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SOME VEDIC LIGHT

ON

AHUR MAZDA

AND

ZARATHUSHTRA

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*By*

*B. R. KULKARNI*

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Swadhyaya Mandal, Nanded. Series

Book No. 1.

SOME VEDIC LIGHT  
ON

AHUR MAZDA  
AND  
ZARATHUSHTRA



By

*B. R. Kulkarni*, B. A.

Author of *Astronomical Clues for  
Chronology in Rigveda; Traces of the  
Arctic Home in the Present Day* —  
*Hindu Life; Lagna System*  
*of Vedang Jyotish etc.*

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# Preface

It is a matter of great pleasure for the Swadhyaya Mandal, Nanded to publish and present this book to readers interested in Indology. The Mandal is organised for higher studies in History, Language, Culture, Philosophy, Aesthetics etc, nearly two years back, by the lead taken by Shri. S. R. Deshpande and at the outset we hardly expected to bring out a book so soon. We started by giving guidance in postgraduate studies and holding discourses and discussions based on researches. To build up a suitable reference library appeared a prime necessity and incumbancy was felt to publish, the results of studies and researches done and discussed under the auspices of the Mandal. The Mandal received, during this period, liberal donations from :— 1 Parbhani Transport Co-operative Union, 2 Nanded District Local Board and 3 Shikshan Prasarak Mandal, Nanded, and decided to publish the present book a year ago.

The donations from the last two institutions were earmarked for printing expenses of this book and hence it has been possible to bring out this publication.

The Mandal, feels highly obliged to these institutions and organizations for their help and hopes that this patronage shown by them will continue in future on greater scale.

Shri. B. R. Kulkarni is one of us in this Mandal from its beginning. He is not unknown to scholars of Indology. He has, under one or the other capacity worked in the Rajwade Samshodhan Mandal, Dhulia well over 18 years, till 1954 and his studies of the Vedas extend over a period of 25 years. He was inspired by the researches of Lokmanya Tilak and has further worked on both the wellknown themes of his viz. The Arctic Home of the Aryans and the Astronomical approach for ascertaining the antiquity of the Vedas.

Shri. Kulkarni brought out Traces of the Arctic Home in the Present Day Hindu Life ( 1938 ) and showed that the indicators of the Arctichabitata of the Aryans are not only

restricted to the Vedas but they are also found to be lingering in the Hindu Life and Culture today.

Astronomy forms the backbone of these both the themes. Kulkarni in course of his studies came to the conclusion that the astronomical data and its application as presented in 'Orion' required some improvement and that the Vedic Literature was highly potential with such data.

He presented a small book, *The Lagna System of the Vedang Jyotish or an Obsolete Indo-Iranian Time measure* (1943).

In this book, he has made a very strong case for acronyca mode of measuring time profusely supported by Vedic, Jain and Avestic evidences. Tilak did not use it in his interpretations in Orion. Kulkarni showed that it is the oldest system and is indispensable in interpreting majority of Astronomical references found in the Vedas. He brought out *Astronomical Clues for Chronology in Rigveda* (1952) and in it has presented different 8 references from Rigveda that can be interpreted from Astronomical base and reduced to facts and figures.



This work contains so far more Riks from Rigveda that have been subjected to astronomical analyses in one book and by one author.

In itself it provides for checks and counter checks for the results. Kulkarni, in order to leave no stone unturned to approach the truth has worked out alternate answers where possible for comparative and critical study. Helical and Aeronycal rising of Stars where possible as well as the seasonal commencements of the year from rains and autumn have been shown. As against the antiquity of 8 or 10 thousands years suggested by Tilak, Kulkarni's findings range from 12 to 20 thousand years. This extension of time has been strengthened by Kulkarni making his position quite clear. According to him the time span disclosed indicates when the particular Astronomical phenomenon might have occurred and not necessarily the time, when the form of literature that contains the reference might have been composed. It might have undergone changes. This stand of his gives his work the moderate and unbiased tone necessary for a work of its

type and it will help to enhance the prestige of Astronomical Contributions made to Indology.

It is quite obvious the Riks containing the association of Sita and Pushan if Astronomically interpreted indicate the antiquity of 20000 years. This means that the Riks contain a subject of such a remote period and not that the particular Riks were composed at that time. The form of composing and the structure of language recording the particular phenomenon might have undergone changes from time to time provided that the information is not borrowed from any sister culture.

This present book too contains some astronomical references and inferences showing such antiquity. His exposition regarding them is the same as stated above. However it is a patent fact that the writers and compilers of comprehensive historical works on India have all and one up till now seem to have taken little notice of the work done in that field. The astronomical approach for chronology has not been accepted by Indologists and the work of Yakobi, Tilak, Ketkar, Dixit, Daftari have had no effect on them. Let it be the age of Rigveda

or the date of Arthasbashttra no so called historian is prepared to accept that astronomical evidence can be worked out to indicate time.

Bhartiya Vidyabhavan of Bombay has enlisted co-operation of a number of wellknown scholars from all over India in bring out a comprehensive series on Indian History and Culture. The Volumes so far produced have shown that no notice of Dr. K. L. Daftari's Astronomical Method in Chronology and its application to Indian History has been taken for pre Shishunag period. Similarly Kulkarni's artical 'Some Astronomical References from Kautilya's Arthasbashttra and their Significance' appearing in Bombay University Journal Vol. xvii Part 1. has been ignored by the editor concerned. This is only by way of illustrations to show that the work of a great sebo ar like Dr. Daftari can go unheeded.

It seems that there are two distinct reasons for this state of affairs. The first and foremost reason is that the difference between the conclusions of different scholars of astronomy presents a vast gulf that can never be bridged.

Tilak suggests the antiquity of the Arctic Home to be about 10000 years. Lele takes the Vedas back to 40000. Sudhakar Dvivedi, works it out as 54000 and one Dinanath Shashtri Chulet has made it a lack and a half! A layman is at a loss to create an order out of this chaos.

Discrimination between slipshod approach and genuine scholarship is yet to appear and no work to show how the method deserves application in the schemes of history has been independently written. The second important reason is that the so called authorities on history have shown ignorance of and aversion for the use of astronomy.

Scholars indulging in linguistic research present their personal likes and dislikes as accepted facts. It is no wonder that the majority of scholars who are not in the know of Astronomy condemn it for historical purpose. Recently M. M. Kane and Prof. Apte have very strongly pleaded for the astronomical research and its use for history, from presidential chairs of Oriental Conferences but these scholars have hardly cared to turn towards the astronomical research themselves. We do not

know why astronomy should not be resorted to for a period in ancient Indian History for which inscriptions, coins, copper plates etc. are not available and cannot be available.

In constructing the history of Egypt astronomy plays a leading role but in unearthing the past of the Aryan Races why the science should be debarred is a question. Max Muller when places the Vedas at 12 hundred B. C. he wants to say that the composed form in which the Vedas are available today cannot be brought later. How much anterior to it one can go we are not inclined to think it. In spite of the supposition that the man was there at the fourth Ice Age we are not prepared to search for an existence of a race the forefathers of the Vedic Aryans parallel to 'Cromagnon'. If Rigveda is studied alone it is obvious that its composition took place at least 1 thousand years after the settlement of those people in India.

The Aryan Tribes that came to India were nomadic. People of stationary habitations invade adjoining territories and even after their conquest and settlement in such land do remember that they have settled on a foreign soil and they cherish the memory of their original

home the more. Vedic Aryans never seem to have thought that they have come to and settled on a foreign soil.

Secondly the Rigveda as available today the major portion of it seems to have been composed after or at the time of the war of Ten Kings दशराज युद्ध. This seems to be the out come of the stabilized state of the Aryan Kingdoms.

The third important clue for this ascertaining the place and time for the final composition of the Vedas is that the languages of the Vedic stock had assimilated the cerebrals ट, ठ, ड, ढ, ण on Indian soil unknown to them before and outside India—a Dravidian effect.

Aryan Nomades were inclined to settle and they started settlements, while drifting from their original home. They came to India and settled in a disconnected form. And if seen in this perspective the entrance of the Aryans in India will go much earlier than what it is supposed at present and it will precede the composition of Rigveda by thousands of years. The language-phase-scale to measure time spans involved in this process appears very arbitrary, random and inadequate. Hence it appears that

in near future some sort of co-ordination and cynchronising will have to be worked out between different approaches. It can no longer be avoided and much less ignored.

It will not be out of place here to give in broad outline the cultural background that Shri. Kulkarni has taken for granted for the discussions in this book. It will help the reader to grasp the full significance of what the author has to say. Rajwade and Ketkar have greater influence on his way of thinking. He thinks that the Aryan clans did scatter from their original home somewhere near the Arctic Circle. A big current came towards the south and there it was divided into two branches one settled in Iran and the other came to India.

These currents were composed of several clans and during this lengthy period their society and language were being strengthened with growing knowledge. These numerous clans spoke pre-Sanskrit tongues which showed much diversity not only for difference of clans but even for change in times. They had separate Gods, such as Pushan, Varuna, Nasatya etc. Some times different words for one and the same thing were there.

One clan derived a word for pot मडके, मटका from मृत्तिका the earth another used lump of mud लोट and formed लोटा (pot). Some clans used वधु as धेनु feminine while others treated it as गुरु in masculine. It seems that at one stage मातृ had a dual form मातृन् similar to पितृन्. These clans produced Vedic Sanskrit in India and Zend in Iran. These two languages in their literature reveal a number of common beliefs, Gods usage, rites etc. Kulkarni thinks these relics the outcome of the Indo-Iranian Age and Home. The original language that gave birth to Vedic Sanskrit, has also given the world the Avestic Zend. He thinks that during the process of a settlement of a nomadic tribe their deities do reflect the necessities of the tribe for the time. His differentiation between a society headed by Prajapati and another headed by Indra has been convincing. A sort of chronological order assigned to Varuna, Prajapati and Indra is a better exposition on independent line of working.

He takes Ahur Mazda to be a Prajapati and the society led by him because of his mature age, knowledge, proficiency in arts and crafts vital for the life of his people. And consequently after a long lapse of time the prophet too



appears to be Vedic Jardashti whose eminence in name has developed around the nucleus of old age. It is the mythological identity that appears plausible rather than philological affinity under such circumstances, because Zend cannot be taken as a product of or deviation from the Vedic Sanskrit.

The phases of linguistic changes the apex of which is Vedic Sanskrit seem as follows :—

- 1) A heterogeneous Indo-Iranian
- 2) A heterogeneous Indian pre-Vedic
- 3) A homogeneous Vedic with Dravidian Contributions
- 4) Vedic Sanskrit.

So in establishing an identity between Ahur Mazda and Prajapati comparative philology will have to play the second fiddle for comparative mythology. An effort to find out harmony between them is made in this book.

I have penned this preface much against my will as I don't suppose myself entitled for such a functioning. However this book abounds in several points interesting for antiquarians and laymen. It will receive, I hope, good response and encouragement for our research and publication work.

I cannot conclude without expressing our thanks for a number of our friends who have helped us specially my friend, Shri. G. N. Ambekar a member of our Mandal. He, being a pressowner I could prevail on him to undertake the printing of this book and circumvent some difficulties.

- *Narhar Kurundkar*



## *Author's Note*

*An effort to visualise the mythological figure of Ahur Mazda of Avesta, in the light of the Vedas is presented in the following pages. In doing so mythology, philology, astronomy and philosophy are availed of where necessary in a historical perspective. Documentation is minimised and Transliteration avoided by making use of Devanagari Script for Avesta extracts. I express my greatest regards for those scholars whose works I have consulted and tried to go a bit ahead. I thank the Swadhyaya Mandal Nanded for taking this book for its first publication and Shri Kurundkar the secretary for writing the preface.*

- *B. R. Kulkarni.*

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## Corrections:-

- 1) On page 52 from the para ' This is Mahad or etc. till the end of page 55 is a long quotation from Kashyap. Quotation marks at the beginning of each para are inadvertantly omitted.
- 2) There are misprints. To give a long list of them is a game not worth the candle as they will not affect the subject matter.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Avesta has one unique feature in maintaining one god, one prophet pattern. The prophet being a historical personage the appearance of the culture can be located in history with certainty. But this does not prove negatively that the culture would not exist before. And it is this side of the question that can be further discussed by means of mythology.

Ahur Mazda, the supreme being of Avesta is not the innovation of Zarathushtra. The very word Asur takes its antiquity to a very remote past.

An attempt is made in this book to see how far the 'Supreme Being' appears to play the same role as that of the Vedic Brahma or Prajapati. And looking at the fact that there were several Prajapatis with different names, we are led to presume that Prajapati the head of society was deified later on. He represented a pattern of

Government and social organization patriarchal in nature. When did it actually exist and how long it continued, is a matter of conjecture. But the material in mythology discloses some clues as to discern an order of change and succession which if called theogony of the Vedas will not be wide of the mark.

## Vedic Theogony.

There are deities such as Pushan and Varuna who seem to have been supreme beings at one time of one or several small societies or clans. It seems that the social pattern was not formed and hence the name of the deity remained the name of an individual.

Then there emerges the personality of Prajapati. He seems to have taken into consideration the past and shown due respect for Varuna by way of compromise.

There is an incident narrated in the Taittiriya Samhita (2-1-2).

प्रजापतिः प्रजा असृजत ता अस्मात् सृष्टाः पराचिरायन्  
ता वरुणमगच्छन् ता अन्वैत् ताः पुनरयाचत ता अस्मै न  
पुनरददात् सोऽब्रवीद्वरं वृणीष्वथ मे पुनर्देहीति तासां वर-

मालभत स कृष्ण एकशितिपादभवद्यो वरुणगृहीतः स्यात्  
 स एतं वारुणं कृष्णमेकशितिपादमालभेत वरुणमेव स्वेन  
 भागधयेनोप धावति स एवैनं वरुणपाशान्मुञ्चति ।

The same story is repeated in Maitrayani and Kathak Samhitae.

The substance of the story is that Prajapati procreated progeny. And it all went to worship Varuna. But afterwards Prajapati redeemed it by offering a particular type of goat to Varuna.

This period when there was no uniform name for the head may be called the Varuna Period. After this comes the Prajapati and a developed organization. The leader knows many arts and has a more ordered society under his control. The pattern seems to have spread in the extensive Indo-aryan race and continued till Indra aspired for supremacy. This is the second period which may be fittingly called the Prajapati period.

Now the third stage of the theogony is occupied by Indra. The appearance of Indra on the scene and transfer of power from Prajapati to Indra is repeatedly mentioned in the Brahmanas.

First, Prajapati created Devas and Asuras but he did not make a king. And he created Indra, being requested to that effect by gods. (Taittiriya Br. 2-2-7)

Then Prajapati asked Indra to proceed to heaven and rule gods by his order. But when he went there all gods put him a question how, he being the youngest of them, could be their ruler? Indra returned to Prajapati and requested him to bestow on him the brilliance that Prajapati possessed. Prajapati expressed his fear that after parting with that special brilliance he himself would be thrown into the background and none would pay him any respect.

But a compromise was arrived at and Prajapati was to receive all due honour as 'Prajapati' even after the transfer of the brilliance. In this way Indra became the head of gods (ibid 2-2-10)

These stories are potential with a number of indications over and above the transfer of leadership from Prajapati to Indra. It should be borne in mind that Indra too was not an individual of that name but it was the office and incumbents of it did change and could be

changed under certain conditons. From Prajapati to Indra was a transfer of power from one type of leadership to another. Some contrasting features between these two types of heads may be noticed here.

Prajapati-ship was given to one mature in age and understanding and also adept in several arts and crafts necessary for the life of the clan.

Indraship was within the reach of one whose first and foremost qualification was young age and bodily vigour. Perhaps Indra established the fighting class as a separate class as such when their fusion with people adept in cattle breeding and agriculture became imminent.

This Indra-stage is the third stage of the theogany. The development of the philosophical knowledge of the society came to contemplate a higher power over and above Indra and thus Brahman or Para-Brahman became that god-head. This is the fourth stage of the theogany. For the sake of clarity and significance the stages may be variously named as follows :—

- I Varuna or pre-Prajapati period.
- II Prajapati or creative Brahma or pre-Indra period,



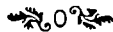
III Post Prajapati or Indra period.

IV Post Indra or Brahman period.

The exponents of philosophy when arrived at a logical concept of the Brahman as explained in the Upanishadas they conveniently used the term Brahma the masculine changing it into Brahman the neuter gender.

So the philosophical predecessor of this Upanishadic Brahman is the Vedic Prajapati Brahma and it is likely to be illogical to trace this Brahman down to any original derivation prior to Brahma.

An example will make the point more clear. The man has hands and a watch or a clock has hands also. The time measuring device has borrowed the name for its part from the human limb on the similarity of some function and under such circumstances to find out the derivative of the hand of a clock apart from and irrespective of a human hand will not be logical



## 2 ZARATHUSHTRA

(AN ATHARWAN)

Zarathushtra is a historical personage and he has been made to converse with Ahur-Mazda. Ahur Mazda is a purely mythological personality occupying the highest place in the Avestic Pantheon.

It is always with every religion that the prophet is in touch with God under this or that name and from Him the prophet receives his knowledge, order or inspiration as the case may be. Avesta too claims the same authority and source of knowledge. Here Ahur Mazda is the Supreme Being.

1 ' I got enlightened by your (Mazda) words before all. '

हत् क्ष्मा ऊर्धाश्श दीदईघहे पओउर्वीम् ।

(हा ४३—११)

2 ' You (Ahur Mazda) told me something not-told (heard) before. '

अत् तू मोई नोइत् असूस्ता पइर्यओघ्ज्ञा ।

(हा. ४३-११)

3 He (Zarathushtra) is the first Atharwan,  
(He is) the first rider in a chariot.....

यो पओइर्यो आथ्रव, यो पआइर्यो रथेअस्ताओ .....

—फरवरदीन यस्त ८९

There are various interpretations suggested as to the proper version of 'Zarathushtra' in sanskrit but we cannot deny that he was an Atharwan which is colloquially called 'Athornan' by his followers and the same word either in its Avesta form or in the current form is nothing but the Vedic Atharwa or Atharwan.

The Vedic literature reveals that there was a class of priests called by this name and that class seems to have led the society for a very long period. Some of the incidents connected with him are mentioned here to illustrate the point.

1 He is an ancient priest. (Fig. 10, 120, 9)

He kindled fire (Ibid 6-16-13).

त्वामग्ने पुष्कराद ध्ययर्वा निरमन्थत ।

2 Indra is the striker of the head of the son of Atharwan (Ibid 10-48-12).

अहमिद्रो रोधो वक्षो अथर्वणः ।

3 Atharvan was the first to invigorate the gods with sacrifice.

यज्ञैरथर्वा प्रथमो वि चारयद्देवाः ।

(ibid 10-92-10)

4 Varuna gave him the celestial cow.

कः पृश्नि घेनुं वरुणेन दत्तामथर्वणे सुदुधां नित्यवत्साम् ।

(Athar- 7-104)

5 Atharva made hymns for Indra.

यामथर्वा मनुष्विपता दध्यङ्क घियमत्नतः ।

(Rig. 1-80-16)

From these citations it is seen that Atharvan was in association with Varuna. It was he who kindled fire and set up the sacrificial ritual for Devas. He praised Indra and also had some conflict with Indra the result being that a son of Atharva was killed by Indra. This last incident indicates that there was a part of the Atharvan class that was not on good terms with Indra and ultimately with Devas whose leader Indra was. This knowledge on part of the Vedas is corroborated by the Avestan tradition where-in Devas as a class are portrayed as evil spirits.

There was a time when Indra was yet to appear in the Vedic Society. And even then

there was the Atharva. So traditionally Atharvans come from a greater antiquity. And the tradition mentioned in connection with the inheritance of philosophical knowledge bears a testimony to it. The Mundkopnishad says :-

ॐ ब्रह्मा देवानां प्रथमः संवभूव ।  
 विश्वस्य कर्ता भुवनस्य गोप्ता ॥  
 स ब्रह्मविद्यां सर्वं विद्या प्रतिष्ठाम् ।  
 अथर्वीय ज्येष्ठपुत्राय प्राह ॥ (९-१)

That Brahma was the first among gods as the creator and protector of the world. And it was he who told this philosophical knowledge, which is the base of all knowledge to his eldest son the Atharva.

In the philosophical world the words son and disciple are synonyms and are always interchangeable. Thus every Atharva claimed to have gained the knowledge direct from the Brahma, as a sovereign claimed to have gained his power from God and not his deceased or deposed predecessor.

The Avestan tradition hails Zarathushtra as an Atharva born for them--

उस्ता- नो जाती आश्रव  
 यो स्पीतामो झरथुश्त्रो ॥

( फरवरदीन यस्त ९४ )

And this Atharva Spitama Zarathushtra is in communion with Ahur Mazda instead of Brahma of the Vedas. So it will not be futile to search for clues that will bring in bold outline the mythological personality of Mazda and will show either it is Brahma under another name or otherwise.

The tradition of the Vedas and Puranas has emphatically mentioned that 'Brahma' in itself was a class of mythological heads of universe and he assumed several names such as Prajapati, Hiranyagarbha, etc.

---

### 3 THE FATHER OF FIRE

In the Avestan literature the following sentence is repeated very frequently.

‘ I worship Fire ( अथ ) the son of Ahur Mazda. ’

आथरेम अहुरमइदाओ पुथरेम यजमइदे ।

We have seen that Zarthustra was an Athava and he received his inspiration from Ahur Mazda as against the Atharva from the Vedic sphere getting his knowledge from Brahma.

Fire under different names is one of the most essential factors of the sacrificial system common to both Veda and Avesta. Some of the names of the fire, very popular on one side, are hardly tracable on the other.

There are several reasons contributive to this difficulty and the foremost amongst them is that the literature available to-day is a fragment and part of the original whole. It is more so with Avesta but some portion of the

Vedas too has been lost through the passage of time.

Then again another observation should be recorded here that the society either in its Indo-European stage or Indo-Iranian stage was a group of clans great many in number and having and developing peculiarities in culture, language etc.

In India there are two words used in languages of sanskrit class for earthen pots. One is 'मडके' in Marathi and 'मटका' in Hindi. This word is formed from 'मृत्तिका' the sanskrit for earth or mud. The second example is of 'लोटा' used in both the above languages. It is derived from 'लोट' meaning lump of mud. This shows the existance of two groups each following one linguistic freak.

Between Veda and Avesta numerous examples of this process can be shown and hence if a word is derived from the same root it is also possible that the later use of the word in these two cultures might have given stress on two different aspects of the word and subsequently developed different significance.



Thus a common source ultimately showing different significance can be utilized for locating a point in time chart when the bifurcation might have taken place.

The word Attar, Athar and Athra is hardly found to stand for 'Fire' independently or isolated in the Vedas as it signifies 'Fire' in Avesta. But it shows the same meaning in the formation of the 'Vedic words' Atharva, 'Atharvan', 'Atri' and so on. So the identity of the name of fire used in the Avestan ritual and Vedic ritual is unmistakably the same. This is the philological affinity between them.

Now let us turn to mythology. The Avesta makes the fire the son of Ahur Mazda as stated above. In the Vedic and Puranic mythology one can trace the parentage of Fire. There it is variously recorded.

In Rigveda the same relation is mentioned  
तनूनपाद्बुध्यते गर्भं आसुरो

(Rig. 3-29-11)

'Tanunapad (Agni) is the child of Asur.'

शंसामि पित्रे असुराय

(Ibid. 10-124-3)

'I (Agni) praise my parents Asur.'

In the light of Avesta this Asura can be easily explained as Ahura Mazda. But whatever diety as the parent of Fire is supposed there it is certainly not with that name having Mazda as an indispensable part of it.

Asura can mean any diety such as Varuna Rudra etc. And even it can mean Prajapati as Sayanacharya says.

In commenting on--

‘महस्पुत्रासः असुरस्य वीराः

in Rig. 10-10-2. Sayanacharya says—

महो महतः असुरस्य प्राणवतः प्रजावतो

वा प्रजापतेः पुत्रासः पुत्रभूताः वीराः

Here Sayana is inclined to take Asura to mean Prajapati if it happens to come sigly without any reference to any perticular diety for which it may be used as an epithet.

त्वष्टा यंत्वा सुजनिमा जजान

(Rig. 10-2-7)

Here Twastri is said to have given birth to Agni. As the Puranic tradition goes Twastri is a Prajapati.

At this particular place some scholars have taken this Asura to stand for Varuna but we can not say it with certainty when ‘Asura’ is

added to several dieties as an epithet in the Vedas.

There is another reference as to Agni being given birth to--

आपो ह यद्बृहतीविश्वमायन् गर्भम् दवाना  
जनयन्तीराग्निम् ॥

ततो देवानां समवर्ततासुरेकः ।

कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेय ॥

(Rig. 10-11-7)

Here the waters are said to have given birth to Agni. Then the word 'Asuh' is used here and the single soul of the devas is the Prajapati. The word Asura is derived from Asuh.

At another place the two pieces of woods that produce fire by frictions are called its parents.

श्वात्रेण यत् पित्रोर्मुच्यसे ।

(Rig 1-31-4)

At one place the Rhishi Angiras calls him a son of his father. Here the tradition says that Brahma was the father of Angirasa. The fire is also called the son of Brahma.

पितुर्यत् पुत्रो ममकस्य जायते ॥

(Rig. 1-31-11)

Prajapati undergoing penance created Agni (Aitereya Brahmana 3-33-5-2):

Agni is the son of Dharma and Vasu and Dharma is a Prajapati according to some Puranic tradition. (Chitrao)

The Mahabharat attributes the birth of Agni to the fury of Brahmadeo. (Ibid)

Though a bit obscure the relation as father and son between Brahma or Prajapati and Agni is traced in the Vedic and Puranic tradition as indicated above.

## The Father Of Soma

नेमो हओमाई मजदघाताइ :

वंघहुश हओमो मजदघातो ॥

(Homa Yast)

Here, Zarathushtra bows to Homa by calling it a thing created by Mazda. When Ahur Mazda is the godhead in Avesta, the creation of the world and particularly of important things is pointedly mentioned to have been done by him. In the Vedic tradition the godheads have undergone changes and it is worth

while to find out to whom the creation of Homa or Soma is attributed there.

There is a Soma known to the Puranic tradition and he is the son of one Prajapati. The further liniage of him shows that he was included in 8 Vasus amongst whom there is Anal (Fire) and Anil (wind) etc. This is the mythological diefication of Soma and it is mingled with the identity of the Moon, who in turn being the king of all vegetation is called Soma herself. (Chitrao)

This tradition has its effect on the literature of Ayurveda.

In Sushruta Samhita ( Chikitsa sthan 29-3 ) we have this incident repeated. There the Soma is said to be the creation of gods amongst whom Brahma was the first. The qualities attributed to this Soma there in, are quite indetical with those given in Veda and Avesta.

ब्रह्मादयोऽ सृजन् पूर्वममृतं सोम संज्ञितम् ।

जरा मृत्युर्विनाशाय

(Long ago, Brahma and other gods created a nector named Soma as a cure for oldage and death.)

## Khratush-Kratu

In Avesta, Ahur Mazda is called 'Khratush.' It is the sixth name of god given in the list of names. The Sanskrit base of this word is Kratu meaning sacrifice or 'यज्ञ'.

The Avestan extracts are as follows:--

(१) अस् ख्रतुश मन्यउश मजदा अहुरा ।

(Gatha 1-4-9)

(२) मजदाओ अहुरह्या ख्रतउश

नस्यन्तो अषाअतचा ॥

(Ibid. 1-5-4)

Here at both the places Ahur Mazda is called Khratush.

According to Vedic tradition Prajapati is a synonym for 'यज्ञ'.

संवात्सरोवैयज्ञः प्रजापतिः ।

शतपथ ब्रा० ११-१-१

Though there may be the word 'ऋतु' or 'यज्ञ' used as an epithet for some other dieties such as Vishnu or Soma the main diety that has this name is 'प्रजापति'. Indra is called 'शतऋतु'. It shows his enhanced prestige of the later stage.

## Dhatar-Dadar

The name Dadar is very frequently used for Ahur Mazda. It can mean the giver if its Sanskrit base is taken to be Datar, from 'दा' to give. But it very well fits in if taken to be 'धतार' from sankrit root 'धृ'. In the Vedic mythology there is the Dhata the creator of this universe. And later on it has been an epithet of Prajapati or Brahma.



## 4 MAZDA THE FATHER OF VRITRAGHNA

Vritraghna is a common term in Veda and Avesta with a clear literary meaning i. e. the destroyer of Vritra. The controversy is about the identification of this Vritraghna with a known personality such as Indra. In Rigveda Indra is frequently called Vritraghna and it has led some scholars to conclude that 'Vritraha' is the unique epithet of Indra and in that word there is embodied the mystery of his prowess. (Dandekar P. 88)

But it is a fact that in Rigveda it is not Indra alone that has been given the credit for the destruction of Vritra. The credit goes to other gods also.

In 1-36-8, all gods are said to have killed Vritra.

घ्नन्तो वृत्रमरन् रोदसी अपः ।

उरु क्षयाय चक्रिरे ॥



'The destroying deities (along with thee) have slain Vritra.' This is addressed to Agni. But at another place he alone is given that credit.

प्र नू महित्वं वृषभस्य वोचं ।  
यं पूरवो वृत्रहणंसचन्ते ॥

(Ibid. 1-59-6)

'I extol the greatness of that showerer of rain whom men celebrate as the slayer of Vritra.' The deity of this rik is Agni Vaishwanara and he alone is given the credit for slaying Vritra.

So it will be nearer the truth to say that when Indra came in the field he was given all the honours that were as a matter of fact and right the property of other older gods who were thrown in the background.

Avesta mentions the word Vritraghna always in conjunction or company with Ahurdhata meaning the son of Ahur.

वेरेथरघनेम अहुरघातेम यजमइदे ।  
—(वेहराण यस्त.)

It should be marked here that traditional meaning of this compound word वेरेथरघन् अहुरघात is 'victory or success born of Ahur.'

(Kanga 243)

The word comes alone too :--

अमेमच वेरेथरघनेमच आफरीनामि ।

--(बेहेराम यस्त.)

It is needless to mention here that the meaning needs revision. The objects of the verbs यज and प्री are better translated as personalities.

This Vritraghna of Avesta is a creation of Asura.

Avesta knows Indra but as the leader of Devas the devils. Here we see that the incident of slaying Vritra is a thing of days by-gone remembered by the people as a glorious act attributed for the sake of honour to their god-head directly or through an intermediary.

In Avesta, the Asura's 'created thing' kills Vritra. The credit is taken to the father omitting the name of the son. This Vritraghna and Asura relation takes the Asura to a former stage in a society where the bifurcation of Indo-Iranian camps was yet to come and Indra was yet to appear as the central hero.

When Vedas mention Agni as one who has killed Vritra and Avesta calls the 'Vritraghna' created by Ahura these two statements can be pointers of a common mythology if looked

at through the very oft repeated Avestan man-  
tra fragement viz.

आथरेम अहुरहे मझ्दाहे पुथरेम यजमईदे ।

I worship Fire the son of Ahur Mazda.

वेरेथघनेम अहुरधातेम यजमईदे ।

'I Worship Vritraghna a creation of Ahura'.

So when one has to take Vritraghna to mean a personality it will point at Agni in Avestan context and can have support from the Vedas as shown above.

A further study of the word shows that two forms found in the Vedas are present in Avesta. There in the Vedas the word is met with as (1) वृत्रघ्न and (2) वृत्रहा. The latter form invariably associated with Indra.

In Avesta there are these both the forms used (1) वेरेथरघन and (2) वेरेथ्रेमजा.

Kanga explains the 2nd word as follows in his Gathas p. 123.

'वेरेथ्रेम-जा- न्कारांत समास नाम १ ली एक वचन एनुं साधारण रूप वेरेथ्रजन् छे. वेरेथ्र = सं. वृत्र - दुश्मन घातु जन् - सं. हन् मारवुं'

Chattarjee has rendered this word as वृत्रदाः in Sanskrit and its Sanskrit base is given वृत्रजा.

In support of his presumption he has pointed a rule of Panini. (6-3-67) And in translating the word 'the conquerors of Vritra' the knowledge of Vedic Vritra has been utilised there.

Unless examples illustrating the change from the same literature are produced the suggested changes are bound to appear farfetched. On the contrary ह of Sanskrit is often seen to be ज and झ in Avesta. होता=ज्ञोता; and hence हन् becomes जन् and हा becomes जा.

So Chatterjee's working in this way is not convincing. Taraporewala also takes the word to mean hero only.

Thus the word in this form i.e. वेरेयजा can be transformed into Sanskrit वृत्रहा only.

Vritra was either a person or personification of adverse natural phenomena and hence the Avestan meaning 'enemy' is a derived meaning and perhaps it is the effect of passage of time. Veda does know वृत्र as an adversary a personality and hence the knowledge goes much nearer to the incident.

Let it be either through an agent or direct, Mazda is attributed the credit for overcoming Vritra.

It can be said with certainty, that such crucial points, in the comparative study of Veda and Avesta, are bound to effect the interpretation of either literature and as progress is made more such points will present themselves. For example one such point is given here by way of illustration. A discussion cannot be entertained here for want of space and propriety.

Identification of Tishtar of Avesta and  
Twashtri of Vedas.

The former is associated by the Parshi Tradition with Sirius the Dog Star while the latter is indicated by Spica in the Vedic Astronomy. There is a gulf of about 100 degrees between these realities. How to bridge this gulf is a question presented to one who is interested in the comparative study of these literatures.



## 5 BRAHMA

IN

## VEDA AND AVESTA

Development of the concept of Brahman in the Vedic literature has been an interesting subject for scholars.

It has undergone changes in meaning to suit the changing phases of philosophical exposition. It is now the 'Sovereign' term that has been given currency to with the stamp of Monism of the Upanishadas. It has been a term of Monotheism and prior to it a name of a deity amongst many.

Brahma in the Veda and Upanishad has more than a score of different meanings expressed in different contexts such as :—

- १) वाग्वै ब्रह्म (ऐ. ब्रा. ६-३)
- २) ब्रह्म वै वाचः परमं व्योम (ऋ. १-१४६-३५)
- ३) ब्रह्म वै गायत्री (ऐ. कौ. तां. श.)

- ४) ब्रह्म वाऽ ऋक् (कौ.)
- ५) ब्रह्म व मंत्रः (श.)
- ६) वेदो ब्रह्म (जै. उ.)
- ७) ब्रह्म वै यज्ञः (ऐ.)
- ८) ब्रह्महि यज्ञः (श.)
- ९) ब्रह्म वै प्रजापति (श.)
- १०) ब्रह्म वै बृहस्पति (कौ. ऐ. श.; जै. उ.)
- ११) ब्रह्म वै ब्राह्मणः (तै. श.)
- १२) ब्रह्महि मित्रः (श.)
- १३) ब्रह्म वा अग्निः (कौ. श. तै.)
- १४) अयं वै ब्रह्मयोऽयं पवते (ऐ.)
- १५) आदित्यो वै ब्रह्म (ऐ.)
- १६) चंद्रमा वै ब्रह्म (ए.)
- १७) ब्रह्म वै ब्रह्मणस्पति (कौ. तां.)
- १८) ब्रह्म वाऽऋतं (श.)
- १९) प्राणा वै ब्रह्म (तै. श.)
- २०) ब्रह्म वै सर्वम् (गो.)
- २१) ब्रह्म वै छंदांसि

So if an attempt to find out a suitable root for a separate case is made, one can easily suggest about half a dozen derivations.

The above list of uses of Brahma is not exhaustive and yet there are enough variations here that can be grouped under different roots.

Brahma meaning :- 1) वाचः 2) गायत्री 3) प्रणवः  
4) ऋक् 5) मन्त्रः 6) वेद 7) छंद 8) रथन्तर 9) त्रिवृतं  
all these can be derived from बृ to speak, and  
it can have its counter-parts in European lan-  
guages .

2) Brahma meaning :- 1) अग्निः 2) यज्ञः  
3) आदित्यः 4) मित्रः all these can be derived  
from भाज् to shine.

Association of Brahma with light, flame etc.  
is very figuratively mentioned in Upanishadas  
and some of the Vedic Mantras cannot be ex-  
plained satisfactorily unless Brahma is taken to  
signify a flame or star.

हिरण्यमये परे कोशे  
विरजं ब्रह्म निष्कलम्  
तच्छुभ्रं ज्योतिषांज्योतिः  
तद्यदात्म विदो विदुः

मुं. उ. २-२-१

In Yajurveda chapter 23 there are some ques-  
tions and answers.

They are as follows :-

किंस्वित सूर्यसमंज्योतिः किं समुद्रसमं सरः

किंस्वित्पृथिव्यै वर्षीयः कस्यमात्रा न विद्यते ॥४७॥



The answers are:-

ब्रह्म सुर्यसमंज्योतिर्द्यौसमुद्रसमंसरः ।

इन्द्रःपृथिव्यैर्वर्षीयान् गोस्तु मात्रा न विद्यते ॥४८

The questions are, what flame or star resembles the sun? What lake is similar to sea? What is greater than the earth and what thing has no measure?

The answers are:- 1) Brahma is a star similar to the sun. 2) The sky is a lake similar to sea. 3) Indra is superior to the earth and 4) the cow has no measure.

This mantra along with others, uses the word Brahma in the sense of a star has been discussed by the present author elsewhere. (Vide Astronomical clues for Chronology in Rigveda P.P. 69.)

3. Brahma is associated with a wheel of universe and it is called the ब्रह्मचक्रम्.

स्वभावमेके कवयो वदन्ती

कालं तथान्ये परिमुह्यमानाः ।

देवस्येषा महिमातु लोके

येनेदं भ्राम्यते ब्रह्मचक्रम् ॥

(श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषत् ६-१)

सर्वाजीवे सर्वसंस्थे बृहन्ते ।

अस्मिन् हंसी भ्राम्यते ब्रह्मचक्रे ॥

पृथगात्मानं प्रेरितारं च मत्वा

जुष्टस्ततस्तेनामृतत्वमेति ॥१-६॥

[Ibid.]

In the light of this Wheel of Brahma it is only left to derive it from अम् to move.

4. Some take the meaning of Brahma in the light of its onini-presence i. e. सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म (छां. उ. 3-14-1). There is the tendency on part of the commentaters to derive it from the root बृह् to occupy or expand.

This elaborate survey of the 'Brahma' with respect to its various meanings and derivations is to provide a preparatory material for fixing its meaning and root as it occurs in Avesta. None can be certain to say that the word Brahma as it occurs in the form of 'Vahma' in Avesta carries a single meaning throughout Avesta and can be derived from one root.

It must be noticed here that this 'Vahma' of Avesta has been even rendered in Sanskrit other wise than Brahma and meaning quite else.

पडरिगअथे क्षमावतो वह्णे

मइदा गरोबीश् स्तूतांम्

(Ahunawad Gatha Ha 34-2)

Here the word वह्ण has been taken to mean वस्म and meaning 'ardour' by Khabardar.

Here are some extracts containing this word in the Gathas.

- १) येह्या वह्णे वोहू परषी मनंघहा,  
--(Ha 45-6)
- २ अत होइ वह्णेंग देमाने गरो निदामा  
- (Ha 45-8)
- ३ यांस्चा हक्षाइ क्षमावतांम् वह्णाइ आ,  
--(Ha 46-10)
- ४ हदा वेस्ता वह्णेंग सेरओषा रादंघहो  
--(Ha 46-17)
- ५ अत तोइ सवाइश् वह्णेम् वक्षत अहुरा  
--(Ha 48-1)
- ६ ज्याइश पेरेथुश् वह्णह्या युष्माकह्या  
--(Ha 50-7)
- ७ क्षमाकाइ अषा वह्णाइ मइदा अहुरा  
--(Ha 50-10)
- ८ क्षमाकेम् वोहू मनंहाघ वह्णाइ दाइदी सवंघहो.  
--(Ha 51-2)
- ९ क्षनूम् मइदाओ वह्णाइ आपरओरेत् यस्नांस्चा  
--(Ha 53-2)
- १० यस्नेम्घ वह्णेम्च अओजस्च इवरेच आपरीनामि

These ten cases have been translated as follows. Translations by Kanga, Taraporwala

and Chatterjee are given in this order for every case.

### Ha 45-6

(K) जेनी आराधना नेक मनस्तीनी मारफते करवामा आवे छे

(T) Through Vohu Man my faith to Him I pledge.

Chatterjee does not take the complete chapter.

### Ha 45-8

(K) तेनी वरवाण (अथवा कीर्त्तनो) (फक्त आये दुनियामाज नही पण) गरोश्मान (बहेस्त) मां हमो मेळीशुं.

(T) Songs of Devotion shall we offer Him.

### Ha 46-10

(K) तेओने, (अए होरमझद) तायी आराधना (अथवा कीर्ती गावा) तरफ हुं मार्ग बतावीश.

(T) All such I'll teach to worship Thee and thine

(C) Whom I teach about your glory.

### Ha 46-17

(K) जणाएली ताबेंदारी थी आराधना रुपी मेटो (होरमझदने) हमेशां (अर्पण करे छे).

- (T) Obeying, then, His will, **worship** through deeds.
- (C) I tell..... **know Brahma** by worship with devotion.

Ha 48-1

- (K) त्वारे तारी परस्तेश (तेथी उपजता) फायदाओ साथे फेलाओ पामशे.
- (T) **Devotion** shall increase within his heart.
- (C) May Ahura give us (Union with) the Brahma (the Absolute).

Ha 50-7

- (K) तारी भक्तीना मार्गोतरफ पोहोंचीने
- (T) Entrance to your Abode I'll gain with **praise**.

- (C) Get union with Thee the Brahma.

Ha 50-10

- (K) अए होरमझद ..... तारी कीर्ती (गावा) नें माटे गरदेश करे छे.
- (T) They but reflect **The Glory** as ordained.
- (C) Are in Rectitude for **Thy Glory** Mazda.

## Ha 51-2

(K) नेक मनश्नीथो (कीधेली) (तारे माटेनी) हमारी आराधना (अयवा भक्तीने) माटे (तेना) फाएदा-ओनी प्राप्ति तुं आप.

(T) Unto Your True and faithful worshipper.

Grant the salvation Vahu Mano brings.

(C) For (union with) The Brahma give me your love along with Conscience.

## Ha 53-2

(K) दीनना एलम तथा क्रियासाथनी आराधनाओ उपर एतेकाद राखीने होरमझनी कीर्ति (गावा) ने माटे (तेओ तत्पर छे.)

(T) Mazda to satisfy let each one choose all deeds of goodness as His worship true.

(C) The knowledge of Mazda which leads to Brahma. Let them take up duty.

## Framraot Ha.

(K) आराधना कीर्ति, अजमत, तथा कौवतने हु वखाणुछुं  
From the use of the word 'Vahma' as variously illustrated and differently translated by

scholars as shown above one feature is to be noted here.

Kashyap raised a question whether Avesta contains a reference to 'Veda' and has tried in the affirmative by translating passages from Avesta where the word Veda occurs in different forms showing that the meaning comes out better thereby. When alternate meanings are available the one that is harmonious to the whole system will hold the ground. In this way Chatterjee's version of visualising the 'Brahman' of the Vedant in Avesta in 'Vahma' does not produce the necessary manifold support for it. The points requiring further support on this score are suggested here.

- 1) 'Vahma' is Brahma of Avesta, beyond any shadow of doubt. But it is not indicating the omnipresent and omnipotent hypothetical concept peculiar to Vedant philosophy. The fountain head of all knowledge and power in Avesta is Mazda and Vahma has been in it like Yasna to play the second fiddle. Vahma has often and on kept company with Yasna and has been always enumerated as an appendage being on par with other

associates such as अओज and इवर. Had the word Vahma been used in exactly with the same meaning as it has been used in the Upnishads then the 'Vahma' would have outdone all the former deities including Mazda and swept them away from the high pedestal as Agni, Indra, Prajapati etc. from the Vedic Pantheon have been ceremoniously thrown in the background by Brahma and no traditional translator would have missed it, and much less the tradition would have ignored it.

Translation of that word by some of these worthies, agrees with surprising accuracy with the other meanings of it indicated in the Vedas itself.

देवतं ब्रह्म गायत

(Rig. 1-37-4)

ब्रह्मं च नो वसो सचेन्द्र यज्ञं च वर्धय ।

(Ibid. 1-10-4)

यन्मेनरः श्रुत्यं ब्रह्म चक्रः

(Ibid. 1-165-11)

At all these places the word 'ब्रह्म' is exactly what Kanga means by 'वह'.

This meaning viz. praise or छंद is retained in the Bhagwadgeeta as well.



कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षसमुद्भवम् ।

तस्मात्सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥३-१५॥

Brahma occurs thrice in this verse and the first two occurrences mean by it as the ' Veda ' ' छंदांसि '. The third occurrence is used in the philosophical context, meaning the omnipresent.

As suggested above the Brahma has covered all creation and therefore it is figuratively said to embody everything as for example—

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नी ब्रह्मणाहुतम् ।

ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्म समाधिना ॥भग. ४-२४॥

At times the Brahma is given the qualifying adjective ' परम् ' simply to show the latest philosophical idea and hence the compound word ' परब्रह्म ' is frequently used. But this ' परब्रह्म ' is above the ब्रह्म and hence the word ब्रह्मपरम् is also used to avoid confusion.

ततः परं ब्रह्मपदं वृहन्तम्

यथानिकायं सर्वभूतेषु गूढम्

विश्वस्यैकं परिवेष्टितारम्

ईशं तं ज्ञात्वामृता भवन्ति ॥

—श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषद् ३-७.

द्वे अक्षरे ब्रह्मपरे त्वनन्ते

विश्वाविधे निहिते यत्र गूढे

क्षरं त्वविधा ह्यमृतं तु विद्या  
विद्याविद्ये ईशते यस्तु सोऽन्यः --Ibid. 4-9

Now the word परम् ब्रह्म

परं ब्रह्म परं धाम पवित्रं परमं भवान्  
पुरुषं शाश्वतं दिव्यमादि देवमजं विभुम्

भगवद्गीता १०-१२

तान्होवाचैतावदेवाहमेतत्परं ब्रह्म वेद ।

नातः परमस्ति । ७ । (प्रश्नोपनिषद् प्रश्न ६-७.)

So the equation that Avestan वह्य is the Vedic ब्रह्म when the latter taken in its Upanishadic phase has not been convincingly explained by Chatterjee while the former means prayer, praise etc. confirms with the Vedic meaning of Brahma and thus indicates a limit in the courses of the twin cultures that have run parallel for a considerable time.

In the Avestic culture the absence of this meaning of Vamha shows that the eastwhile explained fourth phase viz the Post Indra or Brahman phase had not been reached, and no proposition to suppose Mazda on par with that post Indra Brahma can be entertained as discussed in these passages.

## 6 HEAVEN

### IN

## VEDA and AVESTA

'Garothman' is a name for Heaven in Avesta and there Ahur Mazda resides.

(१) गरो देमाने अहुरो

मइदाओ जसत पोउरुयो Ha 51-15

Kanga :- गरोथमानमां होरमइद सउथी पेहेला  
दाखल थयो.

Taraporewala :- Shall be the House on High  
where in doeth dwell

As first and foremost Mazda.

Chatterjee :- Of yore, Mazda Ahura the  
Lord Himself imparted in the House of Song.

(२) अत् होइ वह्येग देमाने गरो निदामा Ha 45-8

Kanga :- तेनी वखाण (अथवा कीर्त्तनो) (फक्त आये  
दुनियामांज नही) गरोथमान (वहेस्त) मां हमो मेळीशु.

Taraporewala :- Songs of Devotion shall  
we offer Him.

३) आकाओ अरेद्रेग देमाने गरो सेरओषाने

Ha 50-4

Kanga :- गरोध्मान (बेहेस्त) मां (मारी) आरा-  
धना (नां गायनां) खोल्ली रीते हुं  
संभळ्.

Taraporewala :- 'Thy Lovers sing from Thy  
Abode on High.

Chatterjee :- 'In open adoration the House  
of the Song of Devotion.

These 3 references regarding 'गरो देमान' or  
गरोध्मान show that it is the Heaven of Avesta.  
The Sanskrit form of this word is given by  
Chatterjee and it is 'गिराधामन्'.

This Abode of songs or prayers is in the  
same way expressed in the Vedas with different  
words carrying the same meaning. वाचा: for गिरा.

१) (अ) पृच्छामि वाचः परमं व्योम ३५.

(ब) ब्रह्मायं वाचः परमं व्योम ३६.

(क) ऋचो अक्षरे परमेव्योमन्

यस्मिन् देवा अधिविश्वे निषेदुः ३९.

Rig. I-164

English translation by Willson :-

(a) I ask Thee, what is the Supreme  
Heaven of (Holy) Speech.

(b) Brahma is the Supreme Heaven of (Holy) speech.

(c) All the gods have taken their seats upon this Supreme Heaven, the imperishable (text) of the Veda.

The 'गरा' of Avesta is the वाचः of Veda and this वाचः has been called ऋचः as seen above. The same ऋचः is taken to be the abode of gods in Rigveda itself as seen in the above extract 'c'.

In Avesta the word 'गरोध्मान' has been popular later on. Similarly the compound word 'परमेव्योम' has been the name for Heaven in the Veda and Upanishadas.

Even in propounding the theory of one 'निर्गुणब्रह्म' itself or its knowledge is said to reside in 'परमेव्योमन्'

सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म । यो वेद गुहायां परमेव्योमन् ।

— तैत्तिरीयोपनिषद्

संषा भार्गवी वारुणी विद्या परमेव्योमन् प्रतिष्ठिता ।

(Ibid 6)

The same is called ब्रह्मधाम and ब्रह्मलोक in Mundaka Upanishada.

स वेदैत् परमं ब्रह्मधाम  
 यत्र विश्वं निहितं भाति शुभ्रम् Mudank 2-1  
 वेदांत विज्ञान सुनिश्चितार्थाः ।  
 सन्यासयोगाद यतयः शुद्ध सत्त्वाः  
 ते ब्रह्मलोकेषु परान्तकाले  
 परामृताः परिमुच्यन्ति सर्वे ॥६॥ Ibid. 2-6

एतदालंबनं ज्ञात्वा ब्रह्मलोके महीयते Kathak 2-17

The difference now noticable is that the words परमव्योम, ब्रह्मलोक, ब्रह्मधाम etc. though are there, the further development of the concept of Brahma has not been restricted by them.

Now it is a question whether this 'गरोद्मान' was a real particular spot or space in the sky towards Zenith with some sign in the form of some visible Star groups or was it only an indication of Zenith.

The mythological concept of Brahma the god with four heads the father of Saraswati (the Hindu Minerva), the propounder of the four Vedas indicates that it was a suggestion that later on developed in course of time, by the brilliant star 'Vega' when near the North Pole of the earth, a phenomenon visible about

10 to 12 thousand B. C. and the Milky Way being Saraswati, the Ardvisura of Avesta.

The central position of this ब्रह्मा and the whole sky turning around it, fits in the phraseology तस्मिन् हंसे ग्राम्यते ब्रह्मचक्रे.

This Brahma is the navel of the universe, and the astronomers know that this Vega is known as Abhijit having its deity Brahman or Brahma.

Indra the Sovereign god of the Veda and Yajna as it is supposed at present does not seem to have appeared on the scene and therefore he is not coming in the picture.

This supposition about the Star Vega is indicated clearly as follows in Tait. Brahman. 3-1-2.

यस्मिन्ब्रह्माभ्यजयत्सर्वमेतत्  
 अमुंच लोकमिदमुंच सर्वं  
 तन्नो नक्षत्रमभिजिद्विजित्य  
 श्रियं दधात्वहणीयमानं

भाष्य : -

यस्मिन्नक्षत्रे ब्रह्मा प्रजापतिः सर्वमेतदभ्यजयत् । किं तत्सर्वमिति तदुच्यते । अमुंच लोकं स्वर्गमपि इदमुंचेदपि च

भूलोकादिकं सर्वं । तज्जय साधनं अभिजिज्ञाम नक्षत्रं  
 नोऽस्मादर्थं श्रियं वैरिसंबन्धिनीं विजित्या हूणीयमानं तैरपहर्तुं  
 अशक्यां कृत्वा दधानु अस्मासु स्थापयतु ।

So the Astronomical aspect common to both these cultures can at places be reduced to facts and figures and made to reveal a specific span of time comparatively more accurate than that suggested by philological or geological changes.

This identification of 'Garothman' with Brahma is not the only evidence that is potential with Astronomical clues. The other Avestan term 'Vahishta' used for Heaven is also full of Astronomical Significance, and it can have none the less support from the Vedic side.

Vahishta is Avestan for Vasishtha of the Vedas. Vasishtha is formed similar to श्रविष्ठा, वनिष्ठा the meanings being the same i-e. Possessor of wealth or abode of wealth, वसू means wealth. These terms वनिष्ठा, श्रविष्ठा are well known to astronomers as indicating a star group by that name which is known to the western world by Delphini.

This star group or constellation is in the proximity of Vega the Abhijit of the Vedas. Similarly it is also very near another Star



group Altair which is known to the Vedic astronomy as 'श्रवण' or विष्णु.

There is no doubt that Garothman and Vahista indicate a common spot in the sky if treated in the sense of astronomy and compared with their Vedic counter parts. There is ample material in Vedic culture to develop this theme which has been very cursorily treated by this author elsewhere ( Vide - Some Astronomical Clues for Chronology in Rigveda )

There may be difference of opinion about the date but the common habitat of the observers cannot be denied, and at the same time the outcome of this discussion is that though the Heaven is common the presiding deity of it is as per Avesta, Ahur Mazda and as per Vedas, the Brahma Prajapati or Hiranyagarbha.

Now it is to be seen by further comparison whether Ahur Mazda can be identified with that deity in the Sanskrit form and meaning suggested there of



## 7 AHUR MAZDA

(LITERAL MEANING OF)

In Avesta the name of godhead occurs as Ahur Mazda. But either Ahur or Mazda do occur singly in that sense. To determine what exactly literally the compound word Ahur Mazda means has been attempted by several scholars. Before new meaning is suggested it is necessary to see what has been suggested up till now and how these solutions fall short.

Out of these two words the first word Ahur is the Sanskrit Asur and no two opinions are entertained about it in any quarter. But the Vedic aspect of the development in the meaning of that word ought to be noticed before hand.

The meaning of Asura has undergone two phases. It is the first phase during which it had not acquired any sinister shade. It meant the sun, fire, etc. in their deified person or could qualify in an enhanced sense any deity such as Varun, Agni etc. as seen in the previous chap-

ters. The second phase shows that the word was taken to stand as an antonym for Deva.

In Avesta the oldest meaning of Asura though apparently appears to have undergone no change it has at the same time been subjected to relative discrimination. It cannot stand for all for which the old phase in the Veda makes it stand for. This restriction is there and Zarathushtra and his tradition have brought it on to this day.

The second half i. e. Mazda of the compound word has presented the real difficulty. Its Sanskrit version has remained disputed and consequently the literal meaning there of has not yet been satisfactorily suggested.

It has been transformed into Sanskrit as महत्, मद्दः and मेघा. A very preliminary test for accepting the solution would be that it should easily suit the compound words that have been framed by using Mazda as a part thereof. It is better these two words are noticed here. They are (१) मद्दयस्न and (२) मद्दएन.

Khabardar emphatically advocates the equation Mazda = Medha.

“Now we will see the evidence from the Gathas and also other evidence to show that

Mazda is the creator of the universe, the Matter, or 'geus tasan' Mazda is 'मह' great and वा is suppoter and we can translate the word in that way; and matter is the support of every creation of this universe so we can translate the word in that way too. But this word Mazda is to be found in Rigveda in the form of मेधा from मेधस् which means intelligence, knowledge, mental power.. ... In Sukta 151 of Mandala 10 of Rigveda there is a chapter, 'मेधा-सूक्तम्' and that whole Sukta is about 'मेधा' only. In the eleventh strophe मेधा is shown as all things of this universe and is regarded as all deiteis as well. From this Sukta it appears that in the Vedic period people also used to worship मेधा (Mazda) and that alone is the sign that has remained in the Vedas of the Mazda Yasni 'मेधायज्ञी' religion. If research work is done in all directions in this respect, much light will be thrown on our religious knowledge ..... From all this it is clear that 'Mazda' is the Lord of the original Matter only... .. In material language, Sprit, Ahura, is the father and Mazda, Matter is the mother' ..... (Khabardar P.616).

So far the Sanskrit of this Mazda is concerned, Stien Konow in his note on 'Medha, Mazda' in *Za commemoration Volum* (P. 219) has suggested this word. But in it he has remarked that the original feminine has been changed into masculine.

There is no word traced out as yet in the Vedic literature such as 'मेवायज्ञ' and 'मेवादन' or anything nearer to it. On the contrary as described in the previous chapters the Vedic 'मेवा' does not occur or is hinted at so far the outstanding features of this Mazda personality are concerned. Khabardar's effort to take Abur for spirit or father and Mazda for the matter or mother is an anachronism in visualising the पुरुष and प्रकृति pair of the Upanishadic period in the Indo-Iranian times.

Chaterjee has tried to give the Sanskrit for Mazda as मजदा = Omniscient, मश् = all; धँ-ध्या = to know. मश् + ध्या + ड = मशधा. ड is provided by the rule अन्त-अत्यन्त etc. (Panini 3-2-48)

The penultimate य elides before ड by the rule टैः (Panini 6-4-143). श is changed into ज् by the rule झलां जश् झशि (Panini 6-4-143)

Chaterjee considers Avesta as a part of Veda and the language of the former a mere dialect.

‘Zend is only a dialect of the Vedic Sanskrit just as Pali is of the classical Sankrit.’ (Chaterjee Intro. 3)

The test as applied to Khabardar’s version if applied to Chaterjee’s मजदा or मशधा, cannot come with satisfactory results- ‘मजदायज्ञ, मशधायज्ञ’ is not traceable in the Vedas and similary मजदादएन or मशधादएन is not found anywhere in the Vedas.

Chaterjee has performed a feat of applying Paninian Grammer in changing the Avesta words into Vedic Sankrit and has clearly ignored his own statement that the Avesta is a dialect of Sanskrit because Panini has not dealt with any dialect of Sanskrit and much less that of Vedic Sanskrit. So whatever is produced by his efforts is bound to be something else than what he wanted to arrive at. Panini knows Vedic Sankrit but he is not aware of anything like a dialect of it and his work does not contemplate to give any rules governing the changes from Vedic to its dialect and vice versa. It

would have been rather reasonable had he utilised a Prakrit Grammar instead, which in fact is nearer in structure and similar in process in determining the Sanskrit form of the word, let it be the Vedic phase.

Kaehyap equates it as महदा = महत् as follows:-

' This Mahad or Mahat does occur in the Vedas as seen Rig.10.55.2 reading.

महत्तन्नामनुह्यं पुरुस्पृग्येनभूतं जनयो येन भव्यम्... ..

' That secret and... all-encompassing name through which thou didst create the past and the future, is Mahat . ... '

Again Rig. V. 11. 6 reads :—

त्वामग्ने अङ्गिःस ..... महत्वामाहु..... ॥

Meaning ' Angiras called Thee Mahat, O ! Agnih ' (Rig. V. 15. 3) uses the epithet महत् for Agnih without using the epithet Agnih.

Maharshi Dayanand explained the plural nature of some names of God in the Veda. Thus अपः an ever-plural a feminine also means 'The Omnipresent Lord.' On the same basis विश्वेदेवः would mean 'The Omniscient, All-illuminating Lord.' The word Mahat represents just this aspect of the Supreme Being in both the

Veda and Avesta. Rig. III. 54. 17..... throws light on this point. It runs:--

महत्तद्रः कवयश्चारु नाम युद्ध देवाभवथ विश्व इन्द्रे.....

· Your that glorious name is Mahat, O. !  
Wise Omnipresent Deities.....'.

In the whole of the Avesta मज्द.... ( Sankrit महद्) has become the one name of the Supreme Being, sometimes further broadened out to मज्जदाओ.

Nirukta XIV. 11. includes the epithets महत् and महः in the list of real Vedic epithets for the great Subtle. Omnipresent one....the Supreme Being designated 'आत्मनःमहतः' which means of the ' Mahan Atma'. Thus Nirukta allows us to take महत्, महान् and महः as proper names of God for, Nirukta XIV 3 reads:--

एष महानात्मा... .. तत्परं तब्रह्म... .. तदमृतं ...i.e.

' This Mahan Atma is the Brahma, the final, the immortal..... '.

It is thus established that Mahad or Mahat is a Vedic epithet for the Supreme Being, being directly called a 'name' there and also being



included by Yaska in his list of the real names of the real Supreme (One and also used by him as such in his book at various places.

Avesta thus picked up मज्द from where it was in Mahad and Mahat forms.

As shown above simple philological operations which the language underwent on account of time and distance caused the evolution Ahura Mazda out of the Vedic Asura Mahad.

Earlier scholars failed to understand this process due to the following reasons :—

- 1) They were absorbed in discussing the probability of the origin of Mazda out of Medhas. Some favoured it while others rejected it. But the attention of both the schools was devoted to it alone, hence no other theory regarding the origin of Mazda could be properly evolved.
- 2) Varuna, long doubted to be the great Asura is not remembered as Asura Mahad or Mahat in the Veda but only असुर महः
- 3) Asura Mazda-- the Assyrian God also misled oriental scholars.

The origin of Mezda through Medha did not recommend itself to us especially because Asura and Medha never occur together in the Veda, what to speak of their together forming the name of the Supreme Being there!

Knowing Varuna to be the King Asura we rejected the same as basis for Asura Mazda. The use of the Vedic word Idex for great Asura i. e. for spots where Mahad and Asura could occur together brought forth the suggestion made by us above.

The following Mantra amongst others serves as the most important piece of evidence in favour of our suggestion.

In fact we believe this to be the real and ultimate Rigvedic source of the Avestan epithet for the Supreme Being:—

तद्देवस्य सवितुर्विर्यं महद् वृणीमहे असुरस्य प्रचेतसः

(ऋ. ४-५३-११)

' We do accept that acceptable Mahad (form) of the supremely wise Asura-- the Savita Deva '

This is the real Vedic basis of the Zarathushtrian Supreme Being. '(Kashyap Pp. 102,105)

‘ To recapitulate the Lord Savita is called Asura of Mahad form in Rig. IV.53. 1. Indra is termed the Asura of Mahat name in Rig. III 38. 5; in Sayana’s opinion Prajapati is the Asura Mahas Rig. X, 10, 2. Agnih is Asura Mahat in Rig. II, 1. 6. While Asura Mahas does figure in Atharva V.II, 1, as well.’ (Ibid P 108)

Kasbyap has equated मद्दः=महत् and महः. These words have the मह base and in Zend it will be only ‘मज्ञ’ and not मद्द and much less मद्दा. In these words the letter ‘द’ is not found properly represented.

If it had been a matter for selecting a Sanskrit version from the Vedas for this word only on linguistic basis there it is provided by Yejurveda 32. 3.

न तस्य प्रतिमाञ्जम्ति यस्य नाम महद्यशः

Here God or Prajapati is named ‘महद्यशः’. This word can be ‘मद्द’.

This महद्यश embodies all deities.

तदेवाग्नि स्तदादित्यस्तद्वायुस्तदु चंद्रमाः

तदेव शुक्रं तद्ब्रह्म ताऽआपः सग्जापतिः ॥१॥

(यजु. ४-३१)

Here if Kashyapa's line of argument is pursued it will not stop where he thinks it ends but lead to this point and word.

It is easy for one to choose between महत् = मद्द and महद्यश = मद्द equations not only on the linguistic but also on the mythological background and preference will go to 'महद्यश = मद्द' as it is a noun and not an adjective. But this word does not stand the test.

The name 'महद्यश' indicates a power as omnipresent and is an improvement on the God ideals such as Prajapati, Indra etc. It has out-grown the ritualistic pattern and cannot be associated with any type of Sacrifice यस्त = यज्ञ and दएन = दिन a set of beliefs. There is no 'महद्यशयज्ञ' or 'महद्यशदिन' yet traced out from the Vedic literature. So the suggestion presents no case. It is only pointed at to make it clear that the suggestion of Kashyap has been fully understood before showing that a satisfactory solution is still wanted.

Taraporewala does not see any Sanskrit counterpart or version of it. He explains Mazda in the following words, the idea under-

lying the explanation is identical with that of Khabardar with the exception that Khabardar's suggestion that Mazda is Vedic Medha is not accepted by him.

'In the Gathas this Fundamental Power' the One Supreme Being bears the name of AHURA MAZDA. This is a double name, and it means 'the Lord of Life (Ahura) and the Creator of Matter (Maz-da)'. The Supreme Being is thus recognised as the Lord of Life as well as of Matter. In the words of Hindu teaching He is Ishvara, from Whom have emanated both Purusha ( spirit ) and Prakriti (matter).  
-Traporewala-P 20

Before starting to find out what it means it is better to examine some such names that come in compound words and denote a deity of eminence. There are Hiranyagr̥bha, and Ahirbudhnya, the latter more akin to Ahurmazda owing to the component part Ahir which is Asura and none else.

Hiranyagr̥bha is formed by two words Hiranya and Gr̥bha. Hiranya means nector and Gr̥bha means centre. It means the centre from where nector flows. This is not the only

meaning of it, it can be interpreted in several ways under different contexts.

The only feature worth noting of this word for the present purpose is that this compound word made of two words, shows that the second word indicates location, of the matter suggested by the first word.

Ahimbudhnya is also a word having Budhnya as the second part which means bottom. The whole word means the Ahim at the bottom. The word indicating location is figuratively used here to show importance. Bottom here signifies base, support and hence superiority.

There are several other words frequently used for showing eminence through location. Bhuwanasya nabhi, Brahmahridaya, भुवनस्य नाभि, ब्रह्महृदय, here both the words नाभि and हृदय stand for centre.

The word ' बुध्न ' is used as a source or fountain head. In Rigveda it has been used in a compound with रायः as रायोबुध्नाः. It has been used for Agni and Savita in Rig. I. 96., 6 and X. 139., 3 respectively.

रायोबुध्नः संगमनो वसुनां यज्ञस्यकेतुः

रायोवुध्नः संगमनो वसूनां विश्वारूपाभिः चष्टे शचीभिः  
देव इव सविता सत्यधर्मद्रो न तस्थौ समरे धनानाम्॥

Here, the word वुध्न which originally means bottom is made to signify source or fountain head of wealth etc.

But when it comes in a compound with a person and not material, there it means figuratively the head, chief etc. to suit the context.

These examples are studied to see whether the word Mazda coming in company with Ahur can denote any location and prominence thereof similar to Ahirbudhnya.

It is at the same time very surprising that this Ahurbudhnya a very obscure Vedic deity is at present prominently known by its association with a constellation called 'उत्तरा भाद्रपदा' 'Algenib'. This star-group is the next but one to 'वसू' (Vedic) 'वहिस्त' (Avesta) the Greek Delphini, and they are in a line with 'अभिजित'—Vega and विष्णु-श्रवण—Altair, शतभिषक् = वरुण = Lambda Aquarius.

The idea of Divinity was first suggested by the Stellar luminaries or they were made to convey it metaphorically later on is a contro-

versy. But it is seen and mentioned in the Vedic context that all prominent deities from the Vedas are represented by stargroups of outstanding lusture and magnitude and this aspect is potential with much more and far reaching significance than what has been up till now interpreted. There is Varuna amongst these stars.

The suggestion that Mazda can indicate location has been hinted at by Rajwade (Sanskhodhak Vol. IV. No. 3) He has given मद्ददएन = माध्यंदिन equation. The माध्यंदिन is a famous branch of शुक्लयजुर्वेद. If मद्ददएन is taken to mean माध्यंदिन then मद्ददयस्न will be मध्ययज्ञ or माध्ययज्ञ. In the Vedic lore there is माध्यंदिनसवन well known. Rig. VIII, 37 nearly the whole Sukta has the burden of the Song—

माध्यंदिनस्य सवनस्य वृत्रहन्नेद्य पिवा सोमस्य वज्रिवः

Indra is invited to drink the Soma that has been prepared in the Midday Savaṇ.

Mazdyasni can mean मध्ययज्ञी or माध्ययज्ञी a cult or group of worshippers giving prominence to मध्ययज्ञ or माध्यंदिन सवन a pattern of sacrificial ritual that has a beginning from midday.



It is a wellknown feature of the Zarathushtanism of the present day that they adhere to the midday beginning of the sacrifice.

The point of beginning of a sacrifice has undergone thousand and one variations. It differs to suit, the purpose, the chief promoter, the actual fire to be invoked first, because there are several fire altars in one Sacrifice and so on. Different beginnings have been attributed different results.

There is a discussion regarding such a beginning, in Taittereeya Brahman.

‘ असुरा अग्निमादधत इति : तदगच्छत् ।

त आहवनीयमग्र आदधत ॥

देवा अग्निमादधत । तदगच्छत् । ते ऽअन्वहार्यं पचनी-  
यमग्र आदधत । सात्रवीदिडामनुम् । तथा वा अहं तवाग्निमा  
ध्यास्यामि । यथा प्रजाया षशुभिर्मिथुनैर्जनिष्यस्ते प्रत्युस्मि-  
न्लोके स्थास्यसि । अभिसुवर्गलोकं जेष्यसिति । .....  
असुरा ..... कंचित्कालं धनिकाभूत्वा पश्चाद्विनाशं  
प्राप्स्यन्ति । १-१४-६७

It means that Ida advised Manu that if one desires progeny he should commence his sacrifice from the altar of Garhapatya Agni

and not otherwise. The Asuras started theirs from the alter of Ahwaniya Agni (at Sun rise) and they became prosperous for a very short time. The Devas resorted to the Anvaharya-pachaniya and they reached Heaven and got no progeny.

The Ahavaneeya commences at the Sunrise and the Garhapatya at Sunset.

A further point that will lend support to this view i.e. मद्द दएन = माध्यंदिन equation is the tradition that makes विवस्वान the ऋषि of this यजुर्वेद. Avesta knows विवंधान as the father of यिम. The Vedic tradition has this pair of the father and son there too. The famous calamity of the deluge was faced by Yim and it was he who gave protection to the species of men, animals and birds says Avesta. Vedas know Yam as the king.

यमः पृथिव्यः (अधिपतिः) तै. सं. ३-४-५.

There was one यम as an opponant of the Devas and he was very powerful.

देवांश्च वै यमश्च अस्मिन्लोकेऽस्पधन्त तै. सं. २-१-३.

From the Vedic sources we find the mention of conflict between देव and असुर very often.

देवासुराः संयत्ता आसन् । तै. सं. ५-३-११.

So it is possible that the Vedic Society was aware of a similar Society under the leadership of one यम perhaps famous for his administrative capacity.

Now if the word Mazda is taken to mean मध्य in its Sanskrit version let us see how it fits in the company of Ahur. The compound word अहुरमद्द is many times mentioned as मद्दअहुर and these both words become असुरमध्य and मध्यअसुर respectively. This word मध्य has come here as indicating location and hence prominence, leadership or sovereignty there by.

It will mean like Ahirbudhnya an Asur occupying the central position.

The word मध्य centre can signify the importance better when looked at it, taking it to be the centre of a rotating circle or globe.

पृच्छामि यत्र भुवनस्य नाभिः and

अयं यज्ञो भुवनस्य नाभिः ऋ. १-१६४-३४

The question is about the navel of the universe and the यज्ञ is said to be the navel of the Universe. These questions are asked when the persons concerned had before them the sky

and the horizon. The words selected and used have a particular technical tendency. As previously cited यज्ञ is a synonym for प्रजापति.

So असुरमध्य can be seen as a very brilliant star fixed up in centre amongst many that are moving round and round or rising and setting, while that central luminary is unmoved and unaffected by time. The Idea expressed by Sanskrit terms such as अक्षय, अमृत, अच्युत, वैकुण्ठ, अमर, अनादि, अनंत and so on, cannot have their origin in relation to प्रजापति, परमेष्ठि, ब्रह्म, परब्रह्म etc. simply by imagination and meditation but actual observation and subsequent poetic and philosophic presentation. Thus if Ahur Mazda is accepted as 'असुरमध्य' on the Sanskrit side, it has a far reaching significance. In previous chapters we have seen how from various mythological angles Ahur Mazda plays the part of and stands in the position of ब्रह्मा-प्रजापति of the Vedas. There it is also some what clear that even Asur can signify प्रजापति. Kashyap has concluded that it is 'सविता' and not प्रजापति but the additional evidence collected from mythology and cited here can no more let his conclusion

stand as it is, and specially when he admits that असुर can alone stand for प्रजापति.

A bit of further linguistic study will show that 'सविता' is another form and really a synonym for प्रजापति. The word has the root 'सू' to give birth to. In this way it becomes one who causes birth. The function of the procreation is attributed to the leader of the clan. Here the creative aspect of the leader is instrumental in the term and in प्रजापति the पति the owning and perhaps protecting aspect of the functions of the leader of a clan is given stress on.

In chronological order Savita seems to have gone earlier and been deified. Prajapati did remain for a longer time in the field. Then it might be noted that the root सू has two versions i.e हू and झू. The word सू becomes सवन and हवन meaning sacrifice. There is होत् and झओतर as the sacrificer in Sanskrit and Zend respectively. In Avesta झओतर is a mere Priest and with no divinity for the prominence of the Godhead.

In taking मइद for मध्य the phonetic changes to be worked out are मध्य = मइद a bit rare case

in which घ and य change places and in doing so य becomes ज and retains the aspirate (ह) and only द goes to the place of य, or it can be accounted for, in the following alternate way.

मध्य = मद्द; घ becomes झ and final य is changed to ज and then द.

The Avestic word दएन when taken to be Vedic दिन can be supported by a similar example showing similar changes taking place in Vowels. There is दीर्घ and it becomes 'दरेघ' it is an instance where ई has been represented by अए also अजिन=इज्ञएन; .

The 'दएन' and subsequently 'दीन' means religion, a set of beliefs and ritual. In Hindi the word signifies ritual that is prescribed for the 12th day after death. This is only to show that it does retain some fragmentary significance of ritual and belief .

The other combined word 'Mazdayasni' contains the word यस्त which is Vedic यज्ञ accepted on all hands. But though phonetically it is 'यज्ञ' if it stands for the identical meaning of the word as it stands for on the Vedic side

is a question. It must be clearly mentioned here that the word 'यज्ञ' too signifies several objects similar to 'ब्रह्म' in the Vedas. However all these meanings do include the one or two that one may attribute to Avestan 'यस्न'.

यज्ञेन यज्ञमयजंत देवाःस्तानि धर्माणि प्रथमान्यासन्

—यजुर्वेद ३१-१६.

'Formerly, Gods performed sacrifice यज्ञ by means of sacrifice यज्ञ and it was the duty धर्म. Here the double use of the word यज्ञ first as the object of the verb यज् and secondly as the means or mode of that action indicates two separate meanings. A critical study of the word यज्ञ and various meanings it has been made to convey will enable one to translate this Mantra in more than fifty ways.

संवत्सरो वै यज्ञः प्रजापतिः | श. ब्रा. ११-१-१

Here संवत्सर the year and प्रजापति are called. यज्ञः In Manu Smriti there are पंचमहायज्ञाः —

अध्यापनं ब्रह्मयज्ञः पितृयज्ञस्तु तर्पणम् ।

होमौ देवो वलिर्भौतो नृयज्ञोऽतिथिपूजनम् ॥

— मनुस्मृति ३-७०

There (1) ब्रह्मयज्ञ = teaching Vedas; (2) पितृयज्ञ तर्पणम् = offering waters to forefathers; (3) देवयज्ञ

throwing oblations in fire. (4) भूतयज्ञ giving food to animals and (5) नृत्यज्ञ entertaining guests, are explained.

In Bhagwadgeeta there are जपयज्ञ, नामयज्ञ, the following kinds are worth noting

द्रव्ययज्ञा स्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञा स्थापरे ।

स्वाध्याय ज्ञान यज्ञाश्च यतयः संशितव्रताः ॥४॥२८॥

## Mazda=Mazdak

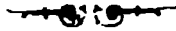
Stien Konow has pointed a word 'Mazdak' a deity name occurring in an Assyrian inscription of 8th century B.C. and thus taken the name back to that period. Mazdak can be interpreted in two ways in the light of Sanskrit just in tune with the trend of reasoning presented in this book. The Sanskrit rendering of it will be मध्यक meaning the central one or the middle one. The other meaning will be central or middle 'क' and thereby chief 'क'. In the Vedas the word 'क' means प्रजापति.

There is a famous Sukta about क (प्रजापति) in Rig.X. 121. It indicates an advance towards monotheism. The whole Sukta contains 10 Riks and there is an effort on the part of the



singer Rishi to visualise his improved out took about one Supreme God on the background of the number of deities well known and very popular till then. The burden of the Sukta is कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम । There is a pun on 'क' meaning 'which' as well as 'Prajapati Hiranyagarbha.'

So if मद्द is taken to be Sanskrit मध्य the words formed therefrom viz. मद्दयस्न, मद्ददएन and मद्दक give a relevant meaning supported by Vedic shades of it as explained above.



## 8 VEDA and AVESTA

( RECIPROCAL RECOGNITION OF )

There is a clear understanding on part of the Avesta that there were some people called Devas, Manushyas, Kavas, Gandharvas etc. The word Devayasni indicates the knowledge of a people separate and distinct from the Mazdayasni. But it is a question whether these Mazdayasnis knew that the former had a collection of prayers called ' Veda ' and also whether the Devayasnis knew the existence of the collection of the prayers for Mazda etc. going under the name of Avesta.

The word वेद occurs there several times in Avesta and it has been translated otherwise i.e. Knowledge etc. and never as वेद the scriptures as such, is the complaint of Kashyap (48) and he has tried to show that at most of the places the meaning comes out better if the word is taken as the scriptures. If his conclusion is accepted

the name 'वेद' for the scriptures will go to a remote antiquity say before the division of the Indo-Iranian race into Iranian and Indian branches. If it be so then there would be justification in calling Avesta of Vedic origin.

But if the word वेद was not used in that sense then but later on, then the expression would be a misnomer and an anachronism.

We have seen that there was a sort of order in the appearance of deities as Goheads in the Vedas. Now from that order we can locate Mazda at a particular phase. During that phase and preceding it a set of prayers, छंद, गायत्रि, ऋचा, गिरा, ब्रह्म, मंत्र were there, of course not necessarily in the form in which they are known today and there were certain deities sacred to all alike. Then a rupture took place in the society. In the branch called Vedic later on and their well known Scriptures the Vedas there is Indra the prominent figure, while in the branch famous as Avesta it is Abur Mazda. Can that much part of the scripture which was formed prior to the division, be called Vedas? And the society Vedic Society? There would be no Indra in it. If the answer is in the negative

then the 'Vedic' origin of Avesta is impossible.

Then the references regarding the word 'वेद' cannot be and should not be interpreted in a way Kashyap suggests. Similarly the after growth of the Vedic literature discloses the existence of Asuras and Yama and their hatred for and conflict with the Devas. But no passage from the Vedas can suggest the existence of their scriptures or Gathas.

But there is one thing above any dispute that some of the words उद etc. mentioned above seems to denote both the collections of prayers coming under the heads viz Veda and Avesta from their common origin.

Chatterjee has called the Avesta —

‘ भृग्वंगिरसात्मकस्य अथर्ववेदस्य उपस्था नामक भृगुखंड

‘ Being the Brigu portion of the Atharva Veda otherwise called Upstha (Avesta).’

As shown above to take it for granted that the idea of Atharva Veda being there and the portion sung by Atharvan Zarathushtra being a part of that Atharva Veda is taking the

word वेद to a time in a sense which could not be possibly there.

After the settlement of Aryans in India when the श्रुति were collected and an order was created for their use, enumeration and preservation, different names were given to them. So the word 'Atharva Veda' too will not be a fitting word for Avesta to include in. It may mean 'Atharva Veda' i. e. the knowledge of an Atharva Zarathushtra but not otherwise.

The Veda though four have several branches and there is no branch as 'उपस्था' known to have been included in the Atharva Veda. Out of the known nine branches of the Atharva Veda there are two names which can resemble to some extant to मद्द. They are मीदाः and ब्रह्मवदा and not a single one can resemble अवेस्ता. They are as follows :—

- १) पेप्पलादाः २) तीदाः ३) मीदाः ४) शीन-  
कीयाः ५) जाजलाः ६) जलदाः ७) ब्रह्मवदाः  
८) देवदर्शा ९) चारणवेद्याः

But as suggested in the last chapter the word मद्ददएन is likely to be 'माध्यंदिन' and when the later is a branch of the Yajur Veda how can

this name signify the cult seems a logical impossibility, and it is so. If one is prepared to accept मद्ददन as माध्यदिन or मध्ययज्ञ the apparent incredibility can be accounted for as follows :--

The practice of Midday beginning of the sacrifice can have a very remote start in the past and then a subsequent inclusion in systematisation much more later on. The practice and name could have existed before and then it would have been selected to designate a branch of the Yajurveda. Besides a tradition associated with the Yajurveda makes it rather a piece of a different nature than the other Vedic Books. The tradition attributes its origin to 'the Sun.' There was some difference of opinion between Vaishampayan and his disciple Yadnyawalkya for which the latter left his preceptor leaving all his learning there and by undergoing penance obtained new Vedas from Aditya (the Sun). This माध्यदिन branch is of that Yajurveda.

यजूषि तेषामथ याज्ञवल्क्यो ह्ययात यामानि रवेरवाप  
vide देवी भागवत.

The old tradition ascribes the authorship of the Vedas to Brahma Prajapati--

तेनासौ चतुरो वेदाश्चतुर्भिर्वदनैः प्रभुः ॥ भागवत १२।४॥

So we see another feature of the problem and it is this that some additions and alterations or quite new orientation of the Vedic texts seems to have been made.

So the equation मद्द=मध्य does not interfere with the historical main current.

There is another similar belief about both the scriptures popular in their respective sphere. It is this, that they are words of God.

So though there is little evidence to prove that Avesta quotes 'Veda' or vice versa, improvements or additions or commentary on the older parts seems to have followed similar trend.

A striking similarity is seen in supposing that 'The word of God' was uttered before all creation.

'The Sacred Word of Ahuna-Vairya did I, Ahura Mazda, repeat..... The Word which was before the Earth, before the Creatures, before the Trees, before Fire the Son of Ahura Mazda, before the Holy man, before the Evil

Once, before all Corporeal Life, before all the Good Creation of Mazda, the Seed of Asha.' (Taraporewala P.2)

This is an ancient commentary in Yasna 19 subsequently forming part of Avesta Text.

There are several references that can be cited that this eminence of being first amongst the creations of God has been given to Vedas also right from Vedas and Brahmins down to Geeta, and Sayanacharya has made the climax of it.

१) स (इंद्र) वाक्त्रग्भ्योऽजायत । अथर्व १३-७-१०

२) स श्रान्तस्तेपानो ब्रह्मैव प्रथममसृजत

त्रयीमेव विद्याम् ॥ शतपथ ब्रा. ६,१,१,९-१०

३) अग्निर्वायुरविभ्यस्तु त्रयं ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।

दुदोह यज्ञसिध्यर्थं ऋग्यजुः सामलक्षणम् ॥

मनुस्मृति १-२३.

४) नामरूपंच भूतानां कृत्यानांच प्रवर्तनम् ।

वेदशब्देभ्य एवादी देवादीनां चकार सः ॥

विष्णुपुराण १-५-५८

कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षर समुद्भवम् ।

भगवद्गीता ३-१५.

Here the word 'ब्रह्म' has been used in the sense of वेद.



यस्य निःश्वसितं वेदा यो वेदेभ्योऽखिलं जगत् ।  
निर्ममे तमहं वंदे विद्यातीर्थमहेश्वरम् ॥

‘ I bow that Maheswar, who is the source of knowledge, whose exhalation is Vedas and who has created this universe through the Vedas.’

This is the well known मंगलाचरण by Sayana-charya in his commentaries on Rigveda and Tait. Samhita.

So it may be surmised that though both the camps vzi. Vedic and Avestic had little reverence for each other still then similar ideas are seen there. One would be tempted to trace out some sort of imitation on the part of one and originality on the part of the other camp. But before such a conclusion is attempted a closer comparative study from various aspects is essential.

The idea, that the utterance of God was there and then followed the other creations such as sacrifice , fire etc. can have a plausible interpretation.

Man or specially the Indo Aryan person in course of his evolution did develop his faculties of perception and expression. His efforts in the domain of visualising, and appeasing the

agency competent to produce, control and destroy his world seem to have been started with verbal approach towards that power and subsequently expanded by ritual and rite keeping pace with his achievements and material progress, such as procuring, producing fire and offering oblations in it.

In this way the recitation of Prayers and Mantras have retained their sway over all the activities of man which are meant for an approach for whatever purpose it may be towards the power divine.

So it is not necessary that the similarity will be by imitation. It can be an original common heritage in this case if AhurMazda and Prajapati happen to be one or identical in playing the part of ' ruler-priest-medicineman and magician in one ' and deified later on.

After the division of the Indo-Iranians into two camps with unfriendly attitude towards each other, their habitations did not resemble watertight compartment. There was some sort of communication and also some give and take process going on. Sciences such as medicine, Mathematics, Astronomy and Crafts of

vital interest to the then society did travel far and wide by transcending the barriers of faith and cult.

But one striking exception to this generalisation is retained by Avesta and it is this, that there a 'fire producing device' is not allowed. They procure fire from various places and keep it burning even for centuries and so on. On the other hand the Vedic tradition or ritual prescribes production of fire by friction of two pieces of wood for every sacrifice, whether public or private.

According to the Vedic Code a bride and the fire come hand in hand to make a home.

अयज्ञो वा एषः । यो ऽपत्निकः ॥

न प्रजा प्रजाएरन् । तै. ब्रा. २-२-६॥

'A man without wife is without sacrifice  
He should not procreate?'

And thus a fire installed in this way is to be kept alive life long. The husband cannot retain it in case of his wife's death and in that case he must at once bring a second wife, and then only his Agnihotra as it is called can continue. This Fire-worship terminates at the demise of the sacrificer the Agnihotri

irrespective of his wife surviving him And his dead body is supposed to be the last oblation to be thrown in his fire which for that purpose is taken to the burning ground. The funeral rite is called 'अन्त्य इष्टि' the last sacrifice.

An indispensable feature of a Hindu funeral procession is that a kith or kin of the dead leads the procession with an earthen pot with burning fire in it and it is a relic of the old household Fire worship now nearly extinct.

So on the Vedic side the Fire worship became part and parcel of a family life and necessary adjunct of a household. Though the fire could be produced by friction of two bits of wood the practice was to keep it burning continuously and at the same time to keep the wooden pieces ready for emergency.

Now quite in contrast to this mode the Avestic Fire never became a household matter and much less a production of wood friction. If needed it was brought from several places where it was likely to be found and spared.

Vedic side shows greater familiarity with and control on fire than the Avesta side. For

a Vedic person his every day food was to be cooked on his own fire.

To account for this difference is more difficult and most important. It is a clue for several reflections regarding the state and stage of the societies in progress of their civilization and culture.

It can be interpreted in two different ways as follows :-

- 1) Man learnt to use fire much earlier and afterwards he mastered the art of its production. Avesta Society retains this relic of greater antiquity in sticking to procuring fire and not producing it for their sacrifice or worship. \*
- 2) The invention of fire production was made by the Indo Aryans after their separation from the Iranians and hence the latter had to remain content with the procurement of fire from whatever place they could get it as the art was a very guarded secret then just like the production of Atom Bomb of today.

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\* This interpretation is suggested by Mr. N. A. Kurundkar during a discussion.

## Astronomical Common Factor !

Astronomical aspect of both the literatures viz. Veda and Avesta is yet to be studied more critically and comparatively. The work has hardly begun and some instances of some work being done, may be pointed out at present. Khabardr's work is one of that class and it will be too early to say how far he has been successful in his work but however there are certain points which appear rather far from convincing. As for examples he is prepared to take Vritiaghna as Indra, just to support that the ' जेष्ठा नक्षत्र ' (Antases) is mentioned in Avesta. (p, 697)

But it will be rather impossible to find for Indra such a very friendly reference and to interpret it in that way. The other main barrier for his scheme is that he takes it for granted that the twelve fold division ( Signs of Zodiac) of the ecliptic is there in the Vedas the thing which is hardly hinted at by any research scholar and much less supported by the astronomical methods and knowledge disclosed by the subsequent Brahmana texts and Vedangas.

The oldest available mode of the measurement of time and commencement of the year in the Vedas appears to be acronyca ( from Sunset ) and not heliacal (from Sunrise) (KulkarniP.36) Avesta supports this theory. The star Tishtar is supposed to be a rain-giver because of the coeval phenomenon of its rise and rains. Its rising as described in Avesta is explained to be acronyca and not heliacal ( Kuka. 3 )

Khabardar also draws too much from astrology rather than astronomy and the historical development of the latter science has been paid very scant attention in the whole theory that he presents in his work.

Similarly his supposition about the perfect alphabet for the Gathas devised by the ancient priests and also his opinion that the language of the Gathas is the base from which Vedic Sanskrit has evolved require closer and critical examination.

The later development in the Vedic literature and the ritual, its subsequent-grouping under three or four heads viz. ऋक्, यजुः, साम, अथर्वण as separate branches and also the further subdivisions into shakhas has proved the trend of

growth and expansion and division into antagonistic factions, the repetition of the incident of the division of the Aryans into two camps viz. Irāniāns and Indīāns.

Samveda was supposed to be of lesser dignity and, so the Atharvaveda and so on. So there it is but natural not to find any reference with due respect for the other in either camp.





## 9 ZARATHUSHTRA AND VEDIC JARDASHTI.

Zarathushtra is the name of the Prophet and the word has been interpreted variously on the Sanskrit back ground. In this chapter a new meaning is suggested and also a new etymology on the Sanskrit basis. But before doing so the interpretations given so far are to be taken into consideration.

The word has been transformed into Sanskrit in following ways—

The first version i. e. जरद्-उष्ट्र means old camel and this is the explanation available in many quarters. Taraporewala has tried to go too much behind and suggested it to mean a bison having golden colour and hence a godly creature. The second explanation is found in the work of A. C. Das and he has given a note that it means जरत्-त्वष्टा. The Vedic old Twastri

or old star Tishtra of Avesta. The third solution is by A.J. Karandikar (Sahyadri Magazine XVII ) and here he has tried to identify this prophet with one जरुथ mentioned in Rigveda and who is killed by वसिष्ठ and अग्नि. The fourth version of the word, जरदष्टि is found in the list of Sanskrit and Avesta words having phonetic affinity and identical meaning, given at the end of his work by Khabardar.

The name has been even tried to be explained by खर-उष्ट by some Western scholars ( Vide. Dnyankosha )

The prophet or Atharwan Zarathushtra has two names. The other name is Speetama Taraporewala thinks that out of these two names Speetam is the personal name and Zarathushtra signifies a title.

While looking at the extent of material available in the Vedas for explanation of the ritual, myths and personages of the Avesta the very name of the prophet and if it happens to be a title, will necessarily have some clue or material to explain it in a better way. The word जरदष्टि is not yet explained and the similiarity between these two words has not yet been

touched. Similarly the name Speetama also requires some attention. Speetama can be treated from the Sanskrit basis in three different ways.

- 1) Speetam श्वेतम् (white) just like श्वेतकेतु
- 2) „ अश्वतम one possessing horses
- 3) „ शिवतम the most benefactor

The word झरयुष्ट्र if taken to be Vedic जरदष्टि The changes in the consonants and vowels involved can be supported by the following similar examples for each change.

- 1) ज becomes झ as in जन्तु = झन्तु
- 2) द becomes थ as in विदुषि = वियुषि
- 3) अ becomes उ as in सर्व = हउर्व
- 4) ष्टि becomes इत as in वसिष्ट = वहिइत
- 5) इ becomes अ as in दीर्घम् = दरागम्
- 6) विसर्ग becomes र् as in स्वः = व्हर्

In this way the Avestan झरयुश्त्र can be equated with the Sanskrit जरदष्टि each change finding a similar example in Avesta.

Now there is the problem of its meaning. In Avesta it has been the name of a person whether a personal name or a title. But in the Vedas the word has been used only as an adjective or supposed to be an adjective so far.

The Vedic literature as it stands today is not fully and very critically studied and trans-

lated. Several instances have been quoted by scholars where the necessity of a new and critical meaning of the Vedic passage is keenly felt. The word जरदष्टि is one of such instances. If we take all the references where this word has occurred and make an exhaustive study it will show that the word has received little attention and requires a new effort. And unless the word is studied from all possible angles one will not be in a position to ascertain what it will mean as the name of the prophet. Let it be the personal name or the title of him.

Extracts from the Veda Samhitas are given below where in the word जरदष्टि: occurs.

१) गृभ्णामि ते सौभगत्वाय हस्तं मयापत्या जरदष्टिर्यथा सः  
देवाऽर्यमा सविता पुरन्धिर्मह्यंत्वाअदु गार्हपत्याय देवाः ॥

ऋग्वेद १०-८५-३०

२) अभि यं देवी निर्ऋतिश्चिदीशे नक्षन्त इन्द्रं शरदःसुपृथः  
उपत्रिवंधुर्जरदष्टिमेत्य स्ववेशं यं कृण्वंत मर्ताः

ऋग्वेद ७-३७-७

३) यदा वधन्दाक्षायणा हिरण्यं शतानिकाय मुमनस्यमानाः  
तन्म आवन्धामि शतशारदाय आयुष्मां जरदष्टिर्यथासम्  
वाजस सं. ३४-५२, काठक सं. ११-१३-१७

४) इममग्न आयुषे वर्चसे कृधिप्रियं रेतो वरुण सोमराजन्  
मातेवास्मा आदिते शर्म यच्छ विश्वेदेवा

जरदष्टिर्यथा ऽ सत्

तै. सं. २-३-१०

- ५) इममग्न आयुषे वर्चसे कृधीत्याहा ऽऽयुरेवास्मिन्  
वर्चो दधाति  
विश्वेदेवा जरदष्टिर्यथाऽसदित्याह जरदष्टिमेवैनं  
करोत्यग्निरायुष्मानिति  
तै. सं. २-३-११
- ६) इममग्नं आयुषे वर्चसे नयप्रियं रेतो वरुण मित्रराजन,  
मातेवास्म अदिते शर्म यच्छ विश्वेदेवा जरदष्टिर्यथासत् ।  
अथर्व. सं. २-२८-५
- ७) आ रभस्वेमामृतस्य श्नुष्टिमच्छद्यमाना जरदष्टिरस्तु ते  
असुं त आयुः पुनरा भरामि रजस्तमो मोष गा मा प्रमेष्ठाः  
अथर्व ८-२-१
- ८) यत् ते माता यत् ते पिता जामिभ्राताच सर्जातः  
प्रत्यक सेवस्व भेषजं जरदष्टि कृणोमि त्वा॥ अथर्व ५-३०-५
- ९) मा विभेर्न मरिष्यसि जरदष्टि कृणोमि त्वा  
निरवोचमहं यक्षममंगेभ्यो अंग ज्वरं त्व ॥ अथर्व ५-३०-८
- १०) सा नो भूमिः प्राणमायुर्दधातु । जरदष्टि मां पृथिवी कृणोतु  
अथर्व १२-१-२२

Here are ten places where the word जरदष्टि has occurred under changed contexts and under different shades of meaning. Sayanacharya has translated it as 'Long Life' or 'Longevity'.

The literal or etymological meaning of the word will be something akin to longevity but its figurative meaning is something else.

In the marriage ceremony of the Vedic type the newly wed couple has to walk seven steps together and express their aims, objects, obligations and determinations in definite terms regarding their married life. At the first step they say :—

‘ॐ इष एकपदी भव । सामामनुव्रता भव ॥

पुत्रां विदावहै वहंस्ते संतु जरदयष्टयः ॥’

आस्व. गृ. सू. १-७-१९

‘This is the first step. She shall follow me. We shall have many sons and they shall be ‘जरदष्टि’. Here to translate the word as mere having long life’ will be too prosaic. The word implies something more than longevity. Let us see what it can be

The word जरदष्टि literally means an old person of eighty. As shown above the newly wedded couple desires many sons and they should be ‘जरदष्टि’. If it be an ideal for a son the meaning will signify something more and nobler than mere longevity to the extent of eighty years.

In Yajurveda there is an instance where the benediction by a priest for his host is given. It shows what the most coveted desires of them

were, they include one about a son. They are as follows:--

आ ब्रह्मन्ब्राह्मणो ब्रह्मवर्चसो जायतामा राष्ट्रे राजन्याः  
शूरऽऽष्वव्योऽतिव्याधी महारथो जायतां दोग्धीर्धेनुर्वोढानङ्वा  
नाशुः सप्तः पुरन्धर्योषा जिष्णू रथेष्ठाः सभेयो युवास्य  
यजमानस्य वीरो जायतां निकामे निकामे नः पर्जन्यो वर्षतु  
फलवत्यो न औषधयः पच्यन्तां योगक्षेमो नः कल्पताम् ।

— यजुर्वेद वा- सं. २२—२२

The host may get a son a hero, always eager for fighting, rider in chariot, and capable of sitting in a conference. So locking to these qualities desirable on part of a son the word जरदष्टि seems to indicate something above old age.

There are some such words the original meaning of them is only old and mature in age but they have been made to signify some office and leader-ship.

There is a word 'महत्तर' meaning old. In Hindi it is महतारा and महतारी and in Marathi it is म्हातारा and म्हातारी. This word signifies an office as well. In old inscriptions and copper plates it means an officer of a village or a group of villages.

'.....वर्षशतजीव पुत्रपौत्रा श्री महादेवी प्रभावतो  
गुप्ता ॥ कौशिकमार्गे अश्वत्थ नगरे सत्रह्यणपुरोग ग्राम-  
महत्तरांश्च कुशलमुक्त्वा समाज्ञापयति ॥

(A copper plate of 5th century A D,) (Journal of  
B E. Society. New Series Vol. 20 P 53),

The age was the qualification that made a person fit for leadership in the beginning of his social life. In the Presbyterian Church the affairs of the parish are conducted by a number of representatives selected from amongst the local people and they are called 'elders'. At present, age is not and cannot be the only criterion for such a leadership but the word is there. It means a leader or a representative and yet its original meaning viz. mature in age is there.

So looking from this stand-point at the word जर्दष्टि and in nearly a dozen different contexts it does give a better meaning than mere '80 years'. If had it been a question of years only the number ought to have been 100 instead of 80. The most popular benidiction expected from age and efficiency point is for 100 years.



पश्येम शरदः शतं जीवेम शरदः शतं श्रुणुयाम शरदः शतं  
 प्रब्रवाम शरदः शतमदीनाः स्याम शरदः शतं भुयश्च शरदः  
 शतात् ॥ यजुर्वेद वा. सं. ३६-२४.

Now in the fitness of things to ask for a longevity of 80 years as against the tradition of 100 years would be a gross indecency. So the word जरदष्टि seems to indicate something more.

In order to find out what this greater or wider significance the word has it is better to examine the instances where the word has occurred in the Vedas. The examination cannot be elaborate but brief here. The remarks have identical numbers to correspond with the extracts.

- 1) This is addressed to a bride by a bridegroom and he desires सौमगत्वं and जरदष्टि. Had it been longevity, alone it would have been 100.
- 3) Here the auspicious cord (कंकणम्) to the wrist the emblem of the sacrificer is to be tied and then the benediction that he should live for 100 years just like जरदष्टि. In this case there are शतशारदाय the words for longe-

vity and therefore the word जरदष्टि is definitely something else.

- 4) and (6) The substance is the same but the deity invoked is in (4) वरुण सोम and in (6) वरुणमित्र . Here आयुष, वचंस and शर्म are asked for similar to जरदष्टि.
- 5) Here along with making जरदष्टि there, making आयुष्मान is expressed. This is simply because जरदष्टि does not stand here for longevity.
- 8) and (9) Show that by medicine one was made जरदष्टि and also some fever was cured.
- 10) Here प्राण and वायू are asked for and also a desire to be made 'जरदष्टि' is expressed. Here is आयुः separately mentioned.
- 6) This extract is to be noted again as there it is implied that विश्वेदेवाः are mentioned as an example for being 'जरदष्टि'.

If all the points disclosed by these extracts are taken together they suggest a position possessing power, proficiency bodily vigour and social prominence all combined with the basic meaning of 80 years. This word discloses a

title of a leadership in the society which in course of time had become obsolete.

The third extract indicates that the sacrificer was praised in these words and was reminded of the historical eminence of दक्ष and शतानीक. From this illustration of शतानीक it becomes clear that the old leadership has been remembered by this name and it was comparable to worldly kings and विश्वदेवा alike.

The word occurs only in the form of the name of the prophet. A more critical and minute study may reveal it in any other form to have come in Avesta. But if Zarathushtra is to be equated with the Vedic word Jardashti as explained above from phonetic and other standpoints the meaning of it is then necessarily changed and it indicates a leader of high eminence and not 'an old camel' or something like it.

Zarathushtra is called an Atharvan as pointed out previously so it will not be in contrast to the whole set of the mission and function of his personality. The word indicates an office or title is already hinted at by Taraporewala.

The discussion made above makes a further advance in that direction and confirms his guess by extracts from the Vedas.

Zarathushtra, a seer, to use the Vedic term for the persons of his class viz. मन्त्रद्रष्टा one who saw the prayers and related them, gave them to his followers-- is a personality that comes in more clear out-line in the light of the information collected on points peculiar to his name and also the Supreme Being Ahur Mazda.

It is as mentioned previously that he does not mention any mediator between him and his God. It is as suggested and also pointed out previously that the Upanishadas claim the knowledge from Brahma to Atharva the latter claiming to be the son of the former. Here the whole class of the propounders and preachers of that system is implied by that name and not one person.

## Christ the Son of God

The supposed father and son relation between the propounder of a set of philosophical ideas with or without ritualistic peculiarities

is not limited only to the Vedic Sphere. Christ too claims himself to be the son of God. For the Upanishadic tradition it is neither new nor a novel feature. And in a historical perspective if a better explanation is not forthcoming the inspiration on part of Jesus to call himself the son of God will have to be taken as borrowed from the ideas spread by the Atharvan class of priest-philosophers rather than spontaneous.

Vedic Literature as it is made available at present is the outcome of a comprehensive effort for co-ordination and combination on synthetic basis by the Indo-Aryans. Appearance of one solitary Atharvan Zarathushtra is enough to indicate the existence of his class in Iran and other adjoining regions but absence of a co-ordinating and combining effort resulting in a collection of the literature is there and hence the diversity in Avesta is not comparable to that found in the Vedas.

## Daeva-yasna not Idolworship

Kanga has translated the word 'दएवयस्त' as 'वृत्त-परस्त' (idol-worshipper). The word fo

idol is here taken to be 'बुत'. It is obviously this 'बुत' the corrupt form of Budha and this term 'बुत परस्त' is the outcome of the Budhistic religious practice of the worship of the images or idols of the Budha. So if the translator sticks to the meaning the composition of Avesta will come after the spread of the Buddhist religion in Iran. This cannot go earlier than about 2000 years. But if the translator sees this significance he will have to be particular in translating the word. It is better to translate it as the worshippers of Devas. By Devas it does not mean that Devas in the form of idols of various Gods. The Vedic sacrificial system does not involve any idolatry and yet there several Gods or Devas are worshipped and invoked.

The meaning of the Avesta and Vedas are complementary and unless both the sources are utilised, in interpreting either of them some inexactitudes are bound to creep in.

While Mazdayasni does not indicate a worshipper of the idole of Mazda, Devayasni too will have to be taken in that way.

Analytical Study of Avesta is a prime necessity. Efforts have been made by scholars to mark out what exactly are the spoken words of Zarathushtra and other material. The efforts have been made mainly from the religious viewpoints and they concern more the form of the language. But apart from this the tradition coming from a great remote past is of all the same importance and it is very valuable for historical and cultural information and comparative study. The study of the teaching of the prophet with due regard to his eminence if viewed from the historical perspective will reveal how the philosophy, rite and ritual developed after the separation of the Iranians from that current of the people that further went on to India.

### The Script

There is the problem of the script. Can it be supported by further researches that the formation of the script of Avesta was so scientific as to express all the vocal peculiarities of the tongue spoken then? Can it stand

comparison with the Devanagari Alphabets as disclosed by Panini on the scientific aspect as Khabardar claims? On the contrary it may be said that the alphabets were very slipshod and have been instrumental and responsible in giving a changed cast to the language.

When consonant and vowel symbols are written separately though in proximity they create a change. Hindi words or rather names written in English illustrate the point very clearly. The family name सिंह has been spelt 'Sinha'. And in admirable imitation to 'English' pronunciation is exactly read as 'सिनहा'. But it does not stop there, in Hindi too now it appears as 'सिनहा' rather proud of the English dubbing!

The word देव is there with its European form 'Devil'. The Avesta gives it as 'दएव'. Can we say that this दएव is the right and correct Indo-Iranian original form and the Vedas have changed it to 'देव' subsequently and where will be the support of the Devil? Will the Devil support 'दएव' who is his flesh and blood or 'देव' who is showing the



orthographic affinity even after change of colour on part of this former kith and kin of his?

## Veda in Avesta

The word Veda has occurred several times in Avesta and as shown previously it is rather illogical to find it exactly in the sense of 'scriptures' of Hindus.

But this position makes the point a bit difficult and also necessary to see what it can mean.

The word Veda has undergone some changes in meaning and cannot be taken to be only with one significance. It means knowledge and wealth at the same time it can mean prayers. So under such diverse shades of meanings all possible meanings are welcome so that it will facilitate one to eliminate what is not going to stand the test of historical background.

मइदा वेदिस्तो अही ।

अहुनवद गाथा हा. ३२-७

....मइदा वेदिस्तो ।

उस्तवद गाथा हा. ४६-१७

The word Vedisto occurring in these lines has been translated taking the meaning of

the root *विद्* to know. Let us try other alternate meanings.

If *वेद* is taken to mean wealth the Lord Ahura Mazda will be the possessor of wealth, and for the gift of which he is always approached.

This meaning wealth *धनम्* as it is in Sanskrit has the word *धनिष्ठा* a similar word and the constellation *धनिष्ठा = वसू*. The *वसू* is *वोदू* in Avesta and *वहिस्ता* subsequently *वेहेस्त* the heaven. If *वेदिस्तो* is thus corroborated by *वहिस्त* the meaning will have to be given some consideration.

An alternate meaning is as prayer or prayer song.

‘वेदः ऋक्सामयजुरात्मकः’

This is what Sayanacharya means in his commentary on Athar. 7-57-1.

Now the following two extracts one from Avesta and other from the Veda sound a similar note:—

१) ये मांश्चा वाचेम मद्ददा वरइती । हा. ५०-६.

२) इमा अस्मै मतयो वाचो अस्मदां ऋचो

गिरः सुष्ठुतयः समग्मत ॥ ऋग्वेद. १०-९१-१२

Here we find मंत्र, वाचा, गिरा, ऋचा the four synonyms for prayer come together to convey the similar idea.

Mazda resides in गरोद्मान or to express in Vedic version 'ऋचा अक्षरे परमेव्योमन' (as explain- previously) then if 'वेद' is taken as गिरा, मंत्र, ऋचा then वेदिष्ठा becomes one who resides in the Vedas. The Avestic गरोद्मान the heaven to be clearly visualised in the Vedic Light.



# Abbreviations for Author's

AND

WORKS USED IN THIS BOOK

- 1) Kanga :-- a) The Gathas (with Gujrathi translations)  
by Kawasji Edalji Kanga.  
b) Yašts " "
- 2) Taraporewala :— The Gathas of Zarathushtra  
by Dr. I. J. S. Taraporewala.
- 3) Khabardar :— New Light on the Gathas of  
Holy Zarathushtra.  
by Ardeshir Framji Khabardar.
- 4) Chatterjee :— Gatha or the Hymns of Athar-  
wan Zarathushtra  
by J. M. Chatterjee.
- 5) Kashyap :— The Vedic Origins of Zarathu-  
shtranism by R. R. Kashyap.
- 6) Kaka :— The Antiquity of the Iranian  
calender and the Era of  
Zoroaster. by M, N, Kaka
- 7) Chitrao :— प्राचीने चरित्रकोश ( Biographies  
from Vedas Puranas and  
other Hindu Lore in Sanskrit  
religious works in Marathi)  
by S. S. Chitrao.
- 8) Ketkar :— Maharashtra Dnyankosh, Vol.  
II, III. by Dr. S. V. Ketkar.

9) Dandekar: — हिंदु देवतांचें अभिनव दर्शन (Marathi)  
by Dr. R. N. Dandekar.

These are the main books: Other extracts and references are given at their places in full. Vedic extracts are given with their references are at their ends.

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## SOME OPINIONS About Shri. Kulkarni's Works

Shri. Kulkarni's work (Traces of the Arctic etc.) illustrates how intelligent research-workers can make old traditions, rites, customs etc. unfold the history of the past. The insight in a researchworker necessary for observation analyses and presentation is highly exhibited in him.

*Swami Kevalanand Saraswati of Wai.*

A famous Scholar and founder of Pradnya Pathshala

The present book (Lagna System etc.) appears to give a plausible explanation of a difficult passage from the Vedanga Jyotisha and has I believe successfully established the fact that acronycal system was prevalent in early Indian Astronomy..... "

7-2=44

*R. S. Dixit.*

Director General of Archaeology in India

This brochure (Lagna System etc.) throws a revealing light on an obscure line in the Vedang Jyotish— that had defied the attempts of such eminent scholars as the late Pandit Sudhakar Dvivedi, Lokmanya Tilak and Mr. Sham Shastri. The interpretation put upon it by Shri. Kulkarni appears to be convincing in view of the corroborative evidence he has cited from Vedic literature..... If his view is accepted the present basis of the predictive Hindu Astrology will have to be radically revised.

23-4-44

Bombay Chronicle, Weekly.

He has correctly found out that the word 'Lagna' there meant the constellation on the eastern horizon at the sunset. He infers that in the Vedang Jyotish also the word Lagna had the same meaning..... I believe that the author of the Vedang Jyotish wrote the line to convey the meaning given to it by Mr. Kulkarni.

25-2-45

*Keshao Laxman Daftari,*  
An Authority on Hindu Astronomy

I have been knowing Mr. B. R. Kulkarni since 1943, in which year he attended the Silver

Jubilee Celebrations of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona as a delegate of the Rajwade Sanshodhan Mandal, Dhulia. On that occasion he read a very interesting paper on the Antiquity of Karkacharya. The scientific treatment of the subject impressed me very much as it did several others who were present there at that time. There after while working for my ' Vedic Bibliography ' I came across some more contributions made by Mr. Kulkarni to the study of Indian Astronomy and Ancient Indian Chronology.

10-2-47

*R. N. Dandekar,*

Secretary, Bhandarkar O. R. Inst Poona.

We have amongst us Mr. B. R. Kulkarni who seems to be best fitted for the job in question. He has applied himself to the task with singular devotion. It is certainly creditable to him that he should help to preserve the scholarly traditions coming down from Tilak, Dixit and others. Mr. Kulkarni's work on the astronomical evidence for determining the date of Rigveda and has established his authority in this field.

23-1-53

*N. G. Chaphekar*

Scholar and Critic of repute in Maharashtra.

Asrtronomical Clues for  
Chronology in Rigveda



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