



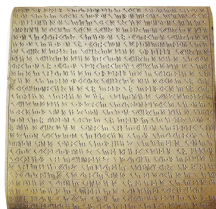
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On Haoma, and its Liturgy in the Gathas

This paper addresses two chief problems in the study of Haoma/*haoma* in ancient Iran: Zarathushtra's attitude, and botanical identification. I shall show that Zarathushtra reworked phraseology of the earlier form of Yasnas 9 and 10, integrating them into a rebuke of Haoma in his Yasnas 32 and 48.¹ I shall also argue for two ancient *haoma* plants, *Peganum harmala* and ephedra.

I.

In Y32 the reworking of the Old Avestan prototypes of YY9 and 10 occurs in alternating stanzas: 8, 10, 12, and 14. Henceforth my reference to passages of YY9 and 10 will (unless otherwise noted) refer to their equivalents in the form of the text known to Zarathushtra.

Zarathushtra's technique in his reworking of the old Haoma liturgy consists of recasting elements of its phraseology and thereby putting a negative "spin" on the liturgy's viewpoint.

The Haoma liturgy's characterization of Yima, son of Vīuuay^vhañt, in Y9.4 as *hūuarā.darəsō mašiiānqm* 'sun-visaged/sun-seeing among mortals' was taken by Zarathushtra as a statement that Yima had the divine quality of being able to see the Sun which illuminates the otherworldly paradisiac seat of Rightness in the divine domain (cf. Vedic *svardṛś-* 'Sun-seeing' = 'divine'); thus Y32.2 *mazdā ahurō ... xšaθrāt ... ašā ... x^vānuuātā* 'Mazdā Ahura ... with Sunny Rightness, from His Dominion' and Y43.16 *x^vāñg darəsōi xšaθrōi* 'in the Dominion which affords sight of the Sun'; further Y16.7 (etc.) *x^vanuuitiš ašāhe vərəzō* 'the radiant quarters of Rightness'. In Y9.1, Haoma is described as a divinity *x^vahe gaiiehe x^vanuuatō aməšāhe* 'of own sunny immortal life', and at Y9.19 is prayed to for 'the [paradisiac] luminous best existence of the righteous, which has all comforts'.

Zarathushtra, who castigates Yima (in the central stanza Y32.8) as having sinned in swearing to be a god on the excuse of wishing to gratify his mortals (*mašiiāñg*), proceeds from a tradition in which Yima became a god of the underworld (a doctrine variously reflected in Iranian material²). For Zarathushtra, then, Yima was the exemplification of deceitful speech and darkness, traits inherent in the cult of Haoma (for the foundation of

¹ More elaborate textual, linguistic and stylistic details will be given in my forthcoming articles in the proceedings of the meeting in memoriam of Ilya Gershevitch, ed. P. Ognibene et al., and in the proceedings of the Paris 2002 conference on Indo-European poetics, ed. D. Petit and G.-J. Pinault. See also Schwartz 2003a.

² See Grenet 2002, p. 23 with fnn. 25-6. Yt19.34 seq., continuing Zarathushtra's view of Yima, states that Yima lost his *x^varənō* by telling a lie. Note that the latter text shares with Y32.8 the patronymic, which seems based on a perfect participle rather than the *-ant- stem of Y9 and the RV. In view of the collocation in Y32.6 of *aēnā-* with *hātā-* (*√han* 'earn', cf. Y32.9 *hātīm*), *vīuuayhuša-* may be Zarathushtra's pun pejorizing Yima as 'not (vī-) earning anything good (*vayhu-ša-*)', cf. YAv. *vījuua-* and Vedic *paśu-śā-*.

which Yima's father was rewarded with the birth of Yima, Y9.4). The contrast between the sight of paradisiac solarly and the sightlessness of infernal darkness, implicit in Zarathushtra's account of Yima, figure more overtly in other stanzas of Y32 directed against the Haoma liturgy, as we shall see presently.

The theme of *aēnah-* 'violence, violation', which occurs in Y32.8 (and there applied to Yima) as a concatenation to the end of Y32 (32.16c" *aēnaḥhē*), is also found at Y9.29 (**aēnaḥheiti* 'commits violence' (against the worshippers' minds and bodies), whence the Haoma liturgy has a series of imprecations, which Zarathushtra recomposes and turns against the Haoma cult. The relevant passages are Y9.29-30. First Y9.29 *mā gəm vaēnoit ašibiia* 'may he not see the Cow with (his wretched) eyes' (which follows a parallel curse with *zəm* 'earth' instead of *gəm* 'cow'); then Y9.30, in which Haoma is to counter the serpent/dragon 'who tosses poison about' (*vīšō.vaēpahe*): 'For the sake of the righteous person (*ašaone*) about to perish', Haoma is invoked (*haoma*) to strike his weapon (*vadarə*) against the evil creature's body. This is followed by a parallel request in which the object to be struck by Haoma's weapon for the sake of the righteous person is the (wretched) head of a mortal (arrogantly) raising (*vōiždaiiaṭahe*) it. The Avestan words cited, in their order, in the above paraphrase, are all represented in Zarathushtra's riposte.

- Y32.10a. *huuō mā nā srauuā mōrəndaṭ yā acištəm vaēnaḥhē aogədā*
 b. *gəm ašibyā huuarəcā yascā dāθəṅg drəguuatō dadāt*
 c. *yascā vāstrā vīuuāpat yascā vadarə vōiždat ašāunē*

Y32.10 'That man derails(,) moreover(,)/my words/fame,
 who professes that the worst person will see Cow and Sun with wretched eyes,
 (or, who professes the worst thing in order to see, etc.)
 (or, who professes that the worst thing is to see, etc.)
 and who makes out wrongsome as just
 (or, and who makes just persons into wrongsome),
 and who throws the pastures apart,
 and who raises a weapon against the righteous person'.

Obvious correspondence to the words of Y9.29-30 are *vaēna-* ... *gəm ašibiia* 'see Cow with (wretched) eyes' (i.e. with the eyes of a person belonging to the realm of evil) and *vadarə vōiždat ašāunē* 'raises weapon against the righteous person'. In addition, *vāstrā vīuuāpat* /*wāstrā wi wāpat*/ 'throws the pastures apart' echoes *vīšō.vaēpa-* /*wišawaipa-*/ 'tossing poison about', and, most importantly, *huuō mā* /*hau mā*/ 'he (...) moreover/my', which suggests *haomā* /*haumā*/ 'via Haoma/*haoma*'. This cryptic allusion to the rejected god and substance is corroborated by the mention in Y32.14 of constant ritual pouring, *hīcā*, and of *dūraoša-*, the characteristic epithet of *haoma*.

The phonic ambiguity of *huuō mā* /*hau mā*/, /*haumā*/, in the context of a covert allusion to the Haoma liturgy, is matched by the syntactic ambiguity of the rest of Y32, and particularly 10.a'-b", which continues the motif of seeing the Sun. The allusion, as explained above in connection with Yima, is to the divine realm, i.e. paradise. Both seeing the Sun and seeing the Cow (the good eschatological envisionment³) here refer to the attainment of paradise, which is an otherworldly reward for the righteous. Cf. the related eschatologically referent Gathic passage Y50.2 'How ... should he seek the joy-bringing Cow,

³ See Schwartz 2003b, *passim*.

amidst the many sunbeams⁴ that She be pastured for him, who lives properly with Rightness?’

Y32.10a’-b”, with its intentional multiplicity of interpretations, embodies a variety of psychological perspectives, ranging from the deceit and self-deceit of the repudiated cultists (their hypocritical stance against wrongful wretches achieving paradise) to the view from the perspective of truth as to the real behavior and innermost mentality of the evildoers: They will use the most duplicitous utterances in order to gain paradise, and they reverse the accurate assessments of right and wrong. They actually regard paradise, i.e. the realm of light and Right, as the worst thing, they being adherents of darkness.

The malefactor’s hypocritical stance as to seeing the Cow and the Sun (i.e. the luminous manifestation of Rightness) is shown not only by Y32.10c (aggression toward Cow and the righteous), but more explicitly by Y32.12-13. According to Y32.12, ‘those who, through that (wrong) word/fame pull mortals away from best action, Mazdā speaks ill to, [and] those who derail (make go wrong) the vitality of the Cow, by which deeds, along with oppressiveness, the *karapan*- (priest) chooses, instead of Rightness, Wrongness and the domination by the mighty.’ The next stanza, Y32.13, complements Y32.10 and again uses ambiguity to set forth the perspectives of falsehood and truth, once more with regard to the miscreant’s apparent aspirations for paradise.

While lines a-b are clear, the translation of line c entails intentional ambiguity:

Y32.13c. *yā θbahiiā maθrānō dūtām yā iś pāt darasāt aṣahiā*

After translation of lines a-b, I shall give the chief possibilities for line c.

‘Through that domination, oppressiveness ties⁵ the destroyers of existence to the House of Worst Mind (= Hell), as also those who, O Mazdā, in their greed (*kāmē*) complain about

(i) Thy manthra-composer’s messenger,
who would keep (obstruct) them from the sight of Rightness.’

(ii) the messenger of Thy manthra-composer
who will keep (obstruct) them from the sight of Rightness.’

(iii) Thy manthra-composer’s messenger,
which (i.e. their greed) will keep (obstruct) them from the sight of Rightness.’

(iv) the “smoke” of thy manthra-composer,
which will keep (obstruct) them from the sight of Rightness.’

(v) the “smoke” of Thy manthra-composer,
which (i.e. their greed) will keep (obstruct) them from the sight of Rightness.’

(vi) the “smoke” of Thy manthra-composer,
which (i.e. their greed) will keep (protect) them from the sight of Rightness.’

The ambiguity arises from the three possible antecedents of the masculine relative pronoun *yā* ‘who/which’ in 32.13, i.e. b” *kāma*- ‘greed’; c” *maθrān*- ‘[Mazdā’s] manthra-composer’ (Zarathushtra); and c” *dūta*- ‘messenger’ and/or ‘smoke’; ambiguous also is *pāt*

⁴ *huuarə.pisiiant*- ‘sun-beam, ray of sun’; cf. Khot. *pāsā* ‘id.’; \sqrt{pis} ‘to adorn (as with gilding, etc.)’.

⁵ *grāhma*- ‘oppression, oppressiveness’ best suits the context(s) of Y32.12-14. Cf. Lithuanian *grėsmė*, *grasmė* ‘threat, compulsion, prohibition’, *gras*- ‘be oppressive, loathsome’; further Armenian *garšim* ‘am disgusted’, Tocharian B *krās*- ‘to vex’; PIE $\sqrt{g^hres}$. *hīśasat* */hiśat/ ‘ties’ = Vedic *śiśāt*.

‘will keep’, i.e. ‘obstruct’ or ‘protect’. The devotees of the cult of Haoma and the other *daēuuas* (‘demons’ = ‘false gods’) blame Zarathushtra and/or his missionaries, whom they regard as so much “smoke” which prevents them, the false cultists, from seeing Rightness (= attaining paradise); however, it is really their greed which obfuscates others and obscures their own vision of Rightness. They oppose Rightness, since they fear seeing it (i.e. seeing Truth). They persist in greed and blame, for it protects them from seeing their ontological darkness—they, like the *daēuuas*, having their origin in Bad Mind and Wrong (Y32.3). Through exploitation, the *daēuuas*-worshippers temporarily wax great (Y32.3, cf. Y32.11), but move out of the range of Good Mind and Rightness’s intelligence (Y32.4).

For Y32.13 *dūta*- masc. ‘smoke’, well-evidenced by New Iranian languages, corroboration is found in the next stanza, Y32.14c *yā dūraošaṃ saocaiiaṭ auuō* ‘(the deluded cultist) who burns *dūraoša*- for help’. The latter detail suits the identification of one of the *haoma*-plants, i.e. the original intoxicant, *Peganum harmala*, whose seeds are burned in a folk-ritual still popular among Iranian people. In this apotropaic rite, the visible token is the production of copious dark smoke (cf. Sistani *dudni*, Luri *dī* ‘*Peganum harmala*’ < **dūd*- < **dūta*- ‘smoke’).⁶ A magical virtue of the burning of the seeds, explicit in the folk verses, is the breaking of the evil eye, homologous to the crackle of the burning seeds. This fact underscores the irony of Y32.10 and 13, with their emphasis on seeing, for it is contextually obvious that the villains are motivated by envy; their *aši*-, which in the dualized Avestan vocabulary is used for the eye of evil beings, necessarily entails the evil eye.

Recognizing the intentional ambiguity of *dūta*-, ‘messenger’ and ‘smoke’, helps solve the enigma inherent in the beginning of the poem. At Y32.1a-b, *xʷaētus* ‘family’, *vərəzānəm* (*maṭ airiiamnā*) ‘community (with tribe)’, and *daēuuā* ‘demons (demon-gods)’ are all immediately preceded by /*ahya*/ ‘of Him, His’, making the series syntactically parallel subjects, all entreating Mazdā Ahura for His bliss. The words of the entreaty constitute a promise in return:

Y32.1c. *θβōi dūtānhō tāng dāraiiō yōi vā daibišənti*

‘We will be messengers/smoke for Thee, holding up those who are inimical to You.’

The recurrence of the double-meaning *dūta*- accords with the fact that of the 16 stanzas of Y32, the first thirteen show systematic concentric pairing according to concatenations (linkages) of word-forms, indicating that Y32.1-13 reflect a proto-poem, of which the final poem, Y32.1-16 (whose concentricism of stanzas involves some concatenations of a purely semantic rather than formal nature) is a later expansion. The linkages between the concentrically paired stanzas may be illustrated by the three outer paired stanzas: Y32.1 and Y32.13 concatenate (formally) through *dūta*- ‘messenger/smoke’, and (semantically) through \sqrt{dar} ‘hold up’ (= ‘hold back/uphold’) and $\sqrt{pā}$ ‘to keep’ (= ‘obstruct/protect’), with use of the double meaning of these verbs following the precedent of Y46.3-5 and 7-8. Y32.2 and Y32.12 concatenate (formally) through the respective phrases *aēibiīō mazdā ... paitī.mraoṭ* ‘to those Mazdā ... answers’ and 32.12 *aēibiīō mazdā akā mraoṭ* ‘to these Mazdā says bad things. 32.3 and 32.11 concatenate formally through shared *maz*- ‘great’, \sqrt{sru} ‘to hear’, and $\sqrt{cit/kaēt}$ ‘to (be) perceive(d)’. 32.3 *ciθrəm* ‘clearly’ (alongside ‘lineage, origin’) expresses the idea that despite their obscurantist duplicity (32.3 *daibitānā* ‘having double

⁶ [Cf. Boir-Ahmad Luri *dīnešt* (*sic*) ‘harmel’, deverbal < **dīn*- < **dūn* (Early Judeo-Persian *dwn*- ‘to cense, make smoke’ as per T.E. Gindin, unpubl. dissert. Jerusalem 2004; Pir. **dūn*(ā)-, > ptc. *dūta*-).]

aspect'), the worshippers of the demon-gods are to be perceived as manifestations of Wrong (Y32.3 *drujascā*, cf. Y32.5 *fracinas* (\sqrt{cit}) *drəguuantəm* 'perceives the Wrongsome One').

In addition, Y32.1-2 and Y32.12-13 are part of the schema of concentricity as two sets of consecutively paired stanzas: 32.1 (whose quasi-trinitarian theology is implicit in its allusion to the singular Mazdā with 'for Thee' and to His triad with 'to You') encrypts the theology of the interrelationship stated overtly in Y32.2 as 'Mazdā Ahura (Lord Wisdom or Wise Lord), who is connected with Vohu Manah (Good Mind), and is the close associate of Aša [Vahišta] ([Best] Rightness; cf. Y28.8, where we have explicit Aša Vahišta in a state of homogeneity [*hazaoša-*] with Mazdā Ahura). In Y32.1a the last four words */ahya wrzanam mat aryamnā/ and, echoing the latter, the last four words of Y32.1b /mnai ahurahya vrāzma mazda'ah/ cabbalistically refer to the interrelated members of the triad iconically via two serial overlaps of the initials, /a/ /v/ /m/ /a/ and /m/ /a/ /v/ /m/. Y32.12 and Y32.13 are paired by 12c and 13a, each articulating the collusion of *grāhma-* 'oppressiveness' and *xšaθra-* 'domination'.

In the concatenation of the paired Y32.1-2 and 12-13 there is the correspondence of Y32.1 *uruuāzēmā* 'bliss' and Y32.12 **uruuāš.uxtī*⁷ 'oath for bliss'. The latter 'oath', against whose declarers Mazdā speaks ill, refers to the duplicitous oath made to gain Mazdā's bliss, Y32.1c with the interpretation 'we will be smoke for Thee, (as we are) upholding those inimical to You'. This contrasts with the alternate intention of the same words 'we will be Thy messengers, keeping in check those inimical to You', the sincere oath which Mazdā answers approvingly together with Vohu Manah and Aša (Y32.2). In Y32.10 *seq.* the duplicitous obfuscators, the *daēuuas* and their worshippers, are typified by Haoma and his cultists.

II.

The evidence for the original *haoma* plant having had intoxicating effects is clear from the Haoma liturgy, as also from the Gathas. We may proceed from the Haoma liturgy.

Y10.14. *mā mē yaθa gaoš drafšō*
āsītō vārēmā caire
fraša fraiiantu tē maδō
vərəzīiaŋ^vhāŋhō jasəntu
pairi.tē haoma ašāum ašauuāzō
daδqmi imqam tanūm ...

'May [thy intoxications] not make me move back and forth like the trembling of a cow, (as they are) besetting me at their own impulse.
 May thy intoxications come forth in (vivid) splendor;
 may they arrive bringing straightness of mind.
 To thee, O righteous, Rightness-promoting Haoma,
 do I give up this body ...'

The essential linguistic details of this analysis are given in Flattery and Schwartz §§162-179, to which I add that, against Vedologizing interpretations comparing a droplet of milk (OInd. *drapsá-* 'drop') caught in a woolen filter (OInd. *vāra-*), stand both the lack of Iranian linguistic cognates and the supposition of imaginative details not supported by Iranian

⁷ With the mss. confusion between *uruuāš-* and *uruuāxš-* found for other passages.

ritual realia. Rather, shivering (cf. MPers. *drafšīdan* ‘to tremble’), compared to that of a frightened cow, and brought on by the intoxication’s own impulses (*vārəma* < **vārəm ā* ‘at will’) are readily understandable as negative effects of intoxication, especially in view of the immediately following explicit request for positive effects of intoxication, and declaration of giving one’s body over to the *haoma*. The request is restated in variation at Y10.19, where *fraša* ‘splendidly, vividly, clearly’ is paralleled by *raoxšna* ‘brightly’, and there is an additional request for the intoxication to move lightly (*rəṅjiīō*). Phraseology similar to Y10.14 and Y10.19 is found in Y11.10, where Haoma is called *dūraoša-*.

The elements of comparison with a terrified cow, straightness (*vərəzi-* ~ *vərəzra-*) of mental effects, and $\sqrt{\text{var}}$ ‘wish, choose’ are reflected in Zarathushtra’s recombinatory phrasing in Y32.13 (skewing the Cow’s vitality, choice of Wrong over Right), and further Y32.14 (constant pouring, Cow ordered to be killed, and *dūraoša-* burned).

The hoped-for positive aspects of *haoma* are accentuated in Y10.8. Here it is stated ‘All other intoxications (*maḍāṅhō*) are accompanied by Fury/Disorderliness (*aēšma*), which has a gory/bloody (*xruui-*) club, but the intoxication (*maḍō*) of *haoma* is accompanied, in accord with Rightness, by bliss (*uruuāsmana*). Of the two instrumental phrases of the last sentence, only ‘by bliss’ is needed for the contrast with ‘by fury’. The extra ‘(in accord with) Rightness’ has the implication that the person who is not righteous would experience ill effects; cf. Flattery in Flattery and Schwartz, §150-151. In the rest of Y10.8, the intoxications of *haoma* are said to go lightly (*rəṅjaiti*), and Haoma, for being addressed gently, is said to commit himself (*vīsaitē*) to bodily cure of his worshippers. In Y10.9, expression of desire for such cures is followed by a declaration of commitment to Haoma (*frā tē vīsāi*) as his ally and praiser.

This material is variously recast in the Gathas. In the aforementioned Y32.12, there is allusion to the rebuked priests’ ‘declaration concerning bliss’ (*uruuāxš.uxtī* for **uruuāš.uxtī*; the concatenating form, Y32.1 *uruuāzəmā*, corresponds in stem to Y9.8 *uruuāsman-*). Y32.14 has *vīsəṅtā* ‘they commit themselves’, with object *drəguuaṅtəm auuō* intentionally ambiguous, ‘to the wrongsomeness for help’ (or, ‘as help’).

In fact, the correspondents to Y9.8 *uruuāsman-*, Y32.14 **uruuāz-* and Y32.1 *uruuāzəman-* (both with *uruuāz-* < **vrāz-*), themselves became the source of a Gathic mystique of eschatological bliss, given not by Haoma but by Mazdā. The relevant texts are based on Y32. As discussed above, in Y32.1 the form is accompanied by a complex set of acrophonic encryptions pertaining to the interconnectedness of the divine triad. Elements of Y32.1-2 recur in Y49.8-9, where *uruuāzištəm* ‘most blissful’ occurs in the midst of the central stanzas of the concentrically concatenated proto-poem Y49.4-11, to characterize the paradisiac connection of the souls of the righteous with the divine triad; from this center, the proto-poem in Y49 expands outward, elaborating these and other elements of Y32. In the concentrically concatenating proto-poem Y33.2-10, the first stanza, Y33.2c, encrypts an oral acrostic *v-r(ā)-a-z-ma* within a line overtly indicating that the righteous, who achieve Mazdā’s will, will thereby arrive in his grace/nature; 33.3 then collocates ‘family’, ‘community (member)’ and ‘tribe’, elaborating Y32.1. Finally, as part of the proto-poem Y32.1-13 having consecutive elements of its phraseology recycled in Y30.1-11, Y32.1 *uruuāzəman-* (~ Y32.14 *uruuāz-*) yields Y30.1 *uruuāzā* as part of a serial oral anagrammatization of *vahištā* ‘best things’ in an eschatological context.

Prominent compositional placement of *aēšma-* ‘fury, disorder’ is found in Y30.6 (central stanza), Y49.4 (first stanza of the proto-poem), and in first and last position of the second half of Y48 (Y48.7-12).

Framed by the concatenating occurrences (Y48.7 and 12) of the theme of eliminating *aēšama-*, Y48.10 combines and vituperatively reworks the material found both in Y10.2, which addresses Haoma/*haoma* as very intelligent, pounded (\sqrt{jan}) with the strength of a man (*narš*), and in Y10.7-8, in which *haoma*/*Haoma* is said to remove stain (*āhiti-*) and give bright (*ciθrəm*) health, having an intoxication not characterized by bloody (*xruui-*) fury, etc. By contrast, Y48.10-11 asks when men (*narō*) will commit themselves (*vīsəntē*) to (Zarathushtra's) **mąθras* (*mąnarōiš* for **mąθrōiš*, cf. Y44.14 and 20 with Y32.13-14), and 'one will smash (*ajān*, \sqrt{jan}) the filth of that intoxication' (*mąθrəm ahiiā madahiiā*) whereby the corrupt priests and, 'with the same intelligence' (*xratū*), their ruler-patrons commit depredation; against these bloody ones (*xrūrāiš*) the righteous champions will establish peace.

Finally, the praise of the growth of *haoma* (Y10.3-6), the victory which this growth brings, and the clasping of the *haoma*-twigs (*ąsu-*) in the mortar during the pressing (*haoma.hūiti-*) are countered by Zarathushtra in the first half of the poem. Y48.1-6 (of which, stanza 6 and its thematic continuation, stanza 7, form the center of the entire Y48). Y48.1 and 6 concatenate via *vaxšat* 'will make grow', which in stanza 6 has as object *uruuarā* 'plants' (here apparently metaphorical). The theme of the 'growing' ($\sqrt{vaxš}$, etc.) of the *haoma*-plant comes from the Haoma liturgy, as evidenced by Y10.3-6, culminating in Y10.6, which collocates themes of the 'growth' ($\sqrt{vaxš}$) of *haoma*, its being praised, its praiser becoming victorious, and the pressing of *haoma* (*haoma.hūiti-*) effecting the defeat of vast numbers of demonic entities. In Y48.1, the defeat of Wrong via Rightness is associated with the increase of laudation at the times of Mazdā's salvific benefactions. The Wrong to be defeated is elaborated in these words:

Y48.1b. *hiiat ąsašutā* *yā daibitāna fraoxtā*
 c. amərətāitī *daēuuāišcā mašiiāišcā*

Apart from the problematic *ąsašutā*, the passage speaks of 'the duplicities declared by demons and (evil) mortals', and is based on Y32.3 and 5. The form *ąsašutā* must be metrically trisyllabic, /ans-šuta/, which, given the background of the passage, may be interpreted as a word-play **/ansu-šutā/* 'pressing of the *haoma*-stalks' (cf. Y10.2 *hauuanəm ... ąsuš* and Vedic *aṃśoḥ* with *sutā-*) and **/ans-šutā/* 'action(s) of malice', cf. Y32.3 *šiiəomąm*, Y32.5 *šiiəəoθanəm*, referring to the duplicitous (~ deceitful) actions undertaken by demons and men, prompted by the Evil Spirit (Y32.5 *aka- mainiiu-* = **aṅgra- mainiiu-*, with *aṅgra-* 'malicious' from the root **/anh/* < **/ans/*). Elaborating the themes of Y48.1, the rest of the poem continues and concludes Zarathushtra's stylistically subtle subversion of the Haoma liturgy, whence his portrayal of Haoma as the exemplum of a demon/false god (*daēuua-*).

III.

The intoxicating effects of *haoma*, noted above in connection with Y10, suit the psychotropic plant *Peganum harmala*, as discussed at length in Flattery and Schwartz. In addition to their potential for bringing about experiences of terrible visions and trembling (as alternatives to effects of benignly poignant visions and well-being), the *Peganum* alkaloids harmaline and harmine often induce diarrhea and vomiting. Zarathushtra may have experienced such adverse effects earlier in his career as a *zaotar*-priest, hence his phrase in Y48.10 *mūθrəm ahiiā magahiiā* 'the excrement/excreta of that intoxication', where *mūθra-*

stands against the Haoma liturgy's claim of *haoma* as ousting *āhiti-* 'stain' and bringing bright (*ciθra-*) health.

Identification of ephedra as the plant which gave rise to the cults of *haoma/soma* is unconvincing. Ephedra has clearly been used as *haoma/soma* from early times by the Indo-Iranian peoples. However, ephedra prepared in a mortar, i.e. as *haoma/soma*, is not intoxicating. Its cold extract doesn't even have any effect as a stimulant. Dr. Flattery observes that only with boiling water can a stimulant ephedra extract be produced in a mortar. Because of pharmacological interaction, however, when ephedra is pounded with *Peganum harmala*, ephedra acts as a stimulant which helps prevent sleep during the visionary experience.

Since *haoma*-intoxication was not intrinsically desirable (i.e. apart from those instances in which visions were sought), while consumption of *haoma* became a priestly obligation, ephedra, rather than *Peganum harmala*, came to be used as the chief ingredient of *haoma*, with pomegranate added as the second ingredient (see Flattery and Schwartz §§231-39). It may be noted that *haoma* merely means '(mortar-)extract(ion)', and is not originally a plant-specific term.

IV.

Among the ancillary arguments given by Flattery and Schwartz in support of the *Peganum* hypothesis are Y32.12 mention of the burning of *dūraoša-* (to which add Y32.13, 'smoke', see above, Section I, on Y32.12-13), and the fact that the name of the plant, Pers. *sipand* etc., goes back to the Old Iranian word for 'holy' (in Avestan, *spənta-*). The latter argument was opposed by I. Gershevitch⁸ (who was followed by Gh. Gnoli⁹). Gershevitch proceeds from my etymology of the Northern Bashkerdi word (recorded by Gershevitch) for *Peganum harmala*, *espaht*, which I compared with Middle Persian *spixt* 'sprouting, blooming', and which I suggested may have produced *espaht* via a "contamination" with *espaht*. For MPers. *spixt*, Gershevitch reconstructs **spixt* (as an established fact), this going back to OIr. **sprxti-* 'the act of snapping', in reference to the crackling burnt seeds, ultimately from a PIE base **spre(n)g*. Pers. *sipand* Gershevitch takes from OIr. **spranti-* < PIE **sprenti-* < **sprenkti-* < **spreng-ti-*. I shall merely mention in passing that instead of Gershevitch's reconstruction of an *-n-* infix full-grade abstract noun, one would expect Old Iranian **sprxti-* < PIE **sprg-ti-*, and that it is inherently unlikely that only one Iranian language preserved the putative ancient form.

It is noteworthy that a root like that posited by Gershevitch is found not for 'snap' or 'crackle' (or 'pop'), but for 'bloom, sprout, have shoots', in Av. *frasparəya-*, MPers. *sparham(ag)*, *isprahm(ag)*, etc. And it is this etymon that misled Gershevitch. In fact, the assumption of *-r-* loss in *spixt* completely lacks parallels. What I actually indicated¹⁰ was that *spixt* goes back to **spixta-* < **spikta-*, as cognate of MPers. *spēg* 'shoot' (cf. Ormuri *spēk*, *ispēk* etc. 'barley', Lat. *spica* 'ear of grain' < PIE **spei-k-* 'to manifest spikelike configurations'), whence MPers. *spēz-*, *spixt-* 'sprout, bloom, shine, radiate'.

⁸ Gershevitch 1992.

⁹ Gnoli 1993.

¹⁰ Flattery and Schwartz §264.

It is impossible to say why N. Bashk. innovated the word in question. In the semantic category of ‘the holy’, it is frequent for tabuistic substitutions and deformations to occur, and this may be the case here. Alternatively, as I had first thought, *espaht* could have resulted from **spand-i spixt* or the like, ‘blooming (verdant) harmel’.

The important fact that escaped Gershevitch’s recollection was that Persian has, alongside *ispand* (*espaht*), *sipand*, etc., the very common *isfand* (*esfand*). Persic *sf/sp* alternation (which cannot be due to the mediation of Arabic, which has only *ḥarmal*) indicates Proto-Iranian **sw* (**sv*). Pers. *isfand* thus parallels *Isfandurmuδ*, cf. Armenain *Sandaramēt*, and, for Saka, *Śśandrāmata* from the divine name Proto-Ir. **Svantā Aramati-*; similarly Pers. *gusfand*, Kumzari *gusen* (Av. *gaospənta-*) ‘sheep’ < ‘sacral cow’. Thus Gershevitch’s *a priori* improbable separation of Pers. *ispand*, etc. ‘harmel’ from Av. *spənta-* must be abandoned. [See Flattery and Schwartz §261 for possible traces of OPers. **santā-* < **svantā-* ‘harmel’ and §262 for non-Persic reflections of an *-ā* stem.]

The antiquity of the word ‘holy’ as designating the harmel plant may well be reflected by Visperad 9.3, *haoma sūra spənta* ‘holy strong *haoma*’.

V.

In concluding this brief report on the Haoma liturgy, its Gathic reflexes, and ramifications thereof, I note briefly that the analysis of the Haoma liturgy provides evidence for archaic Iranian metrics (whose details I am publishing in my fuller account). Like the old Yashts, the Haoma liturgy was octosyllabic, with occasional elision of vowels, insertion or deletion of *i* (and *u*) in clusters, and monosyllabic *-ām*. The following reconstructions from Y9.28-Y10.2 are illustrative:

Y9.28	* <i>/vi nah dbišvatām dbaišahbiš</i>	<i>vi manah bara gramantām/</i>
Y9.29	* <i>/mā zbaraθaihya fra tūyāh</i> <i>mā zām vainait ašibiya</i>	<i>mā gabaibya abi tūyāh</i> <i>mā gām vainait ašibiya/</i>
Y9.31	* <i>/pati martiyahya api</i> <i>krpam nāšamnāi artāunai</i>	<i>vaiždayantah hai kamrdam</i> <i>hauma zārai vadar jadi/</i>
Y10.2	* <i>/frataram-cit tai hāvanam</i> <i>yah ansuš ham grbāyati/</i> ¹¹	<i>vacā_upa staumi huxratau</i>

¹¹ For Y9.31 I have eliminated *druuatō sāstarš* as an interpolation based on Y46.1c *sāstārō drəguuaṇtō*, and have emended the inflectionally incorrect genitive participle *aiβi.vōiždaiiantahe*, thereby reconstructing postposition */api/* and pronominal enclitic */hai/*. [After completing this article I became aware of Eric Pirart, *L’élloge mazdéen de l’ivresse*, Paris 2004, which, on pp. 149-248, proposes a broad octosyllabic reconstruction of Yasnas 9-11 differing in detail from my above proposals. Suffice it to say that this book as a whole is characterized by ungrounded idiosyncratic hypotheses, translations, and emendations.]

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