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Technical Remarks

The Avestan text is transliterated according to the now standard system introduced by Karl Hoffmann. The spelling of proper names and religious terms has been simplified, however, in the Introduction as well as in the English translation. The text is that of K. F. Geldner's edition: *Avesta, The Sacred Books of the Parsis* I-III, Tübingen 1886. Departures from this norm are indicated by a postponed small circle (°) in the case of orthographic variants and given explicitly in the foot-notes when involving morphological differences.

Abbreviations etc.

OAv. = Old Avestan
   (i.e. the language of the Yathā Ahū Vairīyo, the Ashem Vohu, the Gāthās, the Yasna Hāptanghaiti, and the A Aīryēmā Isḥīyā)
YAv. = Young Avestan (i.e. the language of the Younger Avesta)

lit. = literally
ms. = manuscript
mss. = manuscripts
var. = variant reading found in one or more manuscripts
varr. = variant readings found in the manuscripts

In the Avestan text:
[ ] square brackets denote later additions to the text
<> pointed brackets denote loss of text or elements of text

In the English translation:
( ) round brackets are used to denote additions inserted for better intelligibility.
Preface

When Gāthā scholarship began in the second half of the 19th century knowledge of the grammar of the language was still rudimentary and the translations by necessity less than adequate. At best they reflected the Sasanians’ understanding of the text as seen in the Pahlavi rendering, of uncertain date. Nevertheless, theories that were based on these early, mostly incorrect, translations remained the basis for subsequent translations of the Gāthās, thus producing a vicious circle which was broken only in the late 1950’s. But even after this time Gāthā translations have tended to cater to a public expecting traditional renderings and an easily readable text, although such translations can only be achieved by smoothing over numerous difficulties in the text or plainly disregarding the grammar.

The first to study the Gāthās applying the rigorous methods of modern philology was Helmut Humbach, *Die Gathas des Zarathustra* I-II, Heidelberg 1959, an updated English version of which is his *The Gathas of Zarathushtra* I-II, Heidelberg 1991.

While these two earlier translations to a great extent mirror the Avestan text in all its complexities, the present version is intended to be user-friendly and to be consulted by those who prefer an easier access to the Gāthās as poetry and religious document. We have tried to accomplish this without departing too much from the original text, but also without encumbering the translation with stylistic features common in Avestan but alien to English.

In this way we hope we have avoided creating misunderstandings at the same time as making the text readily available to those who wish to study it for its vocabulary and phraseology or for its message.

For scholars this new translation does not replace the two earlier editions, which should be consulted for philological details as well as for Helmut Humbach’s personal opinions regarding Zarathushtra and his Religion.

Helmut Humbach wishes to thank his old friend and colleague, Prods Oktor Skjærven (Harvard University) for taking time to read this translation, as well, and to discuss with him numerous details of it.

August, 1st, 1994

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Introduction

1. Zarathushtra

1. According to Xanthos, a Greek historian of Lydian descent who wrote in the mid-5th century B.C., Spitama Zarathushtra (Zarāšuṣṭra), the prophet of Ancient Iran, lived 600 years before Xerxes' crossing of the Hellespont (480 + 600 = 1080 B.C.). This is in approximate agreement with the linguistic evidence. The native Iranian tradition, transmitted by sources of the early Islamic period (i.e., more than one millennium later) puts him 300 years before Alexander's campaign (330 + 300 = 630 B.C.).

1.1. By Xanthos or, rather, one of his unknown sources, the name of the prophet was distorted into Zoroastro (whence Latin Zoroaster), thus wrongly linking him with the Chaldaean astrologers.

1.2. Zarathushtra mentions his own name fifteen times in his Gāthās (Gāthās), once in the first person (46,19 'for me, Zarathushtra'), once he addresses himself rhetorically (46,14 'O Zarathushtra'). He quotes the following persons among his adherents and relations, or addresses them: Kavi Vishtāspa, his princely promoter, Frashaoshtra Hvōguva and Jāmāspa Hvōguva, two noble brothers at Vishtāspa's court, Maidyoimāngha Spitama, Zarathushtra's cousin who was later said to have been his first convert, the clan of the Haēchatspa Spitamas, relatives of the prophet, Zarathushtri Spitāma, a son of the prophet whose individual name is left unmentioned, and the prophet's youngest daughter Pouruchistā Haēchatspānā Spitāmī. Honorable mention is also made of the relations and descendants of Tūra son of Friya, perhaps a member of a Turanian family.

1.3. By granting Zarathushtra shelter at his court, which was an essential prerequisite for the spreading of the Religion, Kavi Vishtāspa 'Prince Vishtāspa' stood out among the many rulers who opposed the prophet, called by him 'the (other) Kavis'. In the same context as these, the Karapans, the Usijs, and the Grehma gang are mentioned, groups of religious or political character that are otherwise not defined. Two opponents of the prophet are blamed by him individually for not having accepted him, namely Vaēpiya the Kaviyan (51,12) and Bendva (49,1) whom he ironically calls a 'great chief'.

1.4. The society described by Zarathushtra was organized in house, village, county (or: district), and land (or: country). The members of a household are a family, the inhabitants of a village are a community (or: clan), those of a county are a tribe (or: people of the county). No term for the inhabitants of a land is found. In this society the power and renown of individuals as well as of social groups could be measured in the number of sheep, oxen, horses, and camels, owned by them, as well as in the pasture area they commanded and its fertility. The food of average people was mostly barley.

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1 By a lapsus in The Gathas I, 1991, p. 26, the Greek number of years as written in the Istanbul manuscript is given as hexekonta '600' instead of hexakosia '600'.
milk, and milk products, occasionally meat. Yet many people experienced difficulties living from day to day in infertile mountains and steppes and grazing their cattle in poor soil under hard climatic conditions.

1.5. In the time of Zarathushtra the tribes were constantly engaged in warfare. The Kavis other than Kavi Vishtāspa flourished and prospered by raiding and plundering the pastoral and agricultural settlements. Their priests worshipped a pantheon of divinities called Daēvas, the ancient gods, interpreted by Zarathushtra as false gods, devils or demons. Through cruel bloody sacrifices and ritual partaking of intoxicants, preferably strong forms of the Haoma (Haoma Dūraosha), they would seek the help of the Daēvas for the success of the raids perpetrated by their worldly leaders. Against their religious views, called by him a religion of deceit (Druj), Zarathushtra set the Mazdayasnian Religion, the worship of Ahura Mazda, who represents the principle of truth (Asha/Aša), the foremost in a long series of other Ahurian principles or moral concepts (see 2.2). He rejected and condemned the Daēvas and all their adherents, who ruined existence, and he wished the aggressive chieftains of the deceitful tribes of the neighborhood to be replaced by peaceful good rulers such as truthful Kavi Vishtāspa.

2. The Mazdayasnian Religion

2.1. Zarathushtra's Religion is considered by scholars as the dualistic religion par excellence, i.e., a religion in which the evil in the world is not attributed to God's inscrutable ways, as is necessary in monotheism, but in which God's antagonists are blamed for it. As a matter of fact, the life of the world from the loss of paradise caused by Yima\(^1\) to its renovation is painted in the Zarathushrian tradition as a continuous conflict between Ahura Mazda and the Daēvas and their respective ideals, between the principle of truth (Asha/Aša) and that of deceit (Druj), between good and evil, between the truthful and the deceitful. Yet, for the following reason the dualistic interpretation must be somewhat modified: In the Gāthās Ahura Mazda is described as being at the head of a group of divine beings called Ahuras. These Ahuras evidently are the antagonists of the Daēvas, but among the latter there is no individual antagonist of Ahura Mazda, such as the Evil Spirit in the Younger Avesta (Angra Mainyu) and the Middle and New Persian literature (Ahreman). This is a very monotheistic aspect of Zarathushtra's spiritual world. The picture of the end of this material world drawn by the prophet is even purely monotheistic. By the renovation and transfiguration of the world called its 'brilliant-making', Ahura Mazda and the truthful guided by the prophet will finally succeed in eliminating evil, restoring paradise on earth, and securing Ahura Mazda's rule for ever.

2.2. The Ahuras, a group of spiritual entities, are described best as personifications of the Ahurian principles and concepts. These principles and concepts are designated by what we call Ahurian terms. Apart from truth (Asha for which see 1.5), they include holy spirit (Spenta Mainyu), good spirit (Vohu Mainyu), good thought (Vohu Manah), good power (Vohu Khshathra), power worthy of being chosen (Khshathra Vairya), right-mindedness (Armaiti), obedience/attention (Sraosha), integrity (Haurvatat) and

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\(^1\) Yima, YAv. also Yima Xšaeta, New Persian Jamshid.
immortality (Ameretat, Ameretat), but also fire (Aatar) and good reward (Vanghvi Ashi). The Ahurian principles and concepts represent cosmic powers pervading both the spiritual and the material world and manifesting themselves in both the divine and human sphere. Thus Asha does not only denote the Ahurian principle and concept ‘truth’ but also its realization as a moral quality of Ahura Mazda as well as of his truthful worshippers. It also not only denotes its personification as a divine entity but also its materialization in the good things of the world, then called ‘material truth’ (Ashtat Ashem).

2.2.1. To the Ahurian principles and concepts, the dualistic picture of the world opposes the corresponding Daevic concepts such as deceit (Druj), harmful spirit (Angra Mainyu), evil spirit (Aka Mainyu), evil thought (Aka Manah), scorn (Taromaiti), disobedience (Arsushti), and others, such as wrath (Asima).

2.2.2. The number of both the Ahurian terms and their Daevic counterparts is undefined in the Gathas. That of the Ahurian terms has been noticeably enlarged in the Yasna Haptanghaiti (3.2.2). Six of them are represented as Holy Immortals (Amersha Spentas) in the Younger Avesta, where they are the patron saints of the six working days of the first week of each month: namely, good thought (Vohu Manah), best truth (Asa Vahishta), power worthy of being chosen (Khshathra Vairiya), holy right-mindedness (Spenta Armaiti), integrity (Haurvatat), and immortality (Ameretat). The term ‘Holy Immortals’ (Amersha Spenta) is not attested in the Gathas, but the Yasna Haptanghaiti twice speaks of Spenta Ameshas with an inversion of the two elements, with which we can perhaps compare the inverted word order Mazda Ahura found beside Ahura Mazda in both the Gathas and the Yasna Haptanghaiti.

3. The Gathas and the other Old Avestan texts

3.1. Zarathushtra's Gathas (Gathas) are preserved in the Yasna, the liturgy of the Zarathushtrians. Small groups of these survive in Iran, but their best-known branch is the Parsis ("Persians") in India, particularly in Bombay, and in Pakistan. These are descendants of Iranian emigrants of the medieval period. In the past decades numerous groups of Zarathushtrians, Iranian as well as Indian and Pakistani, have established themselves in America and Europe.

3.2. The Gath collection forms the core of the Yasna liturgy which is about two fifths of what has come down to us of the Avesta, the Holy Scriptures of the Zarathushtrians. The Gathas consist of seventeen religious hymns each of them covering one chapter (Haiti) of the Yasna (Yasna 28-34, 43-51, 53).

3.2.1. Avestan, the language of the Avesta, is an Old Iranian language closely related to Old Persian known from the Achaemenid inscriptions. Avestan is attested in two dialects differing from each other both chronologically and dialectologically. Whereas most of the Avesta is in Young Avestan dialect the Gathas are composed in the archaic dialect we call Old Avestan.
3.2.2. Old Avestan is also used in the Yasna Haptanghaiti (Haptanghâiti), the ‘Yasna of Seven Chapters’, a prose text inserted in the Gathas (Yasna 35-41) and attributed by most scholars to early successors of the prophet.

3.2.3. Old Avestan features are also found in what the Zarathushtrians call their four Most Holy Prayers, namely the triad which precedes the Gathas: the Yathâ Ahû Vairiyô (Ya9â Ahû Vairirîo, Yasna 27,13), the Ashem Vohû (Ašâm Vohû, Yasna 27,14), and the Yenghê Hâtâm (Yejhê Hâtâm, Yasna 27,15), and the A Airyemâ Ishiyô (Â Airiûmâ Išiô, Yasna 54,1), which concludes them. Among these the A Airyemâ Ishiyô is the only prayer in the strict sense of the word; the other three are better characterized as mantras (Middle Persian nirang, cf. Sanskrit mantra), that is, powerful meditational texts and truth-spells.

3.2.4. Among these four prayers or mantras, the Yathâ Ahû Vairiyô, the Ashem Vohû, and the A Airyemâ Ishiyô are in pure Old Avestan dialect. Thus there is no reason for questioning Zarathushtra’s authorship of them. As a matter of fact it is hardly thinkable that the founder of a religion left his adherents without any mantras or prayers. Only the authorship of the Yenghê Hâtâm is somewhat doubtful. The only Old Avestan characteristic found here is the lengthening of the final vowels of the single words whereas the words themselves appear in a typically Young Avestan form. Thus yenghê (yejhe), the first word of the Yenghê Hâtâm (Yejhe Hâtam), is most instructive. It equals Young Avestan yejhe, but contrasts with its correct Old Avestan equivalent yejiia. From this it is evident that our Yenghê Hâtâm, in spite of the Old Avestan appearance of its word endings, must have had a Young Avestan original. On the other hand, the name of God is given there not in its Young Avestan form Ahura Mazda but with the Gāthic word order Mazda Ahura. Thus one is entitled to conclude that the dialectal inconsistencies of the language of the Yenghê Hâtâm do not necessarily prove a post-Gāthic origin of the stanza. Instead they may be due to a complicated textual history.

3.3. The term Gathâ is often used to designate each of the seventeen hymns which form the seventeen Hâtis or chapters of the Gâthâ collection, and this use has even found its way into numerous scholarly publications. However, in scholarly usage the term Gathâ should be used exclusively to denote one of the five groups in which the seventeen hymns are arranged according to their respective meters:

1. Ahunavaiti Gathâ (Ahunaua’aiti Gâ9a), seven hymns (Yasna 28-34). Stanzas of three lines of regularly 7+9 or 7+8 syllables each.

2. Ushtavaiti Gathâ (Uśṭaua’aiti Gâ9a), four hymns (Yasna 43-46). Stanzas of five lines of regularly 4+7 syllables each.

3. Spentâmâiniyu Gathâ (Spentâmâiniû Gâ9a), four hymns (Yasna 47-50). Stanzas of four lines of regularly 4+7 syllables each.

4. Vohukhshathra Gathâ (Vohuxša’râ Gâ9a), one hymn only (Yasna 51). Stanzas of three lines of regularly 7+7 syllables each.

5. Vahishtoīsthâ Gathâ (Vahištōištî Gâ9a), one hymn only (Yasna 53). Stanzas of four lines (but 53,6 five lines) of undefined number each.
4. The authenticity of the transmitted text

4.1. The text of the Avesta is transmitted in an alphabetical script including vowels which was created in Sasanian times with the purpose of exactly rendering and preserving the phonetic peculiarities of the pronunciation of the oral tradition as codified by the Sasanian redaction of the Avesta. Yet, linguistic considerations suggest that, particularly with regard to the vowels, the Sasanian way of recitation did no longer agree in all details with Zarathushtra's pronunciation. Numerous dissyllabic vowels or diphthongs had been reduced to monosyllabic value, and numerous redundant vowels had been developed. Thus dayana/dai mana 'religious view, religion' had been reduced to daēna, and shyaothana/shiiaō na 'action, act, deed' had been extended to shyaothana/shiiaō na (a development which has continued to modern times where, e.g., the ritual pronunciation of the noun khshaθhra/xšaθra 'power', though preserved correctly in its written form, has developed into khashathra). Such phonetic change took place unconsciously, adapting itself to the phonetic peculiarities of the respective contemporary language. It did not, however, affect the substance of the text, although it must be taken into account for a correct evaluation of the number of syllables in a Gāthic line.

4.2. According to a syntactic rule largely observed in the archaic language of the Gāthās, verbal prefixes can stand separated from their verb, e.g., in Y 50,9 paiti ... aieni 'I shall approach again' (instead of connected paiti.aieni or paitiiaieni). In a number of cases the separated prefix has been repeated immediately before the verb so that the text has the separated as well as the connected preverb, e.g., in Y 48,7 paiti ... paiti.sioθdūm 'strike (your axe)'. In such cases the repeated prefix is metrically redundant, a fact which proves that the repetition does not belong to the original text but must have been inserted by the Sasanian, or perhaps by an earlier redaction, in order to make the text easier to understand. To restore Zarathushtra's original the repeated preverb evidently must be suppressed. In this edition it is placed in square brackets, writing paiti ... [paiti.]sioθdūm. This insertion, as well, did not affect the substance of the text.

4.3. The metrical regularity of by far most of the Gāthic lines has led the majority of Gāthic scholars to "correct" the transmitted text of all, many, or parts of Gāthic lines that are metrically irregular, having one syllable too much or too less. The most common example of this procedure is Y 28,6c yā daibisuuato duuaēsā taunuuiāama 'whereby we may overcome the hostilities of the enemy'. The number of syllables of the line exceeds the norm, having 10 instead of regularly 8/9 syllables. There is therefore among scholars a strong presumption that the text is corrupt. To "correct" it some delete duuaēsā, obtaining 8 syllables, others obtain 9 syllables by replacing taunuuiāmā with taunuumā otherwise not attested in Avestan. Neither of the two solutions is acceptable. It is much more likely that the text is correctly transmitted and that Zarathushtra used, without regard for the number of syllables, a set phrase which exceeded the bounds of the meter.
5. Notes on the poetry of the Gāthās

5.1. From the translations presented here it will be seen — and it may come as a surprise to some — that some of the concepts attributed to Zarathushtra by modern scholarship such as the “myth of the two spirits” actually are not found in the Gāthās. The two passages in question (30,3-4, 45,2) in fact describe the choices that have to be made by any person at any time. Of special interest is the exact interpretation in which integrity (Haurvatát/Haunuatát) and immortality (Ameretatát/Amaratát) are depicted as sacrificial offerings (33,8,12, 34,1,11, 44,19, 45,10, 47,1). On the one hand this usage goes back to the Indo-European and Indo-Iranian times (cf. Greek Ambrosia and Sanskrit Amrīta, both of which have the double meaning ‘immortality’ and ‘elixir of life as enjoyed by the gods for food’). On the other hand it continues in the Younger Avesta where the two words denote the liquid and vegetable parts of the oblation. As for the Gāthic use we just must leave open the question which kind of offerings are referred to by Zarathushtra.

5.2. It should also be stressed that the Gāthās are not a religious handbook with carefully co-ordinated paragraphs. Thus in 30,6 the Daēvas are said to be used to choosing the worst thought and wrath of the deceitful, whereas in 32,1 they are depicted as being out to take possession of the pious gifts offered to Ahura Mazda by the truthful. There is also an apparent contradiction between the translation of 31,1 given here where Zarathushtra proclaims unheard words to the deceitful, and 31,18 where he expresses the wish that no adherent of the deceitful one should be allowed to listen to Ahura Mazda’s mantras and teachings. Yet in this case at least we can see that the apparent contradiction is not necessarily an actual one. The prophet doubtlessly distinguishes between adherents of the alien faith who can and cannot be taught the new faith. The problem lies with the poetic style, which allows him to vaguely allude to or even completely omit the details we would regard as the most relevant.

5.3. Although the Gāthās are poetical texts of visionary character they are composed according to rules of a poetical technique which were in vogue at the prophet’s time. Modern readers are unaccustomed to this technique, and they must train themselves to understand it. In a number of passages, Zarathushtra’s intoning a song of praise is compared with somebody yoking a team of horses (28,10, 30,10, 50,6-7). Other similes derive from the world of ideas of the cattle-breeders. Thus the ‘bulls of the days’ mentioned in 46,3 stand metaphorically for the first rays of the rosy dawn, announcing the rosy dawn itself which is implicitly compared with a herd of cows. On the other hand the bulls of the days announcing the morning are parallel with the ‘intellects of the strengtheners’ or ‘intellects of the Saoshyants’, i.e., with the wise decisions of the promoters and sponsors of the Religion, who are expected to play a decisive part in the ‘brilliant-making’, that is, the renovation and transfiguration of the world.
The Gathas of Zarathushtra

The Holy Prayers of the Zarathushtrians

and

The Yasna Haptanghaiti

Text and Translation
Yasna 27,13-15. Introductory Prayers

27,13. Yaša Ahū Vairīö

Yaša ahū vairīö  aša ratuš ašačiḥ hacā
vanhōuš dazdā manahūḥ  šiaosanaŋam¹ anhōuš mazdāi
xšaŋme caha urāi.ā  yim drigibbiō dado vāstārem

¹ Geldner šiaosanaŋam as usual in the manuscript transmission of the Gathās.
27.13. Yatha Ahu Vairiyô

Since He is (the One) to be chosen by the world therefore the judgment emanating from truth itself (to be passed) on the deeds of good thought of the world, as well as the power, is committed to Mazda Ahura whom (people) assign as a shepherd to the poor.¹

¹More literally: ‘Since/as He is to be chosen by the world therefore/so the judgment emanating from truth itself (to be passed) on the deeds of good thought of the world is committed to Mazda (Ahura), and the power (is committed) to (Mazda) Ahura…” Note the repetitions ‘world… world’ and ‘commit… assign’ (lit. ‘give… give’). With its artistic syntax the Yatha Ahu Vairiyô offers a summary of the Zarathushtrian Religion in three lines. The traditional translation of its first line by ‘as He is the Lord so He is the judge’ is attested as early as in the Younger Avesta (cf. particularly Y 19.12). Yet it is untenable for both grammatical and syntactical reasons. A more reliable picture results from comparison with Yasht 19.12.90. There the phrase aða rətuš ‘such/so (is) the judgment’ refers to eschatological events which suggests that the Yatha Ahu Vairiyô has an eschatological reference as well.
27.14. Ašəm Vohu

Ašəm vohu vahištəm asti
uštə asti uštə ahmāi
hiaŋ ašai vahištái ašəm

27.15. Yešhe Hatam

Yešhe hatam ah aš yešne paiti vanhoh\(^1\)
mazdā ahurō vaesdā\(^2\) ašat hacā yəŋhəmcə
tascā tascā yazamaitē

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\(^{1}\) The Vulgata reading vanhoh (instead of expected vaŋho) is also found in Visered 16.3 yaeštəm no ahurō mazdā ašaua yešne paiti vanhoh vaesdā. The Visered passage is modelled after the Yeŋhe Hatam, but the Young Avestan dialect form vaesdā is replaced there by the standard form vaesdā as well as the archaic word order mazdā ahurō is replaced by the Young Avestan standard ahurō mazdā.
27,14. Ashem Vohu

Truth is best (of all that is) good.
As desired, what is being desired
is truth for Him/him who (represents) best truth.

or:

Truth is best (of all that is) good.
As desired, as desired, truth
is for Him/him who (represents) best truth.¹

Yasna 27,15. Yenghe Hatam

In accordance with truth Mazda Ahura knows the man among the existing,
as well as the women, whose better (attitude is seen) at worship.²
Those men and women³ we worship.

¹The Ashem Vohu consists of three lines of four words each. Note the repetitions ‘truth ... truth ... truth’, ‘good ... best ... best’, ‘desired ... desired’. The first of the two Ushtha’s doubtlessly means ‘as desired’, but the second is ambiguous as it can mean ‘as desired’ as well as ‘what is being desired’ (cf. 43,1). Thus at least two different renderings of the Ashem Vohu are possible. Zarathushtra may even have intended the ambiguities to provide a basis for the pious to meditate on the message of the stanza.
²lit.: ‘In accordance with truth Mazda Ahura knows the better (attitude) of which male one among the existing, and of which female ones, (has been seen) at worship.’
³‘those men and women’, lit. ‘those male ones and those female ones’. The text recalls 51,22, but it is not clear whether its third line refers to the Ahuras (Ameša Spentas), or to human beings, or to both.
Yasna 28-34. Ahunauaiti Gārā

[Yānīm manō yānīm vacō yānīm šīaoŋnam ašaŋō zaraŋuṣtrahe]\(^1\)
[Ferā aṅīqā spōntā gārā gōunuāin]

[Nāmō vē gārā ašaoniš]\(^2\)

Yasna 28. Ahiśā Hāiti

28.1. Ahiśā yāsā namāŋhā ustānāzastō rafoṅhiiā
mainiisus* mazdā pouruuim spāntahiiā aša vispaŋ šīaoŋanā
vajhauš xaṭum manāŋhō yā xñauuišā gaušcā uruuānam

28.2. yō vē mazdā ahurā payījasāi vohu manāŋhā
maibiioi dāuooi ahuuā astuuatascā hiaiṭcā manāŋhō
aiiapta ašā hacā yaiš raṇpton* daidi x’āstē

28.3. yō vē aša uhiāni manascā vohu apaουnuuim
mazdāmca ahurām yaebīiō xšaŋomcā ayzo.nuuumn*$
vardaiti ārmaitiś a mōi rafoṅra tahuasān jasāt

28.4. yō uruuānam māŋp* gaiṇē vohu dādē haṇṭra manāŋhā
ašiča šīaoŋnanām viduś mazdā ahurahiiā
yauuāt isāi tauuācā auuāt xśāi aēše ašahiā

28.5. aša kaṭ ɔ̄ba darasāni manascā vohu vaedamnō
gatūmcā ahurāi sāuuištā* saraosām mazdāi
anā madrā mazištām vauoimaidi xaʃtra hizuuā

28.6. vohu gaidi manaŋhā daidi ašā dā daraŋtiiū
araʃuuiš tī uʃdiš mazdā zaraŋuʃtraī aoʃŋhuuaat*$ rafoṅ
ahmaibiicā ahurā yā daibĩuuaatō duuaešā tahuuiāiāmā

28.7. daidi ašā tām ašim vajhauš aiapta manāŋhō
daidi tū āmaitem vištaspāi iḥam maibiicā
dāstu mazdā xšaiicā yā vē madrā sruuiim*$ rādā\(^4\)

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\(^1\) The first of these three lines has been inserted in the Young Avestan period.

\(^2\) The second and third lines are in Old Avestan dialect but they are of post-Zarathushtrian origin.

\(^3\) māŋ gairē instead of mōng gairē, owing to erroneous segmentation of spoken text.

\(^4\) sruuiimā rādā, Geldner sruuimā rādā.
Yasna 28-34. Ahunavaiti Gāthā

[Of truthful Zarathushtra the thoughts, words, and actions are entreating.]
[May the Holy Immortals accept the Gāthās.]

[Reverence to you, O truthful Gāthās.]

Yasna 28. Ahiyāsā Hāiti

28,1. In reverence for him, with hands out-stretched at first I entreat (you) all, O Mazda, for the actions of support of the spirit holy through truth, through whom you may gratify the intellect of good thought and the soul of the cow.

28,2. I approach you with good thought, O Mazda Ahura, so that you may grant me (the blessings) of the two existences, the material and that of thought, the blessings emanating from truth, with which one can put (your) supporters in comfort.

28,3. I extol you as never before, O truth, and good thought and Mazda Ahura, for (all of) whom right-mindedness increases also unfading power. May you come to my calls for support.

28,4. Inspired by good thought and being a witness for Mazda Ahura, I have in mind (one’s) soul for (his commendation by my) song, as well as the rewards for (his) actions. For as long as I can and am able I shall look out in (my) search for truth.

28,5. O truth, shall I see you, I who possess good thought as well as obedience to be a throne for Him, the very strong Mazda Ahura? O you beasts, through this manthra, (spoken) by (my) tongue, we would win (Him), the Greatest one.

28,6. Come with good thought. With truth grant (us) a long-lasting gift through your exalted utterances, O Mazda Ahura. (Grant it) as strong support to Zarathushtra and to us all so that thereby we may overcome the hostilities of (your) enemy.

28,7. Grant us that reward, O truth, the blessings of good thought. Grant, O right-mindedness, vigor to Vishtāspa and me. Grant (these things), O Mazda, and rule with a manthra through which we can learn of your bounties.

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1 'intellect of good thought’ instead of ‘men (and women) possessing the intellect of good thought’.
2 The beasts (or: noxious animals) include the Daēvas and the (evil) mortals, cf. 34,5. They are addressed here in order to discourage and chase them away from the ritual so as not to spoil it.
28,8. vahīstām stateProvider vahīstā  yām aśā vahīstā hazaōsam
ahūram yāsā vāunuś  narōi faraśaostrāi maibiiacā
yaēbiiascā it rā́jhaŋhōi  vīspāi yauuē vauhous manan̄hō

28,9. anāiś vā noīṭ ahūra  mazdā aśomcā yānāiś zaranaēmā
manascā hiaṭ vahīstām  yōi vō yōiṣamā dasōmē stūtām
yuṭām zau̲ištīā́n̄hō  iśo xṣaṭomcā sauuaŋham

28,10. at yōṅg aśāatcā voīstā  vanhauuścā daṅg manan̄hō
aṇañg mazdā ahūra  aēbiiō pōēnā āpanāiś kāmām
aṭ vō xṣmaibīiā aśunā  vaēdā x'araīiāia vāinīiā saua̲ā

28,11. yō aśam nipāĳheº  manascā vohu yauuaētāiē
tuom mazdā ahūra  frō mā sīśā istique vaoaĳheº
mainiioušº haca stateProvider saṉha  yāiś a anhuuś pouruiō bauuaṭ¹

End of Yasna 28

¹ bauuaṭ perhaps slightly incorrect for buuaṭ.
28.8. I lovingly ask you, O Best one, the Ahura who is in harmony with best truth, for that which is best for gentle Frashaostrha, and for me, and for all those on whom you will bestow it with good thought for all time.

28.9. With these entreaties, O Mazda Ahura, may we not anger you, nor truth or best thought, we who are standing at the offering of praises to you. You are the swiftest (bringers of) invigorations, and (you hold) the power over the benefits.

28.10. Fulfill with gains the desire of those whom you know to be just and meticulous through truth and good thought, O Mazda Ahura. For (all of) you, O Rich ones, I know loving eulogies conducted by a good charioteer.¹

28.11. Through these you store for yourself truth and good thought for eternity, O Mazda Ahura. So teach me with your mouth, in accordance with your spirit, how to pronounce these (eulogies) by which the first existence comes into being.²

End of Yasna 28

¹ 'conducted by a good charioteer': The eulogies are compared with a team competing at a horse-race (cf. 30.10, 50.6-7; Introd. 5.3). Thus 'good charioteer' is the well-trained tongue of the singer.
² 'the first existence comes into being', or: 'came into being', or: 'will come into being'? Instead of 'first existence' perhaps better 'foremost existence'. At any rate, in the Gathas 'first' when used in connection with 'existence' has a wide spectrum of meanings.
Yasna 29. Xšmauuóia.gau.uruva. Háiti

29.1. Xšmaibiía gau.uruva garozdā kahmāi mā Əbarozdūm kā mā tašāt
ā mā aeshānō hazasca řamō [a]hišāiia darasca tauuišcā
nōiš mōi vāstā xšmāt aniiō ašā mōi sāstā vohū vāstrīa

29.2. āda tašā gau. parosat ašem kātha tōi gauuōi rauš
hiat hīm āda tātā xšāiaihtō hadā vāstrā gaudāiio Əbaxšō
kōm hōi ušā ahuūm yā dra guuō.dabiō aeshām vādāiioiit

29.3. ahuūa ašā nōiš saraia ahuua ānī maa hauuōi paiit.maauiat
auauašem nōiš viduiiē yā šauuaite 1 adrōng schuuaŋhō
hātām huuō aojišō yahmaia zauuaŋj jīma karaado

29.4. mazdā saxārō mairištō yā zī vauuaŋzo paii ciitē
daauuaishcā mašjišišcā yācā varašaite aipi ciitē
huuō viciro ahurō ašā nā aŋhāt yaa huuō vasaŋ

29.5. aŋ vā ustanaiš ahuua zastaiš śrimanā ahuru.iā
mā uruua gauṣcā ațīa hīiaht mazḍum duaići farasābiō 2
nōiš arojaioi frijaiaiš nōiš ēsiieite dra guuuasū paii

29.6. aŋ chō vaooa ahurō mazdā viduuā vauś vijanaiiā
nōiš aeuua ahū vistō nācā rauš ašācīt hacā
aŋ zī Əbā fsoiiaiæce vāstiriačia Əboraštā tašāa

29.7. tēm ašūoiš ahurō māθom tāšā ašā havaašō
mazdā gauuōi vauuaðamī huuō uruauibiiō spaŋtō sasnaiiā
kastē vohū manaŋhā yō i dāiiaŋ aauua mara taebiiō

29.8. aem mōi idā vistō yō nā aeuuō sasna ēsātā
zarašīstrō spītanō huuō nā mazdā vāsti ašācā
caroaŋdrā saroauijejhe hīiaht hōi hudomām diiāi vaxaiahia

29.9. ațcā gauũ uruva raostā yō anašem xšanmānē radmī
vācām naraš asū rahiai yōm a vasāni išā.xšahrīm
kādā yauuē huuō aŋhaŋ yō hōi dāaŋ zaatuuat aauuō

1 Šauuaitē, mss. šauuaitē and šauuaitē.
2 Farasābiō, Geldner farasābiō.
Yasna 29. Khshnavoiiia-geush-urvä Hañiti

29,1. The soul of the cow\(^1\) complains to you: “For whom did you shape me? Who fashioned me? Wrath and oppression, fury, spite, and violence hold me fettered. I have no shepherd other than you. Thus reveal yourselves to me with good pastoral work.”

29,2. Thereupon the fashioner of the cow asks truth: “Of what kind is your judgment for the cow? As you, O Ruling ones, have ordered zealous cattle-breeding together with forage, whom do you wish to be her master who may crush the wrath of the deceitful?”

29,3. But no deliverer will answer (the fashioner) through truth in a way helpful to the cow. No one knows how to set the weak free. He is the strongest among the existing, (the Ahura), whom I wish to reach with (the plaintiff) who has called (for help).\(^{2}\)

29,4. May Mazdâ who precisely remembers acts of brutality take note here and now those which have been perpetrated by Däväs and (evil) mortals, and may he hereafter take note of those which will be perpetrated by them in future. He is the Ahura with judicial authority. As He desires, so it shall be for us.

29,5. Therefore we two, my soul and that of the fertile cow,\(^3\) are devoting ourselves mindfully and with hands out-stretched to Mazdâ Ahura, choosing Him to give (us) orders. There is no hope for the cattle-breeder living correctly among the deceitful.

29,6. Mazdâ Ahura, knowing the pronouncements through His vitality, says (to the cow): “No judgment emanating from truth itself has been found by the world. For the shaper has fashioned you for the cattle-breeding herdsman.”

29,7. In harmony with truth, Mazdâ Ahura, by His teaching beneficial to the emaciated, fashioned for the cow both the manthra of nourishment and the milk. Who may be able through good thought to send these things down to the mortals?

29,8. Here, I have found Zarathushtra Spitama, the only one who listens to our teachings: He wishes to sing hymns of praise for us, O Mazdâ, and for truth, to let me enjoy the beauty of his speech.

29,9. But the soul of the cow laments: “Must I be content with a vigorless caretaker, with the voice of a weak man while I wish him to be in possession of vigorous power? When will that person ever come who can offer him help with (his own) hand?”

\(^1\) "soul of the cow" is a mystical concept. It encompasses the soul of the primeval animal as well as that of the whole species and that of any living member of that species. In the present context it particularly refers to the soul of the animal that the deceitful have taken hold of in order to kill it cruelly for sacrificial purposes.

\(^2\) "whom I wish to reach..." is uncertain. It seems that it is the soul of the cow which calls for help.

\(^3\) "my soul and that of the ... cow" is virtually the same as ‘I, Zarathushtra, and the ... cow’, cf. 50,1.
29,10. یوژام ائیبیو اهورا ً اگد داتا اشا یشام ساکا 
اعواط ووکو ماناجنا ً یا هوائیس رامانما دات 
ازیمیت اهییا مازدا ً گختم ماپهی پاورویم وایعدم 

29,11. کودا اشام ووکا ً مانو یشام ساکا ات ماما لما 
یوژام مازدا یفرخسنی ً مازوی ماغیا اپائیزائت 
اهورا نی نا اعقارو ً یوهم راپیس یوومناتما 

End of Yasna 29
29,10. Grant to those (present), O Mazda Ahura, strength through truth and through good thought that power by which one may establish good dwellings and peace. Indeed I realize, that you are the first provider of these things.

29,11. Where are truth, good thought and power? Recognize me, (the cow), through (the mediation of) mortal (Zarathushtra), with foresight for the great offering. O Mazda Ahura, come down to us now, on account of our gift to those such as you.

End of Yasna 29
Yasna 30. Aţ.tă.vaxşiiă Haiti

30,1. Aţ tă vaxşiiă išəntə ya mazdăša hiiatçit viduše staoṭacă ahurāi yeshniāca vāŋhuš mananţhō humazdrā aša, yeça① ya raocēbiš darasatā uruauza

30,2. sraotā gauš.aiš* vahištā auuaenatā sūcā mananţhā auuaenā vicišahiś narəm narəm x'axiiāi tanuīiē parā mazō yāŋhō ahmaīī na sazdiāi baodantō* paiti

30,3. aţ tă mainiiū pourniiē ya yōmā x'afanā asnuātam manahica vacahica śiiāošanōi hi vahiiō akumcā aścā hudāŋhō eņš višiātā noiš duždāngō

30,4. aţca hiiat tă hōm mainiiū jasaētām paounuim dacă gaemcā ajjīatimcā hiiatcā anhaṭ apūmam anhuš acištō drāguuataṃ aţ ašāunē vahīstōm manō

30,5. aiiā mainiuuā* varatā ya drōguā aciştā voraziiō așam mainniuś spōništō ya xraoždiştāng asānō vastē yaecā xśnaošan ahūrōm haiṭiiaś śiiāošanāiś fraorāt mazdām

30,6. aiiā noiš eņš višiātā daėuuacina hiiat iš a dēbaomā parasōmnāng* upa, jasaṭ hiiat vahinnatā aciştom manō aţ așaomam haṇduuñatā ya baṇaiian ahūm maratānō

30,7. ahmaicā xšārā jasaṭ mananţhā vohū așaća aţ koŋpōm utaiuītiś* dađāt armaitiš ānanā aēšam tōi a anhaṭ yaşa aiiianţhā ādaṇaš pourniiō

30,8. aţca yada aēšam kaënā jaiamī aēnaŋham aţ mazdā taibiiō xšārōm vohū mananţhā voi.vidaīti③ aēbijīō sastē ahurā voi aśai dadan zastaiō druṣām

30,9. aţca tōi vaem xiiāmā voi im farašḥm korānān④ ahūm mazdāscā ahurāŋhō a.mōiastā bāranā așaća hiiat haŋrā manā bauiuā⑤ yaŋrā ciśti anhaṭ maŋhā

①aša, yeça for ašaia-ća from ašaia-ća, or blunder for aša yeça?
②parasōmnāng, Geldner parasmanāng.
③voi.vidaīti, Geldner voiuiuđīti; varr. voi.vidaite, voi.vidaite, voi.vidaite.
④korānān, Geldner korānān.
⑤bauiuā, var. buuiuā.
30.1. O approaching ones, I shall now proclaim praises for the Ahura and worships of good thought, worthy of being noted even by Him who (already) knows them, O attentive ones, and for truth (I shall proclaim) the joy which is visible through the lights.

30.2. Hear the best with your ears. Through the radiance (of the fire) contemplate with your thought the preferences of decisions, contempt each man individually, before the great sharing, in anticipation of having it proclaimed to us.

30.3. These are the two spirits (existing) in the beginning, twins who have been heard of as the two dreams, the two thoughts, the two words, and the two actions, the better and the evil. Between these two, the munificent discriminate rightly but not those who give bad gifts.

30.4. When these two spirits confront each other (to fight for a person, then that person) determines (his) first (existence), (with) vitality or lack of vitality, and how his existence will be in the end. (The existence) of the deceitful will be very bad, but best thought will be (in store) for the truthful one.

30.5. Of these two spirits the deceitful one chooses to do the worst things, but the most holy spirit, clothed in the hardest stones, (chooses) truth, (as do those) who, with true actions, devotedly gratify Mazdâ Ahura.

30.6. The Daêvas do not at all rightly discriminate between these two spirits, for as they take counsel with each other delusion comes over them, so that they choose the worst thought. In that way they all run to meet wrath, by which the mortals sicken existence.

30.7. And to this one He comes with power, good thought, and truth. Thus stability (grants) bodily form, and right-mindedness grants breath, and so by fettering the (Daêvas) in iron, (existence) will be your first one, O Ahura.

30.8. And so, when the (day of) payment for the crimes of these comes, (then) the power will be committed to you with good thought, O Mazdâ Ahura, to command those who will deliver deceit into the hands of truth.

30.9. Thus may we be those who make existence brilliant, O Mazdâ and you (other) Ahuras, with the bringing of changes, and with truth, while (our) thoughts are concentrated on the place where insight wavers.

1 'preferences of decisions', or perhaps: 'invitations resulting from discernment' (cf. 45.1.8).
2 Everybody who wants to participate in the worship of Ahura Mazda has to undergo a test to determine whether he/she can be accepted.
3 The two spirits fight with each other for each single person in order to win him or her over to their respective sides.
4 'where insight wavers': uncertain.