Linear worldview and the Gathas of Zoroaster

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Tiivistelmä: Yleisesti ottaen kahta kulttuuria pidetään lineaarisen maailmankuvan edelläkävijöinä: muinaista Israelia ja zarathustralaisuutta. Tämä tutkimus tarkastelee lineaarisen maailmankuvan syntyä varhaisen zarathustralaisuuden piirissä, joka jo ensimmäisellä vuosituhannella eaa. kehitti idean optimistisesta eskatologiasta, *frašō.kərətista*, joka selkeästi edusti lineaarista maailmankuvaa. Tuon ajan zarathustralaiset uskoivat, että maailma oli saanut alkunsa Viisaan Herran luomistyössä, ja että maailmalla, niin kuin me sen tunnemme, tulisi olemaan kaunis loppu; kuolleet heräävät haudoistaan, maailma palautuu sen alkuperäiseen turmeltumattomaan tilaan, ja kaikki tulisi olemaan täydellistä iankaikkisesti. Syklisessä maailmankuvassa ei ajatella, että maailmalla tai historialla olisi tämänkaltaista loppua.

Tutkimukseni keskittyy kuitenkin zarathustralaisuuden pyhän kirjan Avestan vanhimpaan osaan, profeetta Zarathustran nimissä kulkeviin Gathoihin (*gāθās*), seitsemääntoista hymniin toiselta vuosituhannelta eaa. Tutkimuskysymykseni on siten tämä: onko näissä arkaaisissa hymneissä löydettävissä lineaarista maailmankuvaa, jonka tunnemme myöhemmästä zarathustralaisuudesta. Toisin sanoen tutkimukseni käsittelee sitä, onko Gathoissa *frašō.kərətin* kaltaista eskatologiaa, joka antaisi viitteitä lineaarisesta maailmankuvasta.

Johtopäätöksissä totean, että lineaarinen maailmankuva Gathoissa riippuu käyttämästämme hermeneutiikasta, sitä ei siten eksplisiittisesti löydy analysoimistani jakeista. Gathat saatettiin alun perin ymmärtää ilman eskatologiaa ja lineaarista maailmankuvaa, mutta ensimmäisestä *Ahunauuaitī*-Gathasta (Y. 28-34) löytyvä Yasna 30 sisältää iduillaan olevaa eskatologiaa. Yasna 30:n jakeisiin 5-10 on todella helppoa, modernille lukijalle suorastaan luontevaa, tulkita lineaarinen ja eskatologinen maailmankuva.

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1. Introduction

Western scholarship has traditionally made a dichotomy between cyclical and linear worldviews, and while this binary categorization is inflexible, it certainly points out there are fundamental differences between the two. The emergence of a linear worldview, a tremendous shift in religio-philosophical paradigm in which time and history began to be conceptualized in a novel linear fashion, has been generally considered a unique development in history, in contrast to a cyclical worldview that was dominant in all of the earliest civilizations.[1] When asking which culture was the first to produce a linear worldview, is not unusual to hear a presumption that it originated from ancient Israel when, in fact, it had two originators: Zoroastrianism next to ancient Israel.[2] It is generally thought that a linear worldview, and a "historicising orientation", was certainly popularized by Abrahamic religions,[3] the first Abrahamic faith having been ancient Israel that started to emphasise sacred history; ancient Hebrews began to see unique acts of God in their history[4], and gradually, with the work of their prophets, formed an optimistic eschatology.[5] However, this optimistic future-oriented eschatology had been a part of ancient Zoroastrianism since Young Avestan times (c. 900 – 600 BCE),[6] possibly even earlier.[7] Few 20th – 21st century scholars have argued that a linear worldview was present in Zoroastrianism before Young Avestan times, in the hymns (*gāθās*/*gāthās*) of Zoroaster, which come from the 2nd millennium BCE.[8] This brings us to the main objective of this thesis: do the Gathas of Zoroaster, composed in the Old Avestan language several centuries earlier than the Young Avestan tradition, contain ideas related to a linear worldview. Typically, the academic field of philosophy has taken interest in examining

[1] Toynbee & the Editors of Britannica 2021, One-way view of time in the philosophy of history, Cyclic view of time in the philosophy of history.
[2] Toynbee & the Editors of Britannica 2021, One-way view of time in the philosophy of history; Eliade 1976, 302-303.
[3] Räisänen 2010, 79.
[4] Eliade 1976, 162.
[5] Räisänen 2010, 79–81.
[6] Skjærvø 2003, xiv, xvi-xvii. Young Avestan, spoken in the early 1st millennium c. 900 – 600 BCE, is an Iranian language linguistically close to Old Persian, whose extant texts in cuneiform script date from the 6th to 4th centuries BCE. Old Avestan was spoken in the 2nd millennium BCE. (Skjærvø 2003, xiii). Most of the Avesta, the holy book of Zoroastrianism, is composed in Young Avestan (Kellens 1987, 35-44).
[7] Vevaina 2009, 220. Yt. 13.17; 13.58; Yt. 19.11-12 and Fragment Westergaard 4.1-3 are Young Avestan passages that contain unambiguous (Yt. 19.11 especially), although unsystematized, references to linear eschatology and resurrection of the dead. However, Jan Bremmer, who problematically attributed Yašts to Achaemenid times (550 – 330 BCE), has argued that passages of Yt. 19 "do not particularly thematise the rising of the dead" (Bremmer 2001, 47-50). Yuhan S. D. Vevaina finds this argument weak considering that Yašts are hymns/poems praising deities alluding to mythological motifs known to audience. He has suggested that Zoroastrian eschatological myth was already in existence in 1000 BCE, or even earlier (Vevaina 2009, 220).
[8] Schwartz 2015, 51; Grenet 2015, 21-22; Boyce 1986 [1979], 27-29; Campbell 1976 [1964],190-192; Campbell 1976 [1962], 7-8.

the history of ideas related to time and history, but this thesis, representing the field of religious studies, examines them in a framework of "worldview",[9] a concept further elaborated in the following chapter. The archaic worldview of the Gathas was thoroughly religious, and it was through religious language that ideas related to time and history manifested themselves.

The Gathas have been a subject of Western academic interest since the 17th century,[10] and the early period of comparative and historical studies of religion was quite interested in Zoroastrianism and ancient Iran, however, scholarly interest has declined since,[11]and a recent decline in Zoroastrian studies happened in the 1970s.[12] Nowadays Zoroastrian studies are conducted in fragmentary academic circles[13] but the field itself is certainly alive and progress has been made, although Zoroastrian studies could and should fare better.[14] Until recently, Western scholarship had generally interpreted the Gathas to contain a prophetic message with lofty ethics.[15] Several scholars claimed, and still claim, that the Gathas speak of linear eschatology, therefore possessing a linear worldview.[16] However, a ritual understanding of the Gathas has been the dominant paradigm in Zoroastrian studies since the last few decades.[17] It holds that the Gathas were originally performed in a ritual, and their entire context was to play out a ritual function; this paradigm sees the Gathas as ritual texts, their purpose paralleling the later Yasna and Vidēvdād Sade rituals; to regenerate the cosmos after periods of chaos.[18]

These differing views boil down to my research problem; whether the Gathas are more related to a cyclical worldview, where periodic renewal / regeneration of the cosmos plays a key role, or whether the Gathas truly point to a progressive renovation of the cosmos, that reaches its eschatological pinnacle in *frašō.kərəti*[19] that was articulated in the Young Avestan

[9] The concept of "worldview" contains multiple dimensions, but this thesis focuses on notions of time and history contained within the framework of a worldview. See chapter 2.
[10] Stausberg 2008, 561-600.
[11] Stausberg, Sohrab-Dinshaw Vevaina & Tessmann 2015, viii.
[12] Stausberg 2008, 561-600.
[13] Stausberg, Sohrab-Dinshaw Vevaina & Tessmann 2015, viii.
[14] Stausberg 2008, 561-600.
[15] Skjærvø 2015, 60.
[16] Schwartz 2015, 51; Boyce 1986 [1979], 27-29; Campbell 1976 [1964], 190-192; Campbell 1976 [1962], 7-8.
[17] Ahmadi 2017, 199.
[18] Skjærvø 2015, 59. Vidēvdād aka Vendidad Sade rituals are contained in the Young Avestan book Vidēvdād ("Law against demons").
[19] The action noun *frašō.kərəti* ("making wonderful / excellent") is attested in Young Avestan only, but the underlying verbal phrase and similar expressions occur in the Gathas (Humbach & Faiss 2010, 22).

tradition (first half of the 1st millennium BCE), and elaborated further in Pahlavi, i.e., Middle Persian literature (3rd – 10th centuries CE),[20] all which epitomize a linear worldview.

Fraš̄o.kərəti is a Young Avestan term whose literal meaning is probably "making wonderful / excellent." It is the final judgment of Zoroastrianism, in which the cosmos, having its beginning in Ahura Mazdā's act of creation, experiences its final renovation / transfiguration / rehabilitation, the end of the cosmos as we know it.[21] How the Old Avestan Gathas relate to this narrative, what could be called an eschatological linear worldview of the Young Avesta, is a question explored in analysis chapters 5-5.16.2.[22] This naturally leads us to analyse eschatology and enables us to formulate the second research question: do the Gathas contain eschatology on a universal / general level, which would give better indicators of a linear worldview, or do the Gathic poems relate to individual fates in the afterlife, without any presupposition of universal eschatology. The multivalence of the Gathas makes it very likely that there is much overlapping of ideas concerning individual fates and possible eschatology on a more general level. Therefore, an objective of this thesis is to make a clear distinction between ideas relating to individual fates in the afterlife, and ideas relating to universal eschatology.

[20] Cereti 2009, Middle Persian literature i. Pahlavi literature.
[21] Hintze 2000, 190-192.
[22] If this thesis were to only examine eschatology, it would leave a particular dimension of a linear worldview unexamined, which is the relationship to the past. See chapters 2 and 5.1.

2. Definitions of a worldview

Even though the term "worldview" (Weltanschauung) was popularized by Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804 CE), from whom it spread to popular Western usage,[23] the notion of a worldview is certainly as old as humanity. Since times immemorial, humankind has pondered its place in the universe projecting values and meaning to manifold phenomena witnessed in everyday experience. For a "pre-Socratic" human, mythology and religion, next to empirical observations of recurrences in the nature, were the main tools of narration and understanding of what it meant to be human in the greater cosmos. Several scholars of philosophy and theology have produced different definitions of a worldview, and some of these definitions will be anchored into frequently used, although generalising, dichotomy of cyclical and linear worldviews.

According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, a worldview is a "comprehensive conception or apprehension of the world especially from a specific standpoint."[24] G. K Chesterton defines worldview as "a view of the universe and theory of the cosmos"; James Orr considers it "the whole manner of conceiving of the world and humanity's place in it, the widest possible view which the mind can take of things"; according to Abraham Kuyper "a 'life-system' rooted in a fundamental principle from which was derived a whole complex of ruling ideas and conceptions about reality", and by Norman Geisler: "it is … an interpretative framework … by which one makes sense … of life and the world."[25] What all these definitions have common is that they refer the worldview as **a)** an interpretative framework / standing point, **b)** relating to conceptions about reality / cosmos / universe, **c)** relating to conceptions about humanity's place in the cosmos. Since this thesis examines ideas related to a linear worldview it focuses on ideas that are related to time and history; conceptions about the "direction" of the cosmos, humanity's place in that direction, within a linear framework. Generally speaking, a linear view of the past, with unique non-recurring events, is not heavily emphasized in the Gathas that merely provide allusions to a "golden age"[26] and cosmogony.[27] However, later Zoroastrianism was very interested in history, especially after Babylonian idea of world-years or "Great Years" had entered western Iran where Zoroastrianism, originally a Central Asian and eastern Iranian religion, had spread. This Babylonian idea, a theory widely

[23] Naugle 2007, 13; Naugle 2002.
[24] Merriam Webster, Worldview.
[25] Naugle 2007, 3-5; Naugle 2002.
[26] West and Boyce interpret Y. 28.11; 33.11 and 45.1 referring to a past "pristine" condition of the world (West 2010, 42-43; Boyce 1996, 232).
[27] Y. 43.5; 44.3-7; 45.2-3.

adopted in antiquity, described that the world would experience a set number of millennia until a recurring upheaval would happen, and the cosmos would be reverted to the first phase of its eternal cycle throughout time.[28] In the hands of Zoroastrians, a narrative of linear history was gradually produced where distinct world periods would happen before eschatological fulfilment of history. Zoroastrian texts vary how many millennia constitute a world period, but the original scheme probably contained only 6000 years, which gradually increased to 9000, and eventually to 12,000 that is found in the 9th century CE Greater Bundahišn ("Primal Creation"), where the history of cosmos is set on a 12,000-year long period, on four phases lasting 3000 years, each phase being unique and non-recurring, the final phase marking the end of history.[29] This eschatological narrative is half-cyclical; the cosmos returns to its original pristine condition, but after the perfection is reached the cycle ends, making this view unequivocally linear.[30]

2.1. Worldview and eschatology

Eschatology, the doctrine of last things / end time, is by definition concerned with the future. Western scholarship has traditionally associated eschatology with that of the Abrahamic faiths, so a linear view of history was thought to be a defining part of eschatology. However, modern scholarship has widened the concept of eschatology to include cyclical worldviews and religions as well.[31] In a cyclical worldview, eschatology could concern future events that

[28] Boyce 1990, 20.

[29] The Editors of Britannica 2011, Bundahishn; MacKenzie 1989, Bundahišn; Boyce 1996, 232, 285-287. My abridgment of the Greater Bundahišn's narrative:
The first phase of history begins with the age of Creation when Ohrmazd (Pahlavi name for Ahura Mazdā) becomes aware of Ahriman (Pahlavi name for Angra Mainyu) and creates the world in its spiritual (*mēnōg*) state. Ohrmazd offers peace and partnership to evil Ahriman, who refuses Ahura Mazdā's terms since he jealously covets Ahura Mazdā's creation and sovereignty over it. Then Ohrmazd proposes a time of contest between the two, "in the state of Mixture", which is the next 9000 years, to which Ahriman agrees not knowing he had actually signed his defeat (Zaehner 1975, 37, Anklesaria 1956, 15). In the second period of 3000 years Ohrmazd creates the world in its physical (*gētīg*) state. In the third period, starting from the year 6000, Ahriman commences his assault on the physical creation and corrupts it from its original pristine condition (Zaehner 1975, 45-49; Boyce 1996, 286). To Ahriman's surprise, the physical world became his prison; the very existence of space, time and natural laws turned out to be a well-designed trap; the physical universe would contain Ahriman until the end of time (Gbd. 1-7; Anklesaria 1956, 14-16; Zaehner 1975, 49). By this containment, humankind and Ohrmazd had a blueprint for victory; inch by inch, century by century, the powers of Ahriman and his demonic legions would be pushed back and weakened. In the 4th period starting from 9000, prophet Zoroaster is born, everything according to plan devised by Ohrmazd in his omniscience since the beginning of time (Boyce 1996, 286-287). Zoroaster would lead the world into victory, humankind being in the front line of this counterattack, armed with the Good Religion of Zoroaster, smiting the evil Ahriman with good thoughts, good words, and good deeds. The material world itself is the vehicle by which Ahriman will be defeated. The eternity to come is called the Third Time, "Separation", when goodness and evil are forever separated, the cosmos made perfect, and Ahriman made powerless (Gbd. 34, Anklesaria 1956, 15).

[30] Boyce 1972, 232.

[31] Landes 2016, Eschatology.

take place at the change of world periods, or world-years as ancient Babylonians had put it.[32] However, when we try to define eschatology, we are faced with problematically overlapping notions. Merriam-Webster gives a two-part definition for eschatology, which mixes ideas relating to individual fates after death, and ideas relating to future events on a general, universal level. The first part defines eschatology by what could be called "universal" or "general" eschatology: **1)** "a branch of theology concerned with the final events in the history of the world or of humankind." The second part, however, contains a reference to the afterlife on an individual level: **2)** "a belief concerning death, the end of the world, or the ultimate destiny of humankind."[33] Defining eschatology as a "belief concerning death" is problematic. Some scholars have used terms like individual / personal eschatology when individual judgments and afterlife abodes are concerned.[34] In Catholic Christian theology, there is a term "particular judgment" that refers to an immediate judgment a person experiences after death,[35] which is also featured in Zoroastrianism next to the more general judgment at the end of history in *frašō.kərəti*.[36] To make a clear distinction, individual or personal eschatology will not be considered proper eschatology at all, for the sake of clearer analysis.

2.2. Cyclical vs. linear

The binary categories of cyclical and linear worldviews can be criticized for their inflexibility; for example, anthropologist David Maybury-Lewis has argued that that the Aboriginal culture is neither cyclical or linear,[37] some scholars have argued both for and against the linear nature of the Norse mythology of *ragnarök*,[38] and philosophical works from ancient Greece contained both cyclical and linear ideas, although cyclical views were predominant.[39] Even religions with a linear worldview, such as the Abrahamic faiths, have possessed cyclical elements,[40] the same being true for Zoroastrianism.[41] In the Hebrew Bible, Ecclesiastes 1:9-10 contain famous passages relating to a cyclical worldview,[42] and the pre-

[32] Boyce 1990, 20.
[33] Merriam Webster, Eschatology.
[34] Cantera 2015, 317; Elman & Secunda 2015, 425; Skjærvø 2006, 56.
[35] McHugh 1910, Particular Judgment.
[36] See chapter 5.2.1 & 5.3.7. The Gathas feature a concept of *činuuatō pərətu-* that refers to a bridge that each person must cross after death, the place of individual / personal judgment (Tafażżolī 1991, 594-595). Zoroastrian doctrine of individual judgment is further articulated in the 9th century CE Pahlavi work Dādestān ī dēnīg ("Religious judgments") (Shaki 1993, 550-554). The Zoroastrian doctrine of *frašō.kərəti* refers to the universal general judgment (Hintze 2000, 190-192).
[37] Baggini 2018, 135.
[38] Lindow 2001, 42-43; Crawford 2017, Is Ragnarok Cyclical?
[39] Nelson 1980, 372.
[40] Eccles. 1:9-10, Baggini 2018, 134-135.
[41] Boyce 1996, 287; Skjærvø 2015, 59; Ahmadi 2017, 199, 201, 214.
[42] Ecclesiastes 1:9-10 (NRSV, 1989): "What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be

exilic Hebrew religion in the kingdom of Judah (c. 1000 – 587 BCE) contained rather static notions of the future where many were convinced that Jerusalem was inviolable, and that the house of David would rule forever.[43] In the case of Zoroastrianism, the Gathas themselves have been interpreted by some scholars as representing a cosmogonic ritual,[44] and the central rite of Zoroastrianism, the Yasna, during which the Gathas are recited, is concerned with maintaining the order and integrity of the cosmos against the forces of chaos,[45] possessing cyclical thematic similar to other archaic forms of religion.[46] Additionally, Pahlavi texts (3rd – 10th centuries CE) Zand ī Wahman yasn and Jāmāsp Nāmag contain a doctrine of recurring world periods, both good and bad, which would repeat themselves every thousand years during the last world epoch before the eventual eschatological fulfillment of linear history. These doctrines were probably influenced by a mixture of Babylonian and pre-Zoroastrian traditions[47] but the scheme, nevertheless, contained the idea of linear *frašō.kərəti*.

2.3 Worldview and the afterlife

An important point concerning the categories of cyclical and linear worldviews is that they do not entail any particular set of beliefs concerning the afterlife. For example, cyclical ideas had been prevalent among ancient Mesopotamian and Greece civilizations[48], but it has been traditionally viewed that early forms of those civilizations had rather bleak views about the afterlife.[49] However, beliefs about the immortality and transmigration of souls eventually

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done; there is nothing new under the sun. (10) Is there a thing of which it is said, 'See, this is new'? It has already been, in the ages before us."

[43] Räisänen 2010, 9, 80.

[44] Ahmadi 2017, 199; Skjærvø 2015, 59.

[45] Malandra 2006, Yasna.

[46] Ahmadi 2017, 199; Eliade 1954, 4-6; Eliade 1976, 41-42.

[47] Boyce 1996, 286-287; Eliade 1976, 32, 87; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 21; Sundermann 1988, 492-493; the Editors of Britannica 2016, Yima; Solmsen 2019, Hesiod.

Archaic mythology had a cosmogonic motif of "golden age" (the term "golden age" comes from Hesiod c. 700 BCE), an idea found widely among different peoples of the world. According to this motif there had existed a mythical age in the distant past, when the world and human life had been better. This idea is articulated in the Young Avestan tradition where the world is described as having fallen from the golden age of Yima, a figure of conflicting legends, where he is portrayed as a primeval king (Humbach & Faiss 2010, 21), mythical civilizing hero and progenitor of human race (the Editors of Britannica 2006, Yima). Yima's sin was, according to Pahlavi tradition, that he taught people to eat meat (Y. 32.8; Skjærvø 2012, 501-522), instituting animal sacrifices, which allowed evil to enter the world (West 2010, 15, 70; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 17-18, 21). Humbach & Faiss argue that this same Young Avestan picture of the course of the world underlies the Gathas as well (Humbach & Faiss 2010, 21). The Gathas can be interpreted that the world had once been "pristine" (West 2010, 15; Y. 28:11; Y. 45:1), and Yima is briefly mentioned in Y. 32.8 (see chapters 5.1; 5.4.2).

[48] MacDonald 2013, 95; Nelson 1980, 2-4.

[49] Räisänen 2010, 114-115; Nelson 1980, 22, 38-39; 49. Assyriologist Simo Parpola has argued that ancient Mesopotamia had vivid beliefs about the afterlife and that traditional understanding of these beliefs, as bleak or non-existent, is a misinterpretation (Parpola 1999, 66, 68, 79).

gained popularity among those civilizations.[50] Similarly, ancient Hebrew religion may have cultivated ideas about linear time, but like other Mesopotamians, it originally had a bleak view of the afterlife.[51] The Sadducean tradition of Israelites, which ceased to exist after the destruction of the Second Temple (70 CE), famously rejected the idea of soul's immortality and denied any prospect of the afterlife,[52] and even the idea of transmigration of souls found some adherents among Judaism in the 8th century CE.[53] As we can see, a cyclical or linear worldview does not entail any specific view of the afterlife.

2.4 Cyclical worldview

To understand linear conceptions of time and history, we have to contrast it with rudimentary elements of a cyclical worldview that was predominant in all of the earliest civilizations in Mesopotamia and Egypt (c. 4000 – 3000 BCE), the Indus Valley (c. 2500 BCE), China (c. 1500 BCE) and Mesoamerica (c. 1200 BCE).[54] Systematized forms of a cyclical worldview are represented by various religio-philosophical ideas that appeared in later civilizations, such as the post-Vedic (after c. 500 BCE) doctrines of transmigration of souls (s*aṃsāra*) and the idea of cosmos being an endless repetition of cosmic cycles (*yugas*),[55] concepts which still play an important part in Eastern religions in some form. Religions with a cyclical worldview have produced cosmogonies narrating how the cosmos, with its endless cycle of death and (re)birth, came into existence.[56] Buddhism, however, has a cyclical worldview but does not necessarily attribute a single point of origin for the cosmos.[57]

Mircea Eliade, a classic scholar of religion, held that the birth of agriculture had facilitated the emergence of a perfectly cyclical worldview with the concept of circular time.[58] Additionally, mid-20th century scholarship produced crude generalisations how archaic cultures, especially those of the Orient, did not possess a "historical consciousness"[59] or "historicising orientation,"[60] or were not "temporally oriented," because of their supposed

[50] Nelson 1980, 49-59.
[51] Räisänen 2010, 114-115.
[52] Räisänen 2010, 32, 36.
[53] Kohler & Broydé 2002-2021, Transmigration of souls (termed also Metempsychosis).
[54] Toynbee & the Editors of Britannica 2021, Cyclic view of time in the philosophy of history.
[55] Eliade 1976, 42; Gonzalez-Reiman 2002, 1-8. Gonzalez-Reiman sees that the system of yugas was developed between a period stretching from the 5th century BCE to the 5th century CE.
[56] Eliade 1976, 37-39, 41-42; Campbell 1962, 3-4.
[57] Van der Velde 2016, 177-178; Walshe 1995, 407-416: Aganna Sutta: On Knowledge of Beginnings; Berzin 2011, The Origin of the Universe According to Kalachakra.
[58] Eliade 1976, 42.
[59] Eliade 1954, viii, 151.
[60] Räisänen 2010, 79.

lack of concern for history, and lack of ideas concerning world reform / renovation;[61] life was centered around ritualistic repetition of mythical paradigms where origin myths and their ritual enactments, especially during New Year rituals, played a key role; periodic renewal of the cosmos was thought to be enacted through this ritual behavior.[62] Of course, we should be very critical of these claims, but it is apparent that two religions, Zoroastrianism and the religion of ancient Hebrews, produced predominantly linear views of time and history, and it has been suggested that this linear view of time and history was genuinely different compared to other cultures.[63] Interestingly, Eliade's ideas have gained new momentum in Zoroastrian studies that are interested in analysing the Gathas as a ritual that aims to renew the cosmos periodically, without any eschatology.[64] Regardless, a cyclical worldview can contain refined notions of history,[65] and can agree, in theory, that there are unique events in history. However, in a cyclical setting of history something similar to already experienced events will eventually occur, not necessarily entirely self-similar. The myth of eternal return, an ancient idea which was popularised by Friedrich Nietzsche (1844 – 1900 CE), is one peculiar form of a cyclical worldview, where events and things in the cosmos are thought to eventually reappear entirely as they were.[66] Additionally, a cyclical worldview can contain eschatology and expectations for the future, whether they are optimistic or pessimistic. Hinduism holds that the world has fallen to the age of Kali Yuga, the lowest and most decadent period of history, yet a Hindu might eagerly wait for the moment when the world returns to the golden age of the first cycle, the Kṛta Yuga, also known as the Satya Yuga, the age of truth.[67] Humans would receive new bodies like in the resurrection motifs of Abrahamic and Zoroastrian eschatology. However, for a Hindu, this would not be the end of the cosmos, as we know it, since the cosmos would eventually reach conditions similar to present Kali Yuga, but this is something a linear worldview would disagree with.

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[61] Campbell 1976 [1964], 190-192; Campbell 1976 [1962], 3-8.

[62] Eliade 1954, 4-6; Eliade 1976, 41-42.

[63] Toynbee & the Editors of Britannica 2021, One-way view of time in the philosophy of history, Cyclic view of time in the philosophy of history; Eliade 1976, 302-303.

[64] Skjærvø 2015, 59, Ahmadi 2017, 199. 201, 214. Eliade's theories found their way to Skjærvø through Marijan Molé. Interestingly, what Eliade said about archaic cyclical religions (ritual repetitions of cosmogonic myths to renew the cosmos) is now applied to Zoroastrianism, and what Eliade said about Zoroastrianism can be considered outdated (Ahmadi 2017, 201, 214).

[65] Bowles 2012, Historical Traditions in Hindu Texts.

[66] Eliade 1954, vii. Mircea Eliade lamented that the title of his work "The Myth of the Eternal return" (Le Mythe de reternel retour, published in 1949), caused confusion since his original title was "Cosmos and History", which he later changed into "Archetypes and Repetitions", and later, by the suggestion of the French publisher, the latter became the subtitle, and the book was published under the name "the Myth of the Eternal Return." It was not Eliade's intention to describe the myth of the eternal return as reinterpreted and popularized by Friedrich Nietzsche. 1959 publication by Harper Torchbook series allowed Eliade to restore his original title "Cosmos and History", and "The Myth of the Eternal Return" became the book's subtitle.

2.5. Linear worldview

According to a linear worldview, the world, as we know it, has an end. Time and history are moving in one-way direction, although a linear worldview can agree that there are recurrences in history and can even function on a premise that the universe has no specific beginning. Since both cyclical and linear religions have produced cosmogonies, the idea that the cosmos has a beginning does not entail a linear worldview yet. However, a linear worldview by definition entails that history and time are moving in unidirectional manner, at least in a bigger picture.[68] The belief that cosmos has a beginning and an end, and that time and history are not only moving but progressing forward, through unique phases of history, has been a central theme in Abrahamic faiths and Zoroastrianism. Additionally, these faiths have believed in eschatological fulfillment of history where the universe will be transformed decisively; no longer will there be any cycle of death and birth, no longer will world epochs follow one another; the world will become thoroughly different, and never again will change for the worse.[69] It is a defining part of a linear worldview to believe that history and the cosmos, as we know them, will have an end.

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[67] Gonzalez-Reiman 2002, 1-8.

[68] Toynbee & the Editors of Britannica 2021, One-way view of time in the philosophy of history.

[69] In the religion of ancient Hebrews, eschatology experienced a centuries long development. For example, Isaianic prophecies in the Hebrew Bible describe a future world that is quite good, nearly paradisaical, but people still live and die, although living to a long age, most likely continuing the cycle of death and birth. (Räisänen 2010, 80-81, Isa. 65:17-25). However, later Judaism considered the "Day of the Lord" / "Day of Yahweh" being a decisive event that triumphs over all imperfections of this world (Räisänen 2010, 117; Encyclopedia of The Bible: Day of the Lord [Yahweh]), similarly what Zoroastrianism teaches about *frašō.kərəti* (Hintze 2000, 190-192).

3. Sources and methodology

3.1 The Gathas

The main document analyzed in this thesis is the Gathas; 17 hymns of religious poetry, composed most likely in the 2nd millennium BCE, in Old Avestan language among pastoral Avestan people in Central Asia.[70] The hymns are in stanzas of 3-5 lines, cast in a metrical form that has distant affinity to the style of Rigveda, similarly how the Old Avestan language itself has similarity to Vedic Sanskrit; even some concepts found in the Gathas have parallels in Rigveda.[71] According to Zoroastrianism, and according to the literary narrative of the Gathas, the hymns were produced by a prophet named Zarathustra Spitāma (Zoroaster in Latin and English),[72] who instigated a religious and ethical reform on the ancient Iranian religion. Western scholarship shared this assumptions from the 18th up to 21st century, but much of the modern research no longer sees the Gathas as sermons of a religious reformer, but as anonymous products of oral literature.[73] There is no reliable evidence in the Avesta, or any external evidence, to confirm Zoroaster's historicity.[74] Nevertheless, according to the Gathas, Zoroaster had experienced *ahura mazdā,* literally the 'Lord Wisdom' or the 'Comprehending Lord'[75], the creator of all things good, from whom he had received the mantle of prophethood[76], to proclaim the "good religion."[77] This creator god Ahura Mazdā, a

[70] Grenet 2015, 21-22; Skjærvø 2003, xiii; Boyce 1987, 62-66.

[71] Gnoli 2004, 97-100.

[72] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 4-5: Zarathustra would be the historically correct name for Zoroaster. The Greeks called Zarathustra "Zoroastres", an etymological distortion produced by Greek philosophers so that Zarathustra's name would mean "to whom the stars are pure/clear" since ancient Greeks thought that Zarathustra was not only an ancient sage but an astronomer and astrologer. Eventually, Latin borrowed Greek Zoroastres and turned it into Zoroaster; nowadays many modern languages, including English, know Zarathustra as Zoroaster.

[73] Skjærvø 2019, 2.

[74] De Jong 1997, 58: "Zarathustra's existence cannot be proved and cannot be disproved."; Skjærvø 2015, 59-61.

[75] Schwartz 2015, 57. In the Gathas, Zoroaster refers to Ahura Mazdā as *mazdā,* "the Mindful One" / "Wise One", or as *ahura*, "the Lord". When they are used together there is no fixed order, and the names can be separated by other words. Ahura Mazdā became a fixed combination in later Zoroastrianism, appearing in Achaemenid inscriptions as *Auramazdā*, and later in Pahlavi *Ohrmazd* (West 2010, 11).

[76] Humbach 2015, 41; Boyce 1996, 50, 185; West 2010, 11, 17-18; Y. 28.4, 31.3, 44.11.
The culture where this prophet had supposedly appeared was not familiar of theistic prophets, similarly how theistic prophets were not known in the Orient; instead sages/seers and priests were a common religious phenomenon, persons who could by their own abilities and spiritual connection, and with a supposed synergy of divine powers, fathom eternal truths and understand the will of the gods (Scharfe 2002, 14-15). On the other hand, a prophet, as known in the ancient Middle East and Mediterranea, received a specific message from a deity, which the prophet was obliged to proclaim (Nissinen 2017, 3-7, 19-21). Zoroaster calls himself a *zaotar-*, "minister" and *rishi*, "priest-poet" (West 2010, 17-18, 112). Ṛṣis "seers/sages", are known in Vedic religion, and orthodox Hinduism believes that the great seers "saw" Vedic hymns and rituals with their spiritual eyes. Vedic poets themselves claim in their hymns that they skillfully created the songs with the help of divine inspiration, like a carpenter builds a chariot (Scharfe 2002, 14-15). In the Gathas, however, Ahura Mazdā gives prescripts and teachings and is the source of Zoroaster's poetry (West 2010, 11; Y. 21.6, 7; Y. 26.11; Y. 31.3, 8; Y. 32.1; Y. 43.5, 11; Y. 45.3, 5). In Yasna 45.5 Zoroaster plainly says: "I will tell forth what

godhead who is both singular[78] and simultaneously plural with other *ahuras*, [79] seeks to muster forces of good, consisting of ethical principles and ethical entities (*ahuras*), against the forces evil, consisting of unethical principles and evil entities (*daēuuas*, commonly known as *daēvas*),[80] to make life, truth, and goodness triumph over the forces of death, lie and disorder in a cosmic battle instigated by two primordial spirits; *spənta mainyu*, the Holy Spirit,[81] versus *angra mainyu*, the Hostile Spirit. These two spirits, described as "twins", had existed since the beginning of time, or were created by Ahura Mazdā according to monotheistic reading of Y. 30 and Y. 45.2.[82] Nevertheless, these opposing forces and their cohorts seek to

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the most Bounteous One tells me," (West 2010, 117) / "Now I shall speak of what the most virtuous one told me," (Insler 1975, 75) / "I will proclaim (the word) which the most Beneficent One told me," (Humbach & Faiss 2010, 129).

[77] Y. 51.17; 53.1, 4.

[78] Schwartz 2015, 57. According to Martin Schwartz, the Gathas contain no monotheism; no proclamation of oneness in the sphere of the divine, whereas Mary Boyce argues that Gathic teachings indicate a primeval unity in the sphere of the divine, one good God Ahura Mazdā, who had existed since the beginning with his evil counterpart, *Angra Mainyu* (Boyce 1996, 191-194).

[79] *Ahura* (Vedic *asura*) is an Avestan title meaning "lord", one of the collective terms ancient Iranians and Indians used for their divinities (Boyce 1996, 23). Not all *ahuras* are explicitly mentioned in the Gathas, but the most commonly appearing *ahuras* are *Aməša Spəntas* ("Bounteous / Beneficent Immortals"), a group of seven most important *ahuras* created by Ahura Mazdā. They are **1)** Right (*aṡ̌a*); **2)** Good Thought (*vohu manah*); **3)** Piety (*spənta ārmaiti*); **4)** Bounteous Will (*spənta mainyu*, the "Holy Spirit", heavily associated with Ahura Mazdā himself); **5)** Dominion (*xšaθra*); **6)** Wholeness (*hordād*); and **7)** Immortality (*amurdād*). The Gathas treat these as personified beings, sometimes as virtues, principles and qualities people may have in themselves; the meanings overlap. M. L. West does not interpret *hordād* ("Wholeness") and *amurdād* ("Immortality") as divinities, but qualities humans can possess themselves, and which Ahura Mazdā can grant to his followers. West argues that "Immortality" is a mistranslation, and what Zoroaster hopes is that a person would not die prematurely (West 2010, 12, 15-16; the Editors of Britannica 2019, Amesha spenta; Boyce 1989, 933-936).

[80] *Daēuua / daēva* (Vedic *deva*), "shining one" (Boyce 1996, 337) cognate with Latin *deus*, is an ancient word that comes from an Indo-European base "shine/be bright". It was another collective Avestan term for certain divinities (Boyce 1996, 23). Zoroastrianism gradually debased the meaning of *daēva*, and it became to mean beings not worthy of worship, "false gods" and later "demons", generally representing the forces of darkness (Boyce 1996, 85).

[81] One of the most important terms in the Gathas is *spəntā*, translated generally as "holy", but some scholars have preferred "bounteous" as a standard translation. However, the concept of bounteous does not have any religious connotation in English, therefore holy is a better translation. In the Gathas, spəntā seems to mean "possessing power, possessing power to aid" and "furthering, supporting, benefiting" (Boyce 1986 [1979], 22). According to Humbach & Faiss, the Gathas focus on what is good, and good is profitable (Humbach & Faiss 2010, 23).

[82] Schwartz 2015, 51; Boyce 1996, 192-194, 229. Schwartz and Boyce argue that the original Gathic theology absolves Ahura Mazdā from the origin of evil (Scwhartz 2015, 53, 57). Later Zoroastrianism, famously presented by the 9th century CE Greater Bundahišn, clearly equated Spenta Mainyu with Ahura Mazdā (Ohrmazd in Pahlavi), interpreting Ahura Mazdā having been co-limited with Angra Mainyu (Ahriman in Pahlavi) since the beginning of time (Gbd. 1.1-9). However, a monotheistic reading follows a similar logic as Zurvanism that was a monistic reworking of Zoroastrian dualism, which flourished in the Sassanid era (De Jong 1997, 63-64; Boyce 1986 [1979], 69-70). Since Spenta Mainyu and Angra Mainyu were twins (Y. 30.3), who was their father? It is a question whether the term "twins" should be taken literally or as a term describing the likeness of the spirits, but, nonetheless, Zurvanism postulated a third entity, Zurvan, the deity of Time, as the father of the two primordial spirits. A monotheistic reading also takes the term "twins" literally and argues that since Spenta Mainyu and Angra Mainyu are twins, Ahura Mazdā is their father (Boyce 1996, 193-194). This argument also utilises a Gathic notion that Angra Mainyu became evil by his choice (Y. 45.2); he was not necessarily evil by his substance, unlike the narrative of the Greater Bundahišn claims him to be (Gbd. 1.3, 13, 15-18). Since Ahura Mazdā is the Creator of all that is good (Y. 43.5, 44.3-5;

influence humankind onto their sides (Y. 30.3-4), and it is a central message in the Gathas that a human being, out of free will,[83] should reject *druj* (lie / deceit / wrong) [84] and choose the side of *aṡa* (right / truth).[85] However, the poems that constitute the Gathas are notoriously enigmatic, intermingling concrete and abstract subjects[86], leaving room for multiple interpretations,[87] and it is the purpose of this thesis to examine whether ideas related to a linear worldview can be authentically discerned from these poems. Many scholars hold the Gathas in high esteem finding them extremely fascinating, yours truly, but, nevertheless, the Gathas contain a vast amount of linguistic and ideological obscurity.[88] In short, the Gathas are nothing short of a conundrum, a mysterious message from Central Asia calling to be understood.

3.2. The Gathas and the Avesta

The Gathas became a part of the orally transmitted sacred canon of Zoroastrianism, the Avesta, which was produced orally at different dates in the 2nd and 1st millennia,[89] mainly before 300 BCE,[90] and which received its final written form during the 6th century CE, after the Avestan alphabet was invented in c. 500 CE.[91] There is no definitive evidence that any of the Avesta had been written down before the Sassanids (224 – 651 CE),[92] and the oldest extant manuscripts of the Avesta come from as late as 13th century CE.[93] It is also held that the extant Avesta is greatly reduced from its original form due to the decline of Zoroastrianism after the 7th century Arab conquest, and possibly due to the devastation brought to Iran by Seljuk Turks

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Boyce 1986 [1979], 20) it can be argued that He created Angra Mainyu before the latter became evil by his choice. However, attributing any causality or responsibility of evil to Ahura Mazdā is contrary to Zoroastrian tradition (Boyce 1996, 194).

[83] Y. 30.4-7; 32.2, 12; 43.16; 46.3; 51.1, 18.

[84] West 2010, 12-13; Kellens 1996, 562-563. *Druj* (feminine noun) has been variously translated as "lie", "error", "falsehood", "deceit", "wrong" or "illusory deceptive order." The defeat of *druj* is hoped and sought for (Y. 31.4; 48.1). Victory over *druj* means she will become subordinate to a neuter noun *aša* (Y. 30.8, 44.14). In Y. 44.13 Zoroaster asks Ahura Mazdā how *druj* can be expelled from the pious and confined to the opposition (West 2010, 108-109; Kellens 1996, 562-563; Insler 1975, 71, 248).

[85] Y. 28; Y. 29.2-3, 6-8, 11; Y. 30-51; Y. 53.1, 3, 6a, 9; Y. 54.1. Schwartz 2015, 57. The concept of *aṡa* (*ṛtá* in Sanskrit), was a central theme in Indo-Iranian religions. *Aša*, translated as "truth" or "right", is a principle that governs the cosmos, for example the course of the sun, and in human affairs it represents things like truth and rightness (West 2010, 12-13; Schlerath & Skjærvø 1987, 694-696).

[86] Boyce 1996, 228.

[87] West 2010, 34.

[88] Malandra 2000, 327-330.

[89] Skjærvø 2003, xiv.

[90] West 2010, 3; Skjærvø 2003, xvii. Skjærvø thinks that the canonization of the oral Avesta was possibly finished under the Achaemenids.

[91] Skjærvø 2003, xv.

[92] West 2010, 30; Skjærvø 2003, xiv.

[93] Andrés-Toledo 2015, 519; Skjærvø 2003, xiii.

and Mongols between the 11th and 13th centuries CE.[94] According to Zoroastrian tradition, which some scholars agree with, the final edition of the Avesta was produced by the high priest Veh-Shabuhr during the reign of X̱osrow I (r. 531 – 578 CE).[95] Additionally, the 10th century CE Pahlavi (Middle Persian) book Dēnkard ("Acts of the religion") narrates that the original Avesta contained 21 nasks (books), a number some scholars have taken for granted.[96] If the Dēnkard's account is true, then the extant Avesta contains roughly a quarter of the original 6th century composition, which was, according to Pahlavi literature, intact up to the 9th century CE.[97]

Luckily, the Gathas have survived in astonishingly good condition, their archaic vocabulary and grammar largely intact,[98] despite the inevitable corruption that crept in over the millennia. Gradual changes of pronunciation have caused superficial disruption to the meters[99] and few important passages have suffered corruption beyond reassured reconstruction;[100] a line is missing from Y. 46.15, and a portion of Y. 53 might have been lost in a very early period of Zoroastrianism[101] since roughly three and half lines are missing from Y. 53.6, probably because two stanzas had become conflated.[102] In other places, the metre suggests that a word has been added to clarify the meaning, and some passages give rise to suspicion that a word or grammatical ending has been accidentally repeated from nearby.[103] All things considered, we have a composition that has survived probably over three millennia in a remarkably good form.[104] Nevertheless, parts of the vocabulary remain unknown, even words that have connection to Rigvedic language are a source of dispute owing to possibilities of difference in meaning and having a false basis of comparison.[105] The research on the Gathas has frequently rested on two positions: either the Gathas have been interpreted through Vedic comparisons, or through Zoroastrian tradition itself, but both positions rest on shaky assumptions if taken to extremes.[106]

The Avesta itself that includes the Gathas is divided between Old Avestan and Young Avestan parts, the Old Avestan Gathas constituting the oldest part of the entire corpus. Next to

[94] West 2010, 29-30; Skjærvø 2003, xiii.
[95] West 2010, 32; Frye 2022, Khosrow I.
[96] West 2010, 32; Gignoux 1994, 284-289; Dēnkard Book 8.
[97] West 2010, 2; Cereti 2009, Middle Persian literature i. Pahlavi literature.
[98] West 2010, 30.
[99] West 2010, 30.
[100] Insler 1975, 2, 5-20.
[101] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 10.
[102] West 2010, 33,
[103] West 2010, 34.
[104] West 2010, 30; Insler 1975, 20.
[105] Insler 1975, 2.
[106] De Jong 1997, 58-59.

the Gathas, other Old Avestan texts are the three sacred formulae of *Ahuna Vairiia* / *Vairya* (Y. 27.13), *Aṣəm vohū* (Y. 27.14), *Yeŋhē hātąm* (Y. 27.15), in addition to the *Yasna Haptaŋhāiti* ("The Liturgy in Seven Chapters", Y. 35– 41) and *Airyaman išya* (also known as *Aiiriaman*, Y. 54.1).[107] The rest of the Avesta is composed in Young Avestan that was spoken 900 – 600 BCE[108], which was a development from the Old Avestan language that was spoken in the 2nd millennium BCE.[109] The Liturgy in Seven Chapters (Y. 35– 41) is extremely important to the study of early Zoroastrianism, because early Zoroastrians recited the Gathas in association with this composition.[110]

3.3. The Gathas and the Yasna

Zoroastrian tradition has ordered the Gathas according to the central ritual of Zoroastrianism, the Yasna, where the Gathas are recited in specific parts of the liturgy next to other Old and Young Avestan texts in a collection known again as the Yasna, a collection of 72 texts.[111] The Gathas in the Yasna liturgy are divided in five "Gathas", modes of songs, arranged by their different syllabic meters.[112] According to Zoroastrian tradition, the Gathas constitute everything between *Ahuna Vairiia* (Yasna 27.13), the most sacred Gathic prayer, and *Airyaman išya*, an invocation to safeguard the Zoroastrian community (Y. 54.1)[113] If the Gathas are viewed as a product of anonymous oral literature, with different layers, then there is no problem including Y. 27.13 and Y. 54.1 in the Gathas. Yasna 27.13 is completely in accord with Old Avestan Gathic language and thought,[114] and there is nothing in the language or meter of *Airyaman išya* (Y. 54.1) that would set it thematically apart from the fifth Gatha

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[107] Vevaina 2009, 221; the Editors of Britannica 2019, Avesta; Kellens 1987, 35-44.
Y. 27.13-15 and Y. 54.1 constitute the four great prayers or mantras (Avestan *mąθra*) of Zoroastrianism (Brunner 2015, Yeŋhē hātąm; Schlerath 1987, 741). Traditionally, the extant Avesta has been considered to contain five parts (the Editors of Britannica 2019, Avesta): **1)** the Yasna, **2)** the Visp-rat (a lesser liturgical scripture), **3)** the Vendidad/Vidēvdāt (the main source for Zoroastrian law), **4)** the Yašts (21 hymns to various divinities), **5)** the Khūrda Avesta ("Little Avesta", a group of minor texts including hymns and prayers). However, the Avesta can be considered to contain two more parts: **6)**The Sīrōza, "thirty days", an enumeration of deities that patronize the thirty days of a month, and **7)** the Fragments, more than 20 groups of incomplete fragments (Kellens 1987, 35-44). In Western scholarship, N. L. Westergaard (1815 – 1878 CE) included some miscellaneous fragments (the Fragments) into his edition of the Avesta, but not all later Avestan editions have included these (Cantera 2020, 69). Fragment Westergaard 4.1-3 is especially relevant to this study (see chapters 5.1.1, 5.16).

[108] Skjærvø 2003, xvi-xvii.

[109] Skjærvø 2003, xiv.

[110] West 2010, 31.

[111] Malandra 2006, Yasna: The Yasna ritual, performed daily in the morning by a qualified priest, has high emphasis on the consumption and preparation of the sacred drink of immortality called *haoma* (parallel to *sóma* in Sanskrit). The ritual attempts to maintain cosmic integrity; the cosmos is prevented from falling into chaos by the proper performance of the Yasna.

[112] Humbach 2000, 321-327; Malandra 2000, 327-330.

[113] Vevaina 2009, 217; Brunner 1984, 695. This tradition derives from the Young Avesta (Young Avestan parts of the Avesta, the holy book of Zoroastrianism).

(Y. 53).[115] However, Western scholarship has traditionally assorted the Gathas as following: Y. 28-34 (the first Gatha, *Ahunauuaitī*), Y. 43-46 (the second Gatha, *Uštauuaitī*), Y. 47-50 (the third Gatha, *Spāṇtāmaṅiiu*), Y. 51 (the fourth Gatha, *Vohuxšaθrā*), and Y. 53 (the fifth Gatha, *Vahištōišti*)[116], even though there is a general academic consensus that Y. 53 was produced by the early Zoroastrian community, not by the original creators of the Gathas.[117] Also, Y. 29 with its enigmatic style, and Y. 47 with its highly developed compositional technique, stand out from the other Gathas; the latter is likely composed later since its style is more modern.[118] Until some two decades ago, Western scholarship excluded both *Ahuna Vairiia* (Y. 27.13) and *Airyaman išya* (Y. 54.1) from the Gathas as they were not considered "original" teachings of the supposed prophet Zoroaster, but recently they have been introduced into translations.[119]

3.4. The original context of the Gathas

We do not know exactly in which order the Gathas were originally composed or performed, although Yasna 28 begins very formally and programmatically, giving a feeling of introduction, and in two cases (Y. 31 and 48), the poems seem to proceed from where the previous ones had ended.[120] 16 poems of the Gathas, with the exclusion of Yasna 53, give an impression of being an integrated whole, and this was either the intention of the composer(s) or a result of later redaction.[121] The Gathas can be interpreted that the poems were meant for a live audience, not for hostile or doubtful crowds, but for fellow co-religionists since followers of Zoroaster are addressed, some even by name,[122] even though there is no clear designation for the adherents of Gathic religion.[123] Humbach & Faiss, on the other hand, argue that the Gathas are nothing like the Sermon of the Mount, the Quran, or a religious text book of doctrines and laws. They see the Gathas as invocations of Ahura Mazdā and philosophical conversations with him where human beings are only mentioned in rhetorical digression.[124] Nevertheless, the Gathas can be considered to have been recited in official ceremonies, but the 17th poem, Yasna 53, the only song of the fifth Gatha *Vahištōišti*, suggests that it is not the

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[114] West 2010, 23. According to West, Y. 27.13 might go back to Zoroaster himself.
[115] Vevaina 2009, 216-217.
[116] West 2010, v; Humbach 2000, 321-327.
[117] Malandra 2000, 327-330; West 2010, 3.
[118] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 9.
[119] Vevaina 2009, 216. This thesis uses three translations of the Gathas by M. L. West (2010), Humbach & Faiss (2010) and S. Insler (1975), of which only Insler excludes both *Ahuna Vairiia* (Y. 27.13) and *Airyaman išya* (Y. 54.1).
[120] West 2010, 20.
[121] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 9.
[122] West 2010, 18-19.
[123] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 5.
[124] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 20-21, 184.

voice of Zoroaster since Zoroaster is referred to as a person still living or of recent memory. The apparent context of Y. 53 is a private event;[125] the marriage of Porucistā, Zoroaster's "daughter", although we do not know whether the term "daughter" should be taken literally or refers to a female adherent of Zoroastrianism.[126] According to tradition, however, Porucistā was Zoroaster's youngest daughter.[127]

Other than the above-mentioned examples, the original order of the Gathas, and even their original context, is open to debate,[128] but as mentioned in the introduction chapter a ritual understanding of the Gathas is the dominant paradigm in modern research. Considering the central role of the Gathas in the Zoroastrian Yasna ceremony, this view is certainly sound.

3.5. The Gathas translated

Without knowledge of the archaic Old Avestan language, and without any proper Finnish translation ever produced, this thesis is forced to do a comparative analysis of three different English translations by M. L. West (2010), Humbach & Faiss (2010) and Stanley Insler (1975), whose different academic backgrounds, linguistic methods, hermeneutic choices, and differing views about the message of the Gathas, provide a conflicting yet rich framework to discern possible meanings for the analysed verses. It will be reflected upon what kind of hermeneutics are applied by the translators, for example, it is not always clear whether an upper-case or lower-case initials should be used for the subjects appearing in the poems.[129]As one might imagine, every scholar of Zoroastrianism is acquainted with cryptic and rather maddening ambiguities when reading the Gathas and their conflicting translations.

3.5.1. The Hymns of Zoroaster by M. L. West

A modern English translation by M. L West (2010), a philologist and scholar of classical antiquity, overcomes the issue of readability to a great extent; his down-to-earth interpretation without overly theologising focus (such as putting too many upper-case initials for poetic subjects and representing them as divinities) conveys a message without encumbering abstractions. It was West's personal conviction that he had succeeded in delivering a more correct, more readable, and more intelligible translation than any previous one produced. He regarded some older translations as partially abstract nonsense, which either focused too much on linguistic and philological issues at the expense of the message itself. West even

[125] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 9-10; West 2010, 3, 164.
[126] West 2010, 164.
[127] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 10.
[128] West 2010, 18; Skjærvø 2015, 59.
[129] West 2010, 12.

points out how ancient Zoroastrian priests themselves have misinterpreted Zoroaster,[130] the man he considers having been a historical person. West's translation is aware that the message of this supposed prophet was certainly clothed in metaphorical poetic language, yet his concerns were related to mundane and physical matters next to spiritual topics.[131] West speculates the original context of the Gathas, acknowledging that a ritual context is one possibility, but he leans towards the idea that the Gathas represent songs or poems Zoroaster recited at large and small gatherings of his family and/or followers, during which he voiced his religious aspirations.[132] According to West, to credit Zoroaster with deliberate ambiguity or multivalence derives from our limited understanding, and how the commentators and translators of the Gathas have wanted to show off their resourcefulness, which in West's mind had resulted in a display of indecisiveness on the actual meaning of the Gathas. He thinks that Zoroaster's message was not esoteric and cryptic; his contemporaries understood the Gathas since they were familiar with the poetic tradition of his era, and therefore, had only few serious troubles of comprehension.[133] Nonetheless, he agrees that whoever in this age claims to understand every passage of the Gathas is deluding themselves.[134] Interestingly, West also says it is not likely that Zoroaster intended his poems to be memorised and perpetuated.[135]

3.5.2. Zarathustra and His Antagonists by H. Humbach & K. Faiss

Philologists Helmut Humbach and Klaus Faiss produced their sociolinguistic study on Zoroaster in 2010 (Zarathustra and His Antagonists), which included revised English and German translations of the Gathas originally published in 1991 (The Gathas of Zarathustra)[136] and 1959 (Die Gathas des Zarathustra).[137] Humbach and Faiss consider Zoroaster having been a historical person, yet they acknowledge that the Gathas contain layers composed at different dates, and argue that some verses with irregular number of syllables have certain phrases or even clauses partially borrowed from unknown sources.[138] Additionally, Humbach and Faiss adhere to a ritual understanding of the Gathas; the Gathas are seen as a ritual text, whose 14–16 poems (out of 17) were composed by a man named Zarathustra to be recited in a ritual

[130] West 2010, vii-viii; de Jong 2015, 87.
[131] West 2010, 15; Y. 43.1-3; 44.18; 45.5.
[132] West 2010, 18.
[133] West 2010, 34-35.
[134] West 2010, 34.
[135] West 2010, 31.
[136] The Gāthās of Zarathushtra and the Other Old Avestan Texts (1991) was authored by Helmut Humbach, Joseph Elfenbein and Prods O Skjærvø.
[137] Die Gathas des Zarathustra (1959) was authored by Helmut Humbach.
[138] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 6, 9.

carried out by Zoroaster himself.[139] Their translation is also very abstinent of putting upper-case initials for Gathic subjects. They see that Mazdayasnian religion or Mazdaism[140] was possibly a Proto-Aryan[141], and later Iranian, development, and that the birth of "Zoroastrianism", as the religion was later called, cannot be attributed to a single person like Zoroaster. However, of this development none other works or names except the Gathas and Zoroaster have come down to us; Zoroaster must have been the most successful propagator of this religion.[142] Humbach and Faiss also argue that the poetical technique of the Gathas is essentially the reason why they are so hard to grasp by a modern reader; Zoroaster's poems are not made for didactic purposes since Zoroaster attempts to display his poetical skills in order to please Ahura Mazdā and impress his listeners.[143] Even though Humbach & Faiss see the Gathas through ritual paradigm, they still interpret the Gathas through a macrocosmic narrative: Zoroaster attempts to support Ahura Mazdā in a cosmic struggle for the decisive salvation of the world. At the microcosmic level, this happens through ritual practices, and at the macrocosmic level, all pious behavior contributes to the salvation of the entire world. Humbach & Faiss generally agree that Young Avestan "worldview" is shared by the Gathic worldview, meaning that the creators of Gathas believed that the world had once been a literal paradise, and that the world would be eventually saved in *frašō.kərəti*, accompanied by the resurrection of the dead. They see Zoroaster expected this to happen during his lifetime, until the timing was gradually postponed to the 12,000 years scheme that we know in the Greater Bundahišn (9th century CE).[144]

3.5.3. The Gathas of Zarathustra by S. Insler

Stanley Insler, a philologist and Sanskritist,[145] utilizing skillful comparisons to Rigveda, produced his translation in 1975. Insler believes in historical Zoroaster; a man driven by a vision with a clearly compelling message, but Insler agrees that Gathas are a book of riddles, and that Zoroaster must have labored hard to make his message comprehensible to his

[139] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 4, 9-10.
[140] Hinze 2015, 31; Humbach & Feiss 2010, ix, 5. For "Mazdayasnian", see Y. 12 that contains a confession of faith where one declares "I am a Mazda worshiper" before declaring "I am Zoroastrian" (Saati 1993, 242-243).
[141] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 1: Etymologically, Iran means '(land) of the Aryans'. However, in scholarly use the term Aryan, also found in Sanskrit, means 'Indo-Iranian' that denotes one main branch of the Indo-European peoples and languages. Proto-Iranian means a reconstructed pre-form of ancient Iranian language and Proto-Aryan means a pre-form of an Indo-Iranian language. The term Indo-Aryan denotes the Indian languages of Aryan and ancient Indo-European origin as contrasted to the Dravidian languages that are spoken in the south of the Indian subcontinent.
[142] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 6.
[143] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 21.
[144] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 21-22.
[145] YaleNews 2019, In Memoriam: Stanley Insler, long-serving faculty member and scholar of Sanskrit.

audience, even though the message itself has a unity of thought and language, and the Gathas are remarkably consistent in both outlook and expression.[146] According to Insler there can be ultimately only one correct interpretation of the Gathas and that was Zoroaster's own;[147] Zoroaster's poetry is in many ways the autobiography of an idea, Zoroaster's vision, as much as the self-portrait of the prophet himself.[148] However, Insler admits that much of our knowledge of the Gathas is highly doubtful.[149] His translation rarely uses upper- and lower-case initials to highlight the difference between *Amәša Spәntas* and general moral qualities / principles. Nevertheless, he tries to render the grammar and syntax of the original Avestan into English as literally as possible while attempting to maintain a reasonable degree of readability,[150] and in his commentary, he emphasises the moral and ethical character of the Gathas, which in his mind had been neglected in "misplaced fascination" with their ritualistic background.[151] He also stresses the importance of contrasting antithetical statements, because he believes these notions are fundamental to Zoroaster's philosophy and provide hermeneutic keys for exact interpretation of passages that are ambiguous when approached independently.[152]

3.6. Thematic approach and the scholarly work used

The Gathas, in the order they are presented in the Yasna liturgy, are approached thematically since not all Gathas deal with linear ideas. The analysed Yasnas are concerned with time, history, the past, future, and afterlife on a general level, because these themes might give indicators of a linear worldview. However, there are lots of Yasnas that deal with cosmogony (the past) and afterlife (the future), which are not necessarily related to a linear or cyclical worldview at all. As pointed out in chapter two, cosmogony or ideas of afterlife are not indicators themselves of a linear worldview. Nevertheless, if a Yasna is interested with time, history, the past, future, and afterlife on a general level, an analysis will take place. A general starting point of my own analysis is that the supposed eschatological ideas in the Gathas, and ideas related to a linear worldview, are in their infancy and nowhere systematised, if they exist at all.

The Gathas will be complemented by commentaries of the translators and by works of prominent scholars of Zoroastrianism, such as Yuhan Sohrab-Dinshaw Vevaina, Mary Boyce,

[146] Insler 1975, 1, 3, 22.
[147] Insler 1975, 2-3.
[148] Insler 1975, 2.
[149] Insler 1975, 2.
[150] Insler 1975, 20.
[151] Insler 1975, 22.

P. O. Skjærvø, Almut Hintze, Jean Kellens, Albert de Jong, William Malandra, Frantz Grenet and Helmut Humbach among others, who represent some of the most notable 20th and 21st century scholars of Zoroastrianism. Concerning the origins of a linear worldview, Boyce sees Zoroastrianism's pivotal influence and priority on many religious doctrines that appeared in Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition, including the idea of linear eschatology.[153] Because of this, Boyce can be criticised for succumbing to "parallelomania," seeing parallels and historical influences in phenomena that might have emerged independently of each other. Nevertheless, Boyce has not been the only scholar to argue that Zoroastrianism influenced the emergence of a linear worldview among ancient Israel[154], a middle ground presented by Mircea Eliade who said that Israel might have been familiar with the conception of linear time, but many religious ideas, including an optimistic future-oriented eschatology and a linear conception of history, were systematized in Iran.[155] Nevertheless, a significant number of 20th and 21st century scholars leave much more room for intra-Jewish developments, but may acknowledge possibilities of hermeneutic influence.[156] This thesis, however, is interested in the question whether the Old Avestan Gathas reflect the Young Avestan and Pahlavi worldviews, which were linear and contained unambiguous eschatology. Scholars like Boyce, Skjærvø, Schwartz and Humbach & Faiss see that the Gathic worldview has much in common with the Young Avestan and Pahlavi worldviews,[157] Boyce having taken this stance to extremes, [158] but scholars like Alber de Jong argue it is just as anachronistic to interpret the Gathas through Zoroastrian tradition to say the Gathas are completely unrelated to it.[159]

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[152] Insler 1975, 21.
[153] Boyce 1986 [1979], 29; Boyce 1996, 35.
[154] Campbell 1976 [1964], 200-201.
[155] Eliade 1976, 302.
[156] Elledge 2017, 44; Silverman 2012.
[157] Skjærvø 2015, 62; Schwartz 2015, 51; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 17-18, 21; Boyce 1996, 246.
[158] Of all the scholars included in this thesis, Boyce has the strongest tendency see doctrines of later Zoroastrianism, as present in the Young Avestan and Pahlavi traditions, distinctively articulated in the ancient Gathas. This stems from her apparent conviction that the much later doctrines of Pahlavi literature, especially doctrines of the 9th century CE Greater Bundahišn ("Primal creation"), essentially represent an unchanged form of Zoroaster's original teachings; she firmly believes in historical Zoroaster and occasionally Boyce mixes the words "Zoroastrian" with "Zoroaster's", confusing which doctrines are authentically present in the Gathas, and which are later Zoroastrian developments. For example, see Boyce 1996, 229-231, 236, 246; her description of Zoroastrian eschatology contains many references to Pahlavi literature of the Sassanid (224 – 654 CE) and post-Sassanid eras (7th – 10th centuries) while she describes Zoroaster's message.
[159] De Jong 1997, 58.

4. From Central Asia to western Iran: millennia long transmission of the Gathas

Before entering the analysis chapters of individual Gathas (chapter 5), a closer look on the historical background and transmission of the Gathas is in order since Zoroastrianism has always placed greater emphasis on oral tradition, which has resulted in partial neglection of written tradition. According to Skjærvø, already by Young Avestan times (first half of the 1st millennium BCE), the Old Avestan Gathas were not well understood and Gathic exegesis, in oral form, was born.[160] Additionally, Zoroastrian exegesis and Zoroastrianism itself have suffered historical setbacks that left their distinctive mark on the Avesta and affected Zoroastrian hermeneutics.

4.1. The origins of the Gathas

According to late Zoroastrian tradition of Sassanian times (224 – 651 CE), Zoroaster was born in eastern Iran "258 years before Alexander"[161], but in reality Zoroaster's historicity, dating, and geographical location are shrouded in mystery.[162] The Gathas have been variously dated between 1700 BCE to 550 CE; those who have placed the Gathas close to Achaemenid times have utilised Zoroastrian, Manichaean, Greek, Hebrew and Islamic sources, and those who place the Gathas to 2nd millennium BCE have utilized linguistic analysis. In the end, linguistic analysis is the only somewhat reliable tool we have available next to negative archeological evidence, and two modern authoritative specialists, Skjærvø and Jean Keller, have placed the Gathas to 2nd millennium BCE, the former estimating them somewhere between 1700 – 1200 BCE, and the latter placing them 1200 – 1000 BCE, and a third scholar Frantz Grenet dating them around 1500 – 1200 BCE.[163] The society described in the Gathas is very archaic; there are no mentions of towns, canals or temples or farming,[164] and considering the archeological evidence of developed urban areas of eastern Iran of that period,[165] it can be suggested that the Gathic society was a Proto-Iranian tribe living in northern steppes, somewhere in modern day Kazakhstan, before the southward migration of Iranian tribes.[166] However, there is a complete absence of archeological remains that would point to 2nd millennium Zoroastrian religion in the said area, but this suits the description of the archaic

[160] Skjærvø 2019, 5; de Jong 2015, 87.
[161] Boyce 1996, 3.
[162] Grenet 2015, 21-22.
[163] Grenet 2015, 21-22.
[164] With one possible exception of *yauua-* in Y. 49.1, which means "barley", "grain", or "beer."
[165] Called the Bactria-Margiana Archaeological Complex (BMAC).
[166] Grenet 2015, 22.

society found in the Gathas, and Zoroastrian ritual practitioners did not have a need for permanent architectural structures before the late Achaemenid period (550 – 330 BCE).[167] So, somewhere in central Asia, in the earliest part of Iranian history or even before it, the Mazdayasnian religion aka "good religion"[168] emerged among Proto-Iranian tribes, which considered Zarathustra, "Old-camel-man" in the Old Avestan language, its founder.[169]

4.2. From eastern to western Iran

Even the Young Avestan texts of the Avesta (first half of the 1st millennium BCE) mirror an eastern Iranian/Central Asian society, far away from the ancient Iranian empires of western Iran.[170] It is not known exactly when did Zoroastrianism reach western Iran, but some have inferred it must have happened before the time of Aristotle (384–322 BCE) since he alluded to Persian dualism.[171] According to Frantz Grenet, Zoroastrianism had reached western Iran during the early Achaemenid period (550 – 330 BCE).[172] Achaemenid religion in general was characterised by polytheistic syncretism where Mesopotamian and pre-Zoroastrian deities were worshipped next to Ahura Mazdā, whose earliest historical mention is found in the Behistun inscription produced by Darius the Great (550 – 486 BCE).[173] Then a sudden devastation occurred; a young king from Macedonia, later known as Alexander the Great (336 – 323 BCE), known to Sassanians as the "accursed" (*guzastag*),[174] invaded Asia Minor and defeated the Achaemenid king Darius III in battle in 331 BCE, and in five years conquered nearly all territories of the Achaemenid empire. The initial Macedonian conquest was certainly harmful to Zoroastrianism since it is Alexander, not his Seleucid successors, who is vilified in Zoroastrian tradition; a Sogdian fragment describes Alexander as one of the worst sinners in history, because he "killed Magi." A Pahlavi text says that Alexander slew "many teachers, lawyers, *herbads* and *mobads*" who carried orally transmitted Zoroastrian tradition, including the Gathas, in their learned minds.[175] There exists a Zoroastrian legend, found in the

[167] Grenet 2015, 22.
[168] Hinze 2015, 31; Humbach & Feiss 2010, ix, 5; Y. 12. For "good religion", see Y. 51.17; 53.1, 4.
[169] West 2010, vii; Zaehner 1975, 78; Hintze 2015, 30; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 1-2, 6.
[170] De Jong 2015, 87.
[171] Duchesne-Guillemin 2020, Zoroastrianism.
[172] Grenet 2015, 29.
[173] Gnoli 1988, 334-336; Boyce 1983, 426-429; Shahbazi 1994, 41-50.
[174] The epithet *guzastag* is shared with Ahriman alone (Pahlavi name for Angra Mainyu).
[175] Boyce 1986 [1979], 78-79. Magi, singular Magus (*magu* in Old Persian and *magus* in Latin), is the only recorded name of western Iranian priests during the Median (c. 700 – 599 BCE), Achaemenid (550 – 330 BCE), Parthian (247 BCE – 224 CE) and Sassanid (224 – 651 CE) periods. During Sassanian times, the Pahlavi word *mowbed* / *mobad* originally meant "chief of the Magi," until it became a designation for all Zoroastrian priests. The Pahlavi word *herbad* denotes a priest of lower rank, however, in Pahlavi books the title *herbad* can designate anyone who teaches religious subjects (Dandamayev 2000, Magi; Skjærvø 2003, xiii; Kreyenbroek 2003, 226-227; Stausberg & Karanjia 2015, 368).

10th century Pahlavi book Dēnkard, that Alexander the Great burned and dispersed the original Avesta, written with gold-ink on ox-hides,[176] but this legend has no historical basis, although it is not impossible that commentaries and local translations of the Avesta (conceivably in Old Persian) were destroyed.[177] But other than that, the legend delivers a feeling of resentment and loss Persians felt towards their Hellene conquerors.[178]

Alexander's reign ended in seven years, and after his death his generals, the Diadochi, fought wars over the succession, and this turbulent period brought more suffering to ancient Middle East, until peace came for Iran in 312/311 BCE, when Seleucus I Nicator managed to establish his Seleucid empire that ruled a sizeable part of former Achaemenid domains. Not long after, a seminomadic tribe, called the Parni, entered Iran and disposed Seleucid satraps of the region. The Parni gained control over large regions of Iran and Mesopotamia and gave birth to the Parthian aka Arsacid empire 247 BCE – 224 CE.[179] However, this empire never considered Zoroastrianism its official religion, and Hellene syncretism was widespread. There is no direct evidence that any parts of the Avesta were written down during the Parthian era,[180] even though several Pahlavi texts describe how partial writing down of the Avesta was done by a Parthian king named Valaxs.[181] It is possible, however, that oral translations of the Avesta into spoken languages had been made.[182]

4.3. The written Avesta

It was not until the Sassanian times (224 – 651 CE), after the overthrow of the Arsacid dynasty, when a gradual scripturalisation and dogmatisation of Zoroastrianism took place; Zoroastrianism was transformed into a state religion with its own sacred scripture. High priest Kartīr (3rd century CE),[183] who played a crucial role in the formation of "orthodox" Zoroastrianism, had already produced a large number of cliff inscriptions that represent some of the earliest clearly written expositions of Zoroastrian doctrines[184] (compared to more

[176] Gignoux 1994, 284-289; Kellens 1987, 35-44.
[177] Skjærvø 2003, xv.
[178] Kotwal & Kreyenbroek 2006, Alexander the Great ii. In Zoroastrian Tradition. There exists a Sassanian tradition where Alexander the Great is portrayed in positive light.
[179] Shahbazi 1986, 525; the Editors of Britannica 2022, Arsacid dynasty.
[180] Skjærvø 2003, xiv; West 2010, 32; Kellens 1987, 35-44.
[181] The Arsacid dynasty ruled the Parthian empire, also known as the Arsacid empire (the Editors of Britannica 2022, Arsacid dynasty; Kellens 1987, 35-44).
[182] Skjærvø 2003, xiv-xv. Parthian, a Middle Iranian language, was the official language of the Parthian empire (the Editors of Britannica 2022, Parthian language).
[183] Kartīr is also known as Kartēr, Kerdēr, Kerdīr, Kirdēr, Kirdīr (Skjærvø 2011, 608-628).
[184] Shahbazi 2005, Sasanian dynasty; the Editors of Britannica 2022, Kartēr; Skjærvø 2011, 608-628. The Sassanid empire was especially concerned with legitimizing its rule after Ardašīr I (180 – 242 CE) defeated the last Parthian king Artabanus IV (r. 213 – 224 CE) and claimed the empire for himself, beginning the Sassanid dynasty. Ardašīr I had plans to unite the empire's heterogenous ethnicities together by a shared

meagre Old Persian inscriptions from the Achaemenid era).[185] According to Sassanid tradition described in several Pahlavi texts (3rd – 10th centuries CE), the Avesta, created by Ahura Mazdā in 21 books, was first presented by Zoroaster to Kavi Vištāspa,[186] the first patron of Zoroastrianism.[187] The Sassanid tradition continues how the restoration of the Avesta, after its alleged destruction and dispersion by Alexander the Great, continued in four phases under the Sassanids (224 – 651 CE): The first phase began with king Ardashir I between the years 226 – 241 CE when he ordered high priest Tansar to complete the work of collecting Avestan fragments. The second phase was done by Shapur I (r. 241 – 272 CE) when he initiated a search for scientific documents (from the original Avesta), which had been dispersed to various lands, and reintroduced them to the Sassanid Avesta. The third phase happened under Shapur II (309 – 79 CE), when high priest Ādurbād ī Mahrspandān made a general revision of the Avesta against sectarian divergences,[188] and finally, the fourth phase happened during the reign of Ḵosrow I (r. 531 – 578 CE) when high priest Veh-Shabuhr produced the final edition of the Avesta in 21 books.[189] If the claim of 21 books is true, then the Avesta, as it is known today, contains roughly one quarter of the original composition.[190] Without taking any sides on the issue whether the Avesta truly had 21 books, the idea that the Avesta has been reduced

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religion, and for him, Zoroastrianism was the obvious choice; he commenced first attempts to establish Zoroastrianism as a government religion in the empire's institutions and bureaucracy (the Editors of Britannica 1998, Ardashīr I; Wiesehöfer 1986, 371-376). His successor Šāpur I (240 – 270 CE) toyed with a different idea, however. He welcomed the Iranian prophet Mani to his court in 242 CE and allowed Manichaeism to flourish in the empire. Šāpur I was tempted with the unifying possibilities presented by Manichaeism, but ultimately retained his Zoroastrian faith (Zaehner 1975 [1961], 184). During the reign of Bahrām / Wahrām I (271 – 274 CE), high priest Kartīr won a political victory and Mani was put to death; the formation of Zoroastrian state religion began in full force (Sundermann 2009, Mani; Shahbazi 1988, 514-522; Zaehner 1975 [1961], 186). The Sassanid empire experienced constant wars against Christians in the west and Buddhists in the east, therefore a political consolidation of religious power was an understandable development during a turbulent era (Boyce 1986 [1979], 100). Nevertheless, when Zoroastrianism became the state religion of the Sassanian empire it engaged in persecution of religious minorities, including Jews, Christians, Buddhists and Manichaeans. The orthodoxy set by Kartīr was a completely totalizing narrative; eternal truths were carved in stone, heretical forms of worship were destroyed in an iconoclastic zeal, and torture chambers filled with heretics, all for the supposed greater good of the Sassanid empire (Zaehner 1975 [1961], 186; Skjærvø 2011, 608-628). However, king Narseh (r. 293 – 303 CE) conformed to Kartīr's orthodoxy yet restored the empire's old policy of religious tolerance (Weber 2016, Narseh) before persecutions began anew during the reign of Šāpur II (309 – 379 CE). Christians faced greater persecution because Šāpur II had somewhat good relations with the empire's Jews (Daryaee 2009, Šāpur II; Encyclopaedia Judaica 2022, Shapur°).

[185] Boyce 1983, 426-429.

[186] Kavi Vištāspa is mentioned in Y. 28.7; 46.14; 51.16; 53.2.

[187] Shahbazi 2002, 171-176; Kellens 1987, 35-44; Boyce 1996, 187-189, 278-281. According to tradition, Zoroaster was born 258 years before Alexander, started his prophetic career at the age of 30 and was 42-year-old at the time he converted Kavi Vištāspa.

[188] Kellens 1987, 35-44; Dēnkard Book 4:16-24. It was believed that the original Avesta was destroyed and dispersed by Alexander the Great (336 – 323 BCE); the Greeks had taken and translated scientific passages of the Avesta for their own use and dispersed them to foreign lands.

[189] West 2010, 32, Skjærvø 2003, xxi.

[190] West 2010, 2.

is sound, considering the decline of Zoroastrianism after the Arab conquest, and the devastation brought to Iran by Seljuk Turks and Mongols between the 11th and 13th centuries CE.[191] There's also a section within the Avesta called the Fragments, which highlights the rather obvious fragmentary status of the extant composition.[192]

Of course, Zoroastrian tradition on how the Avesta was written down should not be taken as it stands. It is also paramount to understand that by the Sassanid (224 – 651 CE) and post-Sassanid times the Pahlavi speaking masses, even the religious elite, had lost proper understanding of both the Old and Young Avestan languages, the entire Avesta having become nearly incomprehensible to the reciters. Luckily, oral translations and commentaries of the Avesta into spoken languages had been made;[193] these had become a necessity since Young Avestan was spoken around 900 – 600 BCE[194], and the Avestan alphabet, used to write down the Avesta, was invented as late as c. 500 CE.[195] During the Achaemenid and Parthian eras it is possible, even likely according to Skjærvø, that some oral translations of the Avesta had been made. In the early 3rd century CE Sassanid era, we can surmise that there existed at least oral, possibly even written, translations and commentaries of the Avesta since high priest Kartīr (3rd century CE) refers to one nask (book) of the Avesta in his cliff inscriptions. Additionally, a Manichaean text from the 3rd – 4th century describes the nasks of the Avesta, and another text mentions the five Gathas of Zoroaster by name.[196] However, the Avesta, written in the Old and Young Avestan languages, was committed to writing after the Avestan alphabet was invented c. 500 CE.[197] Some scholars believe that the final edition of the Avesta was written under Khosrow I (r. 531 – 578),[198] so we can generally say that the Avesta was written down in the 6th century CE.[199]

4.4. Fragmentation of the Avesta

After reaching the desired status of a religion with its own sacred scripture, what other faiths

[191] West 2010, 29-30; Skjærvø 2003, xiii.
[192] Kellens 1987, 35-44: VII. the fragments.
[193] Skjærvø 2003, xv
[194] Skjærvø 2003, xiv, xvii.
[195] Skjærvø 2003, xv, 1.
[196] Skjærvø 2003, xv
[197] Skjærvø 2003, xv-xvi
[198] West 2010, 32; https://www.britannica.com/biography/Khosrow-I
[199] Skjærvø 2003, xv-xvi. Numerous linguistic errors entered the Avesta after it was committed to writing in the 6th century CE since both the Old and Young Avestan had become unintelligible to Zoroastrians of the Sassanid era. Grammatical forms and the texts themselves were affected by corruption, such as whole phrases (nouns + adjectives) being lifted out of their actual context and placed elsewhere without proper adjustment.

like Judaism, Manichaeism, Buddhism and Christianity had already done,[200] Zoroastrianism was struck by another disaster: Rashidun caliphate conquered the Sassanid empire during the years 637 – 651 CE, and a gradual Islamisation followed, which slowly caused Zoroastrianism to fade into the background of history, finally becoming an obscure minority religion as it is known today.[201] The gradual deterioration of Zoroastrianism led to a situation that around 1000 BCE there was only a single manuscript left in existence for each part of the extant Avesta, from which all later manuscripts are descended.[202] For some parts of the Avesta, the oldest manuscripts date from the 13th – 14th centuries CE, and for others the tradition does not go beyond the 16th – 18th centuries CE.[203] The surviving manuscripts of the Yasna, where the Gathas are contained, come partly from Iran and partly from India; both versions offer a virtually uniform text with trivial divergences, even though the archetype of both manuscripts is a copy made centuries later than its original Sassanid prototype.[204] The Gathas themselves have survived astonishingly intact, despite their hermeneutic understanding having varied throughout the centuries; even nowadays the Gathas are interpreted in different ways and many scholars agree that even ancient Zoroastrian priests have misinterpreted their message.[205] Regardless, the transmission itself has been fairly successful, despite few corruptions appearing here and there.[206]

It must be pointed out that a Pahlavi translation of the Gathas, with numerous Pahlavi glosses, was produced during the late medieval period, but the quality of this translation is horrible, even though it does yield some fruitful details to scholarly research. However, it generally tells how medieval Zoroastrians had lost true understanding of the Gathas.[207]

4.5. Pahlavi literature

The end of the Sassanian empire (224 – 651 CE) was not the end of Zoroastrian scriptural work. Already in the Sassanian period, a proliferation Zoroastrian literature in the Pahlavi language had taken place, and the production of Pahlavi literature continued up to the 10th century CE. What makes Pahlavi literature important for the study of ancient Zoroastrianism

[200] Kellens 1987, 35-44.
[201] The Editors of Britannica 2020, Sasanian dynasty; Strausberg, Vevaina & Tessmann 2015, 1. Zoroastrianism has currently roughly 125,000 adherents and their numbers have been in rapid decline since World War II.
[202] Skjærvø 2003, xvii.
[203] Andrés-Toledo 2015, 519; Skjærvø 2003, xiii, xv-xvii.
[204] West 2010, 33; Hinnells 2008, Parsi communities i. Early history. The creation of Parsi settlement in India was the outcome of Zoroastrian emigration from medieval Islamic Persia.
[205] De Jong 2015, 87; West 2010, vii-viii; Skjærvø 2003, xv; Boyce 1996, 193.
[206] For details, see chapter 3.1-2.
[207] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 10, 13, 18. One interesting detail given by the Pahlavi translation of the Gathas is the name of Porucistā's bridegroom in Y. 53.4: Jāmāspa.

is that Pahlavi books from as late as 9th century CE describe contents of lost books of the Avesta.[208] There is no detailed cosmogony or eschatology in the extant Avesta, therefore most of Zoroastrian cosmogony and eschatology is found from Pahlavi literature (3rd – 10th centuries CE).[209] Pahlavi books also echo with archaic ideas that stem from both pre-Zoroastrian and Zoroastrian traditions, making them to some degree connected to early Zoroastrian tradition.[210] Given the ancientness of these ideas, it is possible that the creators of the Gathas were familiar with some of them, however, thoroughly discerning which cosmogonic themes in Avestan and Pahlavi material reflect the thought world of the Gathic culture would be a topic of another thesis. It is obvious, however, that Pahlavi books represent a more developed "modern" version of Zoroastrianism,[211] and also Zoroastrian eschatology, with a linear worldview, finds it most refined form in these books; Pahlavi eschatology is systematic and well-articulated,[212] unlike the metaphorical and ambiguous language of the Gathas and the lack of systematic details in the Young Avesta.[213] Two Pahlavi books, the Dēnkard and the Greater Bundahišn, are of utmost importance since they represent Pahlavi Zand (commentary) of the Avesta. A passage at the end of the third book of Dēnkard (10th century CE), describes the work itself as a continuation and synthesis of the Sassanian Avesta in 21 nasks. Additionally, the eight book of Dēnkard describes lost books of the Avesta in some detail.[214] Nevertheless, according to Albert de Jong, it is anachronistic and problematic to interpret the Gathas through Zoroastrian tradition, like it is problematic to take the opposite stance and say the Gathas are completely unrelated to later tradition.[215]

[208] West 2010, 2; Cereti 2009, Middle Persian literature i. Pahlavi literature; the Editors of Britannica 2011, Bundahishn.
[209] Kreyenbroek 1993, 303-307.
[210] Kreyenbroek 1993, 303-307; Cereti 2009, Middle Persian literature i. Pahlavi literature; Boyce 1996, 97, 139, 141, 231-332, 286-287; Eliade 1976, 32, 87; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 21.
[211] Skjærvø 2006, 49.
[212] Cereti 2009, Middle Persian literature i. Pahlavi literature.
[213] Yt. 13.17, 58; 19.11-12 and FrW 4.1-3 of the Young Avesta contain allusions to linear eschatology, Yašt 19.11 (c. 1st millennium BCE) being the most unambiguous reference to *frašō.kərəti* (Vevaina 2009, 220).
[214] Cereti 2009, Middle Persian literature i. Pahlavi literature.
[215] De Jong 1997, 58.

5. Yasna analysis

This chapter approaches the Gathas in the order they are presented in the Yasna liturgy. When a translation, or a scholar, refers to an idea that has relevance to a linear worldview, a closer analysis will take place. Ideas that have relevance to a linear worldview include themes that are concerned with the past, future, and afterlife; themes that deal with the general course of the world, from cosmogony to possible eschatology.

5.1. The first / foremost existence, Y. 28.11

Yasna 28.11 is found from the first Gatha *Ahunauuaitī* (Y. 28-34) that follows a traditional form of supplications to gods.[216] It is a series of entreaties to Ahura Mazdā and his two most prominent forces: *vohu manah* (Good Thought / good thinking) and *aṡ̌a* (Right / truth).[217] Y. 28.11 describes a view of the past, and/or, a view of the future. Additionally, it describes how *vohu manah* and *aṡ̌a* work in accordance with *mazdā ahurā* (Mindful Lord / Wise Lord, i.e., Ahura Mazdā).

Y. 28.11: Thou who with their aid dost protect Thy Right and Good Thought forever, teach me, Mindful Lord, to voice in line with Thy will through Thy mouth (those teachings) by which the pristine existence may come about. - West (2010).[218]

Y. 28.11: You who, with these, store for yourself truth and good though to (all) eternity. O Wise Lord, teach me with your mouth in accordance with your spirit to recite (those eulogies) through which the first/foremost existence came/will come into being. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[219]

Y. 28.11: Thou who dost guard truth and good thinking for eternity in accord with the following things, do Thou, Wise Lord, instruct me (in these very things) through the eloquence befitting Thy spirit and with Thine own mouth, the things by means of which the foremost existence shall come about here. -Insler (1975).[220]

West was the only translator who interpreted *aṡ̌a* and *vohu mannah* as *Aməša Spəntas*. Nevertheless, he generally interprets Y. 28.11 that Zoroaster hopes to promote teachings that will bring about the restoration of the original pristine state of the cosmos.[221] West and Boyce believe the Gathas teach about a progressive renovation of the world in a half-cyclical linear model; the Gathas seek to restore the world to its original pristine condition.[222] However, the concepts of "pristine / first existence" and "foremost existence" have different meanings. Those who have translated *aŋhuš pouruyō* as "the pristine / first existence" see it through a common mythological motif of "golden age," known in many cultures, which narrated how

[216] West 2010, 38.
[217] Insler 1975, 114.
[218] West 2010, 43.
[219] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 77.
[220] Insler 1975, 27.
[221] West 2010, 42.

the world had once been far better for human life. This same motif is articulated in Zoroastrian tradition that describes how the world had literally been perfect and paradisiacal before it became corrupted by the Hostile Spirit and his followers,[223] "destroyers of this existence" (Y. 32. 13).[224] One of these must have been primeval king Yima since his sins are referred to in the Gathas (Y. 32.8). Humbach & Faiss argue that the audience of the Gathas were familiar with the myth of Yima, a king with paradisical rule, who caused the downfall of the world by rebelling against Ahura Mazdā. This tradition is described in Young Avestan Yašt 19:33-34.[225] According to Pahlavi tradition, Yima (Pahlavi Jam / Jamšēd) committed the sin of teaching people to eat meat,[226] and instituted animal sacrifices and evil practices of cow-slaughter (Y. 32.8)[227] by which evil entered the world.[228]

Insler steps out of the golden age motif and translates *aŋhu*š *pouruyō* as "the foremost existence", meaning the one ahead of other existences in terms of importance. He argues *aŋhu*š *pouruyō* indicates that the foremost state of existence has not yet taken place, and he describes "the foremost existence" being the time when deceit and its forces will be destroyed, when *aša* and *vohu manah* will rule the world. Consequently, Insler interprets Y. 28.11 pointing to a linear worldview and *aŋhu*š *pouruyō* pointing to a time following the final judgment.[229] Zoroastrianism has included the final judgment as part of *frašō.kərəti* at least since Pahlavi times (3rd – 10th century CE),[230] but it also included the notion of restored first existence since Young Avestan times (early 1st millennium BCE),[231] which was excluded from Insler's interpretation.

Humbach & Faiss leave it open whether Y. 28.11 refers to the first or the foremost existence, neither deciding if this existence had come into being in the past or will come into being in the future. West might call this a display of indecisiveness.[232] Nonetheless, Humbach & Faiss argue that Young Avestan picture of the course of the world, that the paradise of

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[222] West 2010, 15; Boyce 1996, 232.
[223] West 2010, 15, 42. West translates *aŋhu*š *pouruyō* as "pristine existence" and equates it with perfection. The world may have been pristine, but was it perfect? Was it perfect as it was, or perfect as in completely transcending the imperfections of the known world? Later Zoroastrianism of Young Avestan and Pahlavi traditions would answer that the world had been supernaturally perfect and paradisaical (Yt. 19.11, 33; Gbd. 1.52; 3.21-24). Humbach & Faiss also describe the pristine existence in Young and Old Avestan worldviews as "paradise" (Humbach & Faiss 2020, 21).
[224] Insler 1975, 49; West 2010, 75. It is interesting that the Old Avestan noun *yəma* means "twins".
[225] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 17-18.
[226] Skjærvø 2012, 501-522. The Old Avestan noun for "twins" in dual is *yāmā*.
[227] West 2010, 71-72.
[228] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 21.
[229] Insler 1975, 27, 132.
[230] Cereti 2009, Middle Persian literature i. Pahlavi; Shahbazi 2005, Sasanian dynasty; Hintze 2000, 190-192.
[231] Vevaina 2009, 220; Yt. 13.17, 58; 19.11-12, 33; FrW. 4.1-3.
[232] West 2010, 35.

golden age was lost through the sin of primeval king Yima, underlies the Gathic worldview as well.[233] They also argue that "the first / foremost" existence is deliberately ambiguous and it both refers to songs by which Ahura Mazdā created the world, and to songs Zoroaster wants to learn in order to use them to restore the first existence, or to establish the foremost existence. However, they conclude that the poem recalls both creation and salvation of the world on the macrocosmic level.[234] This interpretation is supported by West,[235] while Insler only emphasises the future salvation.[236]

When deciding whether Y. 28.11 has any ideas related to a linear worldview, it must be reminded that cyclical worldviews have contained the idea of golden age. So, in in a cyclical setting, if the world has declined from a golden age, it will eventually return to its former condition. This is something Y. 28.11 might hope for, but there are not any details about a supposed last judgment, or any articulated narrative how the world would change forever when *aŋhuš pouruyō* comes about.

5.1.1. Young Avestan worldview and Y. 28.11

Young Avestan tradition of Zoroastrianism (c. 900 – 600 BCE) adopted the notion that the world had once been pristine and perfect, and from that premise, a future-oriented, optimistic, and linear eschatology, culminating in *frašō.kərəti*, was devised,[237] although scholars like Boyce, Humbach & Faiss and Skjærvø generally hold that the Young Avestan worldview underlies the Gathic worldview as well.[238] Nevertheless, most scholars agree that the Young Avesta contains at least one unambiguous reference *frašō.kərəti*: Yašt 19.11, contained in the Yašts section of the Avesta that consists of 21 Young Avestan hymns addressed to various divinities.[239] Even though it is very hard to give an exact dating for an orally transmitted tradition, a scholar named Yuhan S. D. Vevaina has suggested that Zoroastrian eschatological myth was already in existence in 1000 BCE, or even earlier[240]. The Yašts were composed in the early 1st millennium BCE, later than the Gathas but before the Achaemenid era 550 – 330 BCE,[241] and they echo with ancient ideas that stem from both pre-Zoroastrian and early Zoroastrian traditions.[242] We can generally conclude that a linear worldview, with an

[233] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 17-18, 21.
[234] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 168.
[235] West 2010, 42.
[236] Insler 1975, 27, 132.
[237] Vevaina 2009, 220; Hintze 2000, 190-192.
[238] Skjærvø 2015, 62, Humbach & Faiss 2010, 17-18, 21.
[239] Hintze 2014, Yašts.
[240] Vevaina 2009, 220.
[241] Skjærvø 2003, xiv; Vevaina 2009, 220.
[242] Hintze 2000, Yašts.

optimistic eschatology, was present before and during the Achaemenid era, this view supported by Greek historians citing Theopompus (380 – c. 315 BCE) as their source.[243] A translation of Yašt 19.11 produced by James Darmesteter goes as follows:

Yt. 19.11: So that they may restore the world, which will (thenceforth) never grow old and never die, never decaying and never rotting, ever living and ever increasing, and master of its wish, when the dead will rise, when life and immortality will come, and the world will be restored at its wish;[244]

Those agents mentioned as "they" are creatures of Ahura Mazdā (Yt. 19.10), who will make life *fraša*.[245] The beginning line clearly states that the world will be restored, the word "restore" meaning that the world is returned to its former condition.

In the end, there's nothing in Y. 28.11 that would differentiate a cyclical worldview from a linear one. Even if we choose a definitive meaning for *aŋhu*š *pouruyō*, whether it refers to the past or the future, the poem merely suggests that Zoroaster seeks to promote teachings / eulogies related to *aŋhu*š *pouruyō*, without giving us any details about end times or eschatology. However, if we read Y. 28.11 through the lens of Yt. 19.11 (early 1st millennium BCE), or through the lens of Pahlavi literature (3rd - 10th centuries CE), it is hermeneutically very easy to project a linear worldview onto Y. 28.11.

5.2. The meeting of the Spirits, Y. 30.2-11

Yasna 30 is interested in both the past and the future, and it is probably one of the most famous Gathic poems contained in the first Gatha *Ahunauuaitī*. It has been interpreted to describe a cosmogonic myth,[246] or describing origins of moral dispositions.[247] Either way, it gives a foundation for Zoroastrian dualism. The poem addresses followers of Zoroaster (Y. 30.1), but according to Humbach & Faiss, Zoroaster does not address humans but he tries to get the attention of Ahura Mazdā and other *ahuras*.[248] Nonetheless, Y. 30.2 urges everyone to make a choice, between good and evil (and between being a munificent or miser according to Humbach & Faiss),[249] and this choice will determine the person's ultimate fate.[250] Verses 3-6

[243] Elledge 2017, 48-49; Vevaina 2009, 220; Boyce 1996, 236. Theopompus (380-315 BCE) became the most cited authoritative figure on Zoroastrian eschatology among Greek literary circles. Late antique authors like Plutarch (c. 46-120 AD), Diogenes Laërtius (c. 3rd century CE) and Aeneas of Gaza (2nd half of 5th century CE) considered that Theopompus (380-315 BCE) had witnessed Persian beliefs about eschatological resurrection. Diogenes Laërtius also mentions Eudemus of Rhodes (4th century BCE) as another witness to Zoroastrian resurrection beliefs (Elledge 2017, 48-49; Laërtius 2003, 14-15).

[244] Darmesteter 1882, 290 (SBE23). Sacred Books of the East (1879 – 1910) remains the only comprehensive English translation of all Yašts (Silverman 2012, 231).

[245] Hintze 2000, 190-192.

[246] Insler 1975, 33.

[247] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 41-42.

[248] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 184.

[249] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 81.

[250] West 2010, 50.

tell about the two primordial spirits, and how their clash results in *daēvas* siding with the evil spirit, which affects the world negatively. Verses 7-8 introduce optimism by describing how *druj* ends up in the hands of *aṡ̌a*, and verse 9 hopes to make the world splendid / perfect / healed.[251] Verses 10-11 tell about *druj's* destruction, present a horse racing metaphor, and allude to the afterlife.

5.2.1. The great *yāh-*, Y.30.2

Y.30.2: Hear with your ears the best message, behold with lucid mind the two choices in the decision each man makes for his own person before the great Supplication, as ye look ahead to the declaration to Him. -West (2010).[252]

Y.30.2: Hear the best with your ears, view, with though (enlightened) by the flame, the preferences/cooptations (resulting) from the discrimination, (viewing) one man after the other for his own body/individually before the great apportionment, waiting for Him to pronounce for us (his sentences). -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[253]

Y.30.2: Listen with your ears to the best things. Reflect with a clear mind – man by man for himself – upon the two choices of decision, being aware to declare yourselves to Him before the great retribution. -Insler (1975).[254]

There are three different translations for *parā mazə̄ yåŋhō*:[255] "before the great Supplication" / "the great apportionment" / "the great retribution." Each translation indicates that *yāh-*, which is also found in Y. 49.9, will happen in the future.[256] This difficult word *yāh-* has been interpreted variously. Some older scholars H. P. Schmidt and F. P. J. Kuiper have argued that *yāh-* is a term metaphorically related to horse racing, a theme which will be analysed in chapters 5.2.7 and 5.7.1. However, Insler and Humbach & Faiss view *yāh-* as a word of legalistic origins, Insler rendering it as "retribution" and Humbach & Faiss as "apportionment."[257] West has given a more religious overtone for *yāh-* as the "Supplication" with upper-case initials. He argues that *yāh-* refers to the individual judgment that each person will face after death.[258] Zoroastrianism adopted and revised a popular pre-Zoroastrian belief in *činuuatō pərətu-* (Y. 46.10-11; Y. 51.13), translated variously as the Chinvat Bridge / Arbiter's Crossing / Bridge of the Requiter / Crossing of the Separator / accountant's bridge / Bridge of the Judge. It is a narrow bridge, where souls of the dead receive their individual judgments. At *činuuatō pərətu-*, the soul meets the Maiden, who is either a beautiful maiden

[251] West 2010, 50-55; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 81-83; Insler 1975, 33-35.
[252] West 2010, 51.
[253] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 81.
[254] Insler 1975, 33.
[255] Insler 1975, 163.
[256] West 2010, 145; Insler 1975, 163. West interprets "Reckoning" in Y. 31.14 (West 2010, 63) as synonymous with "the great Supplication" (West 2010, 16).
[257] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 81; Insler 1975, 163-164.
[258] West 2010, 16.

or terrible hag, representing the morality of the judged, the encounter being the harbinger of soul's future destination.[259] Then, Ahura Mazdā, in company of three *yazatas* according to tradition,[260] judges the soul, by the means of fire and molten metal according to West,[261] which dictates the soul's destination in heaven or hell.[262] This ordeal by fire and molten metal has its roots in an archaic custom, familiar to both ancient Greeks and Indians, in which a person could prove his/her truthfulness and innocence by participating in an ordeal in which molten metal was poured on the accused or the person was required to walk through fire. Of course, such a ritual was rarely carried out, but the ritual was an ultimate guarantor that truth could be objectively uncovered, at least in theory, since divine powers were expected to save the innocent.[263] In the Gathas, fire is heavily associated with truth presented as a power of Ahura Mazdā.[264] In any case, after the judgment at *činuuatō pərətu-*, the afterlife awaited, and the Gathas contain a concept called "the House of Song", also called "the House of Good Thought / good thinking" (Y. 31.2; 50.4). It originally meant places where Zoroaster performed his poetry, places in accord with the best thought, mainly that of Ahura Mazdā. In later Avesta, however, the term "House of Song" came to mean paradise.[265] All in all, the Gathas give ideas about rewards and punishments in the afterlife, but there are not many details: a place of joy and radiance awaits the righteous who will dwell with Ahura Mazdā and Good Thought / good thinking (Y. 31.20, 22; 46.14; 48.7), but the evil ones will endure eternity of darkness and misery, with only foul food to eat (Y. 31.20; cf. 30.4, 11).[266] This is how West interprets "the great Supplication" in Y. 30.2, pointing to the individual judgment each person will face after death.[267]

Humbach & Faiss do not give any detailed explanation for "the great apportionment" in Y.30.2. Their translation simple states that Ahura Mazdā, who is able to give both spiritual

[259] Boyce 1996, 237-240; Tafażżolī 1991, 594-595.
[260] Boyce 1996, 240. Avestan *yazata* means "being worthy of worship." *Aməša Spəntas* ("Bounteous Immortals") along with other *ahuras* are *yazatas* (Boyce 1986 [1979], 21).
[261] According to West, Yasna 30.2; 31.3, 19; 32.7; 34.4; 43.4, 9; 46.7; 47.6; 51.9 are references to the ordeal of molten metal (West 2010, 16). Humbach & Faiss and Insler view that there is an allusion to the ordeal of molten metal in Y. 30.7 (Humbach & Faiss 2010, 82; Insler 1975, 35), but West does not see any molten metal in Y. 30.7 (West 2010, 52-53).
[262] West 2010, 16; Boyce 1996, 35.
[263] West 2010, 16; Boyce 1996, 35, 243. According to Sassanian tradition, high priest Ādurbād ī Mahrspandān, during the reign of Šāpur II (309 – 379 CE), submitted himself to an ordeal of molten metal and passed it unscathed, proving that his revision of the canon Avesta was orthodox and according to the will of Ohrmazd (Kellens 1987, 35-44; Dēnkard Book 4:20).
[264] Boyce 1987, Ātaš 1-5.
[265] West 2010, 18; Skjærvø 2006, 12.
[266] West 2010, 16; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 89.
[267] West 2010, 16, 50.

and material rewards, (Y. 34.14),[268] and who can inflict punishments both in this life and the afterlife,[269] will give his sentences for each man. However, they generally argue that Zoroaster attempts to support Ahura Mazdā in a cosmic struggle for the decisive salvation of the world,[270] but they also say that there is much ambiguity in regards of worldly and other-world matters when the ordeal of molten metal and Gathic legal vocabulary are concerned. However, Humbach & Faiss generally see that the ordeal of molten metal "makes manifest the saved/redeemed, and the condemned/damned", as per the words of Pahlavi glosses from the late medieval translation of the Gathas, but they still do not give exact interpretation whether the ordeal of molten metal is eschatological or not.[271]

Insler sees "the great retribution" as an allusion to eschatology, to the final general judgment in *frašō.kərəti*.[272] Martin Schwartz and Mary Boyce also interpret this ordeal of molten metal eschatologically, like later Zoroastrian tradition has done. [273] Insler's commentary, however, does not give any details about this ordeal; he simply argues that Y. 30.2 is concerned with eschatology and the final judgment.[274] This final judgment is described in detail in Pahlavi books (3rd – 10th centuries CE); evil will be eliminated at the end of history through a universal trial of molten metal, and there will be a final *saošyant*, an Avestan term meaning "benefactor" but sometimes translated as "saviour"[275], who performs a sacrifice by which humankind is resurrected to bathe in molten metal by which Ahura Mazdā completes the renovation of the universe. While the righteous ones will not suffer or be harmed, the impious ones will suffer greatly, but ultimately all of humankind is purified and admitted to the final happiness. Even hell is purified by molten metal and becomes a part of the rehabilitated cosmos that becomes a conjunction of physical and spiritual worlds.[276] According to the Greater Bundahišn, there will not be only perfection but an "eternal progress" (Gbd. 4).[277]

All things considered, West's interpretation seems more likely in my opinion since Y. 30.2 speaks about choices each person must make for themselves, making it seem natural that

[268] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 25.
[269] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 70.
[270] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 21-22, 42.
[271] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 22, 70-72.
[272] Insler 1975, 33, 164.
[273] Schwartz 2015, 51; Boyce 1996, 35.
[274] Insler 1975, 163–164 (Y.30.2); Insler 1975, 105, 315 (Y. 51.9).
[275] Malandra 2000, Saošyant. In the Gathas, the term *saošyant* refers to both contemporaneous and future persons. In Young Avestan Y. 13.3 they are described as "most learned, truest in speech, most powerful, most intelligent", who are to be emulated according to Y. 70: "So that we may speak out with zeal, may we be Saošyants, may we be victorious!".
[276] Panaino 2015, 244; Cereti 2015, 271; Malandra 2000, Saošyant.
[277] Anklesaria 1956, 7.

the great Supplication / retribution / apportionment refers to an individual judgment carried by Ahura Mazdā, not general eschatology, because in pre-Zoroastrian context *činuuatō pərətu-* and the ordeal of molten were related to individual fates.[278] Of course, the narrative of last judgment by definition entails that each person is judged (resurrected to face judgment at the end of days), but Young Avestan references to *frašō.kərəti* do not contain any mentions of judgment (Yt. 13.17;[279] 13.58; Yt. 19.11-12 & FrW. 4.1-3),[280] only allusions to future rewards and how *druj* will perish (Yt. 19.12), and how the world will be made perfect, like it was in the golden age (Yt. 19.33). Pahlavi literature, on the other hand, gives a more detailed account how the ordeal of molten metal is the means of eschatological judgment.[281] If we interpret Y. 30.2 pointing to an individual afterlife judgment, then Y. 30.2 does not contain a linear worldview, because conceptions of the afterlife do not entail a linear or cyclical worldview.

5.2.2. The twins, Y. 30.3-4

Y. 30.3-4: They are the two Wills, the twins who in the beginning made themselves heard through dreaming, those two kinds of thought, of speech, of deed, the better and the evil; and between them well-doers discriminate rightly, but ill-doers do not. (4) Once those two Wills join battle, a man adopts life or non-life, the way of existence that will be his at the last: that of the wrongful the worst kind, but for the righteous one, best thought. - West (2010).[282]

Y. 30.3-4: These are the two spirits, the twins who, at the beginning (of the existence/life,) came to be heard of as both kinds of dreams, thoughts and words, as both kinds of actions, the very good and the evil one, and between these the two munificent ones discriminate rightly, not so the misers. (4) When these two spirits meet (to fight for a person, then this) determines (his) first (existence/life,) vitality or lack of it, and his existence/life

[278] West 2010, 16; Boyce 1996, 35, 243.
[279] There's a concept called *fravaši* in Yt. 13.17. *Fravašis* are supernatural beings, usually souls of great heroes, that can interact beneficially with the world. In early stages of Zoroastrianism, the Avestan term *fravaši* became mixed with *urvan*, a term generally meaning soul (Boyce 2000, 195-199). In the Greater Bundahišn, Ohrmazd asks the *fravašis* of humankind if they would choose to be born in the material world to combat the Lie / *druj* (Gbd. 3.23-24; Anklesaria 1956, 45).

[280] Yt. 13.17: "In fearful battles they are the wisest for help, the Fravashis of the faithful. The most powerful amongst the Fravashis of the faithful, O Spitama! are those of the men of the primitive law or those of the Saoshyants not yet born, who are to restore the world. Of the others, the Fravashis of the living faithful are more powerful, O Zarathushtra! than those of the dead, O Spitama!" (Darmesteter 1882, 184 [SBE23]).

Yt. 13.58: "And now they move around in their far-revolving circle for ever, till they come to the time of the good restoration of the world." (Darmesteter 1882, 194 [SBE23]).

Yt. 19.11-12: "So that they may restore the world, which will (thenceforth) never grow old and never die, never decaying and never rotting, ever living and ever increasing, and master of its wish, when the dead will rise, when life and immortality will come, and the world will be restored at its wish; (12) When the creation will grow deathless,—the prosperous creation of the Good Spirit,—and the Drug (*druj*) shall perish, though she may rush on every side to kill the holy beings; she and her hundredfold brood shall perish, as it is the will of the Lord." (Darmesteter 1882, 290 [SBE23]).

FrW. 4.1-3: "With its help, they shall give life back to the bodies and they will keep their souls with the bodies, that is, thereafter, they will not die." (Westergaard 1852–1854, 332).
[281] Hintze 2000, 190-192.
[282] West 2010, 51.

will be at last. That of the deceitful (will be) very bad, but best thought (will be in store) for the truthful one. - Humbach & Faiss (2010).[283]

Y. 30.3-4: Yes, there are two fundamental spirits, twins which are renowned to be in conflict. In thought and in word, in action, they are two: the good and the bad. And between these two, the beneficent have correctly chosen, not the maleficent. (4) Furthermore, when these two spirits first came together, they created life and death, and how, at the end, the worst existence shall be for the deceitful but the best thinking for the truthful person. -Insler (1975).[284]

All translations indicate that the spirits constitute the origins of moral dispositions,[285] which is elaborated later in Y. 45.2.[286] West translates the two spirits (*mainyū*) as Wills or Mentalities.[287] These *mainyū* enter people's minds as voices in dreams, and a person's choice between them determines the person's way of life, and the "existence that will be at last." This can be easily interpreted alluding to *činuuatō pərətu-* and the afterlife.[288] Even Insler interprets "the best thinking" for the truthful person as an abbreviation for the "House of Best Thinking" / "House of Good Thought", a metaphor for heaven.[289]

West and Insler interpret that the meeting of the spirits represents a cosmogonic narrative; the spirits clashed at the beginning of the world. Insler's translation highlights this cosmogonic aspect even further by saying that the spirits created life and death.[290] However, Humbach & Faiss do not see any cosmogony in Y. 30.3-4. The spirits "came to be heard" in the beginning of a person's existence/life, but then in the present tense, the munificent ones and misers make a choice; the clash between the spirits is about moral choices in the present and the future, not a mythological account of the distant past.[291]

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[283] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 81.
[284] Insler 1975, 33.
[285] The most peculiar Zoroastrian (mis)interpretation of Y. 30.3 is called Zurvanism (*zurvān* is an Avestan word for "time"), which was a monistic reworking of Zoroastrian dualism whose greatest deity was Zurvan, the deity of Time. This interpretation argued that since the two primordial spirits were twins, *yəma*, they must have had a father. Zurvan came to represent this father, the original source of the two spirits. (De Jong 1997, 63-64). Mary Boyce argues that Zurvanite reading of Y. 30.3 was theorized in the late Achaemenid period, but it did not have any practical impact on Zoroastrianism, until the Sassanian and post-Sassanian times when Zurvanism enjoyed royal patronage of several Persian kings, despite Zoroastrianism having become a dogmatized state religion (Boyce 1996, 230, 347; Boyce 1986, 69-70; Boyce 1986 [1979], 68). Zoroastrian studies have produced three main schools of classifying Zurvanism: 1) a separate pre-Zoroastrian religion in Media that was absorbed into Zoroastrianism; 2) a form of Zoroastrian heresy (supported by Boyce); 3) an inoffensive part of diverse Zoroastrianism where Zurvanism, as an organized religious system, is a Western scholarly invention (De Jong 1997, 67-68). The third argument is supported by the fact that Zoroastrian literature contains only one line of polemic against Zurvanism as a heresy (Boyce 1986 [1979], 70), but there is plenty of polemic against other heretical views (De Jong 1997, 67-68). A classic Zoroastrian scholar R. C Zaehner argued that the orthodox dualism of the Sassanid era was crystallized during the reign of Šāpur II, r. 309 – 379 CE (Zaehner 1975, 187).
[286] See chapter 5.9.1
[287] West 2010, 50.
[288] See chapter 2.5.1.
[289] West 2010, 18; Skjærvø 2006, 12; Insler 1975, 33.
[290] West 2010, 50-51; Insler 1975, 33, 159.
[291] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 41-42.

In the end, none of the translators found linear eschatology from Y. 30.3-4, even though Insler interpreted the previous passage (Y. 30.2) as an allusion to the last judgment.[292]

5.2.3. *How the world is blighted*, Y. 30.5-6

Y. 30.5-6: Of those two Wills, the Wrongful one chooses to do the worst things, but the most Bounteous Will (chooses) Right, he who clothes himself in adamant; as do those also who committedly please the lord with genuine actions, the Mindful One. (6) Between those two the very Daevas fail to discriminate rightly, because delusion comes over them as they deliberate, when they choose worst thought; they scurry together to the violence with which mortals blight the world. -West (2010).[293]

Y. 30.5-6: The deceitful one of these two spirits chooses to do what is worst, but the most benevolent spirit, clad in the hardest stones, chooses truth, as (do those) who devotedly satisfy the Wise Lord with real/realizing actions. (6) Particularly the daēvas/devils do not discriminate between these two (spirits). Since delusion comes over them while they hold counsel so that they choose worst thought, therefore they gather at fury, by which the mortals sicken the existence/world. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[294]

Y. 30.5-6: Of these two spirits, the deceitful one chose to bring to realization the worst things. (But) the very virtuous spirit, who is clothed in the hardest stones, chose the truth, and (so shall those) who shall satisfy the Wise Lord continuously with true actions. (6) The gods did not at all choose correctly between these two, since the deceptive one (the evil spirit) approached them as they were deliberating. Since they chose the worst thought, they then rushed into fury, with which they have afflicted the world and mankind. -Insler (1975).[295]

Yasna 30.5 labels the two spirits as "the Wrongful / deceitful one" and "the most bounteous / benevolent / virtuous spirit."[296] Zoroastrianism identifies the evil spirits as *Angra Mainyu*, although he is only once referred to by this name in Y. 45.2.[297] The good spirit is then identified as *Spənta Mainyu*, the Holy Spirit of Ahura Mazdā. The relationship between the Holy Spirit and Ahura Mazdā is subtle and hard to define, but according to Boyce, it is comparable to manifold theological views on the Holy Spirit in Abrahamic faiths.[298] Y. 30.5 also describes how the Holy Spirit "clothes himself in adamant" / is "clad in hardest of stones" / "clothed in the hardest stones." West used the word "adamant" while knowing that the literal phrase is "the hardest stones." According to him, it is a metaphoric description how the Holy Spirit is an invincible warrior of *Aṡa*, wearing impenetrable armour.[299] Insler interprets the stone metaphor that *aṡa* is enduring and unchanging like stone.[300] According to Martin Schwartz, however, this metaphor means that the Holy Spirit became manifest in

[292] Insler 1975, 33, 164.
[293] West 2010, 53.
[294] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 82.
[295] Insler 1975, 33.
[296] West gives an alternative translation "Positive one" (West 2010, 52).
[297] Boyce 1986 (1979), 20-21; Duchesne-Guillemin 1984, 670-673.
[298] Boyce 1984, 684-687.
[299] West 2010, 52.
[300] Insler 1975, 33.

materiality. Now, Ahura Mazdā has become tangibly worshippable.[301] Y. 30.5 also tells how the Holy Spirit and those who committedly / devotedly / continuously satisfy the Lord engage in genuine / real / realizing / true actions. According to Humbach & Faiss, this highlights the juridical and magical components of these actions (cf. Y. 50.11).[302]

West and Humbach & Faiss have translated Y. 30.5-6 in the present tense, while Insler has used the past tense, because he regards Y. 30.5-6 a cosmogonic account in the distant past.[303] West generally shares this notion,[304] but correctly uses the present tense and emphasises how the two spirits and *daēvas* continuously interact with the world. Y. 30.6 continues that the deceitful spirit chooses (chose according to Insler) to do the worst things (Y. 30.5), and consequently *daēvas* do not choose correctly and side with the evil spirit, by which the world is blighted / sickened / afflicted (Y. 30.6). Y. 30.6 tells how *Spənta Mainyu* (and *ahuras*) choose *aṡ̌a*, which pleases / satisfies Ahura Mazdā. The idea that the world is blighted / sickened / afflicted is a fundamental notion in both Old and Young Avestan worldviews. West and Insler say it is 30.6 that describes why the world was blighted / sickened / afflicted for the first time in the past. [305] Humbach & Faiss would argue that Y. 30.5-6 contains a description on the origins of a person's moral dispositions; the person is controlled by either the good or evil spirit,[306] but the "original sin" that blighted / sickened / afflicted the world happened by the hand of primeval king Yima (Y. 32.8).[307] Martin Schwartz also interprets Y. 30.5 in the past tense, revealing that his interpretation is cosmogonic.[308]

5.2.4. *Druj* ends up in the hands of *aṡ̌a*, Y. 30.7-8

In Y. 30.7-8, ideas related to the future are introduced:

Y. 30.7-8: But suppose one comes with dominion for Him, with good thought and right, then vitality informs the body, piety the soul: their ringleader Thou wilt have as if in irons: (8) and then the requital comes for their misdeeds, for Thee, Mindful One, together with Good Thought, will be found dominion to proclaim to those, Lord, who deliver Wrong into hands of Right. -West (2010).[309]

Y. 30.7-8: (But when) one comes to this (existence/world) with power, good thought, and truth, then youthfulness grants bodily form, (and) right-mindedness (grants) breath/life, so that through their allotment by the (ordeal with glowing) metal, this (existence/world) will be your first/foremost one. (8) And when the penalty

[301] Schwartz 2015, 52-53. This metaphor might be related to pre-Zoroastrian concept that heaven was made of stone. This interpretation is also parallel to Pahlavi view of *Spəntā Ārmaiti*; she is immanent in the element of earth (Gbd. 3.17). See chapter 5.2.5.
[302] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 171.
[303] Insler 1975, 159.
[304] West 2010, 50, 52.
[305] West 2010, 114; Insler 1975, 75.
[306] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 41.
[307] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 184; see chapters 5.1, 5.4.2, 5.9.1.
[308] Schwartz 2015, 52-53.
[309] West 2010, 53.

for those outrages has arrived, then, O Wise One, one will, with good thought, commit to you the power (over it) at the (judgment) pronounced to those who have delivered deceit into the hands of truth. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[310]

Y. 30.7-8: But to this world He came with the rule of good thinking and of truth, and (our) enduring piety gave body and breath (to it). He shall be here for the protection of these (faithful), just as He shall be the first (to do so) during the requitals with the (molten) iron. (8) (to the Wise Lord). And thus, when the punishment for these sinners shall come to pass, then, for Thee, Wise One, shall the rule of good thinking be at hand, in order to be announced to those, Lord, who shall deliver deceit into the hands of truth. -Insler (1975).[311]

This time there are quite a few differences between the translations. West's translation attempts to make a clear distinction between *Amәša Spәntas* and general nouns with upper- and lower-case initials; West was actually the only translator who used upper-case initials for Right and Good Thought in Y. 28.11.[312] In Y. 30.7, however, West has translated good thought and right with lower-case initials, meaning they are qualities humans can possess themselves when allied with *vohu manah* and *aš̊a*.[313] Allying oneself with these powers increases Ahura Mazdā's power and contributes to physical well-being and health, and the outcome of this partnership leads to as *aēšąm ... ayaŋhā ādānāiš*, "Their ringleader Thou wilt have as if in irons" (Y. 30.7), meaning Ahura Mazdā will dominantly hold *Angra Mainyu*, the ringleader of *daēvas*, "as if in irons", fettered and powerless.[314] Y. 30.8 continues how delivered to the hands of *aš̊a*, Jean Kellens having interpreted this that *druj* will become a prisoner of *aš̊a*,[315] therefore West's translation of Y. 30.7 "as if in irons" goes thematically well with Kellen's prisoner interpretation of Y. 30.8.

Humbach & Faiss and Insler have translated *aēšąm ... ayaŋhā ādānāiš* differently (Y. 30-7): "through their allotments by the (ordeal with glowing) metal / "during the requitals with the (molten) iron." They see it as a reference to the imminent ordeal of molten metal.[316] Humbach & Faiss argue that the meaning of the word *ādāna* is similar to *ādā*, "apportionment", but they acknowledge that otherwise *ādāna* would be connected to Vedic Sanskrit *ādāna*, "binding / fettering",[317] like in West's translation.

Y. 30.6 spoke of *daēvas*, but the beginning of Y. 30.7 speaks of persons who come to

[310] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 82-83.
[311] Insler 1975, 35.
[312] Chapter 5.1; West 2010, 43.
[313] West 2010, 12, 52.
[314] West 2010, 52.
[315] Kellens 1996, 562-563.
[316] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 35, 171; Y. 30.2, 7; 31.3, 19; 32.7; 34.4; 43.4; 47.6; 51.9; see chapters 5.2.1, 5.2.4, 5.3.1, 5.3.6, 5.4.1, 5.6.1, 5.7.1, 5.11; 5.14.2.
[317] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 171.

this world with good *xšaθra* (dominion / power / rule), [318] at least according to West and Humbach & Faiss. Insler's translation says it is Ahura Mazda who comes to this world with *xšaθra*. If we follow the translation by Humbach & Faiss, it is ambiguous who exactly are the ones who will experience "allotment by the (ordeal of glowing) metal." It can be righteous persons, *daēvas*, or their followers, but according to Insler, they are righteous persons who Ahura Mazdā protects during the ordeal of molten metal.[319] Nevertheless, Y. 30.8 tells that there will be a requital / penalty / punishment for "their misdeeds" / "those outrages" / "these sinners", clearly turning the focus back to *daēvas* or their mortal followers.

Insler's translation of Y. 30.7 renders the first part "*ahmāicā xšaθra jasaṭ*" as "But to this world He came with the rule in alliance (harmony) with good thinking and truth", as an antithesis to the previous line of Y.30.6: "Since they chose the worst thought, they (*daēvas*) then rushed into fury, with which they have afflicted the world and mankind." According to Insler, Y. 30.6-7 describes how the Lord has come with His rule to offer salvation for the faithful community.[320] I find this interpretation rather Christian, or later Zoroastrian, with a heavy emphasis on salvific history. Nevertheless, Insler continues his interpretation of salvation history when he translates the last part of Y. 30.7 as: "He shall be the first (to do so) during the requitals with the (molten) iron." Insler argues this requital with (molten) iron refers to the test of truth during the final judgment,[321] practically meaning the ordeal of molten as known in Pahlavi literature (3^{rd} – 10^{th} centuries CE). Insler says his interpretation corresponds to Gathic notion that the Lord will support the truthful in this world, and at the time of the ordeal of molten metal, which Insler interprets as the final judgment, the decisive moment when the truthful will be saved.[322] Martin Schwartz also agrees with Insler's eschatological interpretation. He sees that already in Y. 30.5, the Holy Spirit of Ahura Mazdā had made himself manifest in materiality, so this ordeal of molten metal concludes the theme how Ahura Mazdā is active in materiality.[323]

After reading all these different translations and interpretations, one could still argue that Y. 30.7 refers to the individual judgment at *činuuatō pərətu-*. However, Y. 30.6 narrates how *daēvas* (and their mortal followers) chose their sides, and then Y. 30.8 continues: "and

[318] Y. 28.3, 9; 29.11; 30.7-8; 31.6, 21; 32.6; 33.10-11, 13; 34.10, 15; 43.6, 13-14, 16; 44.6-7, 9; 45.9; 47.1; 48.8, 11; 49.10; 50.4; 51.6. Inside the Liturgy in Seven Chapters: Y. 37.2, 5; 41.2. For *xšaθra* of the deceitful, see Y. 31.15; 32.12-13; 44.20; 49.11.
[319] Insler 1975, 35.
[320] Insler 1975, 168-169.
[321] Insler 1975, 35.
[322] Insler 1975, 171.
[323] Schwartz 2015, 52-53.

then the requital comes for their misdeed"[324] / "when the penalty for those outrages has arrived"[325] / "And thus, when the punishment for these sinners shall come to pass."[326] In my opinion, it is possible to interpret Y. 30.8 that even *daēvas*, literal gods, might face judgment. Can gods die to face an individual judgment? Or will there be something decisive, the end of the world as we know it, when even *daēvas* and *druj* will face a requital (possibly by molten metal)[327] and be fettered? Sadly, we are not given any details about this tremendous event until Young Avestan tradition where *daēvas* were thought to perish during *frašō.kərəti* (Yt. 19.12).[328]

Next to the requital / penalty / punishment that is reserved for *daēvas* and their followers, there is a mention of those who deliver *druj* in the hands of *aša* (Y. 30.8) Are those persons simply recipients of a good judgment, or have these persons, together with Ahura Mazda, *vohu manah* and *xšaθra*, achieved something eschatological, the total defeat of *druj*? If I cannot yet argue that there is a linear worldview in Y. 30.7-8, I can neither claim it is absent. In Y. 30.7-8 there is something what I would call ideas related to linear eschatology, ideas that have not reached their full bloom yet.

5.2.5. *Spəntā Ārmaiti* and resurrection, Y. 30.7

Mary Boyce makes the most "devotional" interpretation of Y. 30.7-8, perfectly in line with Young Avestan and Pahlavi tradition. According to her, when *daēvas* did not choose rightly in Y. 30.6, they succumbed to Young Avestan demon (*daēva*) of Wrath named *Aēšma* (Gathic *aēšəma*).[329] Boyce also agrees with Insler that Y. 30.7 deals with the final judgment, but on top of that, she claims Y. 30.7 contains a reference to the eschatological resurrection of the dead.[330] Her interpretation is based on the first part of Y. 30.7:

Y. 30.7: But suppose one comes with dominion for Him, with good thought and right, then vitality informs the body, piety the soul:" -West (2010).[331]

Y. 30.7: (But when) one comes to this (existence/world) with power, good thought, and truth, then youthfulness grants bodily form, (and) right-mindedness (grants) breath/life, -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[332]

Y. 30.7: But to this world He (Ahura Mazdā) came with the rule of good thinking and of truth, and (our) enduring piety gave body and breath (to it). -Insler (1975).[333]

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[324] West 2010, 53.
[325] Humbach 2010, 82-83.
[326] Insler 1975, 35.
[327] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 82-83; Insler 1975, 35.
[328] Hintze 2000, 190-192.
[329] Boyce 1996, 201; Asmussen 1983, 479-480.
[330] Boyce 1996, 206, 246.
[331] West 2010, 53.
[332] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 82-83.
[333] Insler 1975, 35.

Boyce interprets the word *spəntā* meaning *Spəntā Ārmaiti* (*Spandārmad* in Pahlavi), one of the *Aməša Spəntas* (Pahl. *Amešāspand*), "Bounteous Immortals", created by Ahura Mazdā.[334] West has translated *spəntā* as a noun, "piety", with lower-case initial, meaning it is a moral quality that informs the soul like vitality informs the body.[335] Humbach & Faiss have translated *ārmaiti* as "right-mindedness",[336] and Insler has translated it as piety with a phrase "our enduring piety",[337] clearly indicating the piety in question is a moral quality. But for Boyce, this "piety" is the hypostasis of piety, *Spəntā Ārmaiti*, who is associated with the earth in the Gathas (Y. 48.5-6). The 9th century CE Greater Bundahišn (Gbd. 3.17) tells that the part of the physical creation which *Spəntā Ārmaiti* protects, and in which she is immanent, is earth.[338] So, according to Boyce, it is the goddess of the earth, the very hypostasis of piety, who will in Y. 30.7 "give up the bones of the dead on the last day," meaning she will be part of the eschatological resurrection.[339]

I agree with the translations used in this thesis that there is no mention of *Spəntā Ārmaiti* in Y. 30.7. When it comes to eschatological resurrection, I concur with Albert de Jong that resurrection cannot be found from Y. 30.7, or from anywhere else in the Gathas.[340] However, as previously mentioned in chapter 5.1.1, there are scholars who hold that the Young Avestan worldview, which included the belief in the resurrection the dead, also underlies the Gathic worldview.[341] Either way, even if Old Avestan religion / worldview believed in resurrection, which I personally doubt, it is not explicitly mentioned in the Gathas.

5.2.6. The world needs perfection, Y. 30.9

The primordial spirits had clashed (Y. 30.3-4), gods had chosen their sides (Y. 30.6), and allusions to a future judgment were made (Y. 30.7-8). Now, it is time to act, and Y. 30.9 describes what the faithful community should do in the aforementioned circumstances:

Y. 30.9: May we be the ones who will make this world splendid, Mindful One and Ye Lords, bringers of change, and Right, as our minds come together where insight is fluctuating. -West (2010).[342]

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[334] Boyce 1996, 206; Boyce 1986, 413-415; Boyce 1989, 933-936.
[335] West 2010, 53.
[336] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 82-83.
[337] Insler 1975, 35.
[338] Boyce 1986, 413-415.
[339] Boyce 1996, 206.
[340] De Jong 1997, 60.
[341] Skjærvø 2015, 62; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 21; Boyce 1996, 246. Skjærvø does not give exact details what this shared worldview of the Old and Young Avesta contained. On the other hand, Humbach & Faiss and Boyce argue that the Young Avestan worldview, with beliefs regarding *frašō.kərəti* and the resurrection of the dead, underlies the Old Avestan worldview as well (Humbach & Faiss 2010, 21; Boyce 1996, 246).
[342] West 2010, 55.

Y. 30.9: May we thus be those who make the existence/world perfect, O Wise One and you (other) Lords/Ahuras, by the bringer-of-turns and through truth, with (our) thoughts concentrated on where insight is a partner. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[343]

Y. 30.9: Therefore may we be those who shall heal this world! Wise One and ye other lords, be present to me with support and with truth, so that one shall become convinced even where his understanding shall be false. -Insler (1975).[344]

West and Insler generally see Y. 39.9 expressing restorative change of the world that is afflicted by the destructive powers of *druj*.[345] The ritual paradigm in Zoroastrian studies would argue that the performance of the Gathas was the means how the world was be made splendid / perfect / healed. Scholars like Marijan Molé and Gherardo Gnoli have suggested that the desired end result, restoration of the world to its splendid state, could have taken place immediately after the Gathic ritual was completed.[346] Jean Kellens has even argued that the purpose of the Gathas was to ensure the daily rise of the sun. [347] This view would argue that Y. 30.8 presents a cyclical idea of a periodically regenerated cosmos, which is in stark contrast to a classic view that Zoroaster produced the Gathas to spread lofty ethics in order to facilitate eventual perfection of the world at the end of linear history. Humbach & Faiss take a middle position; they argue that the Gathas have a microcosmic dimension where the ritual performance of the Gathas brings about beneficent results, but, regardless, the Gathas still contain a macrocosmic linear narrative about the salvation of the entire world. [348] After reading Y.30.9 in the context of previous Yasnas, I must concur that on a narrative level it is possible to interpret that there will be a decisive event in the future, when even gods might be judged and *druj* is delivered into the hands of *aša* (Y. 30.7-8).[349] A performer of the Gathic ritual must have realised, sooner or later, that the world had not turned perfect after the ritual was over; *daēvas* still existed and evil was still lingering in the world, the ritual obviously required repetition. However, here one must ask whether the paradisaical conditions of the golden age of Yima, which Gathic rituals (and ethics) sought to bring about, were believed to resemble daily life in the 2nd millennium BCE. Maybe the world was thought to be perfect as it is, given that principles of *aša* ruled the society, and that Gathic rituals were properly performed. This would mean that perfection could be literally reached in a lifetime, or after the ritual was over. However, Young Avestan Yašt 19.33 describes that during the reign of

[343] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 83.
[344] Insler 1975, 35.
[345] West 2010, 54; Insler 1975, 172.
[346] Ahmadi 2017, 199, 201, 212; Eliade 1976, 312, 315; Gnoli 1967, 287; Gnoli 1965, 105-117; Molé 1963, 262-264.
[347] Ahmadi 2017, 199-201; Kellens 2013, 53-84.
[348] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 21-22, 42.
[349] See chapter 5.2.4.

Yima there was "neither cold wind nor hot wind, neither old age nor death, nor envy made by the Daevas."[350]

Y. 48.2 of the Gathas (analysed in chapter 5.12.1) most explicitly suggests that Zoroaster hoped that the restoration of the world would happen in his lifetime.[351] Humbach & Faiss even argue that Zoroaster expected the salvation of the world to be achieved in the near future, until the timing was postponed by his successors.[352] Zoroastrians must have realised that the noble goal of nothing short of a perfect world could not be reached in a single lifetime. In my opinion, the entire Yasna 30 contains a macrocosmic dimension, given the grand scale of things in Y.30.7-8 as even *daēvas* might be judged and *druj* is delivered into the hands of *aṡa* (Y. 30.8). This lets us interpret Y. 30.9 in a future-oriented way. However, Y. 30.9 like Y. 30.7-8 suffer from a lack of details; even though *daēvas* might be judged and *druj* ends up in the hands of *aṡa* (Y. 30.8), there is no detailed description on what happens after these events, or what kind of world they will bring about. Y. 30.9 simply hopes to make the future world splendid / perfect / healed, leaving room for imagination to fill out the rest of the details.

5.2.7. The destruction of *druj* and the horse race, Y. 30.10-11

Y. 30.10 continues on the rather eschatological thematic of Y. 38.7-8 since it describes how *druj* will be destroyed, but the focus seems to turn into individual fates when a metaphor of a horse / chariot race is utilised; winners come from the stables of *mazdā*, *vohu manah*, and *aṡa*.[353] Y. 30.11 tells how *aṡa* will prosper in the end, and that followers of *druj* will receive "the lasting harm" / "long-lasting/endless harm" / "long destruction."[354] Humbach & Faiss argue that in Y. 30.11 Zoroaster suggests he is quoting words of Ahura Mazdā. [355]

Y. 30.10-11: For then destruction will come down upon Wrong's prosperity, and the swiftest (steeds) will be yoked from the fair dwelling of Good Thought, of the Mindful One, and of Right, and they will be the winners in good repute. (11) When ye grasp those rules that the Mindful One lays down, O mortals, through success and failure, and the lasting harm that is for the wrongful as furtherance is for the righteous, then thereafter desire will be fulfilled. -West (2010).[356]

Y. 30.10-11: And then the breakdown of deceit will come about by clearing it off, and the swiftest (steeds) will be yoked (to drive) up to the comfortable dwelling of the good thought of the Wise One and of truth, (steeds) which, at the good fame/winning post, will let (the others) behind at the good prize of victory. (11) If you master/heed the commandments that the Wise One issues, O mortals, (implying) freedom of movement and lack

[350] Yt. 19.33: In whose reign there was neither cold wind nor hot wind, neither old age nor death, nor envy made by the Daevas, in the times before his lie, before he began to have delight in words of falsehood and untruth. (Darmesteter 1882, 293 [SBE23]).
[351] West 2010, 134-135; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 142; Insler 1975, 91.
[352] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 22; West 2010, 15, 134.
[353] West 2010, 54; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 171.
[354] West 2010, 54.
[355] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 172.
[356] West 2010, 55.

of it, the long-lasting/endless harm (in store) for the deceitful and the benefits for the truthful, then the (things) desired will be (available) through them, indeed. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[357]

Y. 30.10-11: For then shall descend the destruction of the prosperity of deceit, and there shall be yoked from the good dwelling place of good thinking the swiftest steeds, which shall race ahead unto the good fame of the Wise One and of truth. (11) (to the adherents). Men, when ye learn those commandments which the Wise One has posed, when ye learn (there is) both a way of easy access and one with no access, as well as long destruction for the deceitful but salvation for the truthful, then each one (of you) shall abide by (all) these commandments. Wish it so. -Insler (1975).[358]

Since Y. 30.9 described how the word will be made splendid / perfect / healed, it is natural to interpret that the destruction / breakdown of *druj* in Y. 30.10 comes at the time when the world is made splendid / perfect / healed. The metaphor of a horse race implies that the destruction of *druj* is a victory. Insler interprets "dwelling place of *vohu manah*" as a metaphor for the community of the faithful and truthful, and that "swiftest steeds" is a metaphor for the faithful and truthful themselves.[359] So, the community of the faithful and truthful will win the horse race, at the time when *druj* is defeated. Scholars like Skjærvø and West interpret this horse race metaphor as an allusion to individual fates in the afterlife, i.e., "personal / individual eschatology."[360] Generally, all translations suggest that good things await the winners aligned with *aša*, while losers aligned with *druj* will suffer.

In my opinion, Y. 30.10-11 on a literary level links individual fates with macrocosmic eschatology; each person will receive their share when *druj* will be delivered into the hand of *aša* (Y. 30.7-8), when the world is made splendid / perfect / healed (Y. 30.9), and when "destruction will come down upon Wrong's prosperity" / "the breakdown of deceit will come about by clearing it off" / "shall descend the destruction of the prosperity of deceit" (Y. 30.10).

5.3. Two fates and cosmogony, Y. 31.2-8, 14-16, 19-20, 22

The opening of Yasna 31 (Y. 31.1) seems to pick up from the ending of Y. 30.11 since Ahura Mazdā's rules / commandments are mentioned. Verses 2-8 are concerned with the future: Zoroaster appeals to *ahuras* to confirm that there are two lots, contrasting fates, awaiting each person (Y. 31.2). Then Zoroaster asks Ahura Mazdā to state the nature of the two lots that are allocated by fire (Y. 31.3), and a reference is made to a future moment, when *ahuras* help Zoroaster to vanquish / overcome / conquer *druj* (Y. 31.4).[361] In Y. 31.5, Zoroaster asks about "that better lot" / "the higher good" / "that very good thing" Ahura Mazdā has in store for

[357] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 83.
[358] Insler 1975, 35.
[359] Insler 1975, 35.
[360] West 2010, 20-21, 54; Skjærvø 2005, 56; see chapters 2.1, 5.6.1.
[361] West 2010, 56; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 84-85; Insler 1975, 37, 178.

him.[362] Verses 6-7 present an idea of progressing god; Ahura Mazdā's *xšaθra* (dominion / power / rule) is increased by the faithful allied with *vohu manah*.[363] Y. 31.7-8 (and Y. 31.11) contain references to cosmogony in the beginning of time, and Ahura Mazdā is described as the creator.[364]

Verses 14-16 return to future-related themes when Zoroaster asks about things that are to come, about punishments and rewards, and when will a promoter of *aša* enter the scene.[365] Verse 19 says that one who thinks with *aša* is a healer of existence and tells how Ahura Mazdā's fire will make an allocation / distribution.[366] Verse 20 describes the afterlife, and verse 22 states how a good person will be Ahura Mazdā's well-provided guest.[367]

5.3.1. *Rāna-, xšnūt-*, and the judgment on two lots, Y. 31.2-4

Y.31.2-5: If hereby the better way is not in plain view to the soul, then I appeal to You all according to the ruling known to the Lord, the Mindful One, (the ruling) on those two lots, so that we may live in accord with Right. (3) The atonement that Thou didst establish with Thy will and with fire and with Right assign to the two parties, the rule that is for the prudent – tell us that, Mindful One, for our knowledge with the tongue of Thy mouth, and with it may I convince everyone alive. (4) When the time comes to invoke Right and the Mindful One and the Lords with Reward and Piety, I shall petition with best thought for a strong authority for myself, by whose increase we might vanquish Wrong. (5) Tell me, so I may distinguish it, that better lot Ye appointed for me with Right, so I may know and take to heart with Good Thought, whose prophet (I am), those things, Mindful Lord, that will not be, or will be. -West (2010).[368]

Y. 31.2-5: If there is no way through them to attain to the higher goods (already) seen, then I approach all of you since the Wise Lord knows the judgment on those two lots, (the judgment) through which we can live in accordance with truth. (3) (Tell us) which satisfaction you fix by (your) spirit and (your) fire and which you assign through truth in accordance with the balance as (your) commandment in favor of the conscientious, tell us that to let us know (it), O Wise One, by the tongue of your mouth so as to let me test thereby all the living. (4) When the Wise One and the (other) Lords/Ahuras are present (as) Truth worth calling for along with Reward and Right-mindedness, (then) I will catch sight by Best Thought of the strong Power (meant) for me, through the increase of which we may overcome deceit. (5) Tell me the higher good which you have assigned to me through truth to let me discern (it,) (and to learn through good though (from that one) whose seer (I am,) and to impress on my mind which (things) will not be (available) and (which) will be (available to me,) O wise Lord. - Humbach & Faiss (2010).[369]

Y. 31.2-5: (to the adherents). If the better course for the soul has not been seen through these words, then let me lead all of you in which way the Wise Lord knows (to exist) that judgment between the two alternatives by which we are going to live in accordance with truth. (3) (to the Wise Lord). That satisfaction which Thou hast created for both factions together with Thy spirit and hast promised (to them) through fire and truth, that commandment which is for Thy adherents – speak, Wise One, with the tongue of Thine own mouth, in order for us to know (all) that, by means of which I might convert all the living. (4) (to the adherents). When I might call upon truth, the Wise One and the other lords shall appear; also reward and piety. (And) through the very best thinking I shall seek for myself their rule of strength, through whose growth we might conquer deceit. (5) (to the Wise Lord). Speak Thou, in order for me to discern that very good thing which has been created for me by truth,

[362] West 2010, 59; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 85; Insler 1975, 37.
[363] Insler 1975, 179; West 2010, 58
[364] West 2010, 58; Insler 1975, 179.
[365] West 2010, 62; Insler 1975, 179.
[366] West 2010, 64-65; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 89.
[367] West 2010, 64-67; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 90; Insler 1975, 180.
[368] West 2010, 58-59.
[369] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 84-85.

in order for me to know and to bear in mind with good thinking (that thing) of which I am to be the seer. Even those things, Wise Lord, which either shall not be or shall be. -Insler (1975).[370]

All translations indicate that there will be a ruling / judgment on two lots / alternatives (Y. 31.2.). In Y. 31.3, we find a noun *rāna-*, a central concept of Gathic doctrine of punishment and remuneration both in this and the next life. Its meaning, however, is controversial. [371] According to Humbach, *rāna-* is the same word as Younger Avestan *rāna* "thigh / leg". Therefore, *rāna-* denotes balance, the two legs of a scale. In everyday Old Avestan language, *rāna-* must have been a term of trading, but in the Gathas, its meaning is related to weighing the pros and cons in legal proceedings conducted by a high-ranking priest, and in the case of spiritual world / afterlife, conducted by Ahura Mazdā.[372] However, only Humbach & Faiss's translation use the word "balance" to describe *rāna-* that occurs four times in the dual number *rānōibyā* (Y. 31.3, 19; 47.6; 51.9) and once in the plural *rānōibyō* (Y. 43.12).[373] In Y. 31.3, *rāna-* appears in association with *xšnūt-* "satisfaction" (Y. 51.9),[374] a legalistic term according to Insler,[375] with a resemblance to "reward" (cf. Young Avestan Y. 60.2) according to Humbach & Faiss.[376] Their translations have rendered *xšnūt-* as "satisfaction", but West had it translated as "atonement."[377] Nonetheless, all translations agree that during *rāna-* and *xšnūt-* Ahura Mazdā's fire (*atar-*) is present, which is a reference to the ordeal of molten metal.[378] West and Insler do not give proper weight to the word *rāna-*, even Insler's commentary focuses entirely on the word *xšnūt-*.[379] Nevertheless, Y. 31.3 can be interpreted relating to an individual judgment or eschatology, but only Insler interpreted Y. 31.3 as a reference to the final judgment.[380] Insler sees that almost all Gathic words related to the final judgment are taken from the legal vocabulary.[381] There seems to be a universal dimension present in Y. 31.3, but it only refers to either how Zoroaster could proselytize, or test, all the living.[382] Two parties are mentioned in Y. 31.3, which West and Insler interpret consisting of truthful and

[370] Insler 1975, 37.
[371] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 70-72; Y. 31.3, 19; 43.12; 47.6; 51.9; see chapters 5.3.6, 5.7.2, 5.11, 5.14.2.
[372] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 71.
[373] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 70-71.
[374] See chapter 5.14.2.
[375] Insler 1975, 182.
[376] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 70.
[377] West 2010, 57.
[378] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 71; Y. 30.2, 7; 19; 32.7; 34.4; 43.4, 9; 46.7; 47.6; 51.9; see chapters 5.2.1, 5.2.4, 5.3.6, 5.4.1, 5.6.1, 5.7.1, 5.11, 5.14.2.
[379] Insler 1975, 182.
[380] Insler 1975, 37.
[381] Insler 1975, 182.
[382] West 2010, 58-59; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 84-85; Insler 1975, 37.

deceitful persons,[383] but the literal wording by West and Humbach & Faiss say that the favoured party consists of prudent / conscientious persons.[384]

Y. 31.4 mentions a future moment when it is time to invoke *ahuras*[385] (namely *aṡ̌a* and *vohu manah* according to Insler),[386] or when *ahuras* will be present,[387] so that Zoroaster might gain authority / rule [388] or "strong Power (meant) for me" as Humbach & Faiss had put it.[389] The authority / rule / strong Power here is *xšaθra*, a word used extensively in the Gathas to express Ahura Mazdā's power and dominion. In Zoroastrian pantheon, there is an *Aməša Spenta* named *Xšaθra Vairya*, literally "dominion to be chosen" or "choice/desirable/best dominion." Whether the Gathas consider *xšaθra*, like *aša* or *vohu manah*, a divine entity, a quality, or a modality of Ahura Mazdā, or some mixture of all, is difficult to determine owing to the multivalence of Gathic concepts.[390] Humbach & Faiss made an interesting translation that interprets Zoroaster attempting to harness the power of a divinity called *Xšaθra*.[391]

There is a universal implication in Y.31.4 when Zoroaster asks how "we", the truthful, could conquer *druj*. One could interpret this how Zoroaster waited for an imminent eschaton during his lifetime,[392] but the passage could generally refer to actions and rituals Zoroastrians could perform daily in their lives, to gradually, or repeatedly, vanquish *druj*.

In Y. 31.5 Zoroaster asks about "that better lot" / "the higher good" / "that very good thing" he wants to distinguish / discern, but there are no details over what that thing is. The translation by Humbach & Faiss stresses how Zoroaster asks about things that will, or will not be, available to him.[393]

Ultimately, there is no absolute need to apply eschatological reading, or linear worldview, to Y. 31.2-5. However, if we want to apply hermeneutics of Young Avestan tradition, or the grand narrative of Y. 30.5-10 where *druj* is defeated and the world made splendid / perfect / healed,[394] it is possible to follow Insler's interpretation of the last judgment, which would implicate a linear worldview in Y. 31.3.

[383] West 2010, 56; Insler 1975, 37.
[384] West 2010, 58-59; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 84-85.
[385] West 2010, 57; Insler 1975, 37.
[386] Insler 1975, 37.
[387] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 85
[388] West 2010, 57; Insler 1975, 37.
[389] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 85.
[390] Malandra 2000, Šahrewar; Narten & Gignoux 1988, 487-488.
[391] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 85.
[392] Eliade 1976, 312-313.
[393] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 85.
[394] See chapter 5.2.6.

5.3.2. Progressing God and *amərətāt*, Y. 31.6-7

Y. 31.6-7: – 'It will go best for him who knows and speaks my truth, the prescript of health, right, and continuing life. What he increases for Him through good thought, that is dominion for the Mindful One.' (7) He who first conceived these amenities permeating the world of light, He by his sapience is the creator of Right, with which He upholds Best Thought. Through that will, Mindful One, Thou dost increase, which even unto now, Lord, is the same. -West (2010). [395]

Y. 31.6-7: The best (power) shall be to Him, the Knowing/Initiated One, who tells me the true/effective mantra implying integrity and immortality of truth, that power (shall be) to the Wise One which He shall make growth through good thought. (7) The Primal One, who conceived these comforts flooded with lights, (is,) by his intellect, the establisher of truth. (Through that spirit) by which one holds on to best thought. Through that spirit you are growing, O Wise One, who are the same even now, O Lord. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[396]

Y. 31.6-7: (to the adherents). The best shall be for him, the knowing man, who shall tell me the real precept concerning the truth of His completeness and immortality: "Such is the rule for the Wise One that one shall increase it for Him through good thinking". (7) He who first thought thus, "They are to be joined with happiness throughout their days", He created truth in accordance with this very intention, by reason of which He has (also) upheld the very best thinking. (to the Wise Lord). Through this spirit, Wise One, Thou art to grow, Thou who, up to now indeed, hast been the same, Lord. -Insler (1975).[397]

Yasna 31.6 begins by saying that it is best for a person to follow Ahura Mazdā's precepts that concern *aša*, *haurvatāt*, and *amərətāt*. All of them could be identified as *Aməša Spəntas* of Zoroastrian pantheon,[398] which would render *haurvatāt* as "Wholeness" and *amərətāt* as "Immortality."[399] Each translator has produced their own interpretation for *haurvatāt* and *amərətāt* in Y. 31.6, but they are not identified as *Aməša Spəntas*. West has translated *haurvatāt* as "health" and *amərətāt* as "continuing life"; they are gifts that result from following Ahura Mazdā.[400] Humbach & Faiss have translated *haurvatāt* as integrity and *amərətāt* as immortality, but their translation indicates that the immortality in question is *aša's* immortality.[401] Insler sees *haurvatāt* (completeness) and *amərətāt* (immortality) as qualities of Ahura Mazdā, which should be understood and taught. A devotional Zoroastrian interpretation could interpret Y. 31.6 that by following Ahura Mazdā's precepts one would receive immortality. However, none of the translations make this interpretation.

Y. 31.6-7 introduce an interesting theological idea how Ahura Mazdā grows in cooperation with his followers. It follows from this premise that *druj* cannot be defeated unless Ahura Mazdā grows in power, even though he has always been the same (Y. 31.7). If there existed a man named Zoroaster, and if he really expected an imminent eschaton in *frašō.kərəti*, did he believe that he and his followers could literally increase Ahura Mazdā's

[395] West 2010, 59.
[396] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 85-86.
[397] Insler 1975, 37-39.
[398] Boyce 1989, 933-936.
[399] *Haurvatāt* (Pahl. *Hordād*), is also found in Y. 31. 21; 33.8; 34.1, 11; 44.17-18; 45.5, 10; 47.1 and 51.7. *Amərətāt* (Pahl. *amurdād*) is present in Y. 33.8; 34.1, 11; 44.17-18; 45.5, 10; 47.1 and 51.7.
[400] West 2010, 15, 58-59.

powers to a point that a decisive change of reality would happen in a lifetime? In my opinion, passages that indicate a god's growing powers are well-suited for a long-term eschatological interpretation; the world will not become perfect in a day, and Ahura Mazdā's powers and dominion must grow with the help of his followers. Nonetheless, Y. 31.6-7 are not directly concerned with eschatology, but they point out that the fate of the world and humanity, and the fate of its Creator, are interlinked; none can live without the other, and the salvation of the world depends on cooperation,[402] be it ritual or ethical.

5.3.3. The first or the last? Y. 31.8

According to Mircea Eliade and Mobed Firouz Azargoshasb, Y. 31.8 contains an idea related to a linear worldview.[403] They argue that in Y. 31.8 Zoroaster declares recognizing Ahura Mazdā "as first and the last", that is the beginning and the end,[404] Azargoshasb even saying "the last of Creation."[405] As mentioned in chapter 2.4, the belief that the cosmos has an end is a defining part of a linear worldview, so let us analyse Y. 31.8:

Y. 31.8: I think of Thee first, Mindful One, as being young in my thought, the father of Good Thought, when I catch Thee in my eye, the true creator of Right, lord over the world's doings. -West (2010).[406]

Y. 31.8: I realize that you, the Primal One, are youthful through (your) thought, (you,) the father of good thought, when I grasp you with my eye at (your) actions, the true establisher of truth, the Lord of the existence/world. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[407]

Y. 31.8: Yes, although Thou art the First One, I realized Thee to be (ever) young in mind, Wise One, when I grasped Thee in a vision to be the Father of good thinking, the real Creator of truth, (and) the Lord of existence in Thy actions. -Insler (1975).[408]

What all these translations have in common is that *mazdā*, referring to Ahura Mazdā, is the first and the father of *vohu manah* (Good Thought / good thinking) and *aṡa* (Right / truth). Ahura Mazdā, being the creator of truth, is the lord over the world's doings. It is nowhere mentioned that Ahura Mazdā is the last, or that the creation itself would have an end; the passage simply alludes to cosmogony and describes Ahura Mazdā as the lord of the cosmos. We can conclude that Y. 31.8 does not contain a linear worldview according to translations used in this thesis.

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[401] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 85.
[402] West 2010, 58; Insler 1975, 39, 179.
[403] Azargoshashb 1980, 7; Eliade 1976, 309.
[404] Eliade 1976, 309.
[405] Azargoshashb 1980, 7.
[406] West 2010, 59.
[407] Humbach & Faiss, 86.
[408] Insler 1975, 39.

5.3.4. What the future holds, Y. 31.14-15

Y. 31.14-15: I ask Thee, Lord, about the things that are approaching and will come, the requitals that will be given of gifts from the righteous one and those from the wrongful, Mindful One – how they will be at the Reckoning. (15) ask this: what the punishment is for him who is initiating dominion for the wrongful one, for the evil-doer, Lord, who cannot find a livelihood without wronging the herdsman that is innocent before man and beast. -West (2010).[409]

Y. 31.14-15: About those (things) I ask you, O lord, which are approaching and will arrive, about the compensations (consisting) of gifts which (the pious) will obtain from the truthful one and which, O Wise One, from the deceitful, (and) of what kind they will be when (the items) are reckoned up. (15) That I ask, which punishment (will befall) that one who transfers power to the deceitful one, to the evil-doer, O Lord, who does not find a livelihood without outrage against cattle and men of the non-deceiving/sincere herdsman. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[410]

Y. 31.14-15: I ask Thee, Lord, about those things which indeed are coming and shall come, namely, about which of the payments shall be taken as claims from the truthful and which from the deceitful, Wise One, and about how they shall appear when their readiness is at hand. (15) Likewise, I ask about which payments shall be (for him) who shall promote the rule for the deceitful one of evil actions, Lord, for that one who winds no means of living apart from harming the cattle men of the undeceiving pastor. -Insler (1975).[411]

Zoroaster asks Ahura Mazdā about the things that are coming to the truthful and deceitful, such as what kind of requitals / compensations / payments are to be expected. Insler sees this as a complementary expression to legal term *xšnūt-* (atonement / satisfaction) that appears in Y. 31.3 and 51.9.[412] Zoroaster continues his inquiry on fates of the two parties (Y. 31.14): *yaθā tå aŋhən hānkərətā hyaṭ* "how they will be at Reckoning" / "(and) of what kind they will be when (the items) are reckoned up" / "how they shall appear when their readiness (is at hand)."[413] West interprets this pointing to the individual judgment at the ordeal of molten metal,[414] but Humbach & Faiss and Insler leave the exact meaning open. Zoroaster simply asks about the future, what will befall the truthful and the deceitful.[415] Insler, however, had made an eschatological interpretation of Y. 31.3 where *xšnūt-* (atonement / satisfaction) was explicitly mentioned for the first time.[416] Lastly in Y. 31.15, enemies of the truthful are presented: those who harm peaceful cattlemen.[417]

[409] West 2010, 63.
[410] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 87-88.
[411] Insler 1975, 41.
[412] Insler 1975, 187; see chapters 5.3.1, 5.14.2.
[413] Insler 1975, 187. Insler's translation of Y. 31.14 does not have brackets for "is at hand" but they appear in the commentary (Insler 1975, 41, 187).
[414] West 2010, 16, 63; Y. 30.2, 7; 31.3, 19; 32.7; 34.4; 43.4, 9; 46.7; 47.6; 51.9; see chapters 5.2.1, 5.2.4, 5.3.1, 5.3.6, 5.4.1, 5.6.1, 5.7.1, 5.11, 5.14.2.
[415] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 70-72; Insler 1975, 179.
[416] Insler 1975, 37.
[417] Later Zoroastrian ethics taught that a person should procreate and earn a living by cattle raising and agriculture (Duchesne-Guillemin & the Editors of Britannica 2020, Zoroastrianism), although agriculture is practically unmentioned in the Gathas (Grenet 2015, 22).

5.3.5. Saviour? Y. 31.16

Y. 31.16: I ask this: how that munificent man who is zealous to promote with Right his authority over house or district or region, one of Thine, Mindful Lord – when he will be there, and how acting. -West (2010).[418]

Y.31.16: That I ask, in which way the generous person (will be available) who strives to further truth the power over house, county/district, and land, the one such as you, O Wise Lord, (and) when he will be (available) and with which action. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[419]

Y. 31.16: Likewise, I ask about how that person shall be, namely, the blessed one who shall be eager to prosper the rule of the house or of the district or of the land with truth, and about when he – someone like Thee, Wise Lord – shall appear and with which actions. -Insler (1975). [420]

In Y. 31.16, West and Humbach & Faiss see Zoroaster asking for a person, on a general level, who should arrive in the future to further Zoroaster's and Ahura Mazdā's agenda.[421] Insler, however, makes a messianic interpretation: this man is the future saviour *saošyant*, an incarnation of truth,[422]who will, according to Young Avestan Yašt 19 (Zamyād Yašt)[423] and Pahlavi literature, bring about *fraš*ō*.kərəti*. The theology of multiple *saošyants* as eschatological saviour figures is clearly articulated in the Young Avesta. In Yašt 19, there are multiple agents that will participate in *fraš*ō*.kərəti*, including *saošyant*s that are translated as benefactors / saviours (Yt. 19.22). However, Yt. 19.89 mentions a single saviour and his companions, the "victorious one among the *saošyants*", generally known as the Victorious Saošyant (Y. 26.10; Yt. 13.145; 19.89). In the Pahlavi books, there are three eschatological saviour figures but the last one is referred with a singular term *sōšāns*, who will appear at the end time to bring about *fraš*ō*.kərəti*.[424]

In my opinion, Insler's interpretation is far-fetched since Zoroaster asks on a general level about a person who could help him and Ahura Mazdā. If there are multiple *saošyants*, there would be many persons able to help Zoroaster. There is no pressing need to read Y. 31.16 as a reference to Young Avestan and Pahlavi theology of Victorious Saošyant.

5.3.6. The healer of existence, *rāna-,* fire, and *vīdāiti,* Y. 31.19

Y. 31.19: Let him listen (rather) to him who has thought on Right, a healer of existence, a knowing one, Lord, who for true voicing of words is free master of his tongue under Thy flaming fire, Mindful One, when the good is allocated between the two parties. -West (2010).[425]

Y. 31.19: The healer of existence/world listens (to your mantras,) the knowing/initiated one who thinks truth, O Lord, being at will in control of his tongue for the true statement among the words at the distribution (of the

[418] West 2010, 63.
[419] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 88.
[420] Insler 1975, 41.
[421] West 2010, 62; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 87-88.
[422] Insler 1975, 41
[423] Ichaporia 2006, Zamyād Yašt.
[424] Malandra 2000, Saošyant; Hintze 2000, 190-192.
[425] West 2010, 65.

result) of balance, in the good (case performed) with your red fire, O Wise One. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[426]

Y. 31.19: This knowing world-healer has listened, he who has respected the truth, Lord, being one who has mastery over his tongue at will for the true speaking of the (proper) words when the distribution in the good shall occur to both factions through Thy bright fire, Wise One. -Insler (1975).[427]

All translations describe a healer of existence (Y. 44.2 and Y. 44.16), but Insler identifies this world-healer as Zoroaster.[428] West's and Insler's translations speak of two parties / factions (Y. 31.3; 43.12; 47.6; 51.9),[429] and all translations mention Ahura Mazdā's flaming / red / bright fire in association with *vīdāiti-* (allocation / distribution), a noun which is also found in Y. 47.6 and 51.6.[430] Next to fire and *vīdāiti-*, there is *rāna-* ("of balance") that only Humbach & Faiss have rendered visible.[431]

Although Y. 31.19 speaks of two factions receiving their *vīdāiti-* through *rāna-* and Ahura Mazdā's fire, the latter being a reference to the ordeal of molten metal,[432] the verse can be still interpreted alluding to individual judgments that the members of the two parties will face after death. For Insler, however, both Ahura Mazdā's fire and *vīdāiti-* are references to the final judgment.[433]

5.3.7. Hereafter, Y. 31.20, 22

This chapter will shed light on Gathic concepts of the afterlife:

Y. 31.20: Whoso comes to the righteous one, radiance is his to possess hereafter; (but) a long age of darkness, foul food, cries of woe by way of speech, that is the existence to which, ye wrongful, through your own actions your morality will bring you. -West (2010).[434]

Y. 31.20: He who approaches a/the truthful one – splendor (will be) his instead of wailing. Long/endless duration of darkness, foul food, and the word "woe": to such an existence (your) view/view-soul will lead you, O you deceitful, on account of your/its own actions. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[435]

Y. 31.20: "Heavenliness shall be the future possession of him who shall come to a truthful person (now). (But) a long lifetime of darkness, foul food, and the word woe – to such an existence shall your conception, along with its (corresponding) actions, lead you, ye deceitful ones". -Insler (1975).[436]

Insler's translation interprets Y.31.20 as a citation of Ahura Mazdā's own words (marked with quotation marks), His precepts mentioned in Y. 31.18 and 19. Other than that, all

[426] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 89.
[427] Insler 1975, 41.
[428] Insler 1975, 41.
[429] See chapters 5.3.1, 5.7.2, 5.11, 5.14.2.
[430] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 71.
[431] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 70-71.
[432] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 71; Y. 30.2, 7; 31.3, 19; 32.7; 34.4; 43.4, 9; 46.7; 47.6; 51.9; see chapters 5.2.1, 5.2.4, 5.3.1, 5.3.6, 5.4.1, 5.6.1, 5.7.1, 5.11, 5.14.2.
[433] Insler 1975, 41.
[434] West 2010, 65.
[435] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 89.

translations agree that Y. 31.20 describes individual fates of deceitful persons: lasting darkness and woe.[437] In my opinion, this makes it even more natural to interpret the previous passage (Y. 31.19) relating to individual fates. The fate of the truthful is described in Y. 31.22:

Y. 31.22: These things are clear for the well-doer even as he apprehends them in his mind: he with good command holds on to Right in word and deed. He, O Mindful Lord, shall be Thy most welcome house-guest. -West (2010).[438]

Y. 31.22: Bright (gifts) are (in store) for the munificent one who (already) possesses them in his though. Through good power/rule he cultivates truth in word and action. Let him be your best-provided guest, O Wise Lord. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[439]

Y. 31.22: These things are clear to the beneficent man who accepts them along with the effort in harmony with good thinking. He serves truth, during his rule, with good word and good action. Such as person shall be Thy most welcome guest, Wise Lord. -Insler (1975).[440]

All translations agree that a person who cultivates *ašå* will be a welcome quest in Ahura Mazdā's abode. The fate of the deceitful is described in better detail (Y. 31.20) compared to that of the truthful (Y. 31.20, 22). All these passages can be interpreted relating to individual judgments, not eschatology.

5.4. Recording of merits and Yima's sin, Y. 32.6-8, 12-13

The dominant theme of Yasna 32 is the conflict between the good people of Zoroaster's home region and evil *daēva* worshippers, who seek to destroy the peaceful lives of cattlemen;[441] the poem is concerned with the maintenance of the peaceful order. In the first five verses, Zoroaster addresses *daēvas* and reminds them of their failings (cf. Y. 30.6). In Y. 32.6-7, Zoroaster addresses Ahura Mazdā, and the focus shifts to human evildoers.[442] Y. 32.6 tells how Ahura Mazdā "remembers our deserts" / "records merits (and demerits)" / "knows when there is uplifting of beings with the very best thinking." Only West's translation speaks of Ahura Mazdā's decree, but all translations agree that there will be an ordeal of glowing metal / molten iron (Y. 32.7).[443] Y. 32.8 mentions the mythical king Yima, the only time he is directly referred to in the Gathas. Verses 12-13 tell about evil *karapans* / *karpans*, identified as the "destroyers of this existence / world,"[444] and lastly in Y. 32.13, the house of "Worst

[436] Insler 1975, 43.
[437] West 2010, 64.
[438] West 2010, 67.
[439] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 90.
[440] Insler 1975, 43.
[441] West 2010, 68; Insler 1975, 195.
[442] West 2010, 70; Insler 1975, 195, 202.
[443] West 2010, 70-71; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 92; Insler 1975, 45-47.
[444] Malandra 2010, 550.

Thought" / "worst thought" / "Worst Thinking" is mentioned, a variant of the house of *druj*.[445]

5.4.1. False fame and glowing metal, Y. 32.6-7

Y. 32.6-7: The many offences against peace by which he seeks renown (if that is what he is doing), O Lord that rememberest our deserts, Thou knowest with Best Thought. In Thy domain, Mindful One, and Right's let Your decree be given out. (7) Of such offences I declare I know nothing in my rectitude, which are decreed mortal, for which one is tried by the glowing metal, and of whose consequences Thou, Mindful Lord, art the paramount provider. -West (2010).[446]

Y. 32.6-7: The many peace-breaking outrages with which (the deceitful one) strives for fame – whether (he does so) with them, you, O Lord, who records merits (and demerits,) who through best thought. Let laud for you and for Truth, O Wise One, be spread in your power/dominion. (7). I explicitly declare to not be conscious of any of such outrages which are called irremissible, for/of which one becomes notorious (by the ordeal) with glowing metal (and) of which you know the outcome best, O Wise Lord. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[447]

Y. 32.6-7: (to the Wise Lord). Shameful are the many sins by which one attains fame, if at all by such things. (But) Thou knowest, Lord, (only) when there is uplifting of beings with the very best thinking, fame is to serve Thee and the truth, Wise One, under Thy Rule. (7) By reason of his correct conduct, a knowing person is never accused of those sins which are decreed to be capital, for which one has (already) been tried by molten iron, and of which Thou, Wise Lord, art the One who dost best know the consequences. -Insler (1975).[448]

Y. 32.6 speaks of renown / fame (*sānghō*) that sinful ones strive for, but Ahura Mazdā records real merits. According to Insler, the only meaningful fame is to serve Ahura Mazdā with *vohu manah* and *aša*.[449] Humbach & Faiss do not see any *Aməša Spəntas* in Y. 32.6, unlike West who has translated *Vohu Manah* and *Aša* with upper-case initials. Insler has also translated *xšaθra* (domain / power / dominion / rule) as "Rule", one of *Aməša Spəntas*.

In Y. 32.7, West and Humbach & Faiss interpret Zoroaster claiming that he is not guilty of "offences against peace" / "peace-breaking outrages" / "shameful many sins" (Y. 32.6). However, Insler's translation does not see that Zoroaster is speaking about himself, but of a "knowing person", on a general and universal level. Y. 32.7 continues how the sins mentioned in Y. 32.6 are mortal / irremissible / capital, and that there will be the ordeal of glowing metal / molten iron (cf. Y. 30.2, 7; 31.3, 19; 34.4; 43.4; 47.6; 51.9).[450] Insler's translation renders this ordeal in the past tense "for which one has (already) been tried by molten iron", but he generally interprets Y. 32.7 as an allusion to the final judgment in the future.[451]

[445] West 2010, 21; Y. 32.13; 46.11; 49:11; 51.14; cf. 53.6; see chapters 5.4.3, 5.10, 5.13.3, 5.14.3, 5.15.2.
[446] West 2010, 71.
[447] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 92.
[448] Insler 1975, 45-47.
[449] Insler 1975, 45, 203.
[450] See chapters 5.2.1, 5.2.4, 5.2.5, 5.3.1, 5.3.6, 5.6.1, 5.7.1, 5.11, 5.14.2.
[451] Insler 1975, 47.

Once again, Insler was the only translator who made an eschatological interpretation of Y. 32.7, but there is no pressing need to apply Pahlavi or Young Avestan hermeneutics to the said passage.[452]

5.4.2. Yima, Y. 32.8

Y. 32.8: For such offences Vivahvant's son was renowned, even Yima, who sought to gratify our mortal race by feeding them portions of the cow. As to these deeds, I rest on Thy decision, Mindful One. -West (2010).[453]

Y. 32.8: Even Yima, the son of Vivahvan, is notorious for (one) of such outrages, – (even he) who tried to satisfy (us) humans (and) our (animals with the injunction): "Meat (is just) a part of a (complete) meal" – for (that one) of those (outrages) being (subject) to that (well-known) decision of yours, O Wise One. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[454]

Y. 32.8: Even Yama, the son of Vivahvant, was tried for these sins, he who wanted to satisfy our men (by swearing: "The cow is goddess". If, I, too, am guilty of these sins, Wise One, lies in Thy judgment. -Insler (1975).[455]

This passage is the only allusion in the Gathas to the primeval king Yima, under whose rule the world was a paradise. This paradise was lost, however, when Yima committed a sin.[456] According to Insler, he was the first mortal to fall under the corrupting influence of the evil spirit, Angra Mainyu.[457] Y. 32.8 mentions an offence / outrage / sin, but the content of this crime is left ambiguous. According to West, Yima sought to gratify mortals by feeding them cow meat. Humbach & Faiss translate this passage along same lines, which is generally the same view as in Pahlavi tradition; Yima's sin was that he taught humankind to eat meat.[458] Insler's translation makes a different interpretation. According to him, Yima's sin was a form of idolatry as he swore: "The cow is goddess."[459] Nevertheless, in Old and Young Avestan worldviews Yima's sin was the "original sin," or one of the first sins, which caused evil to enter life by which the world is blighted / sickened / afflicted (Y. 30.6).[460] When reading Y. 32.8 through the translations by West and Humbach & Faiss, it can be interpreted that Ahura Mazdā, like Yahweh of the Hebrew Bible, was also participant in how the conditions of the world were changed (Gen. 3.16-19); God made a judgment on humankind: "As for those deeds, I rest on Thy decision" / "for (that one) of those (outrages) being (subject) to that (well-known) decision" (Y. 32.8). However, Insler's translation suggests that Ahura Mazdā

[452] See chapters 5.1.1, 5.2.1.
[453] West 2010, 71.
[454] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 92.
[455] Insler 1975, 47.
[456] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 184; see chapters 5.1, 5.9-1.
[457] Insler 1975, 196.
[458] Skjærvø 2012, 501-522; West 2010, 71-72; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 17-18, 21.
[459] Insler 1975, 47,
[460] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 21; West 2010, 15; see chapter 5.2.3.

did not participate in changing the world's condition and that Y. 32.8 merely speaks of Zoroaster: "If, I, too, am guilty of these sins, Wise One, lies in Thy judgment."

5.4.3. Destroyers of existence and the House of Worst Thought, Y. 32.12-13

Y. 32.12-13: Because of the 'deed of repute' by which they divert mortals from best action, the Mindful One answers them with ill, who pervert the cow's life by shouting 'Move along!' and with whom the Karpan chooses gluttony instead of right, and the dominion of those who promote wrong, (13) the dominion by which the glutton bids to stand in the house of Worst Thought: the destroyers of this existence, and those, Mindful One, who decry in their lust Thy prophet's message, (the lust) that will keep them from the sight of Right. -West (2010).[461]

Y. 32.12-13: For the (abusive) speech by which they divert the mortals from the best action, the Wise One speaks bad (words) to those who spoil the life of the cow by saying "move on!" (and) on whose account the Karapan/lie-priest prefers "grass" to truth as well as the power/rule of those who have sought/chosen deceit. (13) By that power/rule the "grass" gang strives to settle in the house of worst thought, (those) destroyers of this existence/world, O Wise One, who then complain very much about the household of your poet who prevents them from seeing truth. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[462]

Y. 32.12-13: By reason of that teaching with which they deflected men from the best action, the Wise Lord spoke of bad things for them, for those who have ruined the life of the cow with their habit of pleasure, and because of whom the rich Karpan chose the rule of tyrants and deceit rather than truth. (13) Because of such (evil) rule, the destroyers of this world viewed their riches in the House of Worst Thinking. Also those who complained, in their lust, about the message of Thy prophet, Wise One, a lust which did guard them from the sight of truth. -Insler (1975).[463]

Y. 32.12 begins by speaking of people who pervert / ruin / spoil the life of the cow, clearly enemies of peaceful cattlemen.[464] Insler interprets that the cow in Y. 32.12 represents the earth and the "the good vision", [465] a view of the world ruled by *aṡa* and *vohu manah*.[466] Nonetheless, to people who ruin the cow's life Ahura Mazdā "answers with ill" / "speaks bad (words)" / "spoke of bad things." At this point, Insler makes an eschatological interpretation; he sees the final judgment as the moment when Ahura Mazdā speaks bad to people who ruin the cow's life, even though he translated Ahura Mazdā's act of speaking in the past tense. Insler sees this "spoke of bad things" as an antithesis to Y. 47.5 where Ahura Mazdā promises the truthful "the very best things". Therefore, he interprets that both Y. 47.5 and Y. 32.12 allude to the differing fates of the deceitful and the truthful, at the time of the final judgment.[467] However, there is no need to interpret Y. 32.12 eschatologically; these differing fates can point to individual fates in the afterlife.

[461] West 2010, 75.
[462] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 93-94.
[463] Insler 1975, 47, 49.
[464] West 2010, 68.
[465] According to Insler, the "good vision" aka cow / soul of the cow appears in Y. 28.1; 29.1, 9; 31.9; 32.12, 14; 33.3; 44.20; 48.5; 50.2-3; 51.5, 6; 51.14 (Insler 1975, 25, 29, 31, 39, 47, 49, 51, 73, 91, 99, 103, 105, 107, 111). The cow appears in the Liturgy in Seven Chapters in Y. 37.1-2; 38.5; 39.1 (West 2010, 173-175).
[466] Insler 1975, 47.
[467] Insler 1975, 47, 207; see chapter 5.11.

Y. 32.12 continues how the people who ruin the cow's life are also associated with *karpans* / *karapans*, evil priests of the old daivic religion.[468] According to West and Humbach & Faiss, *karapans* choose gluttony / "grass" over *aṡa*, but Insler does not interpret any gluttony as he translates *karapans* as rich. Nevertheless, each translation agrees that *karapans* have chosen *xšaθra* (dominion / power / rule) of those allied with *druj*.

Y. 32.13 continues how the *xšaθra* which *karapans* have chosen makes them settle in the house of Worst Thought / worst thought / Worst Thinking, a variant of the house of *druj* (Y. 46.11; 49.11; 51.14), which is a metaphor for hell.[469] *Karapans* are also described as "destroyers of this existence." This verse implies that the world had once been pristine, undestroyed, and that *karapans* afflict the world negatively and disrupt the lives of cattlemen (Y. 32.12). Y. 31.8 had also previously alluded to the story of Yima, which reinforces the idea that the world is indeed partially destroyed from its former paradisaic condition.

5.5. Lives that have been and will be, Y. 33.1, 10-12

Yasna 33 has a personal and inward-looking feel because only divinities are addressed, and no references to social tensions or conflicts are mentioned. Piety of Zoroaster and the truthful community is discussed along with their relationship to Ahura Mazdā.[470] Y. 33.1 mentions statutes / laws of *aŋhuš pouruyō* and Y. 33.10 speaks of lives that have been and will be, and how those lives, allied with *vohu manah* and *aṡa*, will make Ahura Mazdā grow (cf. Y. 31.7).[471] In verses 11-12, the focus shifts to *ādā-* (dispensation / presentation / apportionment / requital).[472]

5.5.1. The laws of *aŋhuš pouruyō*, Y. 33.1

Y. 33.1: The ruling will be so implemented as by the statutes of the first existence, by action most just both for the wrongful one and as regards the righteous and for him whose false and straight deeds are put in the balance. - West (2010).[473]

Y. 33.1: As (it is provided) by them so the laws of the first/fundamental existence shall be applied by the judge, the most straight/just actions toward the deceitful one and toward him who is truthful as well towards that one whose (manifestation of) crookedness are offset against those of his straightness. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[474]

[468] Malandra 2010, 550; Y. 32.12, 15; 44.20; 46.11; 48.10; 51.14; see chapters 5.4.3, 5.8.3, 5.10, 5.14.3.
[469] West 2010, 16, 74; Insler 1975, 49.
[470] West 2010, 78; Insler 1975, 211.
[471] West 2010, 78-78, 82-83; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 95, 98; Insler 1975, 51-53, 211; see chapter 5.3.2.
[472] West 2010, 83; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 98; Insler 1975, 53; cf. Y. 49.1; see chapter 5.13.1.
[473] West 2010, 79.
[474] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 95.

Y. 33.1: (to the adherents). As in harmony with those things which are the laws of the foremost existence, the (final) judgment thus shall bring to realisation the most just actions for the deceitful as well as for the truthful man, and for the person for whom falsity and honesty are held to be indifferent. -Insler (1975).[475]

All translations agree that laws of *aŋhu*š *pouruyō* (cf. Y. 28.11) are exercised at the judgment. West's translation speaks of a moment when things are put in balance, but he interprets this as a judgment.[476] His translation also speaks of truthful and deceitful persons who will face an implementation of the statutes of *aŋhu*š *pouruyō*. Humbach & Faiss say that "the judge", most likely referring to Ahura Mazdā, applies laws of *aŋhuš pouruyō* towards the deceitful and the truthful. Both translations indicate a personal judgment. Only Insler interprets *aŋhu*š *pouruyō* as the foremost existence following the final judgment.[477] He even added the word "final" to emphasise future eschatology. Nonetheless, there is no compelling reason, in my opinion, to add the word "final" to the judgment present in Y. 33.1, and it is certainly not found in the original text.

5.5.2. Good lives make God grow, Y. 33.10

Y. 33.10: All those good lives that have been and those that are and those, Mindful One, that shall come to be, give them shares in Thy favour; grow in substance with Good Thought, Dominion, and Right as Thou wilt. -West (2010).[478]

Y. 33.10: In order for all the good gains to be (available to you, those) which have existed, and which will exist (at the same time,) receive them in your favor. Grow through good though, power, and truth at will (and continuously. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[479]

Y. 33.10: All those (beings) whose way of life is good for Thee – those who have been, and those who are, and those who shall be – give them a share in Thy approval, Wise One. (And) grow Thyself, in breath and body, through the rule of good thinking and of truth. -Insler (1975).[480]

West's and Insler's translations speak of good lives / beings that benefit Ahura Mazdā in the past, the present and the future, causing him to grow.[481] Insler's translation depicts this rather corporally, how Ahura Mazdā grows in "breath and body", [482] and he also sees Y. 33.10 as an antithesis to Y. 47.5[483] that describes how the deceitful will not receive Ahura Mazdā's favour / share.[484] The translation by Humbach & Faiss does not directly speak of lives that benefit Ahura Mazdā, but it mentions "good gains", with an alternative translation "good winnings"

[475] Insler 1975, 51.
[476] West 2010, 78-79. Not to be confused with *rāna-* (Y. 31.3, 19; 43.12; 47.6; 51.9) that Humbach & Faiss associate with semantics of "balance" (Humbach & Faiss 2010, 70-72). See chapter 5.3.1.
[477] Insler 1975, 27, 51.
[478] West 2010, 83.
[479] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 98.
[480] Insler 1975, 53.
[481] West 2010, 82-83; Insler 1975, 53
[482] Insler 1975, 53.
[483] Insler 1975, 217.

in the commentary.[485] These gains / winnings can be easily interpreted in reference to human lives, whose ritual (and ethical) performance makes Ahura Mazdā receive good gains; how else would a god get these gains and receive them in his favour? The idea of necessary cooperation among humankind and gods was already presented in Y. 31.6-7.[486]

In my opinion, passages like Y. 31.6-7 and Y. 33.10 point to a long-term macrocosmic narrative; the relationship between *ahuras* and the truthful requires development, maturation, and rituals, if the world is to be made splendid and Ahura Mazdā to grow in power through *vohu manah* and *aša* (Y. 33.10).

5.5.3. *Aməša Spəntas* at *ādā-*, Y. 33.11-12

Y. 33.11-12: Thou who art the strongest Lord and the Mindful One, and (Thou) also Piety, and Right that promotes its flock, and Good Thought, and Dominion, hear me, have mercy on me at the dispensation of whatever it may be. (12) Come forth to me, Lord, through (my) piety assume strength, through (my) most bounteous will, Mindful One, promptness with good dispensation, through (my) right, powerful force, through (my) good thought, respect. -West (2010).[487]

Y. 33.11-12: (O you) who (are) the strongest Lord and the Wise One, and (you who are) Right-mindedness and Truth furthering the herds, and Good Thought and Power, listen to me, have mercy on me in return for any presentation. (12) Set out to me, O Lord, take bodily strength through right-mindedness (and) through most beneficent spirit, O Wise One, (take) swiftness through good presentation/apportionment, impetuous superiority through truth, (and) refection through good thought. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[488]

Y. 33.11-12: The Wise One who is the Mightiest Lord, and piety, and truth which prospers the creatures, and good thinking, and (good) rule – listen to me, have mercy on me, when there is any requital. (12) Rise up to me, Lord. Along with Thy most virtuous spirit, Wise One, receive force through (our) piety, strength through (every) good requital, powerful might through truth, protection through (our) good thinking. -Insler (1975).[489]

Insler's translation of Y. 33.11 does not highlight the difference between *Aməša Spəntas* and more general attributes / principles / qualities, whatever concepts like *vohu manah* and *ārmaiti* [490] convey in meaning depending on their context. In Y. 33.11, West and Humbach & Faiss introduce a great number of *Aməša Spəntas* next to *aša* (Right / Truth): *Ārmaiti* (Piety / Right-mindedness), *Vohu Manah* (Good Thought), and *Xšaθra* (Dominion / Power).[491] Other than that, all translations agree that Zoroaster invokes either Ahura Mazdā or all the above mentioned *Aməša* Spəntas to have mercy on him (Y. 33.11). But for what purpose Zoroaster needs this mercy, is left somewhat ambiguous. West and Insler have translated *ādāi kahyācīṭ paitī* that Zoroaster needs mercy at a time of "dispensation of whatever it may be" / "when

[484] West 2010, 133; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 141; Insler 1975, 89.
[485] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 98, 176.
[486] See chapter 5.3.2.
[487] West 2010, 83
[488] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 98-99.
[489] Insler 1975, 53.
[490] See chapter 5.2.4.
[491] West 2010, 83; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 98; Boyce 1989, 933-936.

there is any requital."[492] This part is interesting since it highlights how Gathic vocabulary of *ādā-* (dispensation / presentation / apportionment / requital) can work in multiple contexts. Humbach & Faiss translate this part even more ambiguously: "have mercy on me in return for any presentation."[493]

In Y. 33.12, West and Humbach & Faiss drop *Aməša Spəntas* and words like *ārmaiti* and *spenta mainyu* (bounteous will / beneficent spirit) signify qualities humans can possess in themselves.[494] However, Insler interprets *spenta mainyu* as an *Aməša Spənta* "Thy most virtuous spirit", the Holy Spirit of Ahura Mazdā.[495] All translates indicate that Ahura Mazdā grows from *ārmaiti, aša, vohu* manah, and *spenta mainyu* (Y. 33.12). This theme of growing god was already introduced in Y. 33.10,[496] where Insler had made a rather corporeal translation how Ahura Mazdā grows "in breath and body".[497] This time in Y. 33.12, Humbach & Faiss made a similar corporeal depiction how Ahura Mazdā takes "bodily strength."[498] Y. 33.12 also continues how Ahura Mazdā gets "promptness with good dispensation" / "swiftness through good presentation/apportionment" / "strength through (every) good requital." Again, it is apparent that *ādā-* (dispensation / apportionment / requital) may manifest itself in multiple contexts. In my opinion, *ādā-* may refer to something done right in the human world, which benefits Ahura Mazdā.

5.6. The perfect world through Lord's dominion, Y. 34.4, 15

Yasna 34 has some thematic similarities to Yasna 33, but this time there are more references to Zoroaster's community and its conflict with the enemy.[499] Y. 34.4 mentions Ahura Mazdā's fire,[500] and Y. 34.15 returns to the thematic of making the world splendid / perfect / healed.[501]

5.6.1. Fire that is mighty through *aša*, Y. 34.4

Y. 34.4: We wish for Thy fire, Lord, which is mighty through Right, very potent and strong, to be present as a manifest help to Thy supporter, but to Thy foe, Mindful One, a visible hurt by main force. -West (2010).[502]

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[492] West 2010, 83; Insler 1975, 53. Insler gives an alternative translation for *ādāi kahyācīṭ paitī* "when any requital comes (occurs)" (Insler 1975, 218).
[493] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 98, 171.
[494] West 2010, 83; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 98-99.
[495] Insler 1975, 53; Boyce 1989, 933-936.
[496] See chapter 5.4.2.
[497] Insler 1975, 53.
[498] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 98.
[499] West 2010, 86; Insler 1975, 220.
[500] Cf. 28.11; Y. 31.3; 31.19; 34.4; 43.4, 9; 46.7; 47.6; 51.9. In the Liturgy in Seven Chapters: Y. 36.1-3.
[501] Y. 30.9; 34.15; cf. 28.11; 33.1; 34.15; 44.2; 50.11.
[502] West 2010, 87.

Y. 34.4: We desire your fire strong through truth, O Lord, of much command (and) impetuous, to be of bright help to (your) supporter, but, by the arrows (sent) by its hand, of visible injury to (your) enemy, O Wise One. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[503]

Y. 34.4: Now, we wish Thy fire, Lord, which possesses strength through truth and which is the swiftest, forceful thing, to be of clear help to Thy supporter but of visible harm, with the powers in its hands, to Thy enemy, Wise One. -Insler (1975).[504]

In this verse, the faithful community ("we") wishes for Ahura Mazdā's fire that has strength through *aša*, whom West had translated as an *Aməša Spənta*.[505] The powerfulness of Ahura Mazdā's fire is described further: it is "very potent and strong" / "of much command (and) impetuous" / "the swiftest, forceful thing," and it is a manifest / bright / clear help to Ahura Mazdā's supporters. To Ahura Mazdā's foe / enemy, however, this fire is "a visible hurt" / "of visible injury" / "of visible harm." West interprets this fire as an allusion to the ordeal of molten metal after death.[506] This verse clearly presents all the elements that Pahlavi translators attributed to the ordeal of molten metal: "it makes manifest the saved/redeemed and the condemned/damned."[507] However, Pahlavi literature interpreted the ordeal of molten metal universally, its potency so great that it purifies the entire world at the end of history.[508] Insler sees that Y. 34.4 belongs with Y. 51.9[509] that also describes the ordeal of molten metal, and he generally agrees with the Pahlavi view that the ordeal of molten metal happens at the final judgment.[510] Nevertheless, Y. 34.4 in itself does not give enough details to indicate eschatology or a linear worldview. We are only told that when Ahura Mazdā's fire becomes present, it benefits Ahura Mazdā's supporter and hurts his enemy.

5.6.2. Existence that Zoroaster desires, Y. 34.15

Y. 34.15: Mindful One, tell me the best things to be known for and to do, those things, Thou with Good Thought and with Right, in return for my hymn of praise; through Your dominion, Lord, make real the existence that is splendid in my desiring. -West (2010).[511]

Y. 34.15: O Wise One, tell me the best eulogies and actions, (tell me) them through good thought, and (tell me) through truth the compensation for the praise. Through your power, O Lord, make real the world perfect in value. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[512]

[503] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 100.
[504] Insler 1975, 55.
[505] West 2010, 86-87; Insler 1975, 220.
[506] West 2010, 16, 86.
[507] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 71.
[508] Hintze 2000, 190-192; Boyce 1987, Ātaš 1-5.
[509] Insler 1975, 222; see chapter 5.14.2.
[510] Insler 1975, 35, 37, 41, 47, 61, 277, 282.
[511] West 2010, 93.
[512] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 104.

Y. 34. 15: Wise One, therefore tell me the best words and actions, namely, those allied with good thinking and truth, as the just claim for my praises. By your rule, Lord, Thou shalt truly heal this world in accord with our wish. -Insler (1975).[513]

Y. 30.9 already pointed to a synergetic process between the truthful and Ahura Mazdā,[514] and similarly in Y. 34.15, Zoroaster hopes that Ahura Mazdā would make real the perfect world, a reference to the *aŋhuš pouruyō*,[515] through his *xšaθra* (dominion / power / rule). [516] Insler interprets Y. 34.15 as an antithesis to Y. 46.11 that speaks of rulers who have yoked the world with evil actions to destroy the world and mankind.[517] Y. 34.15 also implies that good actions that benefit the world include eulogies / praises to Ahura Mazdā. In the end, Y. 34.15 does not implicate eschatology or a linear worldview, unless we give an eschatological meaning for *aŋhuš pouruyō*.

5.7. The genesis and the final turn of creation, Y. 43.4-6, 12

Yasna 43 begins the second Gatha *Uštauuaitī* (Y. 43-46). [518] It is almost entirely addressed to Ahura Mazdā and praises his beneficence.[519] In Y. 43.4, Ahura Mazdā is described both "bold and bounteous" / "firm and beneficent" / "brave and virtuous", indicating that Zoroaster realises how Ahura Mazdā helps him. Insler makes more universal interpretation that Ahura Mazdā intercedes for the good of humankind.[520] Y. 43.4 continues how Ahura Mazdā allocates rewards for the good and bad with the heat of his fire. In Y. 43.5, Ahura Mazdā is described as the creator who has set the system of rewards and punishments. The moment when these rewards and punishments take place is described with a metaphor "last bend" / "final turn" / "final turning point" of creation.[521] Y. 43.6 says that at the "last bend" / "final turn" Ahura Mazdā pronounces his judgments with *spenta mainyu*, *xšaθra*, *vohu manah*, *ārmaiti* and *aša*. In Y. 43.12, we once again meet *rāna-* in dual form (*rānōibyā*) happening at a time of allocation / distribution of rewards.[522]

5.7.1. Creation and racecourse, Y. 43.4-6

Y. 43.4-6: I will think Thee bold and bounteous, Mindful One, when by that hand, in which Thou holdest those rewards that Thou didst set for the wrongful one and the righteous through the heat of Thy fire that Right makes mighty, the force of good thought comes to me. (5) Bounteous I think Thee, Mindful Lord, when I see Thee at

[513] Insler 1975, 59.
[514] See chapter 5.2.5.
[515] See chapter 5.1.; West 2010, 92.
[516] West 2010, 92-93; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 104; Insler 1975, 59, 220.
[517] Insler 1975, 228.
[518] West 2010, v; Humbach 2000, 321-327; see chapter 3.3.
[519] West 2010, 94; Insler 1975, 229.
[520] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 115; Insler 1975, 229-230.
[521] West 2010, 96-97; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 115-116; Insler 1975, 61, 229-230.
[522] West 2010, 98-99; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 70-71, 118; Insler 1975, 65; see chapter 5.3.1.

the first in the genesis of the world, when Thou didst set wages for actions and for speech: evil for the evil one, a good reward for the good by Thy genius, at the last bend of creation. (6) At that bend where Thou comest with Thy bounteous will mindful in dominion, there, with Good Thought by whose actions the flock prospers with Right, Piety announces to them the verdicts of Thy wisdom, which no one deceives. -West (2010).[523]

Y. 43.4-6: I will realize that you are firm and beneficent, O Wise One, when from that hand in which you hold those requitals which you assign to the deceitful one and to the truthful one by the heat of your fire strong through truth, when (from that hand) the superiority of good thought has come to me. (5) I realize that you are beneficent, O Wise Lord, when I perceive you, the Primal One, (engaged) in the procreation of the existence/life, (and) when you make the actions have their prize as well as the statements, (assigning) evil to the evil one (but) a good requital/reward to the good one by your skill, at the final turn (of the course) of the world. (6) At that turn at/to which you come with your beneficent spirit, (being) wise through power, at that (turn) right-mindedness, (inspired) by good thought by whose actions the herds are furthered in truth, pronounces to those (in question) the judgments of your intellect, which no one deceives. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[524]

Y. 43.4-6: Yes, I shall (truly) realize Thee to be both brave and virtuous, Wise One, if Thou shalt help me (now) with the very hand with which Thou dost hold those rewards Thou shalt give, through the heat of Thy truth-strong fire, to the deceitful and to the truthful, and also if the force of good thinking shall come to me. (5) But I have already realized Thee to be virtuous, Wise Lord, when I saw Thee to be the First One at the creation of the world, and when I saw that Thou didst determine actions as well as words to have their prizes, namely, bad for the bad, a good reward for the good, (each to be given) through Try skill at the final turning point of creation. (6) (But) at this very turning point in which I exist, Thou, the Wise One, hast come into the world with Thy virtuous spirit (and) with the rule of good thinking, through the actions of which the creatures allied with truth do prosper. To them does piety announce the judgments of Thy will, Thou, whom no one is able to deceive. -Insler (1975).[525]

Y. 45.4 says that Ahura Mazdā gives judgment to the truthful and deceitful. This judgment is associated with Ahura Mazdā's fire, a clear reference to the ordeal of molten metal (cf. Y. 30.2, 7; 31.3, 19; 32.7; 34.4; 43.4; 47.6; 51.9)[526], which Insler interprets as an allusion to the final judgment.[527] Y.45.5 describes further that both actions and words have their corresponding rewards and punishments since Ahura Mazdā is the creator who has established the system of assigning good rewards for the good, and bad for the bad. Ahura Mazdā skilfully carries out these requitals at the "last bend" / "final turn" / "final turning point" of creation / world. This is a horse race metaphor (cf. Y. 30.10; 51.6) that Skjærvø and West interpret alluding to individual fates in the afterlife; life is likened to a giant horse race towards the gods, in which the winners are declared at the "final turn."[528] Y. 43.5 describes this "final turn" rather universally since it is the final turn of the entire creation. However, in Y.43.6 Zoroaster speaks of the turning point in which he exists, which shows that the metaphor is related to individual fates, like in Y. 30.10.[529] Nonetheless, if one wants to perceive this metaphor through the Young Avestan worldview, then this horse race could be

[523] West 2010, 95-97.
[524] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 115-116.
[525] Insler 1975, 61-63.
[526] See chapters 5.2.1, 5.2.4, 5.3.1, 5.3.6, 5.4.1, 5.6.1, 5.11, 5.14.2.
[527] Insler 1975, 61.
[528] West 2010, 20-21, 54; Skjærvø 2005, 56; see chapters 5.2.7, 5.7.1, 5.14.1.
[529] See chapter 5.2.6.

conceived in terms of universal race towards the final judgment and *fraš̄o.kərəti*. Y. 43.6 speaks of a turn, be it individual or universal, when Ahura comes with *spenta mainyu*, *xšaθra*, *vohu manah*, *ārmaiti*, and *aṡ̇a* to pronounce his judgments. West translated *Vohu Manah* (Good Thought) and *Ārmaiti* (Piety) with upper-case initials identifying them as *Aməša Spəntas*.[530]

5.7.2 The wealth-granting Reward distributed, Y. 43.12

Y. 43.12: and when in Thy providence Thou tellest me, 'Go to Right', Thou givest me advice that will not go unheeded, to start out before there comes to me Compliance accompanied by Reward that confers riches, who should distribute the two parties' rewards in the allocation of strength. -West (2010).[531]

Y. 43.12: And when you say to me: "in prudence you reach truth," then you speak to me not without being obeyed (by me). Let me arise (already) before hearing/obedience has reached me, in company with wealth-granting Reward, who, in the favorable (case,) will distribute the rewards with the balance. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[532]

Y. 43.12: However, that Thou didst say to me: "Thou hast come to the truth in thy discernment; moreover, thou hast never contradicted Me in disobedience", it was for me to arise before obedience was to come to me accompanied by a wealth-granting reward, (for it is obedience) according to which one should distribute the rewards to both factions at the time of (our) salvation. -Insler (1975).[533]

Y. 43.12 speaks of Ahura Mazdā's guidance that is mentioned in the previous verse (Y. 43.11). These are Ahura Mazdā's utterances / statements / words from which Zoroaster learns.[534] Y. 43.12 tells how Zoroaster is compliant, and there are two words *sraoša* and *aṣi*, which West has translated as "Compliance" and "Reward" with upper-case initials. Other translations do not give upper-case initials to *sraoša*, who is accompanied by a feminine noun *aṣi* that Humbach & Faiss had translated as a proper noun. These two subjects can be treated as divinities or poetic constructions, which West has translated with upper-case initials, but he does not necessarily interpret them representing divinities like Young Avestan tradition does.[535] In the Young Avestan pantheon, *Sraoša* and *Aṣi* are *yazatas*, beings worthy of worship, but they are not *Aməša Spəntas*.[536]

In Y. 43.12 *sraoša* and *aṣi* will distribute rewards with *rānōibyō*, the only plural form of *rāna-* (Y. 31.3, 19; 43.12; 47.6; 51.9), which normally in the Gathas occurs in the dual number. Humbach & Faiss have translated distributing rewards with *rāna-* as "with the balance". [537] This distribution happens via *vīdāyāṯ* (to distribute), whose noun version *vīdāiti-*

[530] West 2010, 97.
[531] West 2010, 99.
[532] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 118.
[533] Insler 1975, 65.
[534] West 2010, 98-99; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 118; Insler 1975, 63.
[535] West 2010, 20.
[536] Malandra 2014, Sraoša; Boyce 1986 [1979], 21; Schlerath & Skjærvø 1987, Aši 750-751.
[537] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 70-72, 182; see chapter 5.3.1.

(allocation / distribution) has a favourable meaning.[538] Insler has made an eschatological interpretation of this distribution. According to him, Y. 43.12 refers to the final judgment, and that Zoroaster considers this judgment as a time of salvation.[539] Again, this is very dependent on Young Avestan hermeneutics. West and Insler mention two parties / factions receiving their distribution, but the translation by Humbach & Faiss simply states that *sraoša* and *aṣi* will distribute rewards "in a favorable case" with *rānōibyō*, "with the balance."[540] In my opinion, rewards distributed by *rānōibyō* might even be this-worldly. Therefore, there is no necessity to interpret Y. 43.12 eschatologically.

5.8. Questions to the Lord, Y. 44.2-8, 14, 19

Yasna 44 uses "This I ask Thee" formula that was already introduced in a smaller scale in Y. 31.14-16 ("I ask Thee Lord"). This formula followed by questions of cosmological issues is also found in Rigveda.[541] In Y. 44.2, Zoroaster asks about the beginning / foundation of "the best existence" (cf. Y. 28.11).[542] Y. 44.3-8 continues Zoroaster's questions about the origins of the physical and moral worlds, and even though these questions are rhetorical and left unanswered, it is implicitly Ahura Mazdā who is the creator of the things Zoroaster is asking about.[543] In Y. 44.8, Zoroaster asks to what "good destinations" / "goods" will his soul proceed to. In Y. 44,14, he asks how might *druj* be delivered into the hands of *aša*, so that it could be destroyed with Ahura Mazdā's law / sentence / teaching.[544] Y. 44.19 mentions "the last punishment" befalling a man who does not give a reward / prize to a person who has properly earned it.[545]

5.8.1. The beginning of the best existence, Y. 44.2

Y. 44.2: This I ask Thee, tell me straight, Lord: how can the best existence's beginning be furthered by the man of good will who is to take those things forward? For it is such a man, liberal with Right, observing the outcome for all, who by his intent is a healer of existence, an ally, Mindful One. -West (2010).[546]

Y. 44.2: This I ask you, tell me truly, O Lord: What about the foundation of the best existence? For the one who, to (our) benefit/salvation, will restore the (conditions) wished for, (being) beneficent through truth retains by his spirit the outcome of all (thoughts, words, and actions,) the healer of the existence/world (and) ally. (that are you.) O Wise One. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[547]

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[538] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 71; cf. Y. 31.19; 47.6; 51.6; see chapters 5.3.6, 5.11, 5.14.1.
[539] Insler 1975, 65.
[540] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 70-71, 118.
[541] West 2010, 102; see chapters 5.3.4-5.
[542] See chapter 5.1.
[543] Insler 1975, 67-69, 241.
[544] West 2010, 106-107, 110-111; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 123, 125; Insler 1975, 69, 71.
[545] West 2010, 112-113; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 127; Insler 1975, 73.
[546] West 2010, 103.
[547] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 120-121.

Y. 44.2: This I ask Thee. Tell me truly, Lord. Is the beginning of the best existence in such a way that the loving man who shall seek after these things is to be saved? For such a person, virtuous through truth, watching over the heritage for all, is a world-healer and Thy ally in spirit, Wise One. -Insler (1975).[548]

Zoroaster asks about a person who could promote "the best existence" with *aša* for the benefit of all, including Ahura Mazdā and humankind. The idea of necessary cooperation between Ahura Mazdā and pious persons is once again presented (cf. Y. 31.6-7; Y. 33.10).[549] All translations agree that "the best existence" benefits all, but Humbach & Faiss give a possibility that this best existence facilitates the salvation of all parties, including Ahura Mazdā.[550] The idea that a god needs salvation is intriguing. Nonetheless, Insler's translation speaks only of a salvation of a pious person, "the loving man", on an individual level.[551] Insler does not make any messianic interpretation either, like he did previously in the case of Y. 31.16.[552] The person who promotes this best existence is described as the "healer of existence / world" on a general level (cf. Y. 31.19; 44.16).[553]

The idea that the world needs healing implies that the existence is sick, and that it had once been healthy. The translation by Humbach & Faiss contains the word "restore", implying that "the beginning of the best existence", *aŋhāuš vahištahyā paourvīm*, is about restoration of the previous pristine existence, *aŋhu*š *pouruyō*, "the first / foremost existence" that was mentioned in Y. 28.11 and Y. 33.1.[554] Insler says *aŋhāuš vahištahyā paourvīm* is a deliberate variant of *aŋhu*š *pouruyō*.[555]

Whether Y. 44.2 contains a linear worldview, is a matter of hermeneutics in my opinion. If *aŋhu*š *pouruyō* and its variant *aŋhāuš vahištahyā paourvīm* are considered to represent supernaturally perfect condition of the past word, like in the Young Avestan tradition (Yt. 19.33), then "the best existence" has a connotation of a decisively transformed reality, the end of the world as we know it, in a linear framework.

[548] Insler 1975, 67.
[549] See chapter 5.3.2 & 5.4.2.
[550] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 120-121.
[551] Insler 1975, 67.
[552] See chapter 5.3.5; Insler 1975, 41.
[553] "The healer of existence / world" was mentioned previously in Y. 31.19 (chapter 5.3.6) where Insler identified the world-healer as Zoroaster (Insler 1975, 41). The healer of existence is also present in Y. 44.16 where Zoroaster asks for a victorious hero who would either protect "all who exists" or "those pure ones who exist in my (Ahura Mazdā's) house" with Ahura Mazdā's law / sentence / teaching. West identifies this victorious person as the healer of the world, without any messianic connotations, but Humbach & Faiss and Insler interpret it is Ahura Mazdā himself who is the world-healer (West 2010, 110-111; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 126; Insler 1975, 71).
[554] See chapters 5.1.1, 5.4.1.
[555] Insler 1975, 243.

5.8.2. Questions of cosmogony, Y. 44.3-8

Y. 44.3-8: This I ask Thee, tell me straight, Lord: who was the father-begetter of Right in the beginning? Who set the path of the sun and stars? Who is it through whom the moon waxes or wanes? These things, Mindful One, I desire to know, and others besides. (4) This I ask Thee, tell me straight, Lord: who held the earth from beneath, and the heavens from falling down? Who the waters and plants? Who yoked the wind's and the clouds' swift pair? Who is the creator, Mindful One, of Good Thought? (5) This I ask Thee, tell me straight, Lord: what skilful artificer made the light and the darkness? What skilful artificer made sleep and waking? Who is it through whom there are morning, noon, and eve, that make the prudent man mindful of his endeavour? (6) This I ask Thee, tell me straight, Lord: if these propositions are true, that Piety in action confirms Right and assigns dominion to Thee together with Good Thought, for what (class of) people didst Thou fashion the gladdening milch cow? (7) This I ask Thee, tell me straight, Lord: who fashions the piety that we esteem together with dominion? Who by his wisdom made the son respectful to the father? I with these questions am providently promoting Thee, Mindful One, the ordainer of all things through Thy bounteous will. (8) This I ask Thee, tell me straight, Lord, so I may take Thy instruction to heart, Mindful One, and the words spoken by Good Thought that I obtain in consultation, and those fitly to be apprehended through Right about existence: to what good destinations will my soul journey? -West (2010).[556]

Y. 44.3-8: This I ask you, tell me truly, O Lord: Who, by procreation, (is) the primal father of truth? Who fixed the course of the sun and the stars? Who (is he) through whom the moon waxes (now) and wanes later? These very things and others I wish to know, O Wise One. (4) This I ask you, tell me truly, O Lord: Who upholds the earth below and (prevents) the skies from falling, who (upholds) the waters and the plants? Who yokes the swift (teams) to the wind and to the clouds? Who is the founder of good thought, O Wise One? (5) This I ask you, tell me truly, O Lord: Which artist created/produces both light and darkness? Which artist created/produces both sleep and walking? Who (is he) through whom dawn, noon, and nightfall (succeed one another,) reminding the conscientious one of his duty? (6) This I ask you, tell me truly, O Lord, if (the words) which I am about to pronounce are really true: "By (her) actions, right mindedness consolidates truth; through good thought she assigns the power to you." (Tell me:) For which (people) did you fashion the joy-giving fertile cow? (7) This I ask you, tell me truly, O Lord: Who, by his power, fashioned esteemed right-mindedness? Who gets a son excellent in vitality for a father? With these (offerings) I prudently refresh you, O Wise One, (you who,) by beneficent spirit, (are) the creator of all (things). (8) This I ask you, tell me truly, O Lord, in order for me to note in my mind, O Wise One, your instruction and the statements on which I held counsel with good thought and on which (I did so) with truth, with a view to a proper knowledge of (the means of) existence: On which (way) shall my soul proceed toward the goods (already) arrived? -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[557]

Y. 44.3-8: This I ask Thee. Tell me truly, Lord. Which man in the beginning was the father of truth during the creation? Which man did fix the course of the sun and of the stars? Through whom does the moon wax (now), wane later? These things indeed and others I wish to know, Wise One. (4) This I ask Thee. Tell me truly, Lord. Which man has upheld the earth below and the heavens (above) from falling? Who the waters and the plants? Who yoked the pair of swift (steeds) to the wind and to the clouds? Which man, Wise One, is the creator of good thinking? (5) This I ask Thee. Tell me truly, Lord. Which craftsman created the luminous bodies and the dark spaces? Which craftsman created both sleep and activity? Through whom does dawn exist, along with midday and evening, (all of) which remind the worshiper of his purpose? (6) This I ask Thee. Tell me truly, Lord, if these things which I shall speak forth are really true. Through its actions, piety gives substance to the truth. It has made clear to Thee the rule of good thinking. For whom hast Thou fashioned the joy-bringing, fertile cow? (7) This I ask Tee. Tell me truly, Lord. Who fashioned esteemed piety in addition to rule? Who made a son respectful in his attentiveness to his father? By these (questions), Wise One, I am helping to discern Thee to be the creator of everything by reason of Thy virtuous spirit. (8) This I ask Thee. Tell me truly, Lord, in order for me to bear in mind Thy (every) precept and those words about which I have taken counsel with good thinking and those things which are to be correctly acquired from an existence in harmony with truth. To what goods shall my soul proceed in the future? -Insler (1975).[558]

Y. 44.3-7 describe the origin of the cosmos, where Ahura Mazdā is the father of both physical creation and moral principles. Ahura Mazdā's status as creator was already established in Y.

[556] West 2010, 105-107.
[557] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 121-123.
[558] Insler 1975, 67-69.

31.8.[559] We can recall from chapter 2.5. that a linear worldview, as known in Abrahamic faiths, believes that the cosmos has a specific beginning. This idea is certainly shared in the Gathic worldview. However, as mentioned in the same chapter, the idea that the cosmos has a beginning does not entail a linear worldview yet since cyclical religions have produced cosmogonies as well. Therefore, Gathic beliefs about the future give better indicators whether the worldview of the Gathas is cyclical or linear.[560]

Y. 44.8 is also concerned with the future; to what goods will Zoroaster's soul proceed to. Humbach & Faiss translate this slightly more ambiguously: "On which (way) shall my soul proceed toward the goods (already) arrived?"[561] However, there's no mention of any eschatological event for the entire world; the goods mentioned are personally received by Zoroaster's soul.

In the end, there's nothing that would determine a linear worldview for Y. 44.3-8 since a cyclical worldview can share the same notions that the cosmos was created, and that individual persons will receive different fates in this life and the next.[562] There's nothing in Y. 44.3-8 that would suggest the cosmos has an end, or that the cosmos would be decisively transformed in the future (cf. Y. 31.8).[563]

5.8.3. How might *druj* be destroyed? Y. 44.14

Y. 44.14: This I ask Thee, tell me straight, Lord: how might I give Wrong into the hands of Right to destroy her with the prescripts of Thy law, to deliver a crushing blow on the wrongful, to bring pains upon them, Mindful One, and harassments? -West (2010).[564]

Y. 44.14: This I ask you, tell me truly, O Lord: How could I deliver deceit into the hands of truth, to wipe it down by the mantras of your sentence, to let an impetuous weapon come down upon the deceitful to bring ill and harm over them, O Wise One? -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[565]

Y. 44.14: This I ask thee. Tell me truly, Lord. How might I deliver deceit into the hands of truth, in order to destroy it in accord with the precepts of Thy teaching, in order to create a powerful schism among the deceitful ones, in order to bring afflictions and evils upon them? -Insler (1975).[566]

In this passage, Zoroaster asks how he might deliver *druj* into the hands of *aṡa*, a theme that was already presented in Y. 30.8 and Y. 30.10.[567] The destruction of *druj* and its delivery into the hands of *aṡa* can be interpreted eschatologically, but there is no detailed narrative describing what would actually happen after *druj* is defeated; this missing information is

[559] See chapter 5.3.3.
[560] See chapter 2.5.
[561] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 123.
[562] See chapter 2.3.
[563] See chapter 5.3.3.
[564] West 2010, 111.
[565] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 125.
[566] Insler 1975, 71.

presented the Young Avestan tradition.[568] Nevertheless, Y. 44.14 gives some details what causes the destruction of *druj*, and how it affects the deceitful ones negatively. Zoroaster hopes to destroy / wipe out *druj* by *mąθrāiš* (singular *mąθra*), prescripts / mantras / precepts of Ahura Mazdā's law / sentence / teaching. Ahura Mazdā's law / sentence / teaching is also mentioned in Y. 34.8; 43.14; 44.16 and 48.12. According to Insler, one particular *mąθra* of this law / teaching is found in Y. 47.4.[569] Nevertheless, Ahura Mazdā's *mąθras* are a "crushing blow" / "impetuous weapon" / "powerful schism" that comes upon the deceitful and brings them harm.[570]

This fight against *druj* can be also interpreted this-worldly like in Y. 44.13 where Zoroaster asks how *druj* can be expelled and confined to the opposition.[571] According to Zoroastrian tradition, there was a war against evil *karapans* / *karpans* and *kauuis*,[572] priests and poets who worshipped *daēvas*, but the early Zoroastrian community, led by Zoroaster and the good *kauui* Vištāspa, was victorious;[573] they delivered a serious blow against the deceitful, if not a crushing blow.

5.8.4. The last punishment, Y. 44.19

Y. 44.19: This I ask Thee, tell me straight, Lord: he that does not give that reward to one who earns it, the man who awards it to himself when it has been promised, what punishment for that will strike him at the first? For I know the one that will strike him at the last. -West (2010).[574]

Y. 44.19: This I ask you, tell me truly, O Lord: He who does not give that prize to the winner, to the man who has secured it for himself by a true statement, what punishment will befall that (refuser) in (his) first (existence)? The (punishment) that will befall him (for that) at last I (myself) know. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[575]

Y. 44.19: This I ask Thee. Tell me truly, Lord. The person who shall not give that prize to the one winning it, namely, to the man who should receive it in accord with (our) promise – what shall be the first punishment for such a person? I know the final one which shall befall him. -Insler (1975).[576]

In Y. 44.19, Zoroaster asks what punishment will befall a man that does not give "that reward / prize" to "one who earns it" / "the winner" / "the one winning it." That reward is mentioned previously in Y. 44.18, where Zoroaster asks Ahura Mazdā for ten mares with a stallion, a camel, next to *haurvatāt* (health / integrity / nectar / completeness) and *amərətāt* (continuing

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[567] See chapters 5.2.4, 5.2.7.
[568] See chapters 5.1.1, 5.2.1, 5.2.3, and 5.2.6.
[569] Insler 1975, 71, 249.
[570] West 2010, 110-111; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 125; Insler 1975, 71, 241
[571] West 2010, 108-109; Kellens 1996, 562-563; Insler 1975, 71, 248.
[572] *Karapans* are mentioned in Y. 32.12, 15; 44.20; 46.11; 48.10; 51.14. *Kauuis* are mentioned in Y. 32.14-15; 44.20; 46.11, 14; 51.12, 16; 53.2.
[573] Skjærvø 2013, Kayāniān i. Kavi: Avestan kauui, Pahlavi kay; Malandra 2010, 550; Shahbazi 2002, 171-176; see chapter 5.10.
[574] West 2010, 113.
[575] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 127.
[576] Insler 1975, 73.

life / ambrosia / immortality).[577] The situation in Y. 44.18 is similar to a Vedic *ṛṣi* (sage / seer / inspired poet) who expects a reward with livestock from his patron.[578] In Y. 44.18 this reward seems substantial, but Humbach & Faiss see it as an excessive hyperbole, while Insler interprets it as a metaphor for a group of diverse adherents to Zoroaster's message.[579] Nevertheless, Y. 44.19 continues the thematic of a due reward, which a wrongful man does not give to its proper recipient. Zoroaster asks what punishment will "strike him at the first" / "befall that (refuser) in (his) first (existence)" / "be the first punishment." This first punishment seems to be this-worldly as Zoroaster says he knows what the last punishment will be. Both West and Insler interpret the last punishment as an allusion to the afterlife, Insler calling it "damnation,"[580] which is the house of *druj* in Zoroastrianism.[581]

All things considered, there are no indications of eschatology or a linear worldview in Y. 44.19, only an allusion to punishment in the afterlife.

5.9. May the world not be ruined a second time, Y. 45.1-3, 7

At first glance, Y. 45 appears like a sermon where Zoroaster addresses audience "from near and far" who have come to hear his message.[582] However, according to Humbach & Faiss, the context of Y. 45 is not comparable to a religious sermon (cf. Y. 30), such as the "Sermon on the Mount" of the New Testament (Matt. 5-7; Luk. 6:20-49). They argue that Zoroaster does not address any human being but tries to attract the attention of Ahura Mazdā and other *ahuras*.[583] Yasna 40 is related to Yasna 30 since it makes many references to the narrative that described the clashing of the primordial spirits.[584]

Y. 45.1 begins formally by addressing those who are present (be they *ahuras* or humans) and refers to the now familiar idea that the world was ruined in the distant past.[585] It continues how a "false teacher" / "blasphemer" /" the deceitful one" should be stopped from ruining the world a second time. Y. 45.2 gives additional information on the primordial spirits (Y. 30.3-4), while Y. 45.3 briefly describes what awaits those who do not act on Ahura Mazdā's prescripts. Y. 45.7 tells how Ahura Mazdā is a benefactor for the past, present, and future lives.

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[577] West 2010, 113; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 127; Insler 1975, 73; see chapter 5.3.2.
[578] West 2010, 112; Scharfe 2002, 14-15.
[579] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 184; Insler 1975, 251-252.
[580] West 2010, 112; Insler 1975, 73.
[581] Y. 32.13; 46.11; 49:11; 51.14; cf. 53.6; see chapters 5.4.3, 5.10, 5.13.3, 5.14.3, 5.15.2.
[582] West 2010, 114; Insler 1975, 254.
[583] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 184.
[584] See chapters 5.2-5.2.6.
[585] See chapters 5.1-1; 5.2.5.

5.9.1. The spirits in conflict, Y. 45.1-2

Y. 45.1-2: I will tell forth – now listen ye, now hear ye, you proselytes from near and from far; now all take it to heart, for it is clear. May the false teacher not be ruining the world a second time with his bad option, the wrongful one cloaked in his prating. (2) I will tell forth the two Wills at the world's beginning, of whom the Bounteous one speaks thus to the Hostile one: 'Neither our thoughts, nor our pronouncements, nor our intellects, nor our choices, nor our words, nor our deeds, nor our moralities, nor our souls, are in accord.' -West (2010).[586]

Y. 45.1-2: I will proclaim, listen now, hear now, O you who are approaching from near and far. Take all note now of the existence/world, for it is bright. May the blasphemer not destroy it for a second time, through evil choice, the deceitful one, invited/coopted by the tongue. (2) I will proclaim the two spirits (active) in the first (period) of (one's) existence/life, the more beneficent one of whom shall address the harmful one as follows: "Neither our thoughts nor our sentences nor our intellects nor our choices/preferences or our statements nor our actions nor our views nor our souls are in harmony." -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[587]

Y. 45.1-2: (to the adherents). Yes, I shall speak out. Give ear now, listen now, listen now, ye who seek from both near and far. (Listen) now, all of you, to this (precept). Because it is clear, bear it in mind. "May not the deceitful one of evil doctrine destroy the world for a second time, he who has turned hither with his tongue and his evil preference". (2) Yes, I shall speak of the two fundamental spirits of existence, of which the virtuous one would have thus spoken to the evil one: "Neither our thoughts nor teachings nor intentions, neither our preferences nor words, neither our actions nor conceptions nor our souls are in accord". -Insler (1975).[588]

Even though it is Zoroaster who says at the beginning: "I will tell forth / proclaim / speak out", it is important to acknowledge that the Gathas are traditionally recited in a medium voice.[589] West's translation has added the word "proselytises", because he problematically assumes Zoroaster is addressing humans.[590] Nonetheless, Y. 45.1 gives an interesting rhetorical statement hoping that the "false teacher" / "blasphemer" / "deceitful one" would not destroy the world a second time. West argues that those who first propagated the old religion of *daēva* worship were the ones responsible for ruining of the world (Y. 30.6).[591] Insler says the deceitful one is *Angra Mainyu*, and that the first destruction of the world happened when the *daēvas* made their wrong choice in Y. 30.6.[592] However, Humbach & Faiss argue that Zoroaster alludes to sin of the primeval king Yima, vaguely mentioned in Y. 32.8, which ruined the world.[593] In my opinion, these mythological accounts are intertwined in the Gathas, and Y. 45.1 might allude to Angra Mainyu, *daēvas*, their followers, and to Yima's sin at the same time. There is an interesting idea, however, when Zoroaster hopes that the word would not be destroyed a second time (Y. 45.1). Does this mean that it is actually possible for the world to be ruined a second time? This could imply that the first destruction of the world in Y. 30.3 was not a unique non-recurring event in history, and that the future is open, not tied to

[586] West 2010, 115.
[587] Humbach & Faiss, 128.
[588] Insler 1975, 75.
[589] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 184.
[590] West 2010, 114.
[591] West 2010, 114.
[592] Insler 1975, 75.

any cyclical or linear framework. Additionally, if Ahura Mazdā's powers can grow (Y. 31.6; 33.10)[594] it logically follows that Ahura Mazdā's powers may also shrink. Y. 45.1 might imply that if the truthful lose against *druj*, there will be a second calamity for the world, but this is something Zoroaster and Ahura Mazdā strongly oppose, and it is not clear if this is more a of an admonition or a possible scenario. The passage could also be interpreted that Zoroaster makes a statement, or performs a ritual, that it is no longer possible for the world to be ruined a second time, or as long as the Gathic rituals are performed. Nevertheless, the Young Avestan tradition believed the coming of *frašō.kərəti* was guaranteed, and that the world would not be ruined a second time.[595] Pahlavi literature elaborated further how eschatological fulfilment of the world went by according to a plan devised by Ahura Mazdā since the beginning of time; in the Greater Bundahišn (9th century CE), Ohrmazd knew beforehand that he would defeat Ahriman (Gbd. 1.26-30). Nonetheless, we can question if such expectations were shared by the Old Avestan people.

Y. 45.2 returns to the familiar theme of the two primordial spirits from Yasna 30; the depth of their disagreement is emphasised here more vividly than in Y. 30.3. West interprets that these spirits (Wills / Mentalities) came into being at the world's beginning,[596] while Insler translates them as "fundamental spirits of existence." Humbach & Faiss, on the other hand, do not see anything related to cosmogony in Y. 45.2 as the two spirits are simply active "in the first period of (one's) existence/life"; they constitute the origins of a person's morality.[597] Humbach & Faiss emphasise that the future tense in the beginning of Y. 45.2 "I will tell forth" / "I will proclaim" / "Yes, I shall speak" means that Zoroaster does not speak of an event in the remote past, but of a fundamental law to be applied in the present and in the future.[598]

5.9.2. Primal mantra, Y. 45.3

Y. 45.3: I will tell forth this world's beginning, as the Mindful Lord told me of it from His knowledge. Those of you who do not act on this prescript in the way that I conceive and speak it, for them 'Woe!' will be their worldly life's end. -West (2010).[599]

Y. 45.3: I will proclaim the first/primal (mantra) of this existence/world, (the mantra) which the Wise Lord, the Knowing/Initiated One, tells me. To those who do not practice your mantra in the way I think and pronounce it, "woe" will be the last (word) of (their) existence/life. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[600]

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[593] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 184; see chapters 5.1, 5.2.3; 5.4.2.
[594] See chapters 5.3.2, 5.5.2.
[595] See chapters 5.1-1.
[596] West 2010, 114.
[597] See chapters 5.2-3.
[598] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 42, 185.
[599] West 2010, 115.
[600] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 129.

Y. 45.3: Now, I shall speak of the foremost (doctrine) of this existence, that which the Wise Lord, the Knowing One, told me: "Those of you who shall not bring to realization (each) precept now exactly as I shall conceive and speak of it, for them shall there be woe at the end of existence". -Insler (1975).[601]

In Y. 45.3, Zoroaster speaks about "this world's beginning" / "the first/primal (mantra) of this existence/world" / "the foremost doctrine", which Ahura Mazdā had told him. West interprets this referring to what Zoroaster had previously told us in Y. 45.2, about the clashing of the spirits; Zoroaster knows what the good spirit said at the world's beginning.[602] The translation by Humbach & Faiss speaks of a "primal mantra", but it can still be interpreted being an allusion to Y. 45.2, a fundamental law to be applied to the present and the future.[603] Insler's translation speaks of a "foremost doctrine", without any connotations to the past, even though he interpreted Y. 30.3-4 representing a cosmogonic narrative, when the spirits were introduced for the first time.[604] Nonetheless, this mantra / foremost doctrine in Y. 45.3 lays the foundation for behaviour that will determine what kind of afterlife a person will experience,[605] but not even Insler made an eschatological interpretation out of Y. 45.3.

5.9.3. Ahura Mazdā's care, Y. 45.7

Y. 45.7: The Caring One whose strengthening all may set in train, those living, and who have been, and who will come to be – (for) the righteous man's soul is active in continued life and in vitality, which is vexation to the men of Wrong; of those realms too the Mindful Lord is the creator –. -West (2010).[606]

Y. 45.7: The benefits of whose care/order (those) will put into effect who are living (now) and have existed and will exist (at the same time) – the soul of (that) truthful one (is/will be) vigorous in immortality (and) in youthfulness. The griefs (concerning) the men of the deceitful one and those (benefits) the Wise Lord established by (His) power. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[607]

Y. 45.7: "Because those who are alive, and those who have been, and those who shall be, shall seek after the salvation that comes from Him, the One who offers solicitude. That the soul of the truthful person be powerful in immortality, that woes beset the deceitful men in an enduring fashion – these things, too, did the Wise Lord create by reason of His rule". -Insler (1975).[608]

Y. 45.7 deals with the past and the future and tells how Ahura Mazdā's care benefits mortals in all points of time. According to Insler, Ahura Mazdā offers solicitude and means of salvation to humankind.[609] The soul of a truthful one is affected positively by *amərətāt* (continued life / immortality), but[610] Humbach & Faiss argue it is not clear whether the

[601] Insler 1975, 75.
[602] West 2010, 114.
[603] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 42, 185.
[604] See chapter 5.2.2; Insler 1975, 33, 75, 159.
[605] West 2010, 114; Insler 1975, 254-255.
[606] West 2010, 117.
[607] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 130.
[608] Insler 1975, 77.
[609] Insler 1975, 254-255.
[610] See chapter 5.3.2.

truthful one in question is Ahura Mazdā, a sacrificer, or a sponsor of a sacrifice. They generally see that the context of Yasna 45 is a ritual-sacrifice, and they argue that Y. 45.7 may be deliberately ambiguous; it denotes the gifts brought to humans by immortal Ahura Mazdā by his *Aməša Spəntas*, or denotes immortality that humans can be recompensated with by giving offerings to Ahura Mazdā and other *ahuras*.[611] According to West, souls of the righteous enjoy a form of continuing life in a realm created by Ahura Mazdā.[612] Humbach & Faiss and Insler translate that a truthful one is vigorous / powerful in immortality, but they generally see that Ahura Mazdā's *xšaθra* is not the realm for the righteous per se, but Ahura Mazdā's establishment of good and bad allocations by his power / rule (*xšaθra*). The wrongful receive griefs / woes, but West sees that this continued life in the afterlife is a source of vexation to the wrongful.[613] Insler also uses quotation marks since he interprets Y. 45.7 as a direct revelation from Ahura Mazdā that Zoroaster conveys, like in Y. 45.3.[614]

Even though Y. 45.7 moves in multiple levels of time and deals with the afterlife, no indications of a linear worldview can be found.

5.10. Činuuatō pərətu-, Y. 46.10-11

In the first part of Yasna 46 comprising verses 1-11, Zoroaster is concerned with external circumstances. He is an outcast, and his religion is not flourishing; he seeks refuge and support. Optimism emerges in later parts of the poem,[615] and Insler argues that Yasna 46 consisted originally of two distinct works. The second more optimistic part comprises the last eight verses 12-19, which describe Zoroaster's allies after he was accepted by his patron, Kavi Vištāspa. These two themes, search for support and its attainment, could have been the underlying motivation for the fusion of two independent works.[616] According to Humbach & Faiss, Yasna 46 in entirety follows a coherent literary picture that was current in that era; a young priest's journey through life until his reception by a sponsor,[617] even though the last line missing from Y. 46.15.[618] In Y. 46.10-11, we meet two mentions of *činuuatō pərətu-* that is a Zoroastrian and pre-Zoroastrian doctrine of the afterlife judgment:[619]

Y. 46.10-11: The man or woman, Mindful Lord, who should give me what Thou knowest are the best things in this life, reward for right, authority with good thought, and those I join for the lauding of Your kind, with all of them I shall cross the Arbiter's Crossing. (11) The Karpans and Kavis by their authority yoke the mortal to bad

[611] Humbach & Faiss 184-185.
[612] West 2010, 116.
[613] West 2010, 116.
[614] Insler 1975, 75-77; see chapter 5.9.2.
[615] West 2010, 120.
[616] Insler 1975, 262.
[617] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 186.
[618] West 2010,
[619] Boyce 1996, 237-240; Tafażżolī 1991, 594-595; see chapter 5.2.1.

deeds for the ruination of life. Their own soul and their own morality will torment them when they come to where the Arbiter's Crossing is, to lodge for all time in the abode of Wrong. -West (2010).[620]

Y. 46.10-11: That man – or that woman –, O Wise Lord, who would grant to me (the things) which you know to be the best of the existence/world: reward for truth and power through good thought, and (all those) whom I succeed in impelling to (take part in) the laudation of those such as you, with all these I will cross over the accountant's bridge. (11) By (their means of) power the Karapans/lie-priests and the Kavis/princes yoke the mortal one to bad actions in order to ruin (his) existence. Their own breath-soul and their own view-soul will make them shudder/tremble, when they arrive at the accountant's bridge, guests to the house of deceit for all time. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[621]

Y. 46.10-11: Wise Lord, whoever – be it man or woman – would grant to me those things which Thou dost know to be the best for existence, namely the truth for the truth and the rule of good thinking, (with that person) as well as those whom I shall accompany in the glory of your kind – with all these I shall cross over the Bridge of the Judge. (11) During their regimes, the Karpans and the Kavis yoked (us) with evil actions in order to destroy the world and mankind. But their own soul and their own conception did vex them when they reached the Bridge of the Judge, (there) to become guests in the House of Deceit forever. -Insler (1975).[622]

In Y. 46.10, Zoroaster speaks of a person who would grant him "best things" in life / existence / world, and that person, together with others who Zoroaster has impelled to laud Ahura Mazdā, will successfully cross *činuuatō pərətu-*, the Arbiter's Crossing / accountant's bridge / Bridge of the Judge.[623] Y. 46.11 tells how evil *karpans*, *daēva*-worshipping priests, and *kauuis* (Kavis), yoke mortals to bad deeds. [624] The title *kauui* refers to a "(visionary) poet" or "seer". In ancient Indo-Iranian culture, these *kauuis* also performed sacrifices whose primary purpose was to fight darkness and evil, regenerate the cosmos, and ensure the daily rise of the sun. In Old Avestan times, however, the term *kauui* had gained negative, daivic, connotations. In Y. 32.14-15; 46.11, Zoroaster speaks of *kauuis* in association with evil priests, *karapans*, but *kauuis* do not appear intricately evil since they have been led astray by *druj* (cf. Y. 44.20), and at least one of the *kauuis*, Kavi Vištāspa,[625] is an ally of Zoroaster.[626] In Y. 46.11, these evil *kauuis* and *karpans* will be in distress by their "souls and morality" / "breath-souls and view-souls "/ "souls and conceptions" when they enter *činuuatō pərətu-*. From there, they will become quests in the house of *druj* for all time (cf. Y. 32.13; 49.11; 51.14; 53.6).[627]

Insler is once again the only translator who makes an eschatological interpretation of Y. 46.10-11. According to him, *činuuatō pərətu* is the place where the final judgment takes

[620] West 2010, 125.
[621] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 136.
[622] Insler 1975, 83.
[623] See chapter 5.2.1.
[624] For *karapan*, see Y. 32.12, 15; 44.20; 46.11; 48.10; 51.14. For *kauuis*, see Y. 32.14-15; 44.20; 46.11; 51.12.
[625] Kavi Vištāspa is mentioned in Y. 28.7; 46.14; 51.16; 53.2.
[626] Skjærvø 2013, Kayāniān i. Kavi: Avestan kauui, Pahlavi kay; West 2010, 24-25; Malandra 2010, 550; see chapter 5.8.3.
[627] See chapters 5.2.1, 5.3.7, 5.4.3, 5.13.3, 5.14.3, 5.15.2.

place.[628] This is a strange interpretation, even contrary to Zoroastrian tradition. Pahlavi literature describes how a person's soul enters *činuuatō pərətu-* at the dawn of fourth day after death. Then, a particular / individual / personal judgment takes place, and the person ends up in either heaven or hell, abiding his/her time until the final judgment.[629] Eschatological judgment is ascribed to the universal ordeal of molten metal at the end of history (12,000 years from the beginning of creation), not *činuuatō pərətu-*.[630] In Islamic Shi'ite tradition of *As-Sirāt*, each person must cross a bridge at the time of final judgment.[631] We can conclude that Insler's interpretation is rather Islamic and likely an incorrect one, and therefore no eschatology or linear worldview can be found from Y. 46.10-11.

5.11. Spənta mainyu and vīdāiti-, Y. 47.5-6

Yasna 47 begins the third Gatha *Spāṇtāmaṅiiu* (Y. 47-50). [632] This short poem of 6 verses focuses on *spənta mainyu* that was heavily featured in Yasna 30 and 40.[633] Humbach & Faiss point out that Yasna 47 has a highly developed compositional technique, which makes it stand out from the other Gathas.[634] Y. 47.5 speaks how Ahura Mazdā has assigned the truthful best things, and Y. 47.6 speaks of *vīdāiti-* (allocation / distribution, Y. 31.19; 47.6; 51.6)[635] by Ahura Mazdā's fire.[636] In Y. 47.6, we also meet *rāna-* again (cf. Y. 31.3, 19; 43.12; 51.9),[637] standing on two legs in the dual form (*rānōibyā*).[638]

Y. 47.5-6: With that Bounteous Will also, Mindful Lord, Thou didst assign to the righteous one whatever best things there be; it is without Thy favour that the wrongful one partakes of them, by his own actions abiding on the side of Bad Thought. (6) With that Bounteous Will Thou didst establish, Mindful Lord, the allocation of the good between the two parties by the fire that reinforces Piety and Right; for that will convince many proselytes. - West (2010).[639]

Y. 47.5-6: And through this beneficent spirit, O Wise Lord, you assign to the truthful one whatsoever best (things) the deceitful one, being far from your favor, must cede on accounts of his actions, dwelling on the side of evil thought. (6) Through this beneficent spirit, O Wise Lord, (and) by means of the fire you fix, in the good (case,) the distribution with the balance according to the weight of right-mindedness and truth. This will indeed test the many approaching. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[640]

[628] Insler 1975, 83.
[629] Tafażżolī 1991, 594-595.
[630] Hintze 2000, 190-192; Boyce 1996, 286.
[631] al-Mufid 1965, 51.
[632] West 2010, v; Humbach 2000, 321-327; see chapter 3.3.
[633] West 2010, 130; Insler 1975, 277; see chapters 5.2.2, 5.9.1.
[634] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 187; see chapter 3.3.
[635] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 71; see chapters 5.3.6, 5.14.1.
[636] Y. 30.2, 7; 31.3, 19; 32.7; 34.4; 43.4, 9; 46.7; 51.9; see chapters 5.2.1, 5.2.4, 5.3.1, 5.3.6, 5.4.1, 5.6.1, 5.7.1, 5.14.2.
[637] See chapters, 5.3.1, 5.3.6, 5.14.2.
[638] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 70-71; see chapter 5.3.1.
[639] West 2010, 133.
[640] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 141.

Y. 47.5-6: And through this very virtuous spirit, Wise Lord, Thou hast promised for the truthful person what indeed are the very best things. (But) the deceitful man shall have his share apart from Thy approval, since he lives by his actions stemming from evil thinking. (6) Wise Lord, together with this virtuous spirit Thou shalt give the distribution in the good to both factions through Thy fire, by reason of the solidarity of piety and truth. For it shall convert the many who are seeking. -Insler (1975).[641]

Y. 47.5 says that Ahura Mazdā through *spənta mainyu*, capitalised by West as an *Aməša Spənta*,[642] has assigned / promised "whatever best things there be" / "whatsoever best (things)" / "what indeed are the very best things" for the truthful person. This passage clearly implies that there are multiple gifts and rewards Ahura Mazdā can allocate. Two of these "best things" are mentioned in Y. 47.1: *haurvatāt* (health / integrity / completeness) and *amərətāt* (continuing life / immortality).[643] However, the translations by West and Humbach & Faiss imply that not all of the "best things" in Y. 47.5 are necessarily known. This kind of language stimulates imagination for further details, and it is also open whether these "best things" are this-worldly or other-worldly rewards. Y. 47.5 continues how the wrongful / deceitful ones have their share apart from Ahura Mazdā's favour since they live on the side of Bad Thought / evil thought / evil thinking, the antithetical opposite of *vohu manah*. The deceitful ones may have health, continuing life, or other "best things" for a while, until the time of distribution by fire and *rāna-* (Y. 47.6).[644]

Y. 47.6 tells how Ahura Mazdā will perform *vīdāiti-* (allocation / distribution) by the means of his fire. When Ahura Mazdā distributes it is done by *rāna-*, in the balance, as Humbach & Faiss have put it, weighing *ārmaiti* (Piety / right-mindedness / piety) and *aṣa* (Right / truth) against evil actions.[645] West has interpreted *ārmaiti* and *aṣa* as *Aməša Spəntas* who are reinforced by Ahura Mazdā's fire. West sees this fire as a post-mortem (individual) dispensation that will persuade many proselytes to Zoroaster's fold (Y. 47.6)[646] Verse 6 says that Ahura Mazdā's distribution will either convince or test "many proselytes" / "the many approaching" / "the many who are seeking." West has added the word "proselytes" and Insler interprets that "the many who are seeking" are seeking to know Zoroaster's message.[647] Humbach & Faiss translate it more ambiguously; the distribution by Ahura Mazdā by the

[641] Insler 1975, 89.
[642] Insler interprets *spənta mainyu* in Y. 45.5 as a virtuous spirit that is enacted by the truthful believers in this world (Insler 1975, 89).
[643] See chapter 5.3.2; West 2010, 130-132; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 139; Insler 1975, 89, 278. For Y. 47.1, Humbach & Faiss have also given an alternative translation for *haurvatāt* and *amərətāt*: nectar and ambrosia. Insler, however, translates Y. 47.1 that Ahura Mazdā himself has received *haurvatāt* and *amərətāt* as well as *aṡa* through correct actions of righteous people.
[644] West 2010, 132; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 70-71.
[645] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 70-71, 141.
[646] West 2010, 132.
[647] Insler 1975, 89.

means of his fire and *rāna-* will "test the many approaching."[648] They might be approaching Zoroaster or the future judgment. Nevertheless, Insler once again makes an eschatological interpretation out of Y. 47.6; he sees that Ahura Mazdā will make a forceful appearance when both *ārmaiti* and *aṣa* have grown powerful enough on earth.[649]

In the end, Y. 47.5-6 can be interpreted that Ahura Mazdā's fire and *rāna-* facilitate individual judgments in this world and the next; there is no need to read Y. 47.5-6 eschatologically.

5.12. The good form of existence, Y. 48.1-2, 6

Spənta mainyu is no longer addressed in Yasna 48, although it is possible to interpret that the first line of Y. 48.1 refers back to Y. 47.6.[650] Other than that, Yasna 48 deals with questions that concern *aŋhuš pouruyō* (cf. Y. 28.11; 33.1; 44.2)[651] and *druj's* defeat (cf. Y. 30.8, 10-11; 44.14).[652]

5.12.1. When *aŝa* defeats *druj*, Y. 48.1-2

Y. 48.1-2: Now if thereby Right will vanquish Wrong, when it catches up with the deceitful assertions by Daevas and mortals in the matter of avoiding death, then it will increase Thy praise together with Thy strength, Lord. (2) Tell me – Thou art the knowing one, Lord – before the end of the course approaches me: will the righteous man, Mindful One, vanquish the wrongful? For that is the pattern of existence found to be good. -West (2010).[653]

Y. 48.1-2: When truths have overcome deceit by these (rites,) so that is refuted what (was) proclaimed again and again on immortality by Daēvas/devils and (bad) mortals, then one will increase your laudation by benefits, O Lord. (2) Tell me what you know (about,) O Lord, (still) before the penalty (I have) in mind has reached me. Will the truthful one overcome the deceitful one, O Wise One? For this (penalty is) recognized as the good formation of the existence/world. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[654]

Y. 48.1-2: (to the Wise Lord). If, during the times are this (present) one which is under the workings of evil, shall defeat deceit by truth, that hateful deceit which has been taught by gods and men for the sake of immortality, then one shall increase Thy glory, Lord, during those times of salvation. (2) Tell me what things Thou dost know, Lord, before the far end of the course shall come to me. Shall the truthful finally conquer the deceitful, Wise One? For that is known to be the good form of existence. -Insler (1975).[655]

Y. 48.1 seems to suggest that *aŝa's* victory over *druj*, which is achieved by Gathic rites according to Humbach & Faiss,[656] means that the false claims made by *daēvas* and evil mortals, that they would receive *amərətāitē*, will be refuted. This is related to the question I

[648] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 141.
[649] Insler 1975, 277, 282.
[650] West 2010, 134.
[651] See chapters 5.1, 5.5.1, 5.8.1.
[652] Insler 1975, 283; see chapters 5.2.4, 5.2.7, 5.8.3.
[653] West 2010, 135.
[654] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 141-142.
[655] Insler 1975, 91.
[656] In Y. 48.1, Humbach & Faiss added the word "rites" in brackets, signifying how the Gathic rites were thought to be the means how "truths have overcome deceit" (Humbach & Faiss 2010, 141).

presented in chapter 5.2.4 when Y. 30-7.8 was analysed: can *daēvas* die to face a post-mortem judgment? *Amərətāt*, that can be sometimes interpreted as an *Aməša Spənta*, is generally translated by West as "continuing life", while Humbach & Faiss and Insler translate it as "immortality."[657] In Y. 48.1, however, West has translated *amərətāitē* in a context of "avoiding death." In my opinion, Y. 48.1 can be interpreted two ways: either that *daēvas* are indeed mortal and cannot avoid death, or that *daēvas* give deceitful assertions regarding *amərətāt*. West interprets Y. 48 that *aša*, whom he had translated as an *Aməša Spənta*, refutes the claims of the old pre-Zoroastrian religion replacing it with a true religion that confers *amərətāt* (continuing life / immortality).[658]

In Y. 48.2, Zoroaster asks whether the "righteous man" / "truthful one" / "truthful" would vanquish / overcome / conquer the deceitful before Zoroaster experiences "the end of the course" / "the penalty (I have) in mind" / "the far end of the course." According to West, Zoroaster hopes that the old religion and the deceitful would be defeated in his lifetime,[659] and Humbach & Faiss argue that Zoroaster expected, not merely hoped, this to happen. [660] In my opinion, Y. 48.2 is presented as a question, therefore the word "hope" is more accurate description than "expectation." Y. 48.2 ends by saying that the defeat of the deceitful is the "pattern of existence found to be good" / "good formation of the existence/world" / "good form of existence." This resonates with Gathic notions of making the existence splendid / perfect / healed (Y. 30.9; cf. 28.11; 33.1; 34.15; 44.2; 50.11)[661] and notions of *aŋhu*š pouruyō, "the first / foremost existence" (Y. 28.11; 33.1; 44.2; 48.6; cf. 34.15; 48.2).[662] However, there are no details in Y. 48.2 over what the victory over *druj* and the deceitful really entails, except that the defeat of *druj* will be the good form of existence. It is left open whether *druj's* defeat will be an eschatological change of reality, like the linear Young Avestan worldview presumed.

5.12.2. *Ārmaiti* and *aŋhu*š *pouruyō*, Y. 48.6

Y. 48.6: For she it is that gives us easy living, she too vitality and strength, that pair esteemed of Good Thought, and for her with Right the Mindful One will have grown the plants, He the Lord at the engendering of the first existence. -West (2010).[663]

[657] See chapter 5.3.2.
[658] West 2010, 134.
[659] West 2010, 134-135.
[660] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 21-22.
[661] See chapters 5.2.6, 5.6, 5.8.1.
[662] See chapters 5.1, 5.5.1, 5.12.2.
[663] West 2010, 137.

Y. 48.6: For she (grants) us comfortable dwelling, she grants us youthfulness and bodily strength, O (Right-mindedness, you) ward of good thought. Let therefore the Wise One make the plants grow for her through truth, the Lord, at the procreation of the fundamental/foremost existence. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[664]

Y. 48.6: For she shall bring peace to us, she shall grant to us the enduring and esteemed strength of good thinking. And the Wise One shall increase the plants for her through truth, He (who is to be) Lord at the birth of the foremost existence. -Insler (1975).[665]

Y. 48.6 speaks of *Spənta Ārmaiti* (Piety / Right-mindedness) mentioned in Y. 48.5, whom both West and Humbach & Faiss had translated in upper-case initials as an *Aməša Spənta*.[666] Verse 6 says that at the engendering / procreation / birth of *aŋhuš pouruyō*, *Spənta Ārmaiti* grants comfortable dwelling and vitality while Ahura Mazdā makes plants grow for her through *aša*, as she is a divinity associated with earth.[667] West and Humbach & Faiss acknowledge the double meaning of *aŋhuš pouruyō* referring to both the past and the future, but Insler interprets it only in a future-oriented way.[668] Y. 48.5 does give some information about *aŋhuš pouruyō* regardless of whether it happened in the past or the future: there will be comfortable dwelling, vitality, and plants (along with cows cf. Y. 48.5), as per Ahura Mazdā's intelligent design.[669] *Aŋhuš pouruyō* seems to bear some resemblance to the world as we know it.

5.13. Ahura Mazdā's dispensation, Y. 49.1, 9-11

Yasna 49 contrasts the difference between the truthful and deceitful and describes the tension between Zoroaster's followers and opposition.[670] Y. 49.1 features a cryptic word *bəṇdō* translated as "the greatest polluter" / "chieftain Bəṇdva" / "the greatest defiler". That person, or lies surrounding Zoroaster as Insler interprets it,[671] should be exterminated through a "Good Dispensation" / "presentation" / "apportionment" / "requital" and *vohu manah*. Y. 49.9 mentions *yāh-* ("the Supplication" / "apportionment" / "retribution") that will happen in the future, and verses 10-11 describe Zoroastrian afterlife.[672]

5.13.1. Good *ādā-*, Y. 49.1

Y. 49.1: That greatest polluter has fed himself full on my life, I who seek with Right to do justice to the ill-protected, Mindful One. O Good Dispensation, come to me, support me; devise his destruction with Good Thought! -West (2010).[673]

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[664] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 143.
[665] Insler 1975, 91.
[666] West 2010, 136-137; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 143, 188.
[667] See chapter 5.2.5.
[668] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 168; West 2010, 15; Insler 1975, 132; see chapter 5.1.
[669] West 2010, 136.
[670] West 2010, 140; Insler 1975, 294.
[671] Insler 1975, 95, 294, 296.
[672] See chapters 5.2.1, 5.3.7, 5.10.
[673] West 2010, 141.

Y. 49.1: Did chieftain Bəṇdva ever accumulate (religious merit)? (Come to me) who try to satisfy the badly herded (cows) through truth, O Wise One, – good (is/be) the presentation/apportionment – come to me (and) support me. Find, through good thought, (a way to) his extermination. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[674]

Y. 49.1: Yes, throughout my lifetime I have been condemned as the greatest defiler, I who try to satisfy the poorly protected (creatures) with truth, Wise One. If requital is good, come to me and give support to me. Through good thinking find a means of destruction of this. -Insler (1975).[675]

All three translations have interpreted the word *bəṇdō* differently, but they all agree that *bəṇdō* is not *Angra Mainyu*. West and Insler have followed Karl Geldner's translation of the greatest polluter / defiler.[676] West infers that *bəṇdō* must be a person of prominence among the deceitful,[677] and Insler thinks that it must refer to Zoroaster himself; as he sees the matter, Y. 49.1 is a contrasting antithesis of Y. 49.2, where Zoroaster tells what kind of person is the true *bəṇdō*, the greatest polluter / defiler.[678] Humbach & Faiss think that *bəṇdō* is a contemptuous disfiguration of *Bəṇdva*, the name of a ruler who refused to accept Zoroaster.[679]

Y. 49.1 continues how Zoroaster asks Ahura Mazdā for a good *ādā-* ("Good Dispensation / "good presentation/apportionment" / "good requital"), which is something that supports Zoroaster. West put upper-case initials for Good Dispensation, but he interprets it as a personified abstract, not a divinity per se.[680] Nevertheless, with the support of good *ādā-* and *vohu manah*, Zoroaster hopes for the extermination of *bəṇdō*. Y. 49.11 points out that there are *ādās* (dispensations / presentations / apportionments / requitals) that are this-worldly; Zoroaster asks for a good *ādā-* from Ahura Mazdā to get support for his struggles. The imagery of good *ādā-* may also imply that Zoroaster is pious and righteous, a man worthy of divine assistance.

5.13.2. *Yāh-* and Jāmāspa, Y. 49.9

Y. 49.9: Let the cultivator hear the teachings, made as he is to be strong – the straight speaker does not preach union with the wrongful one – since they yoke their moral selves for the best reward at the Supplication, those Djāmaaspas yoked to Right. -West (2010).[681]

Y. 49.9: Let the companion fashioned (to enjoy) benefit/salvation hear the teachings. The (man) of straight word does not approve of alliance with the deceitful one, when (the truthful) yoke their views to the best prize in yoking (themselves) to truth, at the apportionment (of shares,) O Jāmāspa. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[682]

[674] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 145.
[675] Insler 1975, 95.
[676] Insler 1975, 296; Geldner 1926, 12.
[677] West 2010, 140.
[678] Insler 1975, 296.
[679] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 189.
[680] West 2010, 20.
[681] West 2010, 145.
[682] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 148.

Y. 49.9: Let the cultivator, being one fashioned to save, listen to these instructions: "The truly speaking man has never expounded alliance with the deceitful one, since those who are yoked with truth have yoked their conceptions on the best prize when the retribution comes". Yes, Jāmāspa. -Insler (1975).[683]

According to West, Y. 49.9 addresses cultivators, i.e., agriculturalists, who are suitable to promote Zoroaster's vision of well-ordered society.[684] Insler sees that these cultivators are cultivators of *vohu manah*.[685] However, according to Frantz Grenet, the Gathas should not contain any clear references to agriculture,[686] and we must also remember that the Old Avestan people were pastoral.[687] This would suggest that the translation by Humbach & Faiss is more accurate; their translation speaks of "the companion", who is fashioned to enjoy the benefit/salvation of Zoroaster's or Ahura Mazdā's teachings. Insler's translation emphasises how Zoroaster conveys Ahura Mazdā's exact teachings with quotation marks. Nevertheless, the content of this teaching is, according to all translations, that the "straight speaker" / "man of straight word" / "truly speaking man" never approves an alliance with the deceitful one. Y. 49.9 gives a reason why a good person would not do so: the righteous yoke themselves to *aša* along with "the best reward / prize" that comes at the time of *yāh-*, the Supplication / apportionment / retribution that we met previously in Y. 30.2.[688] Insler interprets *yāh-* (Y. 30.2; 49.9) as a reference to the final judgment at the end of history,[689] but for West this is an allusion to the individual judgment in the afterlife. He sees *yāh-* constituting the judgment at *činuuatō pərətu-*, through the ordeal of molten metal.[690] Therefore, Y. 49.9 contains a linear worldview only if later Zoroastrian hermeneutics are utilised, like in Insler's interpretation.

The ending of Y. 49.9 informs us that the verse had also addressed a person named Jāmāspa, who is mentioned three times in the Gathas (Y. 46.17; 49.9; 51.18). The late medieval Pahlavi translation even adds that Jāmāspa was Porucistā's bridegroom (Y. 53.4).[691] West's interpretation, however, sees that the family of Jāmāspa is referred as an exemplary model; they are yoked to *aša*.[692] Insler sees that Zoroaster recognises Jāmāspa's potential to be one of *saošyants*.[693]

[683] Insler 1975, 97.
[684] West 2010, 144.
[685] Insler 1975, 97
[686] Grenet 2015, 22.
[687] Boyce 1987, 62-66.
[688] See chapter 5.2.1.
[689] Insler 1975, 295; see chapter 5.2.1.
[690] West 2010, 16.
[691] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 10, 13; see chapter 3.4.
[692] West 2010, 144-145.
[693] Insler 1975, 300; see chapter 5.3.5.

5.13.3. Two houses, Y. 49.10-11

Y. 49.10-11: And that (reward), Mindful One, Thou dost keep in Thy house: Good Thought, and the souls of the righteous, and Reverence, with which are Piety and Libation, besides . . . that confers lasting dominion. (11) But as for the ill-dominioned, ill-actioned, ill-speaking, ill-moralled, ill-thinking wrongful ones, the souls come to them with foul food; in the house of Wrong they will be veritable lodgers. -West (2010).[694]

Y. 49.10-11: This, O Wise One, you preserve for yourself in your house: good thought and the souls of the truthful, and the reverence with which right-mindedness (goes) and cream-offering granting power through refreshing fattiness. (11) But the deceitful, (persons) of bad rule, bad actions, bad words, bad views, (and) bad thoughts, the souls (of the dead) come to meet with foul food. They will be right quests in the house of deceit. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[695]

Y. 49.10-11: Wise One, Thou dost guard in Thy house this good thinking, and the souls of the truthful ones, and reverence with which are allied piety and milk. – Thou dost guard (all these) with an inalterable permanence that grants rule (to Thee). (11) But the deceitful persons, bad in rule, bad in actions and words, bad in conceptions and thoughts, them shall their souls continue to encounter with foul food when they shall be the true guests in the House of Deceit. -Insler (1975).[696]

Y. 49.9 mentioned "the best reward / prize" coming at the time of *yāh-* (the Supplication / apportionment / retribution). Y. 49.10 describes this reward or *yāh-* further; the souls of the truthful, along with positive concepts or divinities, are kept in Ahura Mazdā's house. According to West, the house contains two *Aməša Spəntas*: *vohu manah* (Good Thought) and *ārmaiti* (Piety). Lesser divinities or personified concepts are also present: *nəmascā* (Reverence) and *īžācā* (Libation).[697] According to Almut Hintze, in Y. 49.10 the feminine nouns *īžācā* (Libation / cream-offering / milk) and *ārmaiti* (Piety / right-mindedness / piety) denote offerings presented to Ahura Mazdā.[698] Insler interprets "milks" as a term for worship and a metaphor for the strength Ahura Mazdā receives from the piety of the truthful.[699] Since Ahura Mazdā keeps all these concepts and divinities in his house, Insler interprets this relating to the Gathic theme of interdependency of Ahura Mazdā's power (*xšaθra*) and the piety and reverence which the truthful allot to it.[700] The translation by Humbach & Faiss emphasises how this interdependency requires rituals and offerings, not merely noble ethics. All thing considered, Y. 49.10 speaks of individual fates in the afterlife, which has relevance to a linear worldview only if we accept the eschatological interpretation of *yāh-* from the previous verse (Y. 49.9). Finally, Y. 49.11 describes the fate of the deceitful: their souls will

[694] West 2010, 145. According to West, there is a line in Y. 49.10 (marked with "…") where the last word or pair of words is unintelligible.
[695] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 148.
[696] Insler 1975, 97.
[697] West 2010, 20; Insler 1975, 300.
[698] Hintze 2007, 214.
[699] Insler 1975, 97.
[700] Insler 1975, 300.

be veritable / right / true guests in the house of *druj*, with only foul food to eat (cf. Y. 32.13; 46.11; 51.14; 53.6).[701]

5.14. At the end of worldly life, Y. 51.6, 9, 13-14

Yasna 51 constitutes the fourth Gatha *Vohuxšaθrā*.[702] It is a long poem of 22 verses, which begins by Zoroaster describing his vision of the rule of *vohu manah* and *aṡa* on earth.[703] According to West, Yasna 51 may be divided into five segments: 1-3 are an introduction; 4-11 present Zoroaster's anxieties and appeals for support while contrasting the difference between the righteous and unrighteous; 12-14 denunciate unrighteous individuals; 15-20 praise righteous individuals; 21-22 contain closing affirmations.[704] Y. 51.6 is concerned with the future and afterlife utilising a horse race metaphor of the "last bend" / "final turn" / "final turning point" (cf. Y. 43.5-6).[705] Y. 51.9 mentions *xšnūt-* (atonement / satisfaction) we met previously in Y. 31.3.[706] Y. 51.13 contains a reference to *činuuatō pərətu-* (cf. Y. 46.10-11),[707] and Y. 51.14 mentions the house of *druj* (cf. Y. 32.13; 46.11; 49.11; 53.6).[708]

5.14.1. The final turn, Y. 51.6

Y. 51.6: If one is choosing what is better than good, and if one will be prompt to His will, the Lord is mindful in His dominion; but it is worse than bad for him that will not serve Him, at the last bend of worldly life. -West (2010).[709]

Y. 51.6: Of him who accepts what is better than good and who submits to His will, the Lord, through His power, (is) mindful. But what is worse than evil (is in store) for that one who did not fulfil (his duties) toward Him, at the final turn of the existence/world. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[710]

Y. 51.6: The one who accepts what is better than good and who shall bring success to His wish, (him) the Lord, Wise in His rule, (shall accept). But what is worse than bad shall be, at the final turning point of existence, for that man who shall not serve Him. -Insler (1975).[711]

This verse speaks of a person to whom Ahura Mazdā is mindful / Wise through his *xšaθra* if that person chooses "what is better than good" and follows Ahura Mazdā's will. Insler's translation does not speak of a person who follows Ahura Mazdā's will, but of a one who will bring success to Ahura Mazdā's wish. Nevertheless, the verse continues by introducing an

[701] See chapters 5.2.1, 5.3.7. Y. 32.13 contains a variant of the house of *druj*: the house of Worst Thought / worst thought / Worst Thinking (West 2010, 21, 75; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 94; Insler 1975, 49). See chapter 5.4.3.
[702] West 2010, v; Humbach 2000, 321-327; see chapter 3.3.
[703] Insler 1975, 310.
[704] West 2010, 152.
[705] See chapter 5.7.1.
[706] See chapter 5.3.1.
[707] See chapters 5.2.1, 5.10.
[708] See chapters 5.4.3, 5.10, 5.13.3, 5.14.1.
[709] West 2010, 155.
[710] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 154.
[711] Insler 1975, 105.

antithesis to better than good: worse than bad / evil. Worse than bad is in store for a person who does not serve Ahura Mazdā or fulfil his duties towards him as Humbach & Faiss put it. These contrasting fates are described with the noun *vīdāiti-*,[712] even though none of the translations of Y. 51.6 used the word "distribution."[713] Nevertheless, the fate that is worse than bad awaits at the "last bend of worldly life" / "final turn of the existence/world" / "final turning point of existence." This is a horse racing metaphor that was already introduced in Y. 43.5-6, which scholars like Skjærvø and West interpret alluding to individual fates in the afterlife.[714] For a modern reader, the metaphor of "final turn of creation" sounds rather grand and universal, as if the metaphor spoke about the end of the whole creation. West's rendition "last bend of worldly life" has a more individual connotation and emphasises that Y. 51.6 speaks about a person's individual fate at the last bend of his/her life. Nevertheless, in my opinion, the metaphor of the "last bend" / "final turn "/ "final turning point" of the entire existence / creation sounds rather eschatological, for a modern reader at least, but the metaphor's original meaning might have been non-eschatological.

5.14.2. *Xšnūt-* and molten metal, Y. 51.9

Y. 51.9: is the atonement that Thou didst set for the two parties through Thy flaming fire, Mindful One, and through molten metal, to establish proof about our characters for the harm of the wrongful one and the strengthening of the righteous. -West (2010).[715]

Y. 51.9: Which satisfaction you fix with the balance by your red fire, O Wise One, (and) by the molten metal – to attach a sign (of that) to the minds: to harm the deceitful one you benefit/save the truthful one. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[716]

Y. 51.9: The satisfaction which Thou shalt give to both factions through Thy pure fire and the molten iron, Wise One, is to be given as a sign among living beings, in order to destroy the deceitful and to save the truthful. -Insler (1975).[717]

Y. 51.9 describes the ordeal of molten metal[718] in association with *xšnūt-* (atonement / satisfaction), a legalistic term with a semantic connotation of "reward" we met previously in Y. 31.3, [719] and *rāna-* ("with the balance" by Humbach & Faiss) we met in Y. 31.3, 19; 43.12 and 47.6.[720] Y. 51.9 gives three functions for *xšnūt-*, *rāna-*, and the ordeal of molten metal. First function is to "establish proof about our characters" / "attach a sign (of that) to the

[712] Y. 31.19; 47.6; 51.6; cf. 43.12; see chapters 5.3.6, 5.7.2, 5.11.
[713] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 71; see chapters 5.3.6, 5.11.
[714] West 2010, 20-21, 54; Skjærvø 2005, 56; see chapters 5.2.7, 5.7.1.
[715] West 2010, 157.
[716] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 155.
[717] Insler 1975, 105.
[718] Y. 30.2, 7; 31.3, 19; 32.7; 34.4; 43.4, 9; 46.7; 47.6; see chapters 5.2.1, 5.2.4, 5.3.1, 5.3.6, 5.4.1, 5.6.1, 5.7.1, 5.11.
[719] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 70; Insler 1975, 182; see chapter 5.3.1.

minds" / "be given as a sign among living beings." This indicates that they are a sign for human beings, a warning that there are two contrasting fates awaiting in the afterlife. Second function is to harm / destroy the wrongful, and the third is to strengthen / benefit / save the truthful. Insler's commentary does not explicitly give eschatological interpretation for Y. 51.9, but he had previously interpreted *xšnūt-* and the ordeal of molten metal eschatologically.[721] There are no other indications of eschatology in Y. 51.9, therefore seeing a linear worldview in Y. 51.9 is completely dependent on Young Avestan and Pahlavi hermeneutics over the meaning of *xšnūt-* (Y. 31.3; 51.9), *rāna-* (Y. 31.3, 19; 43.12; 47.6; 51.9), and the ordeal of molten metal (Y. 30.2, 7; 31.3, 19; 32.7; 34.4; 43.4, 9; 46.7; 47.6; 51.9).

5.14.3. Reality ignored and *činuuatō pərətu-*, Y. 51.13-14

Y. 51.13-14: So the wrongful one's morality may ignore the just one's reality; (but) his soul will torment him at the Arbiter's Crossing when it confronts him, lost through his own actions and his tongue's from the path of Right. (14) The Karpans are not fit allies from the standpoint of (Your) ordinances and the pasture, manifesters of harm to the cow by their actions and proclamations – proclamation that will consign them at the last to the house of Wrong. -West (2010).[722]

Y. 51.13-14: For such (behavior) the view/view-soul of the deceitful one will miss the reality of the straight (path). His breath-soul will shudder/tremble at/on the accountant's bridge, realizing that he has strayed from the path of truth by his own actions and those of (his) tongue. (14) The Karapans/lie-priests (are) no allies with respect to the laws and (the needs of) the pasture, out of greed being unpleasant toward the cow by their actions and sentences, which kind of sentence will, at the end, put them in the house of deceit. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[723]

Y. 51.13-14: By reason of this, the conception of the deceitful person misses the true (conception) of the honest man. His soul shall vex him at the Bridge of the Judge surely, in that he has disappeared from the path of truth by reason of his own actions and (the words) of his tongue. (14) Neither are the Karpans our allies, they who are at a distance from our laws and from the pasture. Theirs is a pleasure from (bringing) injury to the cow by their actions and their words, a doctrine which shall place them in the House of Deceit in the end. -Insler (1975).[724]

Y. 51.3 begins by describing how the deceitful miss "the just one's reality" / "reality of the straight path" / "true (conception) of the honest man." The deceitful are confronted with this fact at *činuuatō pərətu-* (cf. Y. 46.10-11),[725] where they realise they have strayed from the path of *aša* by their own actions and actions / words of their tongue. According to Insler, *činuuatō pərətu-* is the place where the final judgment in enacted.[726] As I argued previously in chapter 5.10 (Y. 46.10-11), this is a dubious interpretation that is at odds with later Zoroastrian tradition regarding the final judgment.

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[720] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 70-72; see chapters 5.3.1, 5.3.6, 5.7.2, 5.11.
[721] Insler 1975, 35, 37, 41, 47, 61, 277, 282.
[722] West 2010, 159.
[723] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 156.
[724] Insler 1975, 107.
[725] See chapter 5.10.

Y. 51.14 continues saying how *karapans* / *karpans*[727] are not allies since they do not follow laws regarding the pasture; they are "manifesters of harm" / "unpleasant" / "(bringing) injury" towards the cow, clearly indicating that *karapans* cause distress to peaceful cattlemen. In the end, however, *karapans* will be placed in the house of *druj*,[728] which is an idea of afterlife that does not indicate eschatology or a linear worldview.[729]

5.15. The wedding poem, Y. 53.1, 6

Yasna 53.1-9 constitutes the fifth Gatha *Vahištōišti*[730] that describes a private event, the wedding of Porucistā, but it is not composed by Zoroaster, even if we assume he was a historical person.[731] Y. 53.1 acknowledges Zoroaster's fame, leadership and virtue, and there is a mention of a "good existence" that Ahura Mazdā gives to Zoroaster and to those who truly follow the "good religion" (cf. Y. 51.17; 53.4). The second analysed verse Y. 53.6 has possible allusions to the afterlife, but it is a partially corrupted verse where two stanzas (Y. 53.6 + 6a), according to West, have become conflated resulting in the loss of parts from both. Humbach & Faiss and Insler see that there is corruption, but they do not necessarily attribute this to a conflation of two verses.[732] Verses 4-5 had previously offered advice for separate sexes, but Y. 53.6 offers more universal guidance[733] and mentions that comfort / well-being / happiness will be lost for the followers of *druj*. It also warns how "spiritual life / "mental existence" / "spiritual existence" can be ruined.[734]

5.15.1. The good existence, Y. 53.1

Y. 53.1: Supreme in renown is the capability of Zarathushtra Spitāma, if (it is true that) in accord with Right the Mindful Lord will grant him blessings for ever, the good existence, and to those who practise and master his Good Religion's speech and conduct. -West (2010).[735]

Y. 53.1: The excellent command of Zarathustra Spitama is famous, because the Wise Lord, in accordance with truth, accorded to him boons (and) good existence for all his life, (to him) and (to those) who observe and master the statements and actions of his good view/religion. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[736]

Y. 53.1: (to the adherents). The Best wish of Zarathustra Spitama has been heard if the Wise Lord shall grant to him those attainments in accord with truth and a good existence for all his lifetime. Likewise, to those who have accepted and taught the words and actions stemming from His good conception. -Insler (1975).[737]

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[726] Insler 1975, 83, 107.
[727] Cf. Y. 32.12, 15; 44.20; 46.11; 48.10; see chapters 5.4.3, 5.8.3, 5.10.
[728] Cf. Y. 32.13; 46.11; 49:11; 53.6; see chapters 5.4.3, 5.10, 5.13.3.
[729] See chapter 2.3.
[730] West 2010, v; Humbach 2000, 321-327; see chapter 3.3.
[731] West 2010, 3, 164; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 9-10; Malandra 2000, 327-330.
[732] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 194; Insler 1975, 325.
[733] West 2010, 166.
[734] West 2010, 167; Humbach & Faiss 2010, 161; Insler 1975, 113.
[735] West 2010, 165.
[736] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 159.
[737] Insler 1975, 111.

Y. 53.1 says that Ahura Mazdā "will grant" / "accorded" Zoroaster "blessings for ever" / "boons" / "attainments" next to the "good existence", all which Ahura Mazdā also conveys to those who "practice and master" / "observe and master" / "accepted and taught" the "speech and conduct" / "statements and actions" / "words and actions" of Ahura Mazdā's "Good Religion" / "good view/religion" / "good conception" (cf. Y. 51.17; 53.4). Insler interprets that this good religion / view / conception is the good vision of a world ruled by *aša* and *vohu manah*, which Insler also sees personified in the character of "the cow" and "cow's soul" / "the soul of the cow."[738]

According to West, the "good existence" refers to the afterlife, and it is granted by Ahura Mazdā to those who may have existed, exist, or will exist (cf. Y. 45.7).[739] Before the good existence is mentioned, West's translation says that Ahura Mazdā will grant "blessings for ever", which emphasises the eternal nature of the good existence. However, translations by Humbach & Faiss and Insler suggest this "good existence" can be understood this-worldly; Zoroaster had a good existence "for all his life / lifetime", granted by Ahura Mazdā, which can be also attained by followers of "good religion". Y. 53.1 does not necessarily have any references to the afterlife, and certainly no references to eschatology or a linear worldview.

5.15.2. Foul food, Y. 53.6

Y. 53.6: These truths are like this, gentlemen; like so, ladies. Of him that is attached to Wrong, the prosperity ye see * * * * * * * * * * of Wrong: I take away his defences from his body. (6a) * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * foul food for them as they cry 'Woe'; well-being is lost for the wrongful diminishers of Right. With them ye ruin spiritual life. -West (2010).[740]

Y. 53.6: In this way (my words are) true, O men, in the same way (for you,) O women. (He) who operates in accordance with deceit (and) whom you see prosper – I take the fat off from his body. With the wind (away with him) to those offering (him) foul food. Comfort fades away from (those) deceitful oppressors of truth. Through these you ruin (your) mental existence. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[741]

Y. 53.6: These things are exactly true, men; exactly, women. There is an adherent of deceit when ye see a prospering of deceit. (But) I am taking these prosperous conditions away from his person. Foul food shall be for these, as they cry 'woe', in that happiness has been lost to the deceitful who violate truth. In alliance with them, ye are going to destroy the spiritual existence. -Insler (1975).[742]

The beginning of Y. 53.6 addresses men and women and tells that if a follower of *druj* is prosperous, that person will eventually experience a bad fate. The verse continues how "I take

[738] According to Insler, the "good vision", i.e., the cow / soul of the cow appears in Y. 28.1; 29.1, 9; 31.9; 32.12, 14; 33.3; 44.20; 48.5; 50.2-3; 51.5, 6; 51.14 (Insler 1975, 25, 29, 31, 39, 47, 49, 51, 73, 91, 99, 103, 105, 107, 111). In the Liturgy in Seven Chapters, the cow appears in Y. 37.1-2; 38.5; 39.1 (West 2010, 173-175).
[739] West 2010, 164; see chapter 5.9.3.
[740] West 2010, 167.
[741] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 161.
[742] Insler 1975, 113.

away defences from his body" / "I take the fat off from his body" / "I am taking these prosperous conditions away from his person." The person "I" could refer to the poet himself, but it is conceivably only Ahura Mazdā who is able to do the aforementioned things. West and Insler infer that Y. 53.6 contains allusions to the house of *druj*, because "foul food" (Y. 31.20; 49.11) and "woe" (Y. 32.20; 45.3) have previously alluded to the house of *druj*.[743] Humbach & Faiss have not included the word "woe", but their translation can be read alluding to the house of *druj*; a deceitful is taken "with the wind (away with him) to those offering (him) foul food." The house of *druj* is one of those places where foul food is served.

The second sentence of Y. 53.6 features two mentions of *druj* (*drujō*), of which Humbach & Faiss see the second iteration as a "horrible blunder" or a remnant of a lost stanza.[744] West's translation indicates that there is corruption before the second *drujō*, but Insler has managed to deliver a coherent translation despite the supposed corruption: "There is an adherent of *drujō* when ye see a prospering of *drujō*."[745]

The last part of Y. 53.6 describes how followers of *druj* will receive negative outcomes: "well-being is lost" / "comfort fades away" / "happiness has been lost." Additionally, one should not associate with the wrongful / deceitful, because they ruin "spiritual life" / "mental existence" / "spiritual existence."[746] Nevertheless, Y. 53.6 does not contain any mentions of general eschatology, or any indications of a linear worldview, even though it alludes to the afterlife.

5.16. Airyaman išya and Fragment Westergaard, Y. 54.1 & FrW. 4:1-3

Airyaman išya (Y. 54.1) is the ending prayer of the fifth Gatha *Vahištōišti* (Y. 53), both which were composed by the early Zoroastrian community, not by the supposed prophet Zoroaster himself. Y. 54.1 is not a part of the Gathas proper, this being the reason why Insler has excluded it from his translation.[747] Nevertheless, what makes Y. 54.1 interesting is that there exists a Young Avestan commentary on it named Fragment Westergaard 4.1-3, a detached text within the Avesta. FrW. 4.1-3 is the only surviving part of the original Young Avestan commentary of which we know its Pahlavi version *Warštmānsr Nask* found in Dēnkard's book 9.[748] FrW. 4.1-3 contain an unambiguous reference to *frašō.kərəti* by mentioning the

[743] West 2010, 166-167; Insler 1975, 325; Y. 32.13; 46.11; 49:11; 51.14; see chapters 5.4.3, 5.10, 5.13.3, 5.14.3.
[744] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 194.
[745] Insler 1975, 113.
[746] West 2010, 166; Insler 1975, 322.
[747] West 2010, 3, 170; Malandra 2000, 327-330.
[748] Vevaina 2009, 217.

resurrection of the dead. The ideas of Y. 54.1 are developed further, to a point where eschatological resurrection is introduced.[749]

5.16.1. Future reward, Y. 54.1

Y. 54.1: Let Aryaman, the one longed for, come to support the men and women of Zarathushtra, to support Good Thought, through which the moral self may win desirable recompense. I pray for Right's reward, the longed-for one that the Mindful Lord conceives. -West (2010).[750]

Y. 54.1: Let the tribe provided with invigorations come to the support of the men and women of Zarathustra, to the support of good thought by the view/religion by which one will win a desirable prize. I request the invigorating reward of truth, which (to accord) the Wise Lord will be delighted. -Humbach & Faiss (2010).[751]

Y. 54.1 is a prayer that is transmitted as the first section of Yasna 54 (Y. 54.1-2), but it is not considered a part of the Gathas proper. However, Y. 54.1 is composed in Old Avestan, and it is thematically and metrically a part of the fifth Gatha *Vahištōišti* (Y. 53),[752] the poem that describes the wedding of Porucistā.[753] Eventually, Y. 54.1 took on a life of its own, and became regarded as a prayer of defence against evil, magic, and illness, traditionally used in Zoroastrian marriage rituals.[754]

Y. 54.1 begins by mentioning a *yazata* (being worthy of worship) named *Airyaman* (Pahl. *Aryaman*). The Avestan common noun *airyaman-* (Vedic *aryaman-*) means friend / companion. For Indo-Iranians, *Airyaman* / *Aryaman* became the hypostasis of friendship, friendly alliance, companionship, and community ties, such as marriage.[755] The translation by Humbach & Faiss has taken the aspect of community ties to extremes and renders *Airyaman* as "the tribe."[756] Y. 54.1 invokes *Airyaman* to support the men and women of Zoroaster, and to support *vohu manah* that West had translated as an *Aməša Spənta*. Through the support of *Airyaman* the "moral self" / "view"/ "religion" may win "desirable recompense" / "desirable prize." After this, *aṡa's* reward (West interprets *aṡa* as an *Aməša Spənta*) is prayed for, which is described as "the longed-for one" / "invigorating", which Ahura Mazdā conceives, or which delights him. The language is highly ambiguous and the exact contents of "desirable recompense" / "desirable prize" and "*aṡa's* reward" are left open. Are they this-worldly or other-worldly, what kind of rewards are to be expected? Y. 54.1 does not give enough details to indicate eschatology, or a linear worldview.

[749] Vevaina 2009, 217-218, 220.
[750] West 2010, 170.
[751] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 162.
[752] West 2010, 170; Vevaina 2009, 216-217.
[753] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 9-10; West 2010, 3, 164.
[754] West 2010, 170.
[755] West 2010, 170; Boyce 1984, 694-695.
[756] Humbach & Faiss 2010, 162.

5.16.2. Resurrection, FrW. 4.1-3

FrW. 4.1-3: And by it the dead shall be redressed. With its help, they shall give life back to the bodies and they will keep (their) souls with the bodies, that is, thereafter, they will not die. -Westergaard (1852-1854).[757]

Yasna 54.1 had already presented ideas of a future reward, but no clear references to eschatology or resurrection could be found. FrW. 4.1-3 is a prime example that shows how Zoroastrian eschatology developed from its Old Avestan roots and reached more refined forms in the Young Avestan tradition. The "desirable recompense" / "desirable prize" and "*aṡa's* reward" from Y. 54.1 are now understood as the eschatological resurrection of the dead during *frašō.kərəti*. The world after resurrection is also implied to be paradisaical because people will never die thereafter.[758] This clearly constitutes a linear worldview since Young Avestan tradition did not believe the world could turn for the worse after *frašō.kərəti*; it is the utter defeat of evil when everything is made perfect forever.[759]

[757] Westergaard 1852-1854, 332; Vevaina 2009, 218.
[758] Vevaina 2009, 215-216, 220.
[759] Hintze 2000, 190-192.

6. Conclusions

The analysed Yasnas, concerned with the past, future, and afterlife, and which were approached in the order they appear in the Yasna liturgy, have provided a glimpse of the Old Avestan worldview from the 2nd millennium BCE. Different scholars have variously interpreted the Gathas, and both the Young Avestan and Pahlavi traditions have provided their own answers for the ambiguousness we face when reading these sacred verses. Nevertheless, I have presented six statements about the Gathic worldview (6.1) using the results of the analysis chapters (5-5.16.2). These statements will be put in comparison with later Zoroastrian tradition (6.2), after which the nascent eschatology of Y. 30.5-10 is scrutinised (6.3). The last chapter (6.4) deals with the need and possibilities of further research.

6.1. Six statements about the Gathic worldview

1) Ahura Mazdā (Wise Lord) is the creator of the cosmos,[760] but his dominion in this world is limited; several Yasnas indicate how Ahura Mazdā's *xšaθra* (dominion / power / rule) [761] grows gradually by the worship of the righteous.[762]

2) The world has fallen from the golden age of Yima because Angra Mainyu (the Hostile Spirit), *daēvas* (gods) and their mortal followers corrupt the world (Y. 30.6), and because Yima committed a sin which allowed evil to enter the world (Y. 32.8).

3) By the above-mentioned reasons, the world is in dire need of improvement. The character of Zoroaster hopes and seeks an existence that is splendid / perfect / healed,[763] also described as "the best existence" (Y. 44.2), ruled by *aṡa* (right / truth) and *vohu manah* (good thought / thinking), which is the "pristine / first / foremost existence", *aŋhuš pouruyō*,[764] that has connotations to the past and the future. *Aŋhuš pouruyō* is both the first pristine existence, before Angra Mainyu's corruption (Y. 30.6) and Yima's sin (Y. 32.8), and the future world that is sought for.

[760] Y. 31.8; 43.5; cf. Y. 29.6; 31.11*; 44.3-5; 47.3*; 50.11*; 51.7*. Verses marked with * were not included in analysis chapters.
[761] Y. 28.3*, 9*; 29.11*; 30.7-8; 31.6, 21*; 32.6; 33.10-11, 13*; 34.10*, 15; 43.6, 13-14*, 16*; 44.6-7, 9*; 45.9*; 47.1*; 48.8*, 11*; 49.10; 50.4*; 51.6. Inside the Liturgy in Seven Chapters: Y. 37.2*, 5*; 41.2*. For *xšaθra* of the deceitful, see Y. 31.15; 32.12-13; 44.20*; 49.11.
[762] Y. 31.6-7; 33.10, 12; 43.10*; 45.7; 48.1.
[763] Y. 30. 9; cf. Y. 28.11; 33.1; 34.15; 44.2; 50.11*.
[764] Y. 28.11; 33.1; 44.2; 48.6; cf. 34.15; 48.2.

4) The future *aŋhuš pouruyō* comes at the time when *druj* (wrong / lie / deceit) is defeated (Y. 30.7-8, 10; 48.1-2). This is depicted rather allegorically in the Gathas: *druj* is delivered into the hands of *aṡa* (Y. 30.8), there will be a destruction / breakdown of *druj* and its prosperity (Y. 30.10), and *aṡa* will vanquish / overcome / defeat *druj* (Y. 48.1-2; cf. 31.4).

5) The character of Zoroaster does not know exactly when will *aŋhuš pouruyō* become realised, or when *druj* will be defeated, but he hopes, not necessarily expects, this to happen in his lifetime (Y. 48.2). Some passages, however, present a helpless and powerless picture of Zoroaster, doubtful of his abilities to accomplish his goals.[765] Zoroaster also presents multiple questions about the future, and even though these questions can be viewed as merely rhetorical, they suggest that Zoroaster's knowledge on the future is limited.[766] There are also passages that indicate how Ahura Mazdā's powers require growing, maturation, and cooperation with the truthful worshippers for him to receive total lordship over the world (Y. 31.6; 33.10; cf. 45.1), and they also present a genuine possibility that Ahura Mazdā's powers can shrink as well. These passages are well-suited for long-term eschatological interpretation. Nevertheless, the ritual paradigm of Zoroastrian studies has presented idea how the Gathic rituals themselves were the means to bring about *aŋhuš pouruyō*; to cyclically regenerate the cosmos after periods of chaos. It is possible that *aŋhuš pouruyō* and the defeat of *druj* were likened to the world as we know it, ruled under the principles of *aša* and *vohu manah*. This would mean that *aŋhuš pouruyō* and the defeat of *druj* were thought to occur literally through ritual practice in a lifetime.

6) Ahura Mazdā's ability to give rewards and punishments in the afterlife seems absolutely guaranteed,[767] although he possesses the ability to dispense justice in the physical world as well.[768] Ahura Mazdā's fire, i.e., the ordeal of molten metal,[769] is the means by which he allocates rewards and punishments, but there are other legal terms denoting his judicial procedures, such as *rāna-* ("with the balance"),[770] *xšnūt-* (satisfaction),[771] *yāh-* (Supplication /

[765] Y. 28.9*; 34.7-8*; 44.16-18*; 46.1-4*, 7*; 51.11*.
[766] Y. 29.5*, 7*; 34.7*, 12*; 44.2, 8-20*; 46.1*, 3*, 7*, 9*; 48.2, 8-11*; 49.7*, 12*; 50.1*-2*, 11*; 51.4*, 11*; 53.9*.
[767] 30.4, 11; 31.2-3, 5, 14, (15), 19-20, 22; 32.7, 13; 33.1; (34.4); 43.4-6; (43.12); 44.19; 45.3, 7; 46.10-11; 47.6; 49.9-11; 51.6, 9-(10*), 13; (53.1), 6; (54.1); cf. Y. 29.4*; 34.13*; (46.19*); 48.4*. Verses in brackets can also be interpreted this-worldly.
[768] Y. 28.2*, 6-8*, 10*; 29.10*-11*; 31.4, 6*, 21*; 32.1*, 16; 33.11, 13*; (34.4), 5*, 7*, (12*-13*), 14*-15; 43.1*-3*, (12), 13*-14*, 16*; 44.15*, 18*-19; 45.5*, 9*-10*; 46.10, 13*; 47.1*, 5; 48.8*-9*; 50.5*, 7*; 51.5*, 7*, 18*, 20*-21*; (53.1), 2*, 4*, 9*; 54.1. Verses in brackets can also be interpreted other-worldly.
[769] Y. 30.2, 7; 31.3, 19; 32.7; 34.4; 43.4, 9*; 46.7; 47.6; 51.9.
[770] Y. 31.3, 19; 43.12; 47.6; 51.9.

apportionment / retribution),[772] *ādā-* (dispensation / presentation / apportionment / requital),[773] and *vīdāiti-* (allocation / distribution).[774] Additionally, there is the pre-Zoroastrian belief in *činuuatō pərətu-* (the Arbiter's Crossing / accountant's bridge / Bridge of the Judge, Y. 46.10-11; 51.13), where the personal / individual judgment in the afterlife takes place. Followers of *druj* will end up in the "house of *druj*"[775] after they die, while followers of *ašå* will be welcome guests in the "house of song."[776] All the above-mentioned concepts form of an intertwined whole that has caused much confusion, and room for conflicting interpretations, for later readers of the Gathas.

6.2. Eschatology of later tradition

Do the six above-mentioned statements constitute a linear worldview? This is dependant on our hermeneutic understanding of them. Already in several Yašt hymns (Yt. 13.17; 13.58; Yt. 19.11-12) and Fragment Westergaard (FrW. 4.1-3), the Young Avestan tradition (1st half of the 1st millennium BCE) had made a hermeneutic process of understanding *aŋhuš pouruyō* and the defeat of *druj* eschatologically.[777] Young Avestan tradition also believed that the golden age of Yima was paradisical and deathless (Yt. 19.33),[778] and that the world would again become deathless in the eschatological event of *frašō.kərəti* (Pahl. *frašegird*), literally "making wonderful / excellent", which was also accompanied by the resurrection of the dead

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[771] Y. 31.3; 51.9; cf. 31.14.
[772] Y. 30.2; 49.9; cf. 31.14.
[773] Y. 33.11-12; 49.1.
[774] Y. 31.19; 47.6; 51.6; cf. 43.12.
[775] Y. 32.13; 46.11; 49:11; 51.14; cf. 53.6.
[776] Y. 45.8*; 50.4*; 51.15*; cf. 30.10; 32.15*; 46.6; 49.10. The House of Song also denotes places where Zoroaster performs his poetry and places in accord with *vohu manah* (West 2010, 18; Skjærvø 2006, 12).
[777] Yt. 13.17: "In fearful battles they are the wisest for help, the Fravashis of the faithful. The most powerful amongst the Fravashis of the faithful, O Spitama! are those of the men of the primitive law or those of the Saoshyants not yet born, who are to restore the world. Of the others, the Fravashis of the living faithful are more powerful, O Zarathushtra! than those of the dead, O Spitama!" (Darmesteter 1882, 184 [SBE23]).

Yt. 13.58: "And now they (*daēvas*) move around in their far-revolving circle for ever, till they come to the time of the good restoration of the world." (Darmesteter 1882, 194 [SBE23]).

Yt. 19.11-12: "So that they may restore the world, which will (thenceforth) never grow old and never die, never decaying and never rotting, ever living and ever increasing, and master of its wish, when the dead will rise, when life and immortality will come, and the world will be restored at its wish; (12) When the creation will grow deathless,—the prosperous creation of the Good Spirit,—and the Drug (*druj*) shall perish, though she may rush on every side to kill the holy beings; she and her hundredfold brood shall perish, as it is the will of the Lord." (Darmesteter 1882, 290 [SBE23]).

FrW. 4.1-3: "With its help, they shall give life back to the bodies and they will keep their souls with the bodies, that is, thereafter, they will not die." (Westergaard 1852–1854, 332).

[778] Yt. 19.33: "In whose reign there was neither cold wind nor hot wind, neither old age nor death, nor envy made by the Daevas, in the times before his lie, before he began to have delight in words of falsehood and untruth." (Darmesteter 1882, 293 [SBE23]).

(Yt. 19.11 & FrW. 4.1-3). The Young Avestan tradition, like its successor Pahlavi tradition (c. 3rd – 10th centuries CE), viewed that the coming of *aŋhuš pouruyō* did not happen during Zoroaster's lifetime, and an eschatological scheme was gradually devised where 12,000 years would pass (Gbd. 34) until the final judgment, when the final victorious *saošyant* (saviour / benefactor) would appear, when *druj* and *daēvas* would be defeated, humankind resurrected, and the world renovated into supernatural perfection by the universal ordeal of molten metal (Gbd. 34.18-21).[779] Pahlavi tradition made a clear distinction between the ordeal of molten metal and *činuuatō pərətu-*; the former became an eschatological event in the future and the latter remained the place of individual / personal judgment in the afterlife, like it was in pre-Zoroastrian tradition.[780] All in all, the defeat of *druj*, *aŋhuš pouruyō*, and the ordeal of molten metal received their detailed eschatological meanings in later Zoroastrianism.[781] In this regard, we are faced with two problems: how much Young Avestan or Pahlavi worldview is shared in the Old Avesta, and can we trust Zoroastrian tradition to deliver the original and correct hermeneutic understanding of the Gathas. This is a source of dispute among scholars; some argue that the Gathas are completely unrelated to later tradition, while others see that the later tradition essentially represents the Old Avestan worldview of the Gathas. Needless to say, the Gathas themselves are notoriously complex and full of multivalence, almost inciting for conflicting interpretations. However, the Gathas generally claim that the present condition of the world can and should be changed; there is optimism at the core that stimulates imagination to greener pastures in future horizons. Old Avestan people may have considered the message of the Gathas to be about the maintenance of the present world, about upholding the principles of *aša* and keeping *druj* at bay by repeatedly performing rituals during which the Gathas were recited, but on a literary level, there is a clear desire to make the world splendid / perfect / healed. It is open to interpretation, however, what was the actual end-goal of the Gathic ritual endeavour to improve the world. Perhaps it was a happy life herding cows,

[779] Anklesaria 1956, 289.

[780] The Pahlavi work Greater Bundahišn (9th century CE) also features an eschatological event called "punishment of the three nights" that happens during the final judgment, but prior to the universal ordeal of molten metal (Gbd. 34.15). First, humankind is resurrected to bodily forms (Gbd 34. 7-9), after which they experience the "punishment of the three nights;" the righteous are carried back to the "abode of harmony" and the wicked cast back to the "wicked existence" in their resurrected bodies (Gbd. 34.13-15). After this, the universal ordeal of molten metal takes place, which purifies every person and the entire world (Gbd. 34. 18-19). In purified forms, "man will ask man: 'where wert-thou these many years? What was the condition of thy soul? Wert thou righteous or wicked?'" (Gbd. 34.20), and finally, all humankind will "unanimously be of one acclaim, and will administer loud praise to Ohrmazd and the beneficent immortals." (Gbd. 34.21, Anklesaria 1956, 287-289).

[781] The ordeal of molten metal also remained a custom of this-worldly judgment. Pahlavi tradition tells how high priest Ādurbād ī Mahrspandān (4th century CE) submitted himself to an ordeal of molten metal and suffered no injury (Dēnkard Book 4:20).

living to a long age in good health. Nevertheless, the Gathas can also be interpreted expecting something far grander, a universal turn of events, when everything will become supernaturally perfect.

6.3. Nascent eschatology of Yasna 30.5-10

Chapters 5.2.3-7 found hermeneutic possibility of nascent eschatology in Y. 30.5-10, contained in the first Gatha *Ahunauuaitī* (Y. 28-34). Verses 5-6 describe how the world is blighted because *daēvas* and their followers choose wrongfully between Spənta Mainyu and Angra Mainyu, the two primordial spirits that constitute the origins of moral dispositions. Verses 7-8 tell how either *daēvas*, or their followers, will face a judgment, and how *druj* will be delivered into the hands of *aṡ̌a*. If we make the interpretation that *daēvas* will receive judgment, then that would entail either that **a)** *daēvas* are mortal,[782] or **b)** *daēvas* receive a judgment in an eschatological event; how else could supernatural entities be defeated or judged? Judgment of gods can be easily imagined through an idea of universal eschatology at the end of history, like it was imagined in Younger Avestan and Pahlavi traditions; *daēvas* would perish in *frašō.kərəti* (Yt. 19.12). Furthermore, the judgment of *daēvas* or their followers happens when *druj* is delivered into the hands of *aṡ̌a* (Y. 30.8). This can be interpreted eschatologically since Y. 30.9 continues: "May we be the ones who will make this world splendid" / "May we thus be those who make the existence/world perfect" / "Therefore may we be those who shall heal this world!" This suggests that delivering *druj* into the hands *aṡ̌a* (Y. 30.8) concerns the entire world (Y. 30.9). Furthermore, Y. 30.10 continues: "For then destruction will come down upon Wrong's prosperity" / "And then the breakdown of deceit will come about by clearing it off" / "For then shall descend the destruction of the prosperity of deceit." We can interpret that making the world splendid / perfect / healed (Y. 30.9) is accompanied by the destruction of *druj* (Y. 30.10). In my opinion, Y. 30.5-10 suggest that individual fates of mortals, and possibly also *daēvas*, are linked with a macrocosmic narrative that is concerned with the fate of the whole world. The language of Y. 30.5-10 is very receptive to eschatological interpretation, but there are no particular details that would describe what kind of world these events will bring about. This means that verses 5-10 do not provide explicit answers whether there is eschatology or a linear worldview. But regardless, a modern reader could easily find a worldview from Y. 30.5-10 that is both eschatological and linear; followers of *druj* will receive a judgment (Y. 30.7-8), *druj* is delivered into the hands

[782] The idea that gods can be killed is fairly common among ancient mythologies (Garry & El-Shamy 2016, 17), and even Psalm 82 of the Hebrew Bible presents the idea that gods will be both judged and killed (Ps. 82:1, 6-8).

aša (Y.30.8), the world is made splendid / perfect / healed (Y. 30.9), and *druj* will be destroyed (Y. 30.10). This is nascent eschatology; it calls the reader to imagine a splendour that is to come, a world without *druj*, which is splendid / perfect / healed.

6.4. Further research

A more thorough study on Young Avestan and Pahlavi traditions would be in order. For example, what do Young Avestan textual sources tell about Ahura Mazdā's fire and the ordeal of molten metal? The thematic of the final judgment, as a judicial procedure, is lacking in the Young Avestan Yašt hymns, although these hymns unambiguously allude to *frašō.kərəti* by other motifs; the world will be restored to supernatural perfection (Yt. 19.11), the dead will be resurrected (Yt. 19.11; FrW. 4.1-3) and *druj* and her hundredfold brood (*daēvas*) will perish (Yt. 19.12; cf. Yt. 13.58). Nevertheless, there is no mention of the universal ordeal of molten metal that would judge the mortals and *daēvas* alike. This leads us to ask how and when exactly, did the ordeal of molten metal reach its purely eschatological implication. Additionally, the exact dating of Young Avestan ideas about *frašō.kərəti* require more scrutiny, although they can be generally dated to the 1st half of the 1st millennium BCE. Yašt hymns would also need a modern English translation.

Another subject that deserves further research is ancient Indo-Iranian mythology surrounding the primeval king Yima. The audience of the Gathas was familiar with the character of Yima (Y. 32.8); therefore, we may question how paradisical, or supernatural, the world was thought to be during Yima's reign. Young Avestan Yašt 19.33 explicitly states that before Yima's sin there was "neither cold wind nor hot wind, neither old age nor death, nor envy made by the Daevas,"[783] but did the Old Avestan worldview share this notion? If it did, then it would give more reasons to make supernatural eschatological interpretation of *aŋhuš pouruyō* that is simultaneously the world before Yima's sin and the future world that the Gathas seek to bring about.

Needles to say, deciphering the Gathas (2nd millennium BCE) is a long journey that Zoroastrian scholarship will tackle for centuries to come. Even their exact dating, and the question of Zoroaster's historicity, will continue to be a source of dispute. Nevertheless, we can hope that Zoroastrian studies will once again become a flourishing field that will bear fruit for a wider audience.

[783] Darmesteter 1882, 293 (SBE23).

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