VOHU MANAH: A KEY TO THE ZOROASTRIAN WORLD-FORMULA

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Vohu Manah, the 'good mind and intention,' is the principle and guardian of the central subject of Zarathushtra's teachings, the 'cow.' The role of the 'cow' continues to mystify scholars. George Cameron (1968) identified its role.* The 'cow' and its guardian, *vohu manah,* shall be the leitmotif of this article, which is dedicated to George Cameron.

1. Introduction

The world-matrix which Zarathushtra implicitly laid out in his Gathic poems is known quite well. One important sub-component of that quasi-mathematical matrix, however, has been so far insufficiently analysed. That sub-component is known as the $am^e\check{s}a\ sp^enta$, 'holy immortals.' There is general agreement that the 'holy immortals' probably represent the most original and most important component in Zarathushtra's philosophy. It is a recognized assumption that they constitute a coherent system of 'principles' which function in the creation, the present state, and the final course of the world. Lommel (1930: 88, 122) put it this way (my free translation): 'the six, and only they, are part and carriers of the world order and represent independent sub-areas of the cosmos'; further 'The world view represented in the Gathas constitutes a unified whole similar to a philosophical system in which not a single essential member (and no essential interrelationships) is allowed to be missing without destroying the system as a whole.' Yet, in spite of the recognition of the crucial role of the 'holy immortals,' the key which would explain their multiple interrelationships and interactions has not been found. Henning (1951) remarked that scholars will probably never agree on their functions.

The 'holy immortals' are the most cited and recurring terms in Zarathushtra's Gathas and have been called the 'problem words' (Smith 1929), not only because of their frequency but, more importantly, because of the difficulty in finding the reason behind that frequency and behind their sequence of occurrences in ever new combinations with each other. One explanation identified their frequency as a rhetorical device to highlight or foreground *Häufigkeitswörter* (Lentz 1953, 1954; Duchesne-Guillemin 1949-51; and others); another, quite different and revolutionary explanation regarded their occurrence in the Gathas as part of a not quite definable pattern of stage-directions accompanying and specifying the Zoroastrian ritual, in which the Gathas constitute the central texts (Molé 1963).

Both explanations may be correct. They do little, however, to explain the system of interactions between the 'holy immortals.' The clue to their understanding can only come from relating them to the overall philosophical system developed by Zarathushtra. That system is known to be extremely complex. Its highest and culminating position is represented by *ahura mazdâ* 'living wisdom' (or 'mind-creating essence').[1] He is the creative principle

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[1] The translations in parentheses added after *ahura mazdâ, sp^enta mainyu* and *aṇra mainyu* indicate possible alternative interpretations. It is likely that these terms may intentionally have been chosen by Zarathushtra in order to create not only semantic but also philosophical 'puns.' This would allow for the association of a considerable range of meanings. In fact, I am not entirely certain whether the traditional translations or the ones suggested here are the intended primary meanings. Since the main objective here is not to discuss those highest levels in the system, a few notes may suffice.

a. Originally *ahura-* is an adjective. This developed the specialized, substantivized meanings such as 'master' (Herr) and 'god, lord, deity.' Gropp (1967: 31-34) reviewed some of the recent studies on this term. He drew attention to the semantic-etymological relationships among a number of important words related to *ahura-*: the verbal root *ah-* 'be, exist'; the derivative noun *ah-u-* 'existence, life'; the derivative adjective therefrom, *ah-u-ra-* 'existing, living'; and the adjective *haiθya-* 'being, true' (wirklich, wahr). To these should be added the present participle *hant-* 'existing, living.' Gropp remarked that the relationship between these words was probably still recognized by Zarathushtra; this is not unlikely considering the elaborate technique of 'punning' so evident in the Gathas. Gropp concluded that *ahura* meant or implied two things: 'living' (lebendig) and 'true' (wirklich, wahr). 'Essence,' the translation of *ahura-* suggested here, is an attempt to unite the various observations and interpretations and to fit them into the context of the Zarathushtrian system, as I try to understand it.

b. Like its Indian etymological equivalent, *medhâ,* the Zarathushtrian word *mazdâ* is believed to be the abstract feminine noun 'wisdom.' However, when paired with *ahura, mazdâ* is considered to be the derived adjective 'wise' in its masculine form; hence the translations of *ahura mazdâ* as 'wise lord' (weiser Herr). Gropp (1967: 31-34) saw no

per se. He first created, or emanated, mental energy.[2] This, in turn, by a primordial act of choice, divided into a positive mental energy, the *sp^{e}nta mainyu,* 'holy spirit' (or 'augmenting energy'), and a negative mental energy, the *aŋra mainyu* 'the fiendish spirit' (or 'diabolic energy'). These 'spirits' or 'energies' are the agents of positive and negative creation. Creation is performed by the creation and/or application of essential principles. The positive principles are the mentioned 'holy immortals,' also regarded by

reason to assume an adjectival form; he consequently translated *ahura mazdâ* as 'living wisdom' (lebendige Weisheit). *Mazdâ-* is known to be derived from the verb *maz-dâ-.* This in turn is a compound of a. the verb *mand-* which itself means 'perceive' (wahrnehmen) and b. the verb *dâ* ($<$ * *dhâ*) 'set, place.' The latter verb, however, also has assumed the meaning 'create' as is evident from the adjective *daθuš-* 'creating,' an epithet of *ahura mazdâ.* The latter's role is that of the creator of the spiritual world and implicitly of the material world. Consequently, *maz-dâ-* is interpreted here as denoting 'mind-creating'; this may be either the primary meaning or one of the secondary, implicit meanings of the term; in any case, it is not entirely impossible, although considerable linguistic-semantic problems remain. (The long list of ever-new analyses and interpretations of this term offers ample proof for the difficulties related to this representative of a rare type of compounds.)

    c. *mainyu* has been translated variously, most frequently as 'spirit' (Geist); more recently, Lentz (1954: 967) suggested 'Geisteskraft.' Duchesne-Guillemin (1961: 28) referred to Vedic Indian *manyu* 'vehemence, etc.' but added that in the Avesta this connotation cannot be identified. I think it can, the common denominator being 'mental energy' as suggested by Lentz.

    d. *sp^{e}nta* has most often been derived from **k̂uen-* 'holy' (heiligen, feiern). Bailey (1933-35: 292) convincingly argued that it must have meant '(having) supernatural power.' Pahlavi translators render the term by *aβzônîk* which is generally translated as 'increasing.' Bailey (*ibidem:* 294) suggested a more specific translation 'he whose activity results in *aβzût* 'increase.' In the context of *sp^{e}nta mainyu* Bailey is more 'liberal' and translates the term as 'constructive (spirit)' as opposed to *aŋra mainyu* 'destructive (spirit).' Such translations as 'bounteous' (Zaehner 1961), 'incremental' (Gershevitch 1964) and 'augmenting' as suggested here are attempts to combine the various connotations. (cf. also the same epithet *sp^{e}nta* in *sp^{e}ntâ ârmaiti* 'augmenting humility').

    e. *aŋra* ($<$ * *ahra*) has generally been translated as 'fiendish, evil' etc., and derived from an Aryan root **a(n)s.* Bailey (1933-35: 295-6) refers to the compound *aŋra- var-* (in *Aog^{e}madaêčâ,* 28) 'the pit of destruction' and he thus suggests 'destructive.' He does not, however, identify the etymology of his root **ah.*

    There is the possibility of relating *ahra* to two other roots which may have contributed to a semantic pun: a) *ah* 'throw'; therefore the alternative translation suggested here 'dia-*bol*-ic,' and b) *ahra* $<$ **ĕs-r-* 'blood.' The first pun would refer to the major role of *aŋra mainyu* as the disturber and destructor of the cosmic order and course; the second pun would refer to the well known *Blutrausch* or *Mordgrimm* attributed to the enemies of the good religion.

    [2] Cf. Gershevitch (1964: 12) who recognized the initial *undifferentiated* stage of the 'spirit,' as he calls it.

scholars as the 'creative aspects' of *ahura mazdâ.* In Zarathushtra's terminology they are called either *ahura-*s 'living ones' (or 'essentials')[3] or *hant-*s 'beings, existing ones.'[4] In post-Zarathushtrian times the religious jargon called them *am^{e}ša sp^{e}nta,* which originally is a compound of *sp^{e}nta mainyu* (who 'heads' the six principles) preceded by the adjectival form of the last principle *am^{e}r^{e}tât.*[5]

These 'immortals' thus figure prominently and almost independently within the philosophy of Zarathushtra's world view.

Within this well-structured philosophy, these positive spiritual principles are each correlated with worldly *(gaêθya-)* symbols (cf. below, p. 280). In addition and in accordance with the binary distinction between positive and negative creation, both the positive spiritual principles and their worldly symbols are contrasted with their negatives. Thus, Zarathushtra saw a doubly dualistic division (cf. Lommel 1930: 102):

	positive	negative
spiritual	x ⎫	x ⎫
worldly	x ⎬	x ⎬

Each of the principles is thus part of a strictly defined fourfold sub-system.

In view of that well-defined system it is surprising that the 'holy immortals,' as important as they are, seem to constitute but a unilinear hierarchy of six principles. According to post-Zarathushtrian lists they are ranked as follows: 1. *vohu manah* 'good mind(edness),' 2. *aša* 'truth,' 3. *xšaθra* '(good) rule,' 4. *ârmaiti* 'humility,' 5. *haurvatât* 'completeness, healthy,' 6. *am^{e}r^{e}tât* 'immortality.'
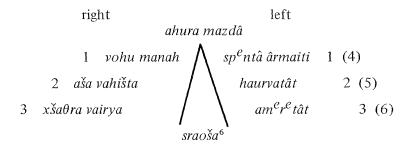
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[3] Thus called in Yasna 30.9 and 31.4.

[4] Thus called in the *Yeńhê Hâtąm* prayer; cf. also Yasna 51.22: *yôi ańhar^{e}čâ h^{e}nticâ* 'those who have been and are.'

[5] As mentioned in footnote 1, both *ahura-* and *hant-* derive from the root **ah* 'exist, be,' and have the connotation of 'true' (wirklich), hence the translations suggested here: 'essences, existential (principles).' - The origin of *am^{e}ša sp^{e}nta* suggested here seems to make most sense; it is in agreement with similar abbreviations in the jargon.

One wonders why this seeming weakness in Zarathushtra's otherwise binary philosophy has not aroused the degree of curiosity of scholars that it deserves. Even more surprising is the fact that Zarathushtra seems to have virtually overlooked the most obvious binary opposition in this world, namely that between male and female. The only recognition of that vital distinction, in his system, appears to be the fact that the first three 'holy immortals' are neuter in grammatical gender while the last three are feminine.

In fact, Zoroastrian tradition is not altogether void of the recognition of the sexes. Two examples of traditional pairings between the neuter *qua* masculine principles and the female principles may suffice. In the very late Middle Persian *Great Iranian Bondehešn* the six 'holy immortals' are depicted as sitting in front of *ahura mazdâ's* throne, well-ordered according to rank *and* sex: *vohu manah* 'good mind' is the first, sitting immediately to the right of *ahura mazdâ,* while his sister *ârmaiti* 'humility' sits opposite him, etc. Jackson (1896-1904: 635) showed that order in form of a table:

	right			left		
			ahura mazdâ			
1	*vohu manah*			*sp^{e}ntâ ârmaiti*	1	(4)
2	*aša vahišta*			*haurvatât*	2	(5)
3	*xšaθra vairya*			*am^{e}r^{e}tât*	3	(6)
			sraoša^6			

The pairing of *vohu manah* and *ârmaiti* already in the Gathas was recognized by Nyberg (1938: 152) in his analysis of Yasna 53, the so-called 'Wedding Gatha.' He found that the wedding there depicted between *Pouručistâ,* Zarathushtra's youngest daughter, and *Jâmâspa* is a symbolic ritual intended to reflect and reduplicate the wedding between *vohu manah* and *ârmaiti.*

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[6]This table includes the standard epithets of the 'holy immortals' and another entity *sraoša* 'obedience,' which in later Avestan times gained in stature. The numbers and the explanatory terms are added here to Jackson's table.

The objective of the present discussion is to demonstrate that those popularized scenes of a seating order and of a wedding of personified principles are probably very late anthropomorphic configurations; and, further, that the 'holy immortals' were not simply a unilinear hierarchy but constituted a *matrix,* a highly complex part of a world formula, the members of which are well-defined as to their functions and interactions, not only by the dualism of positive and negative and the dualism of spirit and world but, in addition, by the dualism of the sexes. But prior to that discussion it is in place to present briefly the two main approaches to the problem of the hierarchy, the function and the interrelationships of the 'holy immortals' that have so far been taken.

These two main lines of approach established the ranking and hierarchy of the six either by comparative structural analysis or by internal structural analysis. The two approaches resulted in two different hierarchies. The internal structural analysis agrees essentially with the ranking as found in the Avestan lists, while the comparative structural analysis rearranged the six according to social functions. Not only do both hierarchies show certain internal inconsistencies but, what is more important, both are unilinear hierarchies.

1.1. *Comparative structural analysis.*

From the very onset of Zoroastrian[7] studies the Zoroastrian system has been compared with that of neighboring cultures and religious texts, mainly that of the Indian Rigveda, and many parallels have been found. More recently, the epitomy of this approach is found in the studies by Dumézil (1945, 1952, 1958, etc.). Based on the insight that the Indo-European pantheon is pervaded by a tripartition of the 'ruling, the military, and the working functions' (as a reflex of the social stratification) Dumézil showed that the various religious-philosophical hierarchies can be

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[7] 'Zoroastrian' is used as a cover-term. The most differentiated terminology for the stages of this religion was suggested by Gershevitch (1964: 12); he accepted Lommel's earlier suggestion to distinguish between the Sassanian 'Zoroastrianism' and the earlier 'Zarathushtrianism,' but suggested to split the latter into 'Zarathushtrianism' which is confined to the religion of the Gathas, and 'Zarathushtricism,' the religion or doctrine of the Younger Avestan texts.

more or less neatly fitted into that tripartition. The focus of atten
tion is not so much the internal structure of the specific system as
it is the similarities of divine functions across the systems of the
Indo-European *Sprach-* and *Religionsbund*. Dumézil's analysis o:
the functions of the 'holy immortals' in comparison with the
Indian and Roman pantheon is as follows (cf. Duchesne-Guillemin
1949-51: 639, and 1958: 40-41):

functions	Rome	India	Iran, Zarathushtrian
initial	Janus bifrons	double vâyu	Sp^{e}nta Mainyu/Aka Mainyu
first	Jupiter Dius fidius	Varuṇa Mitra	Aša Vohu Manah
second	Mars	Indra	Xšaθra
third	Quirinus	2 Nâsatyas	Haurvatât/Am^{e}r^{e}tât
final	Vesta	Sarasvati Agni	Ârmaiti Âtar

The low position of *ârmaiti* 'humility' is questionable, since
she is not even included under the three major functions or levels
This comparative analysis totally ignores the fact that *ârmaiti* is o:
major importance in the Zarathushtrian system and partially
parallel to that of *vohu manah* 'good mind' (cf. below). She is not
an adjunct. The comparative approach is an important contribu
tion to the analysis of religious systems but it can only be ancillary
to the internal analysis of coherent systems.

This oddity of the position of *ârmaiti* had been noticed by
Duchesne-Guillemin (esp. 1949-51). In discussing the sequence o:
the months in the Zoroastrian and the 'Cappadocian' calendars he
noticed a) that *ârmaiti* is classed together with *vohu manah* and
aša of the 'first function'; and b) that the representative of the
'second function,' *xšaθra, follows* after the representatives of the
'third function,' *haurvatât* and *am^{e}r^{e}tât* (for this sequence in the
Iranian calendar, cf. 2.2. below). The context of these observa
tions by Duchesne-Guillemin provided the proof that the sequence
of occurrence of *ahura mazdâ*, the *sp^{e}nta mainyu* and the *am^{e}š*

sp^e^nta in Yasna 45 corresponds directly to that of the months of the Zoroastrian calendar (which thus can be taken as internal structural evidence for the coherent structure of at least this Yasna). Why the evidence of both this important Yasna and of the Zoroastrian calendar did not induce scholars to abandon the external Dumézilean ranking, or at least to modify it, is not clear.[8]

1.2. *Internal structural analysis.*

In the Gathas themselves no ranking of the six is immediately evident; after all, they appear within rather strict syllabic meters (but cf. Duchesne-Guillemin 1949-51, just mentioned, and below). Thus Dumézil's comparative approach to the analysis of the ranking of the six seemed to suggest an ingenious way out of the dilemma. However, it is possible to apply internal structural analysis even to the Gathic poems. The epitomy of that approach is represented by the studies by Lommel (most importantly, 1930). It is characterized by placing the priority of attention on the Gathic texts themselves while other evidence, from later Avestan and Middle Persian sources, is taken into consideration as an important (often the most explicit), but still auxiliary evidence for understanding Zarathushtra's own system, as is the evidence provided by the comparison with Rigvedic and other systems. As Lommel (1930: 14) put it with regard to the understanding of *ahura mazdâ* (my translation): 'In any case, the essential point with regard to Ahura Mazdah is what Zarathushtra has made of him, not what he may have adopted from others or what he *seems* to have adopted, even though we are not quite certain about that.'

Lommel's analysis is still the most comprehensive and the most sharply-focused on Zarathushtra's own system.[9] It is, as he would admit, 'speculative' in the sense that it is a reconstruction; but it is far less Procrustean and speculative than Dumézil's approach.

[8] Cf. also Duchesne-Guillemin (1961: 30), where he found that *ârmaiti* could be inserted anywhere since it is ambivalent and does not fit in any specific way into the three social classes (e.g., 1961: 30).

[9] Cf. the comment by Gershevitch (1959: 67): 'Lommel has contributed more than any other living author to a balanced and sound understanding of the Zoroastrian religion,' and further he remarked that Lommel's book is 'packed with penetrating and sober observations on the Zoroastrian religion.'

The ranking of the 'six' in the Gathas as found by Lommel is the following: 1. The highest is *aša* truth; 2. it is through 'truth' that *vohu manah* 'good mind' develops, but not vice versa (p. 49);[10] 3. in turn, 'good mind' is presupposed by *xšaθra* '(good) rulership' (pp. 54-55); 4. *ârmaiti* 'humility,' however, does not presuppose 'rulership' in a direct way,' rather it is found to be peculiarly parallel in its function to that of *vohu manah* 'good mind'; thus, similar to the latter, 'humility' comes with or follows 'truth,' or 'truth' *together with* 'humility' increases good rulership (pp. 60-63, e.g., Y: 28.3); 5. and 6., *haurvatât* 'health,' 'complete-ness,' and *am^er^etât* 'immortality,' virtually always occur as a pair; their relative position is not quite evident, but in view of the fact that their functions in the Gathas concern 'whole-ness' or 'health of life' and everlasting future life, they can be placed as the final pair.

Thus the ranking which Lommel found is not entirely the unilinear hierarchy as generally assumed; instead it implies a 'break' with the first feminine principle, *ârmaiti* 'humility'; which he has left unexplained. (Lommel himself (1964) in a brief sum-mary of his earlier findings overlooked the break he had found and instead assumed that *ârmaiti* directly presupposes *xšaθra*; he thus disregarded one of his most important observations as to the in-ternal structure of the six 'immortals').

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[10]The ranking of *aša* and *vohu manah:* One may cite just one problem of the ranking of the 'holy immortals,' the peculiar uncertainty about the ranking of *vohu manah* and *aša.* In the Avestan lists, *vohu manah* is placed first. In the Gathas, as Lommel and others found, *aša* is the first through which the others operate. *Aša* is the most decisive concept of the Zarathushtrian confession; it is not 'order' but 'truth' (cf. Lommel 1930: 18). Given this difference in ranking, Gershevitch (1964: 12) actually concluded that Zarathushtra's system is the result of the syncretization of two earlier ones: one system in which *aša* was recognized as the highest primordial principle and another in which *ahura mazdâ* was the highest essence or deity and where *aša* is an organ, aspect of *ahura mazdâ.* Lommel (1964) pointed out that, while *aša* is an age-old concept, *vohu manah* is the most recent Iranian/Zarathushtrian addition; because of its status as the principle of 'mind' it could not well be placed last, thus its insertion as the highest. Duchesne-Guillemin (1958: 46-50) observed that, unlike *aša, vohu manah* is more or less on the same level with the words and deeds of man (cf. also Widengren 1045: 46 ff.).

It appears that there is no need to assume syncretism. *aša* existed as the prime principle even before the creation of the world; but creation is an act of *mind,* of the creative principle *ahura mazdâ* and of mental energy; *aša* is realized *through* creation. For the creation of this time-bound world, and for its salvation, *mind* is the prime mover, and with it *vohu manah.*

As mentioned, Zarathushtra's system is conceived of as doubly dualistic: on the one hand, the positive principles are opposed to their negative opposites; on the other hand, the spiritual principles, positive and negative, are paired with their worldly symbols, thus creating a system with four sectors. Lommel (1930) is the first to have systematically analysed that system in regard to all of its positions. The difficulty of that analysis lies in the fact that while in post-Zarathushtrian times the system had been terminologically regularized, in the Gathas only the major positions are so determined; whereas the other positions, especially the negative worldly symbols, are filled by more than one term. Yet it is evident that the *positions* as such had already been established in Zarathushtra's system, even though he had probably not rigorously formalized it.

This is not the place to recapitulate the careful and detailed arguments that led Lommel to reconstruct the sets of positive principles, negative principles, positive symbols and negative symbols; the reader is referred to his study. However, the four sets as reconstructed by him are (Lommel 1930: 111 and 120):

	Gut	Böse
Geist	Weiser Herr	———————
	Kluger Geist	Böser Geist
	1. Gutes Denken	1. Schlechtes Denken
	2. Wahrsein	2. Lüge
	3. Herrschaft	3. Missherrschaft
	4. Fügsamkeit	4. Auflehnung
	5. Heilsein	5. Hunger
	6. Nichtsterben	6. Durst
	Gehorsam	Ungehorsam
	Vergeltung	Zorn

Gut	Böse
Zarathushtra und fromme Menschen	Unmensch (böser, todeswürdiger Mensch).
1. Haustiere	1. Wolf (reissende Tiere)
2. Feuer	2. Schlange (Kriechtiere, Ungeschöpfe Ungeziefer)
3. Metall	3. Verunreinigung (durch Leiche, Krankheit, Fäulnis, Unsauberkeit), Rost
4. Erde	4. - - - - - - - -
5. Wasser	5. Dürre (Hitze)
6. Pflanzen	6. Misswuchs (Frost)

(The left margin is labeled vertically: **Körper**)

Note that the symbol for 4. 'Auflehnung' is left open by Lommel. He tentatively suggested 'winter, ice, snow' (*ibidem:* 119).

In the following table the items are rearranged by number so that each of the six positive principles occurs together with the items of the same number, i.e., with its negative principle and the worldly symbols of both. The items 'Gehorsam' and 'Vergeltung' and their correlates will not be considered here. The resulting sets of four items each are arranged in two columns of three sets each. Such arrangement both saves space—and implies the *pairings* of the principles and their symbols discussed in the following.

1	spirit	pos	good mind	4	humility
		neg	bad mind		hubris
	world	pos	cow (domestic animals)		earth
		neg	wolf (predatory animals)		(? left open by Lommel)
2	spirit	pos	truth	5	completeness, health
		neg	lie		disease, wounds
	world	pos	fire		waters
		neg	snake, vermin (cold blooded creatures)		drought
3	spirit	pos	(good) rulership	6	immortality
		neg	bad rulership		aging, mortality
	world	pos	metals		plants
		neg	rust, disintegration		bad harvest, frost, hunger

These are the principles and symbols applied by the two spirits for their creations. The two spirits, in turn, have their own worldly symbols, two kinds of man:

ahura mazdâ		
spirit	pos	sp^{e}nta mainyu
	neg	aṇra mainyu
world	pos	true mankind
	neg	false mankind

Although Lommel did not elaborate very much on this high-level fourfold pattern, his reasons for positing it were: a) man is the only worldly creature which has a *daênâ* 'Urbild?' (better 'conscience,' cf. footnote 12) like the spiritual beings; b) man chooses freely between true and false, just as the two spirits have chosen; c) for his choice man utilizes, and seeks the help of, the six 'holy immortals,' or their negatives, just as the two spirits do; d) man is in the center of the creation of the world, part spiritual, part corporeal; and he is also the decisive agent in bringing about the final confrontation between truth and falsity, and thus laying the foundations for the final battle. Man, through his decision, is responsible for either the ultimate destruction or the resurrection of himself and the creature which depends on him, and he is likewise responsible for the destruction or the resurrection of the spiritual powers on which he himself depends and which created him.

Based on these observations by Lommel, it is evident that the 'symbolic' function of man in relation to the highest principle, *sp^enta mainyu,* is more than simply a figurative equation. Man is the 'incarnation/incorporation'—or, using a term from natural science, 'materialization'—of the positive and negative mental energies, called the *sp^enta mainyu* and the *aṇra mainyu.* Materialization is necessary in order to bring about, by continuous deliberate choices, the maximal separation (and polarization) of positive and negative, true and false, good and evil, at which time the world is prepared for the final holocaust, the 'ordeal of the molten metal' in Zarathushtra's imagery; then the *active* forces of natural laws, here *vohu manah* 'good mind,' *aša* 'truth' and *xšaθra* 'rule,' will force the deviant, arbitrary, random laws into oblivion.

Similar to the relationship between *sp^enta mainyu* and good mankind, the symbols of the 'holy immortal' principles are not to be understood as figurative terms but as materializations and realizations[11] of the principles which control the world of limited time. Both are spiritual and worldly 'creations' in Zarathushtra's

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[11] Cf. the terms suggested by Lommel (1930: 102-4): 'Verwirklichung,' 'wirksam werden' and 'Analogie und Wechselwirkung.'—On the complex correlation between principle and symbol, cf. Lommel's (1930: 126) observation on *ârmaiti* (my translation): '*ârmaiti,* who offers homestead and pastures, nurtures the cow with the plants which god let grow for her. Thus *ârmaiti* is not the material earth itself, nor the deity of earth, but the spiritual *Urgrund* of earth.'

terms. In the following the main focus will be on those principles
which enable Zarathushtra's central agent, man, as well as the two
spirits, to operate.[12] In particular the question asked will be how
Zarathushtra and his more immediate successors may have under-
stood the multiple interrelationships and interactions between
principles and symbols.

2. *The matrix of the 'holy immortals'*

2.1. *The matrix in the Gathas*

As mentioned above, Lommel (1930) had found that the
function of the first female principle, *ârmaiti* 'humility,' is

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[12]It has not always been recognized that the 'holy immortals' and their negatives
are to be understood as *instrumental* principles applied by both 'holy spirits' and men.
The principles are not *part* of men or spirits, nor are they their *capabilities* (Fähigkeiten).
This distinction may briefly be hinted at with regard to *vohu manah* 'good mind,' *daênâ,*
xratu 'intellect' and *čišti* 'insight, differentiation.' 1. *čišti* is the *result* of the application
and operation of the *daênâ, vohu manah* and *xratu* by which 'insight' or 'differentiation'
is achieved; 2. *vohu manah* is the 'guide-line' of how to think and to recognize right, a
rule to be applied, hence also to be understood as an 'instrument'; 3. *xratu* is the *capa-
bility* of thinking and recognizing; 4. *daênâ,* however, is *part* of man and spirit, the
highest part which man as the only worldly creature has in common with the two spirits.
Thus, *daênâ* is definitely not 'Sinn' or 'Gesinnung' (Humbach 1959 throughout); much
more acceptable is its interpretations as 'Urbild' or 'Urwesen' (Lommel 1930) and better
still 'geistiges Ich' (Bartholomae 1904: column 665-67). It is best to interpret it as *con-
science* both in the sense of 'Bewusstsein' and 'Gewissen,' that enlightened or unen-
lightened highest part that knows and *recognizes,* and is recognized, intuitively. In a way
it is the 'astral body' or the 'fluidum' in less enlightened spiritualistic terms. Such
conscience is part of man and of the spirits.
    The connotation of (good) *daênâ* as 'religion,' specifically the 'good religion' of
Zarathushtra, thus emphasizes the 'bond' of all good men with the spirits and *ahura
mazdâ* through that good conscience. In later mythology, it is the *daênâ* 'conscience'
which receives the dead at the 'bridge,' either an ugly or a beautiful conscience, pending
on his thoughts, words and deeds (for the unlikely derivation of *daênâ < dhāy* 'nurture'
as well as the other related terms, cf. bibliography in Widengren 1954-55: 33-4). Pavry
(1926) also translates 'conscience'; however, without presenting arguments.
    b. As Smith (1929) has clearly pointed out, only the first four of the 'holy im-
mortals' are *instrumental* 'aspects' of *ahura mazdâ,* only they frequently occur in the in-
strumental case in the Gathas; *haurvatât* and *am^er^etât* do not. She concluded (p. 51) that
the latter two are the 'blessings' of *ahura mazdâ,* denoting 'eternal welfare.' This obser-
vation seems to indicate that the two, which so often appear as a dual *dvandva,* are not
'creative' but 're-creative' principles, promised, i.e., 'anticipated,' in terms of linear time,
but active simultaneously with the others when viewed in terms of non-linear time.