

## AŠA IN ARMENIA\*

The seven Bounteous Immortals, Av. Aməša Spəntas, which personify the chief creations and related moral qualities of the good world of Ahura Mazdā, are central to the cosmological and ethical revelatory teaching of the Prophet Zaratustra. Most of these are known from the sources on the pre-Christian religion of the Armenians: Spənta Ārmaiti, Bounteous Devotion or Piety, associated with the earth, appears in two forms, Spandaramet and Sandaramet. The first name is used to translate that of Dionysos in the Arm. translation of Maccabees, and is apparently NWMIr., whilst the second, from SWIr., is used to mean simply earth or the underworld, as one finds also in Zoroastrian usage.<sup>1</sup> Haurvatāt and Amərətāt, Wholeness and Immortality, the waters and the plants, give their name to a flower used in an Ascension Day ritual employing water and plants together.<sup>2</sup> Omanos, perhaps Vohu Manah, was worshipped in Asia Minor.<sup>3</sup> The heptad is named in a speech of Christian bishops responding to the Mazdeans in the text of Ehišē: Mihr (Miθra), they say, is *hamharz kaj ewinerordac' astuacoc'* "(but an) adjutant of the mighty seven gods."<sup>4</sup> After the destruction wrought by the Christians, records of Zoroastrianism in Armenia are fragmentary, yet the absence of any direct mention of Aša Vahišta, the Best Righteousness, associated with Fire, is striking, because of the great importance of the divinity in the Zoroastrian system. In this paper it is proposed to present a discussion of the rôle of Aša in the Zoroastrian system and to suggest how the concept of the divinity of

the Right from Iran may have inspired the development of thought in Greece, and in Armenia. In both countries, we find cognate words and concepts for "right"; both also came more or less directly under the political and cultural ægis of ancient Iran, Ionian Greece in the Achæmenian age and Armenia from the rise of the Medes to the fall of the Sasanians, so it is not surprising that concepts of Indo-European antiquity should receive a peculiarly Zoroastrian direction. In the Armenian case, it appears that the Iranian concept of Aša might have found expression through a coincidentally similar-sounding Armenian cognate word, rather than, as is most often the case, through a MIr. loan.

### 1. Iranian Aša.

The word is cognate to OInd. *ṛta-*, and corresponds to OPers. (*a*)*rta-*, the form most commonly found as an element of historical Iranian names from the Achæmenian period on. Lüders rendered Vedic *Ṛta* as "Truth"; as a concept it finds close parallels in non-Indo-European ideas, e. g., Old Egy. *maat*, "order, truth, correctness, right, authenticity as a characteristic of the order of life,"<sup>5</sup> and Akkadian *kīttu* and *mīšaru*, as "moral right".<sup>6</sup> But the Iranian term finds the closest correspondence, as one would expect, in Vedic religion. Aša, as a principle of universal order and of truth, serves as a matrix or mediator of word and action, as well as being a discrete being, cf. the Av. formula *ašāṭ hačā* "according to Aša", i. e., rightly. Amongst the various natural phenomena, fire was seen to be similarly pervasive, and correspondences have been

\* (Communication to the 1986 Meeting of the Association Internationale des Études Arméniennes, Brussels.)

<sup>1</sup> See J. R. Russell, *Zoroastrianism in Armenia*, Harvard Iranian Series, Cambridge, MA. 1987 (in press) (hereafter *Zor. Arm.*), Ch. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. 12.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. 14.

<sup>4</sup> E. Ter-Minasean, ed., *Ehišei Vasn Vardanay ew Hayoc' Paterazmin*, Erevan, 1957, 35 lines 7–8.

<sup>5</sup> F. Kuiper, "Remarks on the *Avestan Hymn to Mithra*," *IJ 5*, 1961–2, 42.

<sup>6</sup> B. Geiger, "*Ṛta* und Verwandtes," *WZKM 4*, 1934, 108.

noted between Av. Aša and the Vedic god of fire, Agni, who in the Ṛg Veda possesses the frequent epithet *ṛāvan-* "possessor of *ṛta*".<sup>7</sup> In the Zoroastrian scripture, fire as the seventh creation permeates the other six (sky, water, earth; plants, animals, man). It is *aša.aojah-* "strong through Aša" (Y. 43.4), a reminder of Aša (Y. 43.9); the Sun is the greatest of physical fires, and the link between concepts is further affirmed in that the movement of the great celestial luminary is in accord with Aša.<sup>8</sup> The Sun is in the Veda, similarly, associated with *Ṛta*, of which it is called the twelve-spoked wheel.<sup>9</sup> The formal systems elaborated by Indians and Iranians appear to restate the ancient Indo-European homology of Sun and eyes,<sup>10</sup> the latter the organs of sight and, hence, of the capacity to distinguish what is true, real, and right (cf. Arm. *čšmarit* "true", lit. "seen by the eye", a loan-word from Parthian). Though righteous behavior and virtue here in this life are obviously the primary reasons for any religious system to evolve a concept of cosmic order such as Aša, and Zoroastrianism is perhaps the most life-affirming of all the great faiths, it is in the nature of the religious quest also to look beyond

the immediate and the temporal to the perfect and the final.

In the *Gāthās*, Aša appears to be closely associated with the events of the final Renovation of the universe, *Frašō.kərēti*, Aša holds final rewards and punishments (Y 51.4), and Ahura Mazda will apportion these through *Spənta Mainyu*, the Bounteous Spirit, and Atar, Fire, with the aid of *Ārmaiti* and Aša (Y. 47.6). Such passages allude evidently to the rôle of Aša in melting the metals in the mountains to create the burning river of purgation through which the resurrected generations must pass, "the requitals with the (molten) iron" of Y. 30.7. Equally, Aša plays a rôle in the afterlife; according to the Greater or Iranian *Bundahišn*, 26.35, the duty (Phl. *xwēš-kārīh*) of *Ardwahišt* is to make sure that sinners in hell are not punished beyond their deserts. In Vedic, *ṛāvan* is an epithet of the Gods, the deceased Fathers, and the initiated seers (*kavi-*); *ṛta-* itself is connected to the realm of death, being hidden "where they unharness the horses of the Sun."<sup>11</sup> The term for the place of unharnessing of horses, Av. *avan-hānē*, loc. sg., appears to be used by *Zaraθuštra* in Y. 33.5 in an eschatological sense; it is possible that he expressed his original vision of the end of the world in the poetical terms of the death of the individual which already existed in Indo-Iranian religion. As his religion evolved, believers elaborated the details of the apocalypse, again following the imagery of their Prophet: the Savior at *Frašō.kərēti-* is named, significantly, *Astvaṭ.ərəta*, after the Gāthic phrase *astvaṭ ašəm hyāṭ* "May Aša become corporeal!"<sup>12</sup> There is some evidence from the OPers. inscriptions that the term (*a*)*ṛtāvan-* was an epithet of the dead: Xerxes advises those who desire *šiyāta ahaniy jšva*

*utā marta artāvā ahaniy* "May I be happy while alive and may I be *artāvan* when dead!" to worship Ahura Mazda with correctly-performed rituals (*artācā brazmaniya*).<sup>13</sup> The spirits of the dead receive reverence amongst Zoroastrians as *uṣrā fravašayō ašāunqm* "the powerful guardian-spirits of the righteous";<sup>14</sup> in later literature, the term *Ardafravaš* or *Ardafravard* is used interchangeably with *Ašōān* in rites for the dead.<sup>15</sup>

Aša, as is seen from the foregoing, is associated not only with truth and cosmic order, but with justice. The *fravaši*, guardian of the righteous man in his life as a sort of spirit-double, is vengeful after death if he suffers wrong. In the *Cyropaideia* of Xenophon, the dying Cyrus invokes the vengeful power of those who died suffering injustice (*tən adika pathontōn*).<sup>16</sup> Antiochus of Commagene records at his Irano-Greek hierothesion on Nemrut Dağ that he preserves "a just counterfeit (*mimēma dikaion*) of the immortal thought (*phrontis*) which oftentimes stood by me as a

kindly helper in my kingly endeavors," presumably his *fravaši*.<sup>17</sup>

Aša, then, is truth, order, righteousness, and justice. It is associated with fire, and with the greatest physical fire, the Sun. It is an attribute of the spirit, and of the man who ascends at death to Heaven. Its fire will play an important part in the final judgement and the redemption of the world. It is invoked and claimed by Kings.

## 2. Greece.

Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, 46, identifies Iranian Aša with *alētheia* "truth"; and when Epimenides slept his sleep of initiation in the cave of Diktaean Zeus, "he met with the gods, and with divine intercourse, and with Truth (*Alētheia*) and Justice (*Dikē*)."<sup>18</sup> Truth and Justice appear to be attained through *askēsis*, rigorous training in *aretē*, virtue or excellence; Plutarch writes, "to those who imitate him in virtue, God gives a share of his Eunomia and *Dikē*."<sup>19</sup> Persian religion was seen often, as in the *Menippus* of Lucian, in terms of ascetic practices and initiations followed by revelatory visions, probably on the model of garbled accounts of the life of *Zaraθuštra*, so it is not impossible that the statements cited about *dikē* and *Alētheia* are inspired in part by Iranian ideas of Aša. The idea of asceticism and the life of contemplation seem remote from the active, ethical life prescribed by normative Zoroastrianism, yet it seems that in ancient times some religious Iranians practiced such a life. *Dēnkard VI* reflects it, though real mortification of the body was never favored; a life of measured simplicity, rather, is indicated.<sup>20</sup> In Tractate *Baba Batra 55a* of the Babylonian Talmud is found this passage: "PRDKT helps the city [in the payment of the poll-tax] but

<sup>13</sup> XPh 47-51, in R. Kent, *Old Persian*, New Haven, 1953, 151. The phrase *artācā brazmaniya* is a crux; Ito has even proposed to see the Aramaic prep. *be-* in the second word. M. Schwartz in the *Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. II Cambridge, 1985, 689, has suggested that *artācā* refers to the being Arta, on the analogy of Av. *ašāṭ hača*. M. Bogolyubov, "Iz antidėvovskoi nadpisi Kserksa," *Uch. Zap. Leningradskogo Univ.* 405, *Seriya vosto-koved. nauk* 24.8, Leningrad, 1981, 3, notes the association of Aša with formal worship in Y. 50.7. On the phrase see M. Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism*, II, *Hb. d. Or.* 1. 8.1. 2. 2a, Leiden, 1982, 175-6. The Sasanian priest Kartir in his inscriptions, e. g., KNRm para. 22, also affirms that the *ardāy* "righteous one" ascends to heaven after death; his words may follow a canon of formulae going back to the OPers. texts themselves, see P. O. Skjaervø "Thematic and Linguistic Parallels in the Achaemenian and Sassanian Inscription," *Acta Iranica* 25, Leiden, 1985, 601.

<sup>14</sup> C. Bartholomae, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*, Strasbourg, 1904, 992-5.

<sup>15</sup> See B. N. Dhabhar, *The Persian Rivāyats of Hormazyār Framarz*, Bombay, 1932, 170-2.

<sup>16</sup> Cit. by J. Bidez, F. Cumont, *Les Mages Hellénisés*, Paris, 1938, I, 185.

<sup>17</sup> Gray, *Foundations*, 77.

<sup>18</sup> Maximus of Tyre, cit. by Harrison, *Themis*, 53 and 526-7.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 80, citing Plutarch, *Ad princip. inerud.*

<sup>20</sup> See S. Shaked, *The Wisdom of the Sasanian Sages (Dēnkard VI)*, Boulder, CO, 1979, Intro., xxxvii.

<sup>7</sup> See L. H. Gray, *The Foundations of the Iranian Religions*, Bombay, 1929, repr. 1930, 38, 44.

<sup>8</sup> See Y. Yamamoto, "The Zoroastrian temple cult of fire in archaeology and literature, I" *Oriens* 15, 1979, 25. A number of Iranian elements appear to be present in the shamanistic religions of Siberia, probably diffused from pre-Islamic Central Asia. Amongst these would appear to be the belief of the Sagai people, recorded by N. F. Katanov in 1897, that "the spirit of fire grows and warms every living thing; as soon as the spirit departs from this being, it dies, that is, the body is returned to the earth and the soul joins the legions of spirits that wander over the earth" (cit. by N. A. Alekseev, *Shamanizm tyurkoyazychnykh narodov Sibiri*, Novosibirsk, 1984, 73).

<sup>9</sup> See M. Bloomfield, *The Religion of the Veda*, 1908, 126-7, cit. by Jane Harrison, *Themis*, 3rd ed., Cambridge, 1927, repr. 1962, 526-7. The association of Aša in Zoroastrianism with fire, and especially with the luminaries of heaven, seems to have inspired the ungrammatical isolation of the words *Ašəm. yeñhe. raočā* as a proper name (Yt. 13.120, meaning "Aša, whose are the lights") from Y. 12.1, in which Aša and the Lights are both described as belonging to Ahura Mazda.

<sup>10</sup> See B. Lincoln, *Myth, Cosmos, and Society*, Cambridge, MA., 1986, 17, 33.

<sup>11</sup> F. Kuiper, rev. of U. Bianchi, *Zamān i Ohrmazd*, III 3, 215.

<sup>12</sup> On this and similar formations, some explained on the basis of Vedic verses containing the words which make up the Avestan name, see M. Mayrhofer, *Zum Namensgut des Avesta*, Vienna, 1977, para. 4.1.

only when the city has saved him [paying his poll-tax for him]. If then 'NDYSK' [saved him by the fact that he was not entered on the list of the taxpayers], that is God's help [and he is not obliged to the city for anything].” Mediæval commentators take 'NDYSK' to mean “tax collector, notary”. As for the first term PRDKT, it is suggested that it is a loan from a MPers. *pardāxtag*, to be understood as one who has “completely abandoned worldly affairs, completely given over to the religious, contemplative life.”<sup>21</sup> If the interpretation is right, we have a word for a follower of the contemplative life which was well known enough to be used in the Babylonian Talmud as a term for a Sasanian *Luftmensch*; it would tally well with Greek allusions to Persian contemplatives. We shall return presently to the question of contemplation and Aša.

It appears that the pre-Socratics Hippasus and Heraclitus may have been aware of the Zoroastrian doctrines concerning Aša. Heraclitus wrote, “This cosmic order, which is the same for all, was not made by any of the gods or of mankind, but was ever and is and shall be ever-living fire, kindled in measure and quenched in measure.” Fire is seen to be present in various other substances, including water, as in Zoroastrian doctrine.<sup>22</sup> Aristotle was familiar with the writing of Hippasus, whom he mentions, and it seems hardly fortuitous that justice (*to dikaion*) in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1134b, when universal and unchangeable, is compared to fire, “which burns here and in Persia” (*hōsper to pyr kai enthade kai en Persais kai ei*). Aristotle goes on to distinguish between universal and political forms of justice. One recalls from Herodotus that the Persians were similarly fascinated by the variant and sometimes contradictory ideas of right and wrong they encountered amongst

the nations they subdued, whom they subjected to a single law.<sup>23</sup> In the same work, Aristotle sets out to show how happiness, *eudaimonia*, is the activity of man according to virtue, *aretē*,<sup>24</sup> declaring happiness the chief good (1097b). Later he proposes, “If happiness is activity in accordance with virtue (*kat' aretēn*), it is reasonable that it should be in accordance with the highest virtue (*kata tēn kratistēn*), and this will be that of the best thing (*tou aristou*)” (1177a). This happiness consists in contemplation of an absolute good which is divine and perfect. If one substitutes the term Aša for Gk. *aretē*, one arrives at a paraphrase of the great Zoroastrian mantric prayer of Y. 27.14:

*Ašam vohū vahištām astī uštā astī ustā ahmāi hyaṭ ašāi vahištāi ašam.*

“Righteousness is the best good. It is happiness. May we have happiness. Righteousness belongs to the Best Righteousness.” Aristotle's *to ariston* is contemplation of the divine, the activity of the Persian *pardāxtag*, one supposes. For the Iranian, the “best things” are the teachings of the *Gāθās*, cf. Y. 30.2, *Srao-tā gāuš.āiš vahištā* “Listen with your ears to the best things!” This is the *gāhānīg* “Gāθic” wisdom often lauded in the Pahlavi books, which, as it seems, was to some degree reserved for a spiritual élite removed from ev-

<sup>23</sup> Herodotus, *Histories*, 3.39; see J. R. Russell, “Aristotle and the *Ašam Vohu*,” *Zoroastrian Studies Newsletter*, Bombay, 1986.

<sup>24</sup> Related as a cognate to *arta-*, see J. Pokorny, *Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, I, Bern, 1959, 56, related also to Latin *ritus* (cf. the association with *brazmaniya* “rites”, above). There is in Greek a later loan from Iranian meaning “the righteous deceased”, *artaioi*, see Schwartz, *op. cit.*, 689. It does not seem that the stress on the afterlife must contradict the usage according to which the *ašāvan* is a living righteous man; after death he is judged to have been righteous. The Zoroastrian is encouraged to take a positive view of himself in life (see, e. g., *Čīdag Andarz ī Pōryōtkēsān*, para. 2, in which the believer declares that he is a man, not a *dēw*, one of the good [*wehān*] – though in this text, too, the word *ahlāw* “righteous” is used only in connection with the moment of decease, para. 32).

<sup>21</sup> See Y. Solodukho, “Persian Borrowings in the Babylonian Gemara,” in J. Neusner, ed., *Solodukho, Soviet Views of Talmudic Judaism*, Leiden, 1973, 102.

<sup>22</sup> See J. Duchesne-Guillemin, “Fire in Iran and in Greece,” *East and West*, Rome, 1962, repr. in Duchesne-Guillemin, *Opera Minora*, III, Tehrān, 1978, 12.

eryday concerns<sup>25</sup> (such as making money for the tax man to collect). The Ašam Vohū is one of the most frequently recited Zoroastrian prayers, second only to the Ahuna Vairya, so it is possible that Aristotle was familiar with a translation or paraphrase of it which influenced his own thinking. It is seen that Iranian ideas concerning the interrelationship of fire, cosmic order, justice and truth early were considered by Greek philosophers; Aristotle himself appears to have been aware of some of these ideas. It is most likely that Iranian thought, again, helped to give refined form to concepts already present from Indo-European antiquity: the link between light, sight, truth, and, hence, the Sun. It may be expected that Iranian Aša will be seen in Armenia, closer as it was to Iran, in still brighter focus.

### 3. Aregakn ardarutēan i Hayastan cageal.

The name Aša Vahišta is not found in Armenian. The second month of the Zoroastrian calendar is named after the Aməša Spənta, and the name does appear in the Cappadocian calendar, whose forms were fixed in the Achaemenian period, as *Artaestin Araiota*, or *Artastēs*.<sup>26</sup> In Armenian, the name of the second month, Hoṛi, is simply a Caucasian word meaning “second”. The Aməša Spənta gives his name also to the third day of the Zoroastrian month; in Armenian, the third day is Aram,<sup>27</sup> which probably is unrelated to *arta-* (Aram was one of the legendary ancestors of the Armenians).

A number of proper names are found in Arm., however, with *arta-*; some form the basis of toponyms.<sup>28</sup> The names are: Artawan, Artawazd (cf. Av. Ašavazdah-), Artasēn (“Whose abode is *arta*?” Arm. *Šēn*, OIr. *šayana-*), Artasēs (OPers. Artaxšaça-), Arta-

šir, Artasām (from \*Artaršam?), and, attested in Greek transcription, Ardoatēs (equivalent to OPers. Artavardiya-<sup>29</sup>), and Artapatēs (with *-pati* ‘ruler’). *Art(a)-* with endings alone appears in Artak, Artēn (the latter found also in Aramaic as *rtyn*<sup>30</sup>). Of particular interest is Artit', with an old ending possibly seen in the theophoric name Haldita, an Armenian, father of Arxa, mentioned in the Behistun inscription of Darius.<sup>31</sup> The ending is seen also in the theophoric name Tirit', which contains the name of the Iranian *yazata* Tir, whose temple in Armenia, Erazamoy, stood near Artasāt.<sup>32</sup> Artit' is found with an apparently Greek ending as Artit'ēs in the Arm. text of Agathangelos as the name of the son of a heathen priest, who was trained and ordained as a bishop by St. Gregory the Illuminator (he is called Artios in the Greek text).<sup>33</sup> For the theophoric name Tirik, well documented, there is in Agathangelos the similarly Hellenising parallel Tirikēs, also son of a heathen priest,<sup>34</sup> and other Helleno-Iranian names, such as Mesakēs, the name of a priest of Vahagn, Uxtanēs of Sebastia, a tenth-century bishop and historian, and Vrtanēs, eldest son of St. Gregory, suggest the presence in Armenia of a mixed population and culture analogous to the conditions on the Saka Black Sea littoral or in Pontus, where is attested the most famous Helleno-Iranian theophoric name of all, Mithridatēs.

The presence of a number of theophoric names with *arta-* in Armenian suggests that Armenians were acquainted with Iranian Aša. For, although Ardawan and Artasēs are fairly common in various forms and probably indicate Iranian political influence more than the presence of belief or cult, the “Armenian” form Artit' suggests that Armenians were aware of *arta-*, as a concept, or of Aša as a dis-

<sup>25</sup> See M. Molé, *Culte, Mythe, et Cosmologie dans l'Iran Ancien*, Annales du Musée Guimet, Bibliothèque d'études, t. LXIX, Paris, 1963, viii.

<sup>26</sup> Gray, *op. cit.*, 77.

<sup>27</sup> Fr. L. Ališan, *Hin hawatk kam hetanosakan krōnk Hayoc*, Venice, 1910, 157.

<sup>28</sup> H. Hübschmann, *Die altarmenischen Ortsnamen*, Straßburg, 1904, 408–9.

<sup>29</sup> See M. Mayrhofer, *Onomastica Persepolitana*, Vienna, 1973, para. 8.616.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.653.

<sup>31</sup> DB 3.79, see Kent, *op. cit.*, 214.

<sup>32</sup> See *Zor. Arm.*, Ch. 9.

<sup>33</sup> H. Ačaṙean, *Hayoc anjanunneri baṙaran*, repr. Beirut, 1972, I, 319.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 167–8.

tinct Aməša Spənta. The nature of the evidence for pre-Christian religion in Armenia is such that it would be most unlikely to encounter any extensive statement of moral or metaphysical teachings. We find rather, references to visible features of cult, such as veneration for fire (Arm. *krakapaštut'iwn* "fire-worship", *moxrapaštut'iwn* "ash-worship") in temples (Arm. *atrušan*).<sup>35</sup> Although fire is the embodiment of Aša, it was not the purpose of Christian chroniclers to discover to the reader Zoroastrian philosophy, but to represent the defeated faith as idolatrous and primitive.

The Armenian scholar Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan has observed, however, that "the strong influence of monotheistic Mazdeism on Armenians of the pre-Christian period disposed them favourably toward the religion of Christ,"<sup>36</sup> and it may be further suggested that certain moral precepts of the old religion blended harmoniously with the new dispensation Armenians call still *lusoy hawat'k*, "the faith of light". It was seen how Iranian concepts of the interrelationship of justice fire, and virtue seem to have entered into the refinement of Aristotelian *aretē* and *dikē*. The reward of *aretē* became metaphysical happiness, rather than *timē*, the social esteem of Homer's society, and Zeus was now arbiter of cosmic justice, not the mere King of a heroic order.<sup>37</sup> It would be rash, and unprovable, to imagine that without the introduction of Iranian thought the philosophy of the Greeks should not have developed in the direction it did, but the presence of Iranian ideas is unmistakable, their inspirational power often praised.

There are in Armenian a number of terms related etymologically to *arta-* but not loan-words, from the Indo-European root \**ar-* with *-t-* extension analogous to Iranian, Arm. *ard*. "right (now)", cf. Gk. *arti*. Arm. *ardar* trans-

lates principally Gk. *dikaios* "just", and is closely associated with the idea of truth also, the adv. from inst. *ardarew* being employed to translate Gk. *alēthōs*, factitive *ardaracūcānem* likewise equivalent to Gk. *alētheuō*.<sup>38</sup> The adj. *ardak*, as distinct from the theophoric name Artak, fourth century, means "even, flat". With prefixes, *yard* and *zard* correspond to Gk. *kosmos*, "order, adornment".<sup>39</sup> In the Arm. tr. of the Holy Scriptures, *ardar* glosses *Sadukeci'k* "Sadducees", the word therefore carried the sense of "morally righteous" as well as "just", "truthful", and "ordered" (Arm. *yardar*) or "even" (one recalls the rôle of Aša in ensuring that the damned are given balanced punishment).

The semantic group of words formed from *ard* in Armenian thus fills all the conceptual categories Aša represents in the Zoroastrian tradition, except that of light and fire. The use of *ardar* in Arm. Bible translations also corresponds to Iranian words from *arta-* in, e. g., the Sogdian version of Luke 1.75, where Arm. *ardarut'yamb* parallels Sgd. *artāvyā* (Syr. *bezadiqūthā*, Gk. *dikaiosynēi*), elsewhere *ardar* parallels MPers. *ardāyih*.<sup>40</sup> In the Arm. Bible, *ardar* is synonymous with *anpart* "without debt"; the Iranian opposite of the *ašavan-* is *pāšō.tanu-* (OIr. *part-*), "one whose body is forfeit in debt".<sup>41</sup> There is a Biblical association of the righteous with death and the heavens because of the concept of eternal reward and the ascent of the soul (probably both Iranian importations of the post-exilic period), cf. Wisdom of Solomon 2.16, Arm. *Eranē zvačān ardaroc'* "he blesses the end of the righteous", Daniel 12.3 *Bazumk' ardaroc' ibrew zastels* "the multitudes of the righteous (are) like the stars". Ps. 96.11 speaks of light for the righteous, *loys cageac' ardaroc'* "light dawned for (or, 'of') the righteous."

<sup>35</sup> See *Zor. Arm.*, Ch. 15.

<sup>36</sup> Abp. Tiran Nersoyan, *Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church*, New York, 1950, 245 (I am indebted to Mr. Hratch Sarkissian for a copy of this volume).

<sup>37</sup> See M. Finley, *The World of Odysseus*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middx., 1972, 162, 245.

<sup>38</sup> See *Nor Bargirk' Haykazeen Lezui*, I, 346, s. v.; on the suffix *-ar* see R. Godel, *Introduction to the Study of Classical Armenian*, Wiesbaden, 1975, 65.

<sup>39</sup> *NBHL*, I, 718.

<sup>40</sup> Geiger, *op. cit.*, 110-1.

<sup>41</sup> Exod. 23.7: *Zanpartn ew zardarn mi spananičes*.

But the only passage in the Bible I find in which *ardarut'iwn* "righteousness" is explicitly associated with fire, and with the Sun at that, is in a vision of the Prophet Malachi, who lived probably in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, i. e., at a time when Judaism flourished in the full noon of Achaemenian rule: *ew cagešcē jez erkiw'laoc' anuan imoy aregagn ardaruteans ew bžškutiwn i tewš nora* "and the Sun of Righteousness will dawn for you who fear my name, with healing on its wings" (Mal. 4.2). This is to happen at the time of the great final judgement, which will be burning, the prophet declares, like fire sweeping through a bed of reeds, and then the Lord's saving messenger, Elijah, will come. D'Alviella saw in the image of the Sun of Righteousness the winged disk of the Egyptian Rē.<sup>42</sup> But in Malachi's time the symbol, variously elaborated, had become pre-eminently that of the Achaemenians, as a sign, variously interpreted, of Ahura Mazda, the *x'varənah-* "divine glory" (cf. Arm. l-w. *park*) bestowed on Kings, or the *fravaši* of the righteous. Its primary meaning as a solar symbol, with all that the Sun implies for Zoroastrians, appears, however, to have been remembered in Achaemenian iconography.<sup>43</sup> The fiery Apocalypse which attends the appearance of the Winged Sun in the vision of the Hebrew Prophet seems inspired by the rôle of Aša Vahišta at Frašō.kərəti; Elijah takes the place of Astvaṭ.ərəta, if indeed it is not the Sun of Righteousness itself with healing on its wings which is "Righteousness Embodied". The image of a fire consuming reeds would also have sounded very familiar to any Armenian or Iranian listener.<sup>44</sup>

This single Biblical reference to righteousness as the Sun, couched in Zoroastrian imagery and permeated with Zoroastrian eschatology, composed at the zenith of Achae-

menian power, has exerted an influence upon subsequent Armenian literature out of all proportion to its theological importance within Christianity or Judaism, and it seems inescapable that one should regard Arm. *ardar* "righteous" as a Zoroastrian Armenian term equivalent to *ardawān* in Iranian in its religious associations. The terms sound so similar that the Armenians probably regarded them as various branches from the same Mazdean tree: the phonetic coincidence of cognates had far-reaching semasiological consequences, and it appears that the Armenian Zoroastrian *ardarut'iwn* of righteousness, truth, justice, posthumous reward, and the Sun as well, entered Armenian Christianity, wearing lightly a Biblical garment that itself is cut in Zoroastrian fashion.

Here is the Sun of Righteousness in Armenia, the greater fire extinguishing the lesser:

*Aregagn ardarut'ean i Hayastan cageal  
paycaracūcer surb zekeleci  
hel'mamb arean srbočn:  
małtanawk' soča xnayea i mez  
pargewatu bareac:  
ew ołormea ko araracoc'.  
Pancali surb zawakawk' hoviwkn zuartunk',  
hrov hogwoyn ši'jučn  
zbočn zkrakapašt parsicn:  
małtanawk' . . .  
Pariewakan tesanolin yara'jagoyn azdecu-  
teamb  
zhawatoy ordis srboyn  
Grigori psakazard tesimal:  
małtanawk' . . .<sup>45</sup>*

"Sun of Righteousness dawned in Armenia, by the shedding of the blood of saints you caused the holy Church to shine. Spare us by their intercessions, O giver of good gifts, and have mercy upon your creatures. With their glorious, holy children, the awakened shepherds, they extinguished by the fire of the spirit the conflagration of fire-worship of the Persians. (Spare us. . .) Gregory the Parthian, inspired by Him who sees, beheld from the

<sup>42</sup> G. D'Alviella, *The Migration of Symbols*, London, 1894, xiii.

<sup>43</sup> See Boyce, *Hist. Zor.* II, 114.

<sup>44</sup> P'awstos Buzand 5.5; see N. G. Garsoian, Intro. to the Facsimile of the 1883 St. Petersburg ed., Caravan Books, Delmar, NY, 1984, xii.

<sup>45</sup> *Šarakan hogewor ergoc'*, Jerusalem, St. James' Press, 1936, 762.

past the children of the faith adorned with diadems. (Spare us. . .)"

It is perhaps worthwhile here to note that "fire-worship", described here as "Persian", was eradicated by Gregory in Armenia, not in Iran: it is Armenian Zoroastrianism to which the hymn refers.

Though this is the hymn which links explicitly and ironically the Sun of \*arta- to the fire of the same divinity, to state that Christianity is the true light, a spiritual radiance, the most important hymn incorporating the image is the abecedarian hymn of dawn of Nersēs Šnorhali which begins: *Arawawt lusoy/ Aregakn ardar/ Ar is loys cagea* "Morning of light, /Righteous Sun, /Shine your light on me." Šnorhali, according to Kirakos of Ganjak, fashioned hymns to replace the songs and *araspelk* ("fables", a word used often of pre-Christian traditions) of his bodyguards at Hromkla.<sup>46</sup> One of these was, apparently, the hymn *Loys ararič lusoy* "Light, Creator of

Light" sung in the *Arewagal*, Sunrise Office of the Armenian Church. The second stanza begins with the line *Loys, i lusoy cagumn aregakn ardar* "Light dawned of light, Righteous Sun,"<sup>47</sup> The Righteous Sun is Christ; he is so called in at least two other spiritual songs of the Armenian Church.<sup>48</sup> Christ is shown as an effulgent Sun on most Armenian Crosses, in appearance like the Ostensorium or *čacānč*. St. John the Baptist and the Virgin are described as Sun-eyed in Armenian texts, perpetuating ancient Armenian and Iranian religious imagery,<sup>49</sup> or as the morning star, heralding Christ the Sun of Righteousness himself – the Saviour, Righteousness, *Arta, Ardarutiwn*, embodied, Christ who is justice, "the truth and the light". Zoroastrian Aša is to the philosophical Greek the object of contemplation; to the Christian Armenian, the object of worship and hope of salvation.

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<sup>47</sup> *Ergečohutiwnk Arewagali Hayastaneayč Ekelečwoy*, Jerusalem, 1957, 49; *Šarakan*, 790. (I am indebted to Ms. Roberta Ervine for the first vol.)

<sup>48</sup> *Šarakan*, 520, 537.

<sup>49</sup> See J. R. Russell, "A Poem of Grigor Narekaci," communication to the 1983 Meeting of the AIEA, *REArm*, 1985, 435–439.

<sup>46</sup> See J. R. Russell, "O Sun of Righteousness!" *Ararat Quarterly* (forthcoming).

## IN MARGINE A UN PROBLEMA DI SINTASSI ARMENA

Gli studi dedicati all'uso e all'impiego dei dimostrativi armeni, dopo aver messo in luce la straordinaria ricchezza e varietà di questa categoria grammaticale e la sua singolarità all'interno delle lingue indeuropee, pongono<sup>1</sup> in genere l'accento sul fatto che i tre radicali che hanno dato origine a questo sistema sono in relazione con la prima persona (*s*), con la seconda persona (*d*), con la terza persona (*n*), con riferimento alla collocazione nello spazio e nel tempo, potendo così supplire alla scomparsa del genere in armeno.<sup>2</sup>

Quanto poi all'origine dei dimostrativi, gli studi relativi a questo aspetto vedono, come è logico, il problema in una visione storico-comparativa, che però non tiene conto del reale funzionamento della lingua.

L'uso dei dimostrativi in armeno obbedirebbe, secondo gli studiosi, alle seguenti regole:

- *sa da na* con valore anaforico vengono usati tutte le volte che non si vuol rinviare nè alla prima nè alla seconda persona<sup>3</sup>
- il valore anaforico di *sa da na* è evidente quando una relativa precede<sup>4</sup>
- il valore dimostrativo è evidente per *sa* e per *da*, più debole per *na*<sup>5</sup>
- *sa da na* raddoppiano il relativo ("idiotismes")<sup>6</sup>
- *sa da na* non esprimono il neutro per cui si usa *ays, ayd, ayn*<sup>7</sup>
- *na* anaforico è usato nelle enumerazioni<sup>8</sup>
- il valore funzionale di *sa* è essenzialmente cataforico, in quanto annuncia il contenuto della subordinata<sup>9</sup>
- *sa* è correlativo di *zi*<sup>10</sup>
- *ays, ayd, ayn* sono antecedenti di una relativa che segue<sup>11</sup>
- *soyn, doyn, noyn* occupano il posto di *sa, da, na* in quanto designano persone o cose nominate prima, hanno senso dimostrativo, sono correlativi del relativo, fungono da aggettivi davanti ad un sostantivo<sup>12</sup>
- *-s, -n, -d* hanno fondamentalmente valore spaziale, e secondariamente contengono un riferimento alla persona<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A. Meillet, *Etudes de linguistique et de philologie arméniennes*, I, Lisbona 1962, pp. 5–30; H. Pedersen, *Kleine Schriften zum Armenischen*, Hildesheim 1982, pp. 9–10.

<sup>2</sup> H. Jensen, *Altarmenische Grammatik*, Heidelberg 1959, p. 82; R. Godel, *An Introduction to the Study of Classical Armenian*, Wiesbaden 1975, pp. 19, 107; A. Meillet, *Esquisse d'une grammaire comparée de l'arménien classique*, Vienna 1936<sup>2</sup>, p. 88; Idem, *Etudes de linguistique . . .*, pp. 7–8, 19:

<sup>3</sup> Meillet, *Etudes . . .* p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Meillet, *Etudes . . .* p. 20.

<sup>5</sup> Meillet, *Etudes . . .* p. 20.

<sup>6</sup> Meillet, *Etudes . . .* p. 19.

<sup>7</sup> Meillet, *Etudes . . .* p. 19.

<sup>8</sup> F. Mawet, *Les particules pronominales de l'indo-européen à l'arménien*, in "Revue des Etudes Arméniennes" NS, vol. XVII (1983), p. 32.

<sup>9</sup> F. Mawet, *Les particules . . .*, p. 41.

<sup>10</sup> F. Mawet, *Les particules . . .*, p. 41.

<sup>11</sup> Meillet, *Etudes . . .* p. 20.

<sup>12</sup> Meillet, *Etudes . . .* p. 21.

<sup>13</sup> Meillet, *Etudes . . .* p. 9. *Les particules . . .* p. 43: "valeur personnelle, mais dépouillée de la spécification spatiale présente dans les autres langues".