

## THE NOTION OF DUALISM

Professor Dr. Jamshid Chokesy

Dualism, or the doctrine that existence is under the domain of two antithetical principles, has frequently been proposed as present in the Zoroastrian religion.<sup>i</sup> Often this determination has been applied rigidly to the faith's entire history, with forces designated as good and evil said to operate on both spiritual and corporeal levels. Little consideration has been given to deliberate theological elaboration on the nature of these two forces.<sup>ii</sup> Dualism, in one form or the other, indeed may have been present in Zoroastrianism during most time periods. In one document, written in the Middle Persian or Pahlavi language during the ninth century AD, a Zoroastrian theologian named Mardanfarrokh I Ohrmazddadan expounded: " It is explicitly revealed that there are two original principles, no others. Furthermore, good (Pazand: nyak Pahlavi: nek) cannot arise from evil (Pazand: vad Pahlavi: wad), nor evil from good. Thus, it should be understood that something completely perfect in terms of goodness (Pazand: neki Pahlavi: nekih) cannot produce evil (Pazand: vadi Pahlavi: wadih). If it could [produce evil] then it is not perfect, because when something is defined as perfect there is no place [in it] for anything else. When there is no place for anything else, nothing else can arise from it. Since God is perfect in terms of goodness (Pazand: vahi Pahlavi: wehah) and wisdom (Pazand: danai Pahlavi: danagih), evil (Pazand: vatar Pahlavi: wadar) and ignorance (Pazand: adani Pahlavi: adanih) cannot arise from God. If it were possible [for evil to arise from God] then God would not be perfect, and if God were not perfect and good it would not be possible to praise him as the righteous creator. " This passage, cited from latter Pazand rendering of the Pahlavi Shkand Gumanig Wizar or Doubt Dispelling Exposition (8:101-110), had been composed at the time when Zoroastrians were under political and socioreligious pressure from Muslims to adopt Islam. In that situation, such words were intended to bolster the faith of Zoroastrians living under Islamic rule by calling attention to one aspect then fundamental to Iranian religion: cosmic dualism. Mardanfarrokh did so by contrasting the dualistic worship of Ahura Mazda (ormazd) the creator God and condemnation of Angra Mainyu (Ahreman) the destructive devil to the monotheistic veneration of Allah who, according to Islamic belief, is the ultimate source of all things good and evil.

The theme upon which Mardanfarrokh I Ohrmazddadan drew was not a new one. It had become, in many respect, the central tenet of Zoroastrianism -- namely, an all-encompassing struggle between good and evil symbolized by Ahura Mazda against Angra Mainyu, truth opposed to lies, wisdom casting light upon ignorance, life holding death at bay. Humans too were drawn into this grandiose struggle by dogma claiming all people are born to combat evil (also known as the lie). A passage in the Bundahishn or book of Primal Creation (3:23-24), a Pahlavi text whose present version dates from the eleventh century AD, recounts an archaic covenant established when: "Ahura Mazda deliberated with humanity's consciousness' and immortal soul, and having granted omniscience to all humanity inquired, 'Should I create you in corporal form to battle the lie (Pahlavi: druz Old Persian drauga, Avesta: drug), vanquish it, and then be resurrected perfect and immortal, ... or must you always be safeguarded from the adversary (Pahlavi: ebgat Avesta: aibigati). Which option appears more advantageous to you?" It is written that: "The immortal souls of humanity knew, through omniscience, of Angra Mainyu's evil afflicting the material world and of the adversary's eventual defeat. So they agreed to enter the material world." The notion of an absolute cosmic or universal dualism where God and devotees constantly contest the devil and his evil eventually found representation in many forms of Zoroastrian life -- from politics to art and literature.<sup>iii</sup> The Bundahishn, like the Shkand Gumanig Wizar, echoes views and attributes of Mazda worshippers living during the Middle Ages, a period roughly spanning the sixth to the sixteenth centuries A.D. Yet, the question arises whether the Zoroastrian notion of dualism had always been so stark, in contrasting good combating evil throughout the universe, or if its extremism developed gradually by spreading from an ethical dimension of faith, into the daily activities of Zoroastrians.<sup>iv</sup>

## ZARATHUSHTRA'S CONCEPT

The prophet Zarathushtra is now believed to have lived sometime between the fifteenth to the twelfth century BC, among Iranian tribes-folk dwelling northwest of the Sry Darya or Oxus River in Central Asia. It is likely, based on references found in his Hymns or Gathas (33.6 for instance) that the prophet originally belonged to a priestly sect called the Zaotars or libation offerers who served the ancient Iranians.<sup>v</sup> Zarathushtra would, therefore, have been intimately familiar with the pantheons, pandemoniums, prayers, rituals, and myths of the people to whom he eventually preached his own tenets. Older sections of the

Yashts of Prayers to other divine beings suggest Ahura Mazda might not have been as important to those pre-Zoroastrian ancient Iranians as was the deity Mitra, and Angra Mainyu possibly unknown altogether. On the other hand, the concept of asha, symbolizing truth and righteousness, and its opposite drug, representing falsehood and sinfulness were present in that early religious system. Zarathushtra elevated Ahura Mazda, the lord of Wisdom to the position of the only God, associating this deity with asha so that Ahura Mazda could emerge as a creator of virtuous things. As the fount of truth, Ahura Mazda's basic nature or hypostasis would then be represented in the prophet's hymns by the term Spenta Mainyu or the Holy Spirit. Likewise, through association with drug, the locus of inquiry came to be known as Angra Mainyu or the hostile spirit.<sup>vi</sup>

At first glance it might appear that the prophet Zarathushtra, by pairing asha with Ahura Mazda or Spenta Mainyu and drug with Angra Mainyu, had set up an absolute dualism between good and evil. While a form of dualism between good and evil, righteousness and falsehood, truth and lies seems to have been important in Zarathushtra's worldview and is echoed throughout his teachings, does it mean that he bifurcated the world into all things holy and hostile? Or was each entity, and the cause it championed, presented as an alternative selection -- an ethical dualism rather than a cosmic one.<sup>vii</sup>

It is important to recall that, according to the Gathas, Spenta Mainyu chose Asha, Angra Mainyu chose drug, and so too could every other sentient being follow one or the other principle. Thus Zarathushtra was recorded as having told his followers in the Avestan language: " these two spirits, who are original twins, revealed their distinction in a vision. They are the better one and the worse one in thought, word, and deed. The wise chose rightly between them, not so the ignorant. When these two spirits came together, in the beginning, they created existence and nonexistence so that in the end those who follow falsehood will gain the worst existence while those who follow righteousness will gain the best mind. Of these two spirits, the hostile one chose the doing of the worst things. The holiest spirit, covered in the hardest stone, chose righteousness, as do those who satisfy Ahura Mazda through good deeds. Some of the divinities did not choose rightly between these two spirits. Ignorance beset them as they pondered, so they chose the worst thought. Consequently, they sided with wrath thereby afflicting human life" (Gathas 30:3-6). Hence, each person and supernatural being (they

called daeva, a term which in its latter Pahlavi form dew or demon would reflect the choice for the worse made by some of those divinities) was believed to adopt either good or evil through an active choice. In addition to the issue of selecting between the two possible courses of action, the relationship between Ahura Mazda (or spenta Mainyu) and Angra Mainyu had been presented linguistically in comparative rather than in absolute terms "the better one and the worse one" (Avesta: vahyo akemca, in Gatha 30:3.2).<sup>viii</sup>

Undoubtedly Zarathushtra's words were recited for centuries, being orally transmitted from one generation to another with certain changes over time, before being written down. Possible variations from his original teachings notwithstanding, the comparative terminology would be preserved long after its doctrinal implications had been reinterpreted by his followers. Those Zoroastrians, probably priests and theologians, who compiled the Zand or exegetical commentary on the Yasna rendered the Avesta word vahyo akemca (Gatha 30:3.2) into Pahlavi twice as 'the better [or the good] one and the worse one' (Pahlavi: ke weh ud ke-iz wattar; ek ani weh ... ud ek an I wattar) (Bodleian Library, MS J2 folio 186v, p 373). Repeated recopying over the years did not completely eliminate the Avesta and Pahlavi phrases' original usage. Eventually, an hirbod (Gujarati: ervad) named Mihrban Kaykhosro duplicated them in AD 1323 when producing the oldest surviving text of the Avesta and Zand. This tradition of interpreting Avesta phrases in a comparative sense suggests that in Iran, unlike in India where on occasion similar terminology would be used in Vedic literature to denote absolute positions, language served to preserve a distinction of religious belief.

The same comparative presentation shows up in another verse of the Gathas when the prophet Zarathushtra addressed his acolytes: "Now I shall speak of the two spirits of whom, at the beginning of existence, the holier one spoke to the hostile one thus, 'Neither our thoughts, nor our teachings, or our wills, neither our choices, nor our words, or our deeds, neither our consciences nor our souls are in accord" ' (45:2). In the case of the holier (Avesta: spanya, comparative form of spenta) spirit is contrasted with its hostile (Avesta: angrem) twin. The Zand on this passage states: " Of them, the more bountiful one spoke to the corrupt one thus" (Phalavi: ke pad aweshan abzonigih ast edon guft o oy I gannag) (Bodleian Liabrary, MS J2, fdolio 254r,p508). Again, traces of the analogous nature of the difference between Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu survive.

These passages cited from Avesta and Zand suggest that rather than posit two original principles -- and their spiritual embodiments -- as unqualified opposites, Zarathushtra seems to have taken a more fluid perspective. Perhaps, using comparative terminology, he sought to reject a view prevailing among priests (karapans) and seers (kavis) who opposed him that those two principles were simply contrasting forces of nature over which humans had little control (Gathas 32:3,5). By raising the issue of choice, the founder of Zoroastrianism gave people hope of affecting their own destinies. Moreover, through the issue of a choice between the better and the worse paths, he also could present Asha as more beneficial and Ahura Mazda as more bountiful than Druj and Angra Mainyu, respectively. Given this evidence it is therefore unlikely that early Zoroastrianism focused narrowly on the grand battle between two supernatural forces or the spiritual entities associated with those forces. Nowhere in the Gathas does the prophet propose a total partition of the cosmos into two groups of good and evil. Rather, ethical dualism represents one of several factors -- of which choice was another already mentioned, and sacrifice yet one more -- employed by the founder of Zoroastrianism to explain the world and the situation of people within it.

Zarathushtra had, nonetheless, suggested that Asha and Ahura Mazda should be regarded as superior on a moral level to Druj and Angra Mainyu. For instance, the prophet had referred to his creator God as the "holiest spirit" (Avestan: mainyush spenishto) in the Gathas (30:5,2). He had also urged worshipers to follow closely his teachings as these were revelations from Ahura Mazda (Gathas 30:11, 31:1). Consequently although Zarathushtra himself did not divide creation into two absolute spheres of influence -- one controlled by the force of good and inhabited by beneficial living things, the other under evil's sway and populated with harmful creatures -- it was only a matter of time before bifurcation of the world along absolute dualistic lines took place in the religion's doctrine and praxis.

## THE MAGI'S CONTRIBUTION

The first written account about Iranian tribes is found in Assyrian military campaign annals. Their presence is attested within the western and southwestern Iranian provinces of Kurdistan and Fars during the middle of the ninth century BC. As these people spread out across the plateau

they gave their ethnic name to the land itself: Iran. Among the tribes was an ecclesiastic group called the Magi. At some time during or after the tribes had relocated from Central Asia onto the Iranian plateau -- exactly when is unclear -- the magi adopted the teachings of Zarathushtra. Devotees need a ritual foundation to unite them as a community, distinguished from others in adjoining lands like Assyria and Babylonia, in order to ensure survival and growth during the years ahead. The magi helped fulfil that need by modifying Zarathushtra's message to accommodate their own practices such as dislike of wild animals, reptiles, and insects, non-desecration of nature, and exposure of human corpses to the elements. Herodotus, for instance, commented in his Histories (1:101, 132-140) during the fifth century B.C. on how all these activities had originally been distinctive to the magi. At the same time, the magi used their knowledge of prayers and rites to establish themselves as the faith's hereditary priesthood.

It is among early Magian writings; particularly the Avesta Vendidad or Law Against the Demons, that variation in the notion of dualism from that set forth by Zarathushtra is initially found. At the time this ritual text was compiled, around the third century BC, substantial changes were occurring in doctrine. The Videvdat (3:14, 5:36, 7:1-27, 73 -75, 8:73-74 14:5-8, 14:2, among other passages) indicates magi justified inclusions of their socio-religious preferences within the framework of Zoroastrianism by casting upon these the notion of a dualism in which the entire cosmos was split along the lines of good and evil at both spiritual and corporal levels. Thus, certain creatures like cattle, dogs, horses, and many plants were portrayed as beneficial -- primarily because they proved useful to humans. Others such as wolves, mice, snakes, frogs, and ants came to be despised as noxious or khrafstra (after a word denoting harmful beasts used by Zarathushtra in a general sense in Gatha 28.5, 34:5,9) -- since they could harm people or crops. Beneficial creatures were said to have been created by Ahura Mazda to assist humans, whereas noxious creatures supposedly rose from Angra mainyu to injure people. Likewise, elaborate rules came to be laid down to prevent pollution of the material world. In this case the magi argued that Angra Mainyu had produced various types of defilement, particularly in the form of a corpse demoness or Druksh Nassush, whose ill effects could spread from humans and animals to fire, water, and earth. Ceremonies arose to cleanse these aspects of nature if pollution was thought to have occurred. The postulation of demonic pollution in the guise of a corpse demoness legitimized a funerary service where the

corpse of a Zoroastrian would be left exposed to undergo desiccation so that it could no longer be inhabited by the demoness nor spread pollution to those who touch it. Exposure of the dead bodies originally took place either in the wilderness or on hilltops. Latter, as the practice became more standardized, funerary towers would be erected and corpses placed therein. Fear of pollution was not confined to aspects of corporeal existence, for magi suggested that contamination while alive resulted in spiritual imperfection hindering the soul during the afterlife as well. To prevent this, a range of purification rituals were invented to exorcise evil. Some like padyab or simple cleansing take a few minutes to perform; others, like the barashum I no shab last for nine days and nights.

The Achaemenian king Darius 1 had displayed a tendency toward cosmic dualism, in the sixth century BC, equating rebellion against his rule to a rejection of Ahura Mazda's righteousness and an acceptance of falsehood: "The lie made them rebellious" (Behistun Inscription 4:34). Yet, even by early Sasanian times dualism does not appear to have become the most central feature of Zoroastrian doctrine. Dualist ideas were not mentioned in the inscriptions of Shapur I during the middle of the third century A.D. But, as subsequent Sasanian kings faced other claimants to the throne they were increasingly compelled to turn to Zoroastrian religion and its clergy for validation of authority. Narseh would, therefore refer to his adversary Wahram III as having seized the throne " through falsehood and [with the assistance] of Ahreman and the demons" (Paikuli Inscription sec 4). Doctrines and rituals of cosmic dualism, which portrayed the Sasanians as divinely chosen rulers whose duty was to further the cause of good within their realm, proved useful in wielding power. Royal support helped consolidate cosmic or universal dualistic views in Iranian society, especially at a time when the magi were themselves rejecting many prevailing practices as heterodox and imposing their own view of orthodoxy on the general population.

Eventually, the nexus between dualism, ritual, and power resulted in a cosmogonic myth postulating all forms of evil -- including death, decay, pollution, and insubordination -- had been cast upon corporeal life by Angra Mainyu when the hostile spirit invaded the material world. This myth's generic version has roots in very old Proto-Indo-European sacrificial custom. Zoroastrian theologians and storytellers gave the tale a particular dualistic twist, whereby Ahura Mazda reproduced living things after Angra Mainyu slaughtered the first ones. For his destructive actions, Angra Mainyu came to be scorned as the Gannag Menog or

corrupt spirit. By the Middle Ages, this myth dramatically presented the origins of an unmitigated ongoing struggle between the good forces of Ahura Mazda -- led by reigning kings and orthodox priests, followed by pious persons and beneficial creatures -- against evil powers of Angra Mainyu -- united around false kings and heterodox priest, assisted by corrupt people and noxious beasts. The Bundahishn, in which the doctrine of cosmic dualism reached its literary zenith, commences: "[Herein is] information from the Zand, beginning with the fundamentalness of Ahura Mazda and the evilness of Gannag Menog." This Book of Primal Creation then details the irreconcilable dualism between Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu (1:1-59), before recording how evil entered the material world and will be banished from the cosmos at the end of time in an eschatological sequence where humans gain eternal life for having assisted Ahura Mazda. Given that dualism was viewed by medieval Zoroastrians as all embracing, and evil and pollution feared as ever present in the world, customs would be prescribed by the magi to safeguard the routine acts of life -- from sex, childbirth, and menstruation, to eating bathing and grooming. Each new prescription found justification as assisting asha and Ahura Mazda in vanquishing durg and Angra Mainyu, thus ensuring passage for human soul to heaven. These rules and observance became part of the Zoroastrian lifestyle, carefully overseen by priests. In this manner, through mythology, rites, and politics, dualism was gradually extended from an ethical disjunction between righteousness and sinfulness in the spiritual world (Pahlavi: menog) to a cosmic struggle between good and evil within the material world (Pahlavi: getig).

Of course, not all Zoroastrians living in the Middle Ages subscribed to the absolute form of dualism that had augmented the prophet's original ethical version. Given the narrow corpus of extant sources -- most of which were drafted by members of a few related priestly families residing in southwest Iran -- it is not fully clear how constantly popular this extremism was among the common masses or even within how constantly popular this extremism was among the common masses or even within noble and intellectual circles. Perhaps the slow but steady spread of Zurvanism, which sought to depict Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu as dualistic twins born from a singular spiritual being or God of time named Zurvan, reflected a desire for a return to the more fluid ethical dualism or even a change to a variety of quasi-monotheism. Possibly present within Zoroastrianism since the Achaemenian era, Zurvanite views appear to have penetrated the highest rank of Iranian

society during the final centuries of Sasanian rule even enjoying a degree of official favor. But Zurvanism faded after the Muslim conquest of Iran (seventh to eighth century A.D.), perhaps because its monotheist doctrine left followers open to espousing parallel views in Islam.

Uncontested as the orthodox form of Zoroastrian doctrine, cosmic dualism could survive unhindered even as Islam spread among the Zoroastrian population of Iran. The ninth century magus Zadspram i Juwanjaman, for one, reproduced a wholly dualist version of this cataclysmic struggle in his *Wizidagiha* or selections (3:1-47) -- a passage that suggests he did not subscribe to the monotheism prevailing among Zurvanite Zoroastrians. In that book's opening chapter too, the cosmic dualism that was believed to separate Ahura Mazda from Angra Mainyu is forcefully conveyed to readers through a scene in which the creator God rebuffs his opponent with the word: "You are not omnipotent, lie" (1:6). Zoroastrian, who migrated from Iran to the western shores of India around AD 936, namely the Parsis, carried this priestly doctrine with them. As a result, when the Sanjan magus Neryosang Dhaval translated the *Yasna* into Sanskrit in the late eleventh or early twelfth century AD, the comparative terminology of the Gathas was comprehended in superlative form: "a highest one and a degraded one" (30:3) and "the greatest Hormijda addressed the murderous Ahramana thus " (45:2). During the fifteenth century AD, once Zoroastrians had declined numerically in Iran but Parsi immigrants had firmly established themselves on the Indian subcontinent; the magi renewed efforts aimed at ensuring that neither the doctrine nor the praxis of cosmic dualism would be forgotten. Communication with Iranian priests provided Zoroastrians residing in Indian with Darab Hormazyar's *Rivayats* (also known as the *Persian Rivayats*), treatises in which the eternal division between good and evil was repeatedly stressed. One selection reads: "The path of Spenta Mainyu is the work of Ahura Mazda, bright and fearless ... The path of Gannag Menog is the work of Angra Mainyu and [his] demons, full of corruption and darkness" (p.20).

Only with the advent of Protestant Christian missionaries to Iran and India did the doctrine of cosmic dualism, and the elaborate rites it had spawned, slowly begin to attenuate. The *Rahbar -I din-I Jarthushti* or *Guide to the Zoroastrian Religion*, composed in Gujarati by a nineteenth century AD high priest Erachji Sohrabji Meherjirana, is one literary example where dualism is scarcely evident -- indeed Angra Mainyu is mentioned once (pp. 21-22). The writings of Ervads like *Sir Jivanji*

Jamshedji Modi, in his 1911 text *A Catechism of the Zoroastrian Religion*, and Godrej Dinshaw Sidhwa, in his 1985 work *Discourses on Zoroastrianism*, have further refocused Zoroastrian beliefs away from cosmic dualism. The sharp decline in frequency with which purification rituals are undergone in India and Iran during recent years is an accompanying behavioral change. Many contemporary Zoroastrians have reverted to ethical rather than cosmic explanation of their faith's dualistic tenets. Others have turned to monotheism where Ahura Mazda is viewed as the ultimate origin of all creatures and events, good or evil. The latter individuals often object to discussions of dualism in the religion, feeling it suggests that their ancestors believed in two deities rather than venerating one creator God as Zoroaster had always proposed.

## CONSEQUENCES TO ZOROASTRIANS

The doctrinal modification wrought by the magi when they first adopted Zoroastrianism proved, in the long run, to be invaluable. At the level of theology, the magi shifted the balance of power towards Ahura Mazda by elevating dualism using myths cosmology and eschatology --from an ethical rift to a cosmic conflict in which Ahura Mazda would be victorious at the end of time. On a more mundane level, they molded an important feature of Zarathushtra's message into a powerful ideology, which unified Zoroastrians in a common cause: to fight all aspects of evil via every act. The rites introduced by those priests became a rote substratum connecting believers to one another through shared action -- performance that reminded participants and onlookers of dualism's enduring importance. Without rituals perpetuating this distinctive belief, it is unlikely the religion introduced by Zarathushtra could have survived repeated exposure to Near Eastern monotheistic faiths. By transforming the prophet's ethical dualism into constant, indeed daily, struggle between good and evil on both the spiritual and corporeal plains of existence, Zoroastrians enhanced the power to direct their lives. Within the parameters of belief, good action during life meant devotees had fulfilled the covenant made by their immortal souls with Ahura Mazda and, therefore, their souls were presumed to reach paradise after death. Thus, the concept of each person choosing righteousness over sinfulness -- first enunciated in Zarathushtra's own ethical preaching -- attained paramount importance through rigidly dualistic view of the entire universe. When the Magian doctrine of cosmic dualism between good and evil was at its strongest, during the high Middle Ages, the prevailing

position would be summarized in the Chidag Handarzi Poryothekeshan or Select Counsel of the Ancient Sages. While answering fundamental questions on human existence, such as whether people belong to the principle of good or of evil (sec.1), the writer of the catechism declared (sec.10-14): "One is the path of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, of heaven, light, purity, and infinity which are the creator Ahura Mazda. ... The other is the path of evil thoughts, evil words, and evil deeds, of darkness, finiteness, every affliction, death, and sin which are the accursed Angra Mainyu ... There are two original principles: the creator (Pahlavi: Dadar) and the destroyer (Pahlavi: murnjenidar). The creator is Ahura Mazda who is all goodness (Pahlavi: harwisp nekih) and all light (Pahlavi: harwisp roshnih). The destroyer is the accursed Gannag Menog [or Angra Mainyu] who is all evil (Pahlavi: harwisp wattarih), full of death (Pahlavi: purr-margih), the lie (Pahlavi: durz), and the deceiver (Pahlavi: freftar)."

\*\*\*

---

<sup>i</sup> This article is based on a lecture given at the Second Indo-Iranian International Congress of the K.R.Cama Oriental Institute convened in Bombay, India. The research was funded by a grant from the office of International Programs of Indiana University. Diacriticals have been omitted for ease of printing.

<sup>ii</sup> The idea that Zoroastrianism always embodied an absolute form of dualism is widespread in current scholarship where ethical dualism is often conflated with cosmic struggle amongst corporal entities. Among the vocal proponents of this view is Mary Boyce. Ref. *A History of Zoroastrianism*, Vol 1 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1975, rpt 1989), pp 198-202, 229-330, 294; & *Zoroastrianism: Its Antiquity and Constant Vigour* (Costa Mesa, California: Mazda Publishers, 1992), pp. 72-74.

<sup>iii</sup> See examples cited by Jamshid K.Choksey, "Sacral Kinship in Sassanian Iran," *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*, new series 2(1988),pp. 41-47. "The Theme of Truth in Zoroastrian Mythology: A few representations from Iranian Literature and Art, in *Zoroastrianism and the Parsis*, ed. Peroza Godrej (Bombay).

<sup>iv</sup> For types of dualism see further Simone Petrement, *Le dualisme dans l'histoire de la philosophie et des religions* (Paris: Gallimard, 1946) Jean P. de Menasce, "Note sur le dualisme mazdeen, " in *Satan*, ed. Bruno de Jesus-Marie (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1948), pp.130-135;

<sup>v</sup> The issues are extensively surveyed in Mary Boyce, "Zoroaster the Priest," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* 33.1 (1970), pp22-36; and *Zoroastrianism*, 27-45,64-65. The best investigation at present on when and where Zarathushtra lived is by Homi E.Eduljee, "The Date of Zoroaster," *Journal of K.R. Cama Oriental Institute* 48 (1980), pp. 132-147.

<sup>vi</sup> In general reference to Mary Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism*, Vol 1, pp. 22-53, 199,255; and Robert C Zaehner, *The Dawn of Twilight of Zoroastrianism* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1961), pp. 34-36, 63-73, 139-140, 181-183. On the nature of Asha, its disjunction from druj and Angra mainyu, and its connection to Ahura Mazda consult *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "Ahriman, "Ahura Mazda," and "asha".

<sup>vii</sup> The question arises from the insightful suggestion by Gernot L. Windfuhr, "The Word in Zoroastrianism." *Journal of Indo-European Studies*12, 1-2(1984),pp.150-153, 160-163, 166-167, who refer to previous explanations of the comparative terminology in the Gathas. See Jamsheed Choksey, *Purity and Pollution in Zoroastrianism: Triumph over Evil* (Austin University of Texas Press, 1989), pp. 2-3 upon which the present discussion elaborates.

<sup>viii</sup> Various attempts have been made by contemporary scholars to translate this Avesta phrase. Examples where the words are rendered as positive forms rather than comparative ones include: Pour Davoud, Irach J S. Taraporewala, Stanley Insler, Firuz Azargoshasb,