

YAMA/YIMA/JAMŠĒD, KING OF PARADISE OF THE IRANIANS

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At the beginning of my Gāthā studies, I was convinced that the Pahlavi translation of the Gāthās is, in most cases, not much use in the interpretation of the Gāthās themselves, but I have changed my mind in the course of time. One of the aims of the present paper is to adduce the Pahlavi translation and other native sources to elucidate the Yima stanza of Zarathushtra's Gāthās (Yasna 32,8), thereby correcting my former attempts to decipher it, the last of which was put forward in Humbach-Ichaporla (1994) p. 41. The post-Avestan sources were collected by Arthur Christensen in 1934; the Pahlavi Rivayat is now accessible in Williams' modern edition (published in 1990), and the Avesta fragments inserted in the Pahlavi translation of Vidēvdād 2,5 and 2,19 are dealt with in the new edition of Zamyād Yašt which I published in cooperation with Pallan Ichaporla (1998).

1. Old Persian *yama*, Avestan *yima*, Pahlavi *jamsea*,
New Persian *Jamšīd*

The legendary early history of the Iranians is described in the Old Iranian Avesta, the Middle Persian Pahlavi literature, and Firdusi's New Persian Book of the Kings (*Šāhnāme*). It comprises two periods, the first extending from the very beginning up to the loss of Paradise, the second covering the period of the Kavi rulers, or Kayanids, from Kavi Kavāta to Kavi Vištāspa, the protector of the prophet Zarathushtra.

The figures of the first period are:

Gaiiō Marōtan 'Mortal Life,' the first man, Phl. *Gayōmard*, NP. *Kayūmarth*;

Haošiiaŋha, the first ruler, Phl.NP. *Hōšang*;

Taxmō Urupi, Phl. *Taxmōrub* (incorrectly read *Taxmōraz*), NP. *Tahmūrath*, and finally

Yima (*Yima xšaēta*), the king of the paradisiacal Golden Age of the Iranians, Phl. *Jam* (*Jamšēd*), NP. *Jamšīd* ("Jamsheed"). Cf. also *Yamakšēdda* (= **Yama xšhaita*), an Old Persian proper name transmitted in Elamite garb on one of the Elamite clay tablets unearthed in Persepolis.¹

Yama (**Yama xšaita*) is not only the Old Persian equivalent of Avestan *Yima* (*Yima Xšaēta*), but is also its Proto-Iranian pre-form. The name and its attribute *xšaēta* < *xšaita* 'brilliant, majestic' had coalesced already in the majority of their Pahlavi occurrences.² The stem vowel *a* of *Yama* was

¹Gershevitch (1969) p. 245.

²In quite the same way the phrase Av. *hwarəxšaēta* 'bright Sun' has coalesced in Phl. *hwar(x)šēd* and NP. *xuršīd*, which simply mean 'Sun.'

preserved in Old, Middle, and New Persian, yet changed into *Yima* in the Avestan language.³ In the Gāthās one would expect **Yāma*, the correct Old Avestan form of the name, cf. the homonymous adjective *yāma* 'twin' < **yama* in Yasna 30,3, but in Yasna 32,8, the only Gāthic instance of the name, we find *Yima*, which due to its numerous Young Avestan occurrences and the popularity of the Yima legend as well, crept into the transmission of the Gāthā text.

In the Younger Avesta, Yima is described as the king of the Paradise of the Golden Age of mankind, see, e.g., Yašt 19,33:

*yejhe xšaθrāda / nōit aotəm āṇha nōit garəməm / nōit zauruuā
āṇha nōit mərəiviiuš / nōit araskō daēuuō.dātō / par<ō> anādruxt-
ōit / para ahmat̄ yaṭ hīm aēm / draoγəm (variant: draoγəm) vācim
aṇhaiθīm / cinmāne (*cimāne) paiti.barata*

'(Yima) under whose reign / there was neither cold nor heat, / neither old age nor death, / nor the envy created by the *daēvas* (demons), / owing to (his) not-lying,⁴ / before he added⁵ the lie, the untrue speech, to his *account.'⁶

Paradise, however, does not last forever. The subsequent stanza Yašt 19,34 describes Yima's loss of Paradise and his downfall:

*āat̄ hīiat̄ hīm aēm / draoγəm vācim aṇhaiθīm / ci[n]māne paiti.bar-
ata / vāēnəmnam̄ ahmat̄ haca x^varəno / mərəyahe kəhrpa frašusat̄*

'but when (Yima) had added the lie, the untrue word, to his *account, the Royal Glory flew away from him visibly in the shape of a bird.'

Yima fled, and evil, personified as the Serpent Aži Dahāka and the Turanian scoundrel Frangrasyan, entered the world. Yašt 19,46 tells us that Yima was cut

³Sogdian has *Ymyh*, to be read *Yimi* rather than *Yami*, which is found in a fragment of the Book of the Giants, see Henning (1943/1946) pp. 52-74 = (1977) p. 137, and Skjærvø (1995) pp. 186-223. Bactrian *Iamšo*, carrying sword and spear and having a falcon sitting on his hand is depicted on the reverse side of a coin issued by the Kušāna king Huviška and published by Göbl (1984) p. 41, pls. 127 and 171. A copy with a most useful drawing was published by Grenet (1984) p. 253. In my opinion *Iamšo* is a short form ("Kurzname") of **Iamšēdo* rather than an abbreviated spelling for **Iamo šao* 'King Yama' as proposed by Grenet, who addresses the Kafirian (non-Iranian) god *Imrā* < **Yama rājā*, followed by Gnoli (1989) pp. 919-923. Bactr. *Iamšo* is also found in the proper names *Iamšo* (*Iamšano*), *Iamšobandago*, *Iamšolado*, *Iamšooanindo*, *Iamšospalo* (*Iamšospalēlo*); see Sims-Williams (2000), p. 194. Note in this connection that besides the frequent Bactrian coin inscription *Nana šao* 'Queen Nana' no variants such as **Nanašo* or **Nanšo* are found.

⁴*para* is an error due to anticipation of the following *para ahmat̄*. In Humbach-Ichaporria (1994) p. 109, we have restored **parō*, but also **haca* might be possible in this carelessly transmitted text.

⁵*paiti.barata* 'he added (to his own)' (medium voice!) is more plausible than 'he accepted' (Av. better **paiti- gərəβnāt̄*, Phl. *padirift*) or 'he reproduced (the false speech insinuated to Yima by the Druj)' as proposed in Humbach-Ichaporria (1998) p. 109.

⁶With this translation I try to improve the one given in Humbach-Ichaporria (1998) pp. 110f. It seems to me now that *cinmāne* 'to strive' is corrupted from *cimāne* 'to heap up, to be heaped up, to account for, to be accounted for' by adding one vertical stroke. Cf. Yašt 10,32 *paiti nō zaodrā višay^vha ... ḥam̄ hiš cimāne baray^vha nī hiš dasuuā garō.nmāne* 'approach our libations, ... collect them to heap them up, store them with yourself in Paradise.' Differently Gershevitch (1959) p. 89: *ḥam̄ ... cimāne* 'for consumption.'

superimposed by the conception of Yima forming a primary twin couple with his sister (Phl. *Jamag*, Vedic Sanskrit *Yamā*). In the Indian Rigveda, this twin couple is faced with the duty to procreate progeny, as prescribed by divine law, but the inevitable way to fulfill this duty is to commit incest. This is the deadly sin by which Yama lost immortality and became the king of the underworld, the Indian Hades. The matter is different in Iranian tradition inasmuch as the Iranian theory — hardly the general practice of the Iranians — cultivated the idea of the next-of-kin marriage not as a sin but as a religious merit.¹¹

The problem of the procreation of mankind preoccupied Iranian minds again and again, as is graphically shown in two passages of the Pahlavi encyclopaedia *Bundahishn*, which diverge from each other but neither of which is necessarily of ancient origin. According to Bdh. 14B,1, Jam (Yima), after having lost immortality, married a she-*dēw* (female demon) and gave his sister Jamag in marriage to a he-*dēw* (male demon), a marriage from which unwholesome animals such as the ape and the bear arose. Contrary to this improper solution, Bdh. 35,4 attributes to Jam and his sister Jamag the first next-of-kin marriage in Iranian history, saying that 'from Jam and his sister Jamag a pair (*juxtāg*) of man and woman was born, and they became wife and husband together,' a tradition which is paralleled by similar passages of other Pahlavi texts.

Concerning Yima's twinning, Zarathushtra himself does not seem to have adopted the concept of a twin couple of brother and sister, but he rather emphasised the ambivalence of his character. Yima was a twin in himself insofar as he was the prototype of mankind in which both good and evil are inseparable. In Yima, the twin, the two antagonistic primeval spirits started their fight against each other, the fight which will not be decided until the Renovation of the World (Av. *frašōkərəiti*, literally 'brilliant-making'). On these two, see the famous Gāthā passage Yasna 30,3:

*aṭ tā mainiū paouruīē / yā yēmā xʷafnā asruuātəm /
manahicā vacahicā / šūaodanōi hī vahiiō akəmcā*

'These are the two spirits (existing) in the beginning, the twins who have been heard of as the two (kinds of) dreams, as the two (kinds of) thoughts and words, as the two (kinds of) actions, the better and the evil one.'¹²

2. Yima's sin

Zarathushtra's Yasna 32,8 is the only Gāthic instance of Yima's name and his sinfulness too:

- (a) *aēšam aēnaḡham vīuaḡhušō srāuuī yimascī*
(b) *yō mašūnḡ cixšnušō ahmākəḡḡ gāuš bagā xʷārəmnō*

¹¹The derogatory western interpretation of the term 'next-of-kin marriage' introduced by classical authors is certainly erroneous. One should rather think of the kind of intermarriage practised in the German high nobility, all the members of which feel to belong to one and the same family.

¹²The translation 'the two (kinds of) actions, the better and the evil one' is to be substituted for the misleading 'the two actions, the better and the evil' in Humbach-Ichaporis 1994.

'Even (or: particularly) Yima, the son of Vivahvan, became notorious for such sins/crimes,
(Yima), who tried to content men ...'

Here the question must be asked, whether line b specifies the sin committed by Yima ('particularly Yima, who'), or whether it mentions one of Yima's most outstanding merits, thus depicting him as a tragic hero ('even Yima, who'). This question cannot be answered until the sequence *gāuš bagā x^uārəmnō* is analysed correctly. Contrary to some of my previous attempts, the study of the Pahlavi translation of this sequence has convinced me that it really refers to meat-eating, as was already held by Bartholomae (1904) col. 1866f. Unfortunately, *aēnah-* 'crime, outrage' used by Zarathushtra in Yasna 32,8 is a term too general to provide us with some information on what was really told by the ancient story-tellers and poets in the underlying legend. The only substantial definition of Yima's sin that is available for us is *draoγa-* (*draoga-*) 'lie, deceit' found in Yašt 19,33f. quoted above. In this connection it is worth mentioning that the manuscript variant *draoga-* is an Old Avestan form that must have crept from a lost Old Avestan text into the transmission of this Young Avestan passage, thus proving the Old Avestan origin of the motive. Its Old Persian equivalent is *drauga-* 'lie, deceit,' attested in Darius's Behistun inscription where it qualifies the unjustified claim to Darius's throne raised by Gaumāta, the false Bardiya (Greek Pseudo-Smerdis). From the Pahlavi sources and the *Šāhnāmeḥ* passages dealt with below we may infer that Avestan *draoγa-* (*draoga-*) has the same connotation as Old Persian *drauga-* has in Behistūn: Yima claimed to be acknowledged as the Creator and Supreme Ruler. The determining factor of his downfall is what the ancient Greeks called *hybris*, an excess of ambition ultimately bringing about the transgressor's ruin. *Dādestān-ī Dēnīg* 38,19-20 (West 39,16) speaks of Jam as having been deceived by the Druj, the personified lie:

*ka az druj frēfihist / u-š az ōhrmazd bandaγih be ō abardom xwadāyih
ārzūgēnīd / u-š abar dām-dādārih-ī xwēš guft*

'when (Jam) was deceived by the Druj and was, thereby, made eager for supreme sovereignty instead of the service of Ohrmazd, / he spoke about himself as having created the creatures.'

More explicit is Pahlavi Rivayat 31a10:

*u-š guft kū āb man dād / zamīg man dād / urwar man dād / xwaršēd
man dād / māh man dād / star man dād / ud asmān man dād /
gōspand man dād / mardōm man dād / hāmōyēn dahišn ī gētīg man
dād / ud pad ān drō-gōwišnīh / ā-š xwarrah ud xwadāyih az-iš appār
būd / u-š tan bē ō wišōbišn ī dast ī dēwān mad*

'and (Jam) said: "I created the waters, / I created the earth, / I created the plants, / I created the sun, / I created the moon, / I created the stars, / and I created the heaven, / I created the beneficent animal, / I created mankind, / I created all the creations of the material world / ..." and owing to that deceitful speech (*drō-gōwišnīh*, cf. Av. *draoγəm vācim*), / his glory and lordship were taken away from him, and his body fell into destruction at the hands of the *dēvs* (demons)'

Just a slight variation of the second half of this is found in Yima's so-called confession in Pahlavi Rivayat 31c7:

*u-m harw dām ud dahišn ī mēnōg ud gētīg guft kū man dād / pad
ān drō ī-m guft / man xwarrah ud xwadāyih az-i<m> appār būd /
u-m tan be ō wišōbišn ī dast ī dēwān mad*

'and I said that I (had) created all the creatures and creations of the spiritual and material worlds.' / For those lies (*drō* = Av. *draoγa-*) which I uttered, / glory and lordship were taken away from me, / and my body fell into destruction at the hands of the *dēws* (demons).'

The idea of *hybris* is even more clearly expressed in Firdusi's description of the event that had led to the catastrophe, found in *Šāhnāme* 4,66ff.¹³

*garānmāyikān-rā ze-lashkar be-xwānd / ce māyeh sozan piš-e išan
berānad / cunīn guft bā sāl-xwurde mahān / ke juz xwištan-rā na-
dānam jehān / hunar dar jehān az man āmad padīd / cu man
nāmwar taxt-e šāhī na-dād*

'(Jamšīd) summoned all the chiefs from the army, and what a wealth of words he used! So he said to the aged grandees: "I do not acknowledge in the world (anyone) but myself / Virtue was made visible in the world by me / The royal throne has seen no famous one like me."'

75ff. *garīdūn ke dānād ke man kardam īn / ma-rā xwānd bāyad jehān
āfarīn / cu īn gufteh šud farr-e yazdān az way / gusast*

"If it is so that ye perceive what I have done / I should be hailed as the maker of the world." When this was said, God's Grace departed from him.'

83 *Jamšīd bar tīre-gūn gašt rūz / hamī kāst ān farr-e gīti furūz*

'Day darkened to Jamšīd, / he lost the Grace that lightens the world.'

189f. *siyah gašt raxšande rūz-e safīd / gusastand paywand bā jamšīd
/ bar-ū tīre šud farrāh-ye īzādī / be-kazẓī gerāyīd u nā-bezradī*

'The bright day gloomed / and men renounced Jamšīd / who when God's Grace was darkened / turned to folly and perverseness.'

3. The eating of Yima's meat

Logically, the human inhabitants of Paradise, which was free of mortality and death, should have become mortal at the very moment of Yima's downfall but there must have existed a number of other versions. According to one of them, which resembles the forbidden fruits of Jewish Paradise, men lost immortality by devouring (= eating in an improper way) "the meat of Yima". See the gloss to the Pahlavi translation of Yasna 9,1:

¹³The English translation given here is based upon that by A. G. and E. Warner (1905).

*Hād, ā-š tan pad frārōnūh amary kard ēstēd / ud nē ēdōn ciyōn
awešān kē gōšt ī Jam jūd / u-šān andar tan *marg¹⁴ kard ēstēd*

'The body of (Hōm) was made immortal owing to his honesty, / and (it was) not (treated) in the way of those who devoured (= improperly ate) the meat of Yima¹⁵ / so that death was produced in their bodies.'¹⁶

At first glance, this version would blame Yima for having made people eat meat, thus giving way to death and destruction, the logical consequence of which would have been the loss of paradise and immortality.¹⁷ Yet one should rather suppose that men stole some meat kept by Yima for sacrificial purposes, a hypothesis which is corroborated by the interpretation of Yasna 32,8 put forward below. Depicting Yima as the first sacrificer, the gloss has ritual implications that have not yet been recognised as such.

The same subject can be found in the corrupt Pahlavi Rivayat 31b1-3, where Yima is described as having permitted men to slaughter animals and, at the same time, as having tried to prevent them from doing so:

*Zarduxšt ēn-iz pursīd az Ohrmazd / kū Jam pad gēhān nekīh cē
weh kard / Ohrmazd guft kū ān ī ka dēwān be ō mardōmān guft
kū gōspand bē ōzanēd / ... mardōmān guft kū / †OD¹⁸ pad dast-
warīh ī Jam be kunēm / u-šān kard / ud Jam pad nē ōzadan ī
mardōmān gōspand / ... abāg dēwān ēdōn pāhikārd / <kū pad...
> ī-š¹⁹ dēw<ān> bē ērast hēnd / u-š <mard ōmān>²⁰ margōmand
ud pādīfrāhōmand kard hēnd*

'Zarduxst asked this also of Ohrmazd: / What did Jam do best of the world? / Ohrmazd said: That which was when the *dēws* (demons) said to men: "Kill the beneficent animal..." / Men replied: "Let us act with (*without?) the permission of Jam," / and they did, / and so Jam battled with the *dēws* (demons) for men not to kill the beneficent animal / <so that by> his <...> the *dēws* were condemned / and <men> were made by him(?) mortal and punishable.²¹

¹⁴ **marg* 'death' is my correction for MSS *amary* 'deathless, immortal,' a corruption which is due to inadvertent repetition/perseveration of the preceding *amary*. The corruption has completely distorted the meaning of the gloss, see note 16.

¹⁵ The idea of cannibalism is disproved by the use of *gōšt* 'meat,' which cannot refer to Yima's dead body.

¹⁶ The translation 'so that (lit. and) in them their bodies were made immortal' (thus after Bartholomae's German entry in (1904) col. 1866f.), is technically incorrect and does not make sense, neither in its details (they were made immortal in their bodies) nor as a whole (the *devourers* of meat were made immortal). By the use of the verb *jūdan* 'to devour,' the "daēvic" equivalent of the "ahurian" *zwardan* 'to eat,' the consumption of "Yima's meat" is qualified as sinful, a fact which contradicts the idea that men became immortal by having partaken of it.

¹⁷ Firdusi places the beginning of slaughtering animals in the era of Zohak [Aži Dahāka], whose cook was Iblis [Ahriman], but strangely enough this particular subject is inserted in the chapter on Jamšīd, 4, 149-153.

¹⁸ The ideogram *OD* = *tā* 'until' is corrected into **LA* = *nē* 'not' by Williams, a rather doubtful correction. Instead of *tā pad* one would rather expect *bē az* 'without.'

¹⁹ In my opinion some piece of text is lost here. In this case it is not necessary to follow Williams in correcting *ZY-š* = *ī-š* into **AYK-š* = *kū-š*.

²⁰ *mardōmān* 'men' is supplied by the present author.

²¹ Williams: 'that is, he fought the demons / and they were made mortal and punishable.'

Let us return now to the Gāthic line Yasna 32,8b

(*Yimascīt.* . . .) *yā mašūōng cixšnušō ahmakēōng gāuš bagā x^wārəmnō*

whose sequence *gāuš bagā x^wārəmnō* is understood by the Pahlavi translation as a legal injunction issued by the prophet, imposing on men to be moderate in eating meat:

kē ō mardōmān cāšīd amagān gōšt pad bazišn xwarēd

‘(Yima) who taught men, our (people): “eat meat according to apportionment”.’

or alternatively:

‘(Yima) who taught men: “eat the meat of our (animals) according to apportionment”.’

This injunction is explained by the gloss

āmēzag mardōmān sēnag-masāy bāzā-masāy

‘the side-dish of men/humans is as much as a breast/foreleg²² (and) as much as a hind leg.’

where ‘breast/foreleg’ and ‘hind leg’ are units of measure which should not be taken literally.²³

It is evident that the Gāthā line Yasna 32,8b was interpreted by the Pahlavi scholars as an admonition addressed to men by Yima to be moderate in consuming meat and making ample use of the side-dishes instead, in order to save their livestock. The same idea underlies the Pahlavi translation of Yasna 29,7b *mazdā gauuōi xšuuīdəmcā huuō urušaēibiiō spəntō sāsnaīā*, which runs:

Ohrmazd gōspand waxšēnīd [kū-š bē abzāyēnīd] ō xwardārān [kū pad paymān xwarēd] ī ōy abzōnīg [Ohrmazd] amōxt [pad sēnag-masāy ud bāzā-masāy]

‘Ohrmazd made cattle grow [i.e., he made it increase] for its eaters [saying: “eat you moderately”]; the bountiful one [Ohrmazd] taught: [“with as much as a breast/foreleg and with (the side-dish being) as much as a hind leg”].’

A more circumstantial treatment of the Avesta text of the Yima line Yasna 32,8b is concealed in its corrupt Pahlavi paraphrase found in Book 9 of the Dēnkard.²⁴ Whereas Av. *cixšnušō* ‘wishing to content’ is rendered in the Pahlavi translation by the erroneous etymology *cāšīd* ‘he taught,’ the Dēnkard manuscripts have *hwšwt* /ANŠWTA= *mardōm* ‘man, mankind,’ which in my opinion is just a slight corruption of *hwšwtk* = *hwšnūdag* ‘contented,’ a corruption which made the passage unintelligible:

²²Note that Phl. *sēnag*, which usually means ‘breast,’ renders Av. *sraoni-* ‘buttock (of men)’ in Vid. 8.56-58, and the compound *sēnag-masāy* renders Av. *sraoni.masah-* ‘hind leg’ in Vid. 6,20 *astəm . . . bāzu.stauuayhəm vā sraoni.masayhəm vā* ‘a bone as strong as (from) an arm and as long as (from) a thigh.’

²³See Macuch (1993), pp. 211-214.

²⁴Dēnkard 9,31,12, Sanjana, vol. 17, text, p. 102, lines 12ff.: Madan D. 838 lines 2ff.

*ud ān ī Wiwanghānān Jam / ā-š šnāyēnīd mardom u-š šnāyēnīd
gōspand hudāhag / ēdōn pad gōwišn, zarduxšt, ka-š guft ō mardōm
/ "ašmā pad gōspand *hušnūdag-ēd / kū ašmā pad bazišn xwēš gōšt
xwarēd *hušnūdag-ēd / mā āz rāy ud mā arišk rāy apaymān gōšt
xwarēd / pad bazišn gōšt sagr bawišn"*

'Jam, son of Vivanghan / contented mankind and contented the
beneficent cattle, / O Zarduxst, when he addressed men with the
following speech: / "be content with (your) cattle; / i. e., eat meat
according to your own apportionment (=the ration apportioned to
you), and be content (therewith); / do not eat meat immodestly out
of greed or out of envy; / with the meat apportioned (to you) you
must be satiated.'

The same idea is hidden in Zarathushtra's enigmatic half-line *gāuš bagā
x^vārəmnō* of Yasna 32,8b, a direct speech, which is freely rendered by Pahlavi
gōšt pad bazišn x^varēd 'eat meat according to apportionment,' thus suggesting
that the three words do not just form a simple phrase but rather a complete
verbless sentence quoting a statement or an injunction attributed to Yima.²⁵

(1) Phl. *gōšt* 'meat' suggests that Av. *gāuš* 'cow, ox, piece of cattle' is used
in the sense of 'meat' as it is used in several of its Young Avestan occurrences
listed by Bartholomae (1904) col. 507f.

(2) If Phl. *pad bazišn* 'by apportionment, appropriately' is correct, OAv.
bagā must be the same as YAv. *baγā* 'portion.'

(3) Phl. *xwarēd* 'eat' makes the attribution of *x^vārəmnō* to the root *x^var*
'to eat, take' inevitable, but the current analysis of the word as a medium participle
of an unattested present **x^vāra-* (correct would be the active *x^varant-*) is
to be abandoned. *x^vārəmnō* must be the genitive singular masculine of a stem
x^vārəman- (**x^vāraman-*). This is a derivation from Proto Iranian *x^vāra-* 'meal'
(cf. Phl. *xwār* 'food' and Ossetic *xor*, *xwar* 'bread'²⁶ in the same way as OAv.
airiīaman- 'clan' and Oss. *limān* 'guest' are derivations from *airiīa-* 'Aryan,'
and Greek *daitymōn* 'participant in a meal' is a derivation from *daitys* 'meal.'
As for the genitive singular *x^vārəmnō* from masculine *x^vārəman-* cf. *airiīamanō*
(written *airiīamanō*) from masc. *airiīaman-*.²⁷

Taking these considerations as point of departure, three alternative mean-
ings of *x^vārəman-* are possible, viz. 'complete meal,' or 'company at meal,' or
'participant in a meal.' Thus *gāuš bagā x^vārəmnō* can either mean 'meat is an
(integral) part of a complete meal,' or 'meat is a share due to the company-at-
meal,' or 'meat is a share due to the participant-in-a-meal.' In principle, these
three alternatives do not differ much. The masculine gender of *x^vārəman* points
to 'company at meal' or 'participant in a meal' rather than to 'complete meal,'
but this is strongly supported by the Pahlavi tradition and, therefore, used in
the following concluding translation of the two pertinent lines Yasna 32,8ab:

²⁵In Sanskrit, the direct speech would be concluded with the particle *iti* also in the present
case where a *verbum dicendi* is lacking.

²⁶The Ossetic word was adduced by Gershevitch (1987) p. 491f., who however continues to
pose a medium participle *x^vārəmnā-*, to which he attributes the unparalleled meaning 'top(?)
food constituting.' Assuming a most typical word order he understands the line as a plea for
mercy uttered by Yima in court in the dock.

²⁷The formation of the genitive singular of the masculine *man-* stems in *°mnō* (*°mnas-cā*)
is different from that of the neutral stems in *°māng* such as *cašmāng* from *cašman-* 'eye.'

*aēšam aēnaḡham vīuuḡhušō srāuuī yimascēt yē mašūiḡng cixšnušō
ahmākēḡg gāuš bagā x^vārəmnō*

'Even (or: particularly) Yima, the son of Vivahvan, became notorious for such crimes, (Yima), who tried to content men, our (people)[or: men (and) our (animals)], (decreeing:) meat (should/may be) part of a (complete) meal.'

The Yima legend was well known to the Iranians of Zarathushtra's time, and his reference to it belonged to the very few passages of the Gāthās that were comprehensible to most of his listeners. Nowhere else in the Gāthās had the prophet regulated human behaviour in such a detailed form. In no way did he attribute vegetarianism to the inhabitants of his Paradise, but he admitted that the consumption of meat since ancient times had been an inevitable necessity for the preservation of human life in (most of) the Iranian countries. His solution is a compromise between practicability on the one hand and love for all beings of the good creation on the other. People should eat meat but they should do it moderately, thereby saving their livestock and, at one and the same time, doing justice to the animals entrusted to them by Ahura Mazdā.

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