

## An enigmatic word in the Gathas: *auuāmīrā* in Yasna 49.10

By Almut Hintze

**Abstract.** This article discusses various proposals for analysing the enigmatic form *auuāmīrā*, which constitutes the last word of the Gathic stanza Yasna 49.10. It is then proposed that the word is best understood as *\*a-ūi-mī-ra-* ‘undiminishing’. Being a compound with privative *a-* and the preverb *\*ūi* ‘apart’, it is argued that the word provides a further attestation for the root *mī* ‘to dwindle, diminish’, which is poorly documented in Iranian languages but well attested in Vedic and other Indo-European languages. The phrase *mązā.xšaθrā vazdaŋhā auuāmīrā*, an attribute of *īzā-* ‘fat-offering, refreshment’, is translated as ‘(the refreshment) which grants dominion through undiminishing nourishment’. The expression ‘through undiminishing nourishment’ is interpreted as referring to the regularly recurring ritual performances, whose ‘refreshments’ Ahura Mazda preserves in his ‘house’ and with which the soul of the righteous is welcomed when it arrives there after death.

The<sup>1</sup> Gathas, alongside the Yasna Haptanghaiti, are valued by both scholars and members of the Zoroastrian community as the oldest surviving witness of any Iranian language and as the earliest expression of the Zoroastrian religion and worldview. Composed presumably in the second millennium BCE within the priestly tradition of ritual oral poetry, the seventeen hymns, which are grouped into five Gathas, or ‘songs’, stand as the earliest monument of Iranian language and live on to the present day at the heart of Zoroastrian ritual and religion. Cognates of words and imagery in the closely related Vedic tradition indicate that the poetry draws on traditional expressions and techniques which can be traced back to the ancestral Indo-Iranian period. But the hymns also exhibit features which are unique to the Iranian Zoroastrian world.

The Gathas have attracted the attention of scholars like no other Avestan composition. Our understanding and interpretation of these ancient texts has been greatly stimulated and enhanced by the studies of Jean Kellens, who has dedicated much of his scholarly work to them, pointing out obscure passages and significantly contributing to their elucidation and interpretation. And yet, a considerable number of enigmatic words remains, many of which occur only in these hymns. One of them is the form *auuāmīrā* in Yasna 49.10. Almost all studies dealing with this stanza point out that the word is obscure and has so far found no satisfactory explanation. What follows provides a comprehensive discussion and evaluation of the various explanations and analyses that have been put forward for this word. The article concludes with my own proposal. I am not claiming to have solved the problem, but I am hoping that a critical evaluation of the various proposals that have been made to date will be a useful contribution and stimulate the discussion, which will no doubt continue. It is my pleasure and privilege to dedicate this article to Jean Kellens as a small token of appreciation for his scholarly work.

### 1. Critical evaluation of earlier analyses of *auuāmīrā*

Yasna 49 is the third hymn of the Spentamainyu Gatha, whose twelve stanzas consist of four verse lines each. Each verse line counts 4+7 syllables and has a caesura after the fourth syllable. This metre suggests that the word *auuāmīrā* counts four syllables.

---

<sup>1</sup> I wish to thank Nicholas Sims-Williams for helpful and stimulating comments on an earlier draft of this article.

Y.49.10 *taṭcā mazdā ʒbahmī ā dqm ʰnipāñhē*  
*manō vohū urunascā ašāunqm*  
*nāmascā yā ārmaitiš īžācā*  
*mązā.xšaθrā vazdanhā auuāmīrā*

And in your house, O Wise One, you preserve<sup>2</sup> this:  
 good thought and the souls of the righteous (men and women),  
 and the reverence with which (are associated) right-mindedness and refreshment,  
 which grants dominion through *vazdanhā auuāmīrā*.

BARTHOLOMAE splits the form *auuāmīrā* into two separate words *auuām* and *īrā*. He regards *auuām* as an infinitive meaning here ‘to care for, to watch over’ (“zu sorgen für –, zu wachen über –”) of the root *av* ‘to help (BARTHOLOMAE 1904: 179–180). He interprets *īrā* as the instr.sg. of the neuter stem *īra-*, for which he posits the meanings ‘aggression, attack’ (“Anlauf, Angriff”) in Yt.13.26 and 10.14 and ‘energy, vigour’ (“Energie, Tatkraft”) in Y.49.10. He derives the noun *īra-* from the root *ar* ‘to set (oneself) in motion’.<sup>3</sup> BARTHOLOMAE (1904: 372; 1905: 96) translates the last line of Y.49.10 as “dass du darüber wachest, grossmächtiger, mit beständiger Tatkraft”, which is in English ‘so that you may watch over (*auuām*) it (referring back to *taṭ* in Y.49.10a), O (you) of great power (*mązā.xšaθrā*), with steadfast (*vazdanhā*) energy (*īrā*)’. BENVENISTE (1935: 22) rightly rejects BARTHOLOMAE’s assumption of an infinitive but leaves the word *auuāmīrā* without any analysis or explanation.

Accepting BARTHOLOMAE’s view of two separate words *auuām* and *īrā*, WERBA (1986 [1988]: 359–360) sees in *auuām* the acc.sg.m. of the far-deictic demonstrative pronoun *auua-* ‘that’ and interprets it as referring back to the loc.sg. *dqm* ‘in the house’ in the first line of Y.49.10. He analyses the metrically disyllabic *īrā* as the 1sg.subj. of the reduplicated athematic present stem of the verbal root *ar* and translates *auuām īrā* as ‘I want to reach that (scilicet: your house)’ (“ich will jenes (sc. dein Haus) erreichen”). However, WERBA’s interpretation of the postulated verbal form is weakened by the fact that the reduplicated present stem IIr. *\*Hi-Her-/Hi-Hr-* > Av. *iiar-/īr-* does not belong to the root <sup>2</sup>*ar* ‘to reach’ (IE *\*h<sub>1</sub>er*), but to the homonymous root <sup>1</sup>*ar* ‘to set oneself in motion’ (IE *\*h<sub>3</sub>er*).<sup>4</sup> The translation should accordingly be ‘I want that to set myself in motion to that (sc. house)’. While such a meaning cannot be ruled out, WERBA’s

<sup>2</sup> BARTHOLOMAE (1904: 886) analyses the form *nipāñhē* in Y 28.11 and 49.10 as the 1sg. subj. s-aor. mid. of the root *ni-pā* ‘to protect’ and translates it as ‘ich will in Verwehr geben’ (‘I want to put into custody’). His translation of lines 1–2 of Y.49.10 is as follows: ‘Und das, o Mazdāh, will ich in Deinem Haus in Verwehr geben: den guten Sinn ...’ (1904: 684). This analysis, however, is unlikely because no aorist forms of this root are found in Avestan, while the two attestations in Vedic are innovations (NARTEN 1964: 168–169). HUMBACH (1957–1958, 43 fn.9 and 1959 II: 12) more plausibly analyses the form as the 2sg.ind.pres. middle of that root and interprets the middle form as having indirect reflexive function ‘to preserve for oneself’. In these and other passages (quoted in HUMBACH 1991 II: 28–29 on Y.28.11 note 3 and 171 on Y.45.8 note 4) the deity is presented as preserving the offerings in his own abode. KELLENS (1984: 68) rightly endorses this interpretation. The expected spelling of the form *nipāñhē* with palatal *-ñ-* (< *\*ni-pā-he* < *\*ni-pā-saj*) for the 2sg.ind.pres.mid. is well attested in Y.28.11 (see the apparatus in PESCHL 2022: 128f. no.3) and can also be posited for Y.49.10, where the best reading is *nipāñhē*. HOFFMANN & FORSSMAN (2004: 45) note that the manuscripts frequently write *-ñh-* instead of expected *-ñh-*.

<sup>3</sup> BARTHOLOMAE (1904: 372). On the distinction of the different roots <sup>1</sup>*ar* ‘to set oneself in motion’ and <sup>2</sup>*ar* ‘to reach, arrive’, see HINTZE (2017: 171–174).

<sup>4</sup> KELLENS (1984: 192–193); KÜMMEL (2000b: 253–254); RIX *et al.* (2001: 299); HINTZE (2017: 173).

analysis is further weakened by the morphological problem that one would expect the form of the subjunctive to be built from the full grade root, cf. the YAv. 3sg.subj. *uziīarāi* (thematic) from the reduplicated present stem of the root *ʼar* ‘to set oneself in motion’.<sup>5</sup>

Although BARTHOLOMAE’s interpretation of *auuām* as an infinitive has been rightly and unanimously rejected, his connection of the form with the verb *av* ‘to help’ has been further explored by several scholars. Thus, HUMBACH (1959 II: 82, followed by SCHMIDT 1968: 178) segments *auuāmīrā* as *auuā-mīrā* and sees in *auuā*<sup>o</sup> either the stem *auuah-* ‘help’ or the preposition *auua* but provides no proposal for the second part of the word, *o-mīrā*. Later, HUMBACH (1991 II: 212), adhering to this segmentation and adopting the reading *auuā.mīrā* of the Pahlavi Yasna and other mss., translates *auuā*<sup>o</sup> as ‘helpful’ and renders the expression *vazdahā auuāmīrā* as ‘with helpful fatness’ (HUMBACH 1991 I: 182). He admits, however, that *o-mīrā* is obscure and that “no better result is achieved by dividing *auuām.īrā*” (as BARTHOLOMAE had proposed). HUMBACH & FEISS (2010: 148, 190) uphold the connection of the first part of the word with *auuah-* ‘help’ or with *auua* ‘down’, edit the word as *auuā.mīrā*, and translate *vazdahā auuā.mīrā* as ‘with refreshing fattiness’.

BAILEY (1955: 117, 1956: 227), who also segments the word as *auuā-mīrā*, translates it as ‘mighty to help’. Like HUMBACH, he interprets the first part as belonging to Av. *auuah-* ‘help’, but, in contrast to HUMBACH, he makes a proposal for *mīra-*. According to BAILEY, *mīra-* is an adj. formed with suffix *-ra* from the zero grade of the root *mi*, whose meaning he posits as ‘to become strong’, referring to the Hittite verb *mai-* : *mi-* ‘to become strong’. BAILEY also adduces Av. *māiīā-*, Ved. *māyā-*, whose meaning he posits as ‘power’ (but as ‘welfare’ in BAILEY 1960: 67). Analysing the feminine substantive as *\*māi-ā-*, he derives it from the lengthened grade of that root. The meaning and etymology of Av. *māiīā-*, Ved. *māyā-* have been subject to an extensive scholarly debate, and there is the strong possibility that the noun is best analysed as *\*mā-īā-* (MAYRHOFER 1986–2001 II: 349–350) rather than *\*māi-ā-* as proposed by BAILEY. At any rate, this noun helps little to understand the form and meaning of *-mīrā* in the obscure *auuā-mīrā* and is better excluded from the debate. BAILEY’s explanation of *mīra-* requires the assumption that *-ī-* is written instead of *-i-* because there is no evidence for a laryngeal at the end of the root *ʼmi* ‘to make firm’ (RIX *et al.* 2001: 426), which is attested in Avestan in the adj. *bərəzi.mita-* ‘high-built’ (of a house, Yt.10.28 and 30). While the phonetic variation of [i] and [i:] is common in the transmission of Avestan words, in such cases the manuscripts usually show variants with *-i-* and *-ī-*.<sup>6</sup> However, in the case of Y.49.10 *auuāmīrā* all manuscripts have *-ī-* and none of them attests a variant reading with *-i-*. This indicates that *-ī-* is best taken as being phonemic rather than as a phonetic variant of *-i-*.

Interpreting the first part of the word as *auua* ‘down, away’, PIRART (1985: 205) analyses *auuāmīrā* as the instr.sg. of an adjective *auuāmīra-*. Assuming that *auuāmīra-* is formed with suffix *-ra-* from the root contained in the Vediv verb *mīvati* ‘to move (by pushing)’, he compares Ved. *jīrā-*, which exists alongside *jīvati* ‘to live’. In support of the combination of the Av. root *mīuu* with *auua* he adduces YAv. *auua-mīuuāmahi* in V.18.55 and translates *auuāmīrā* as ‘qui vous attire’. Referring to PIRART 1985, KELLENS & PIRART (1989–1991 I: 173, II: 205, III: 235) and KELLENS (2021: 65) uphold this analysis and translation and render *auuāmīrā* ‘qui vous attire ici’ and ‘qui vous attire ici-bas’, respectively.

<sup>5</sup> KELLENS (1984: 192 bottom).

<sup>6</sup> HINTZE (1994: 60 and fn.161); REDARD (2021: 65).

PIRART's analysis assumes that the present stem Av. *miuuu-*, Ved. *mīva-* is formed with a suffix *-ua-* just like the present stem Ved. *jīva-*, Av. *juua-* (< Ir. *\*jīua-*). There is, however, a fundamental morphological difference between the two verbs, not addressed by PIRART. The Ir. root *\*jīu-* has long been recognised to be a secondary root based on the IE present stem *\*g<sup>w</sup>ih<sub>3</sub>-u-*.<sup>7</sup> Forms from this secondary root coexist with forms and derivatives from the primary root *jī-*.<sup>8</sup> By contrast, the present stem Av. *miuuu-*, Ved. *mīva-* is formed with suffix *-a-* from the root Ir. *\*miHu-*, the zero grade (with metathesis of the laryngeal) of IE *\*m<sub>1</sub>ieuh<sub>1</sub>-* 'to move (by pushing)'.<sup>9</sup> There is no evidence for the existence, alongside this root, of a root without the labial *-u-*. The only evidence for the root without *-u-* would be the *\*mī-* 'to move' from which PIRART derives *-mī-ra-* in *auuāmīrā*. Moreover, the proposed analysis creates the syntactical problem that the postulated root *\*mī-* 'to move' is transitive and requires an object. PIRART accordingly adds the object 'vous' in his translation, but this word is absent from the Avestan text. There is therefore little, if any, linguistic foundation for this explanation.

Interpreting the form *auuāmīrā* as an instr.sg., SCHEFTELOWITZ (1927: 217) considers it to represent *auuīmīrā*. Pointing out that readings with *ā* for *ī* are common in the manuscripts of Gathic texts, he adduces numerous examples from Geldner's apparatus, e.g. Y.29.5 *frīnāmnā* : *frānāmnā*.<sup>10</sup> According to him, the adjective is built from the root which is attested in Vedic *mīl* 'to close the eyes' and goes back to a form which SCHEFTELOWITZ reconstructs as Ir. *\*a-ūi-mīla-* 'not sleeping, sleepless'. However, there is no basis for the reconstruction of such an Ir. form because *-mīr-* in Av. *auuāmīrā* would be the only cognate of the root *mīl* 'to close the eyes', which is only attested in Indo-Aryan. As GOTŌ (1987: 74 fn.48) plausibly suggests, the root *mīl* probably results from a phonetic development within Indo-Aryan and represents *mīd*, which goes back to earlier *\*mis-d*.<sup>11</sup>

LOMMEL (1935: 145–146) revives an old proposal by BARTHOLOMAE (1884: 226), which BARTHOLOMAE later abandoned and does not even mention in his *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*. According to that proposal the Avestan characters ⟨n⟩, ⟨r⟩ and ⟨v⟩ for the sounds [n], [r] and [v] were interchangeable. Instead of the transmitted *auuāmīrā* (which BARTHOLOMAE writes as *auāmīrā*, LOMMEL as *avāmīrā*), BARTHOLOMAE considered it permissible to read *\*anāmīvā* and see in it a cognate of Ved. *anamīvā-* 'without disease'. The view that some consonants of the Avestan script are interchangeable is based on the theory of Friedrich Carl Andreas according to which the extant Avesta was transcribed from an earlier version written in the Pahlavi script, in which a single grapheme is used for /n/, /r/ and /w/. Andreas's theory has long since been decisively refuted<sup>12</sup> and it would hardly be worthwhile even mentioning BARTHOLOMAE's and LOMMEL's proposal, had it not found its way into Schlerath (1968 II: 158), who adduces alleged Vedic phraseological parallels, and into MAYRHOFER's *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindoarischen* (MAYRHOFER 1986–2001 I: 98).

Moreover, the view that the assumption of "confusion of *-v-* and *-n-*" in Avestan manuscripts is legitimate, is also found in INSLER's (1975: 300) proposal, which INSLER explicitly bases on LOMMEL (1935: 145). Commenting that "*avāmīrā* is unclear", INSLER emends the form to

<sup>7</sup> MAYRHOFER (1986–2001 I: 594 with references); KELLENS (1984: 162–163).

<sup>8</sup> MAYRHOFER (1986–2001 I: 467–468).

<sup>9</sup> RIX *et al.* (2001: 445, 446 note 2).

<sup>10</sup> For a new collation of this word see PESCHL (2022: 141, Y.29.5 no.5). PESCHL (2022: 107–176) conveniently presents the variant readings of 30 manuscripts of Yasna 28–30.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. RIX *et al.* (2001: 429); MAYRHOFER (1986–2001 II: 359).

<sup>12</sup> For a summary with references, see Schlerath (1985).

<sup>+</sup>*anāmīrā*. Further assuming that *-ām-* goes back to earlier *\*-ām-*, he suggests that the conjectured <sup>+</sup>*anāmīrā* is the Av. equivalent of an (unattested) Vedic adjective *\*an-ā-mīrā-*, whose meaning INSLER posits as ‘inalterable’. Translating *vazdahā* <sup>+</sup>*anāmīrā* as ‘with an inalterable permanence’, he sees in IIr. *\*an-ā-mīrā-* a privative adjective formed with suffix *-ra-* from the verb *ā-mī-* ‘to alter, change’. He supports this proposal with reference to the Vedic forms *āmināné* ‘changing’ (RV 1.113.2d) and *āmemyāne* (RV 1.96.5a). These Vedic forms are middle participles, the former from the *nā*-present stem *ā-mināná-* and the latter from the intensive stem *ā-mémiāna-*,<sup>13</sup> and they seem to have the meaning ‘to change’ in their respective contexts. They belong to the *seṭ*-root *mī*, whose basic meaning is ‘to diminish, dwindle’. While a derivation of *mīra-* from this root is morphologically possible (and will be argued for below), INSLER’s proposed emendation has no support, either in the manuscripts of this passage or elsewhere in the Avesta and invoking Andreas’s theory (implicitly through the reference to LOMMEL) is unacceptable. There is, therefore, no basis for the emendation and interpretation which INSLER proposes.

## 2. A new analysis of *auuāmīrā*

While INSLER’s proposed emendation lacks support, a connection of *mīra-* with the root *mī* ‘to diminish, dwindle’ is worthwhile exploring further. The transmitted *auuāmīrā* is then a compound and to be segmented *auuā-mīrā*. This also seems to have been the way the Pahlavi translators segmented the word since, as BARTHOLOMAE (1904: 372 s.v. *īrā* n.2) notes, the Pahlavi translation of *auuāmīrā* as *frōd murd bawēd* ‘he dies’ suggests that the Av. word *mīrā* reminded the Pahlavi translators of Middle Persian *mīrēd* ‘he dies’ from the present stem *mīr-* of the verb *murdan* ‘to die’.<sup>14</sup> The second part of *auuā-mīrā* then derives with suffix *-ra-* from the root *mī* ‘to diminish, dwindle’ and means ‘diminishing, dwindling’. The first part *auuā-* would go back to earlier *\*a-ūi-*, as already proposed by SCHEFTELOWITZ (1927: 217) and supported with examples for the alternation of *ā* and *ī* in the manuscripts. REDARD (2021: 64–66) lists more examples for such a phonetic variation in the manuscript tradition. While in Y.46.10 most manuscripts have readings with *auuā-*, a reading with *auuī-* is found in *auuī.mīrā* of the ms. 4000\_TU1. The spelling of the preverb *vi* ‘apart’ as *vī* in Avestan is also common and unexceptionable, e.g. Y.30.2 *vīciṭahiiā* (alongside the phonetic variant *vāciṭahiiā*).<sup>15</sup> The form *auuāmīrā* is accordingly the instr.sg.ntr. of an adjective *auuāmīra-* ‘undwinding, undiminishing’ and goes back to an earlier *\*a-ūi-mī-ra-* from the root *mī* ‘to dwindle, diminish’, composed with the preverb *\*ūi* ‘apart’ and privative *a-*.

While outside Iranian, verbal and nominal forms of the IE root *\*meiH* ‘to diminish, dwindle’ are well attested (MAYRHOFER 1986–2001 II: 316–317), in Avestan the only possible attestation of a finite verbal form is *maiaṭ* in Farhang ī ōim 309<sup>16</sup> (= F.6). BARTHOLOMAE (1904: 1141) sees in it the 3sg.act. of a present stem *maia-*. Presumably based on the Pahlavi translation ⟨wn`ssn⟩ /wināhišn/ ‘damage, destruction’, he derives it from a root *may* ‘to destroy’ (“zu Grunde richten”). The fact that he adduces Ved. *mināti* ‘to diminish’ as a cognate indicates that the intended root is in fact Av. *mī* ‘to diminish, dwindle’. However, the present stem *\*mai-a-* is unattested for this root and instead belongs to <sup>2</sup>*mi* ‘to change, exchange’.<sup>17</sup> Preferable is, therefore, the proposal of KLINGENSCHMITT (1968: 111) that *maiaṭ* is the 3sg.

<sup>13</sup> On the intensive form, see SCHAEFER (1994: 165–166).

<sup>14</sup> DARMESTETER (1892–1893 I: 324) comments that both the Pahlavi translation of this passage and the summary in Dēnkard 9.42.11 reflect a general interpretive understanding of the Avestan text.

<sup>15</sup> PESCHL (2022: 158 no.8).

<sup>16</sup> KLINGENSCHMITT (1968: 111).

<sup>17</sup> GOTŌ (1987: 240–242); MAYRHOFER (1986–2001 II: 314–315).

subj. root aor. act. of *mī*. KLINGENSCHMITT poses the meaning of this root as ‘to exchange’ (“vertauschen”) or, alternatively, as ‘to diminish’ (“vermindern”), but the meaning ‘to exchange’ for the root *mī* is uncertain if not improbable,<sup>18</sup> while the Pahlavi translation ⟨wn’sšn⟩ /wināhišn/ ‘damage, destruction’ points to ‘to diminish’. KÜMMEL (2000a: 370) convincingly argues that the meaning of the root *mī* (< \**mejH*) is intransitive ‘to become less, dwindle’, and this is also how the meaning of the root is posited in RIX *et al.* (2001: 427 “gering werden, schwinden”).

Apart from the verbal form in FiO 309, Avestan attests the verbal adjective *vī-mīta-* in the compound *vī-mīto.dantāna-* ‘with decayed teeth’ in V.2.29 and Yt.5.93.<sup>19</sup> A further but uncertain attestation for the root *mī* ‘to diminish, dwindle’ has been seen in the feminine *ti*-abstract *vīmiti-* (transmitted as *vīmati-*) in Nērangestān 47.11 (= 65 in Waag’s edition). WAAG (1941: 71) and KOTWAL & KREYENBROEK (2003: 202) emend the transmitted form *vīmatim* to <sup>+</sup>*vīmitim*, for which BARTHOLOMAE (1904: 1450) accepts the meaning ‘Vernichtung’ posited by WAAG. The Pahlavi version, which renders the Av. word as *wināhišnīh* ‘damage, destruction’, supports the emendation, although one would expect a form <sup>+</sup>*vīmītim*. MAYRHOFER (1986–2001 II: 316) records this attestation under the root *mī* (*may*) ‘to diminish’ (“schädigen, mindern, beeinträchtigen”). In conclusion, although forms of and derivations from this root are rare in Avestan, their presence is undeniable, the best attestation being in the compound *vī-mīto.dantāna-*. It therefore seems legitimate to posit a further attestation in the second part *-mīra-* of the compound *uuuē-mīrā*. Here, as in one (or possibly two) of the other Avestan attestations, the root is in composition with the preverb *vī*.

The form *uuuē-mīrā*, which constitutes the last word of the stanza Y.49.10, is preceded by the three-syllabic form *vazdahā*, which is the instr.sg. of the stem *vazdah-*. BARTHOLOMAE (1904: 1391) translates the noun *vazdah-* and the heteroclitic stem *vazduuar-* as ‘constancy, permanence’ (“Beständigkeit”). These nouns have also been much debated and in greater detail than *uuuē-mīrā*, perhaps thanks to the fact that *vazdah-* has a cognate in Vedic *vedhás-*, but no scholarly agreement has so far been reached.<sup>20</sup> Without going into further detail here about the Vedic word, it should suffice to mention that BRERETON (2004: 337–340) defines the Vedic masculine cognate *vedhás-* as ‘(ritual) expert’ while PINAULT (2012) explores a possible connection of *vedhás-* with the feminine noun *védi-*, which in Vedic ritual designates the piece of ground serving as altar. PINAULT derives the IIr. noun <sup>\*</sup>*uazdhás-* through a compound <sup>\*</sup>*uazd-H-ás-* from the root *sad* ‘to sit’.

PIRART (1985: 204–205) explains Av. *vazdah-* as a compound based on an IIr. syntagm <sup>\*</sup>*uanas-d<sup>h</sup>ā* ‘charmeur’, in which <sup>\*</sup>*uanas-* would have the meaning ‘religious spell’ (“charme religieux”). KELLENS & PIRART (1988–1991 II 300) and KELLENS (2021: 65) retain this analysis. Most scholars, however, posit the meaning of *vazdah-* and *vazduuar-* in the semantic sphere of ‘strength, permanence, constancy’, as BARTHOLOMAE did (1904: 1391 s.v. *vazduuar-*). Such a meaning is based on an etymological connection with New Iranian words for ‘fat’ such as Paštō *wāzda*, as proposed by DARMESTETER (1888: xxiv and note 1 and 233 fn.79) for the heteroclitic stem *vazduuar-*. DARMESTETER supports his translation of *vazduuar-* as ‘fat’ (“graisse”) with reference to the Sanskrit translation *pīvartvam* for Av. *vazduuar-* in Y.31.21.

<sup>18</sup> GOTŌ (1987: 241 and fn. 532 for references).

<sup>19</sup> BARTHOLOMAE (1904: 1451) interprets the form *vīmītō.dantānō* as the nom.pl. of a stem *vīmītō.dantān-*. Friš (1954: 38) has rightly recognised that the attested form is the nom.sg.m. of the thematic stem *vīmītō.dantāna-*, cf. *vīzafāra-* ‘with wide-open mouth’ in Yt.19.41 (HINTZE 1994: 220–221).

<sup>20</sup> For a review of the debate, see MAYRHOFER (1956–1980 III: 258–259; 1986–2001 II: 582).

On the basis of the Av., Vedic and New Iranian data, BAILEY (1960: 62–78) posits an IIr. root \**uazd* ‘to nourish’ as the derivational base of these nouns. WERBA (1986 [1988]: 360) reinforces this explanation.

Further support for the semantic definition of *vazduuar-* and *vazdah-* as ‘fat, nourishment; density, permanence’ could be found if V.9.44 *vazduuarə vahištahe aṅhəuš* ‘the fat of Best Existence’ is interpreted in the light of Hādōxt Nask 2.18 = Vištāsp Yašt 8.12 (64), where the souls of the righteous welcome the newcomer with spring-butter (*zarəmaīia- raōyna-*).<sup>21</sup> By contrast, the souls of deceitful people are welcomed in the House of Deceit with foul and stinking food, as emerges from the stanza that immediately follows Y.49.10:

Y.49.11 *aṭ dušəxšaθrəṅg duš.šīiaoθanəṅg dužuuacaṅhō*  
*duždaēnəṅg dužmanaṅhō drəguuatō*  
*akāiš xʷarəθāiš paitī uruuəṅhō paitīeīṅtī*  
*drūjō dəmānē haiθiīā aṅhən astaiiō*

With bad foods, the souls come to meet the deceitful ones  
of bad rule, bad deed, bad word,  
bad vision, bad thought.  
They will be real guests in the House of Deceit.

According to the analysis proposed here, the last two words of Y.49.10 *vazdaṅhā auuəṁmīrā* are two forms in the instrumental sg., whereby *auuəṁmīrā* is an attribute of *vazdaṅhā*. Syntactically, the expression complements the verbal rection compound *məzā.xšaθrā*,<sup>22</sup> which agrees in case, number and gender with the nom.sg. of the feminine noun *īzā-* ‘ghee, strengthening, refreshment’ in line 3. The stanza can then be translated as follows:

Y.49.10 *taṭcā mazdā θbahmī ā dəm ʰnīpāṅhē*  
*manō vohū urunascā ašāunəṅm*  
*nəṁascā yā ārmaitiš īzācā*  
*məzā.xšaθrā vazdaṅhā auuəṁmīrā*

And in your house, O Wise One, you preserve this:  
good thought and the souls of the righteous (men and women),  
and the reverence with which (are associated) right-mindedness and refreshment,  
which grants dominion through nourishment undiminishing.

What Ahura Mazdā keeps safely in his ‘house’ are ‘good thought’ (*manō vohū*), the ‘souls the righteous’ persons (*urunascā ašāunəṅm*) and veneration (*nəṁascā*). It is the last of these three with which ‘right-mindedness’ (*ārmaitiš*) and ‘refreshment’ (*īzācā*) are combined.<sup>23</sup> The ‘refreshment’ is further described as ‘granting dominion’ (*məzā.xšaθrā*) ‘through undiminishing’ (*auuəṁmīrā*) ‘nourishment’ (*vazdaṅhā*). The noun *īzā-*, a cognate of Ved. *īdā-* (*īlā-*) has long been recognised as an IIr. ritual technical term denoting the ‘fat-offering, strengthening, invigoration, refreshment’ which the deity receives through the offering

<sup>21</sup> See PIRAS (2000: 55, 111–112) for the passage in the Hādōxt Nask.

<sup>22</sup> HUMBACH (1954: 62–63 = 1961: 58–59) has recognised that the first term of the compound is the present stem *məzā-* (with lengthened *-ā-* in the compound) of the root *məz* and a cognate of Ved. *mamha-* of the root *mamh* ‘to bestow’.

<sup>23</sup> The combination of these terms is discussed in HINTZE (2007: 211–214).

presented in a ritual.<sup>24</sup> Such fat-offering ‘grants dominion’ because it is presented to the deity with ‘undiminishing nourishment’ in regularly repeated ritual performances. Ahura Mazda preserves these refreshments alongside other offerings in his ‘house’, and, as described in Hāḍōxt Nask 2.18 quoted above, they will provide food in the form of ‘spring-butter’ when the soul of a righteous man or woman arrives there after death.

## References

- Bailey, Harold Walter (1955). Indica et Iranica. In: *Indian Linguistics* vol. 16: *Suniti Kuma Chatterji Jubilee Volume*. Presented on the Occasion of His Sixty-fifth Birthday (26th November, 1955). Poona: Linguistic Society of India, pp. 114–119.
- Bailey, Harold Walter (1956). Monoeceta Vedica. In: Denis Sinor (ed.), *Proceedings of the twenty-third International Congress of Orientalists*, Cambridge, 21st-28th August 1954. London: Royal Asiatic Society, pp. 227–228.
- Bailey, Harold Walter (1960). Indagatio indoiranica. *Transactions of the Philological Society* 59, pp. 62–86.
- Bartholomae, Christian (1884). Zwei Lieder des Zaratustra. *Bezenberger's Beiträge zur Kunde der indogermanischen Sprachen* 8, pp. 204–233.
- Bartholomae, Christian (1904). *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*. Strassburg: Trübner.
- Bartholomae, Christian (1905). *Die Gatha's des Awesta*. Zarathustra's Verspredigten. Straßburg: Trübner.
- Benveniste, Émile (1935). *Les infinitifs avestiques*. Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient Adrien Maisonneuve.
- Brereton, Joel P. (2004). Bráhmān, Brahmán and Sacrificer. In: Arlo Griffiths & Jan E.M. Houben (eds.), *The Vedas. Texts, Language & Ritual*. Proceedings of the Third International Vedic Workshop, Leiden 2002. Groningen: Egbert Forsten (Groningen Oriental Studies, Vol. XX), pp. 325–344.
- Darmesteter, James (1892–1893). *Le Zend-Avesta*. Traduction nouvelle avec commentaire historique et philologique. 3 vols., Paris: Ernest Leroux (Annales du Musée Guimet).
- Friš, Oldřich (1954). Die Stämme auf -an im Awesta. *Archív Orientální* 22, pp. 38–62.
- Gotō, Toshifumi. 1987. *Die «I. Präsensklasse» im Vedischen*. Untersuchung der vollstufigen thematischen Wurzelpräsentia. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (SbÖAW 489)
- Hintze, Almut (1994). *Der Zamyād-Yašt*. Edition, Übersetzung, Kommentar. Wiesbaden: Reichert (Beiträge zur Iranistik 15).
- Hintze, Almut (2007). *A Zoroastrian Liturgy. The Worship in Seven Chapters (Yasna 35–41)*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz (Iranica 12).
- Hintze, Almut (2017). The Advance of the *Daēnā*: The Vištāsp Yašt and an obscure word in the Hāḍōxt Nask. In: Enrico Morano, Elio Provasi & Adriano V. Rossi (eds.), *Studia Philologica Iranica. Gherardo Gnoli Memorial Volume*. Roma: Scienze e Lettere, pp. 165–178 (Serie Orientale, Nuova Serie vol.5).
- Hoffmann, Karl & Bernhard Forssman (2004). *Avestische Laut- und Formenlehre*. 2., durchgesehene und erweiterte Auflage. Innsbruck: Institut für Sprachwissenschaft (Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Sprachwissenschaft 115).
- Humbach, Helmut (1954). Der Fugenvokal *ā* in gathisch-awestischen Komposita. *Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft* 4, pp. 53–71 (revised reprint 1961, pp. 51–65).
- Humbach, Helmut (1957–1958). Milchprodukte im zarathustrischen Ritual. *Indogermanische Forschungen* 63, pp. 40–54.

<sup>24</sup> HUMBACH (1957–1958: 40–47); MAYRHOFER (1986–2001 I: 187).



- Humbach, Helmut (1959). *Die Gathas des Zarathustra*. 2 vols. Heidelberg: Winter.
- Humbach, Helmut (1991). *The Gāthās of Zarathushtra and the Other Old Avestan Texts*. In collaboration with Josef Elfenbein and Prods O. Skjærvø. 2 vols. Heidelberg: Winter.
- Humbach, Helmut & Klaus Faiss (2010). *Zarathushtra and His Antagonists*. A Sociolinguistic Study with English and German Translations of His Gāthās. Wiesbaden: Reichert.
- Insler, Stanley (1975). *The Gāthās of Zarathustra*. Tehran & Liège: Brill (Acta Iranica 8).
- Kellens, Jean (1984). *Le verbe avestique*. Wiesbaden: Reichert.
- Kellens, Jean (2021). *Essai sur la Gāthā spəntā.mainiiu*. Leuven, Paris and Bristol, CT: Peeters (Études avestiques et mazdéennes vol.7).
- Kellens, Jean & Éric Pirart (1988–1991). *Les textes vieil-avestiques*. 3 vols. Wiesbaden: Reichert.
- Klingenschmitt, Gert (1968). *Farhang-i ōīm*. Edition und Kommentar. Inaugural-Dissertation der Philosophischen Fakultät der Friedrich-Alexander-Universität zu Erlangen–Nürnberg.
- Kotwal, Firoze M. & Philip G. Kreyenbroek (2003). *The Hērbedestān and Nērangestān*. Volume III: Nērangestān, Fragard 2. Paris: Association pour l'avancement des études iraniennes (Studia Iranica cahier 30).
- Kümmel, Martin Joachim (2000a). *Das Perfekt im Indoiranischen*. Eine Untersuchung der Form und Funktion einer ererbten Kategorie des Verbums und ihrer Weiterentwicklung in den altindoiranischen Sprachen. Wiesbaden: Reichert.
- Kümmel, Martin Joachim (2000b). Der Aorist der Wurzel(n) *ar* im Indoiranischen. In: Bernhard Forssman & Robert Plath (eds.), *Indoarisch, Iranisch und die Indogermanistik*. Arbeitstagung der Indogermanischen Gesellschaft vom 2. bis 5. Oktober 1997 in Erlangen. Wiesbaden: Reichert, pp. 253–266.
- Lommel, Herman (1935). Gāthā's des Zarathustra, Yasna 47–51. Mit Benützung der Entwürfe von F. C. Andreas. *Nachrichten von der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*. Philologisch-historische Klasse. Fachgruppe III Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft, Östlicher Kulturkreis, Neue Folge, Band I, Nr. 4, pp. 121–169.
- Mayrhofer, Manfred (1956–1980). *Kurzgefaßtes Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen / A concise etymological Sanskrit Dictionary*. 4 vols. Heidelberg: Winter.
- Mayrhofer, Manfred (1986–2001). *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindiarischen*. 3 vols. Heidelberg: Winter.
- Narten, Johanna (1964). *Die sigmatischen Aoriste im Veda*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Peschl, Benedikt (2022). *The First Three Hymns of the Ahunauvaitī Gāthā*. The Avestan Text of Yasna 28–30 and Its Tradition. Leiden & Boston: Brill (Handbook of Oriental Studies / Handbuch der Orientalistik, Section 2, Corpus Avesticum 32/4).
- Pinault, Georges (2012). Aspects of Vedic Semantics and Etymology: *vedhās-* and *vēdi-*. In: Jared S. Klein & Kazuhiko Yoshida (eds.), *Indic across the Millennia. From the Rigveda to Modern Indo-Aryan*. Proceedings of the Linguistic Section of the 14th World Sanskrit Conference, Kyoto, Japan, September 1st–5th, 2009. Bremen: Hempen Verlag, pp. 113–134.
- Pirart, Éric (1985). Gāthique *vazdanhā auuēmīrā*. *Indo-Iranian Journal* 28, pp. 204–206.
- Piras, Andrea (2000). *Hādōxt Nask 2*. Il racconto zoroastriano della sorte dell' anima. Edizione critica del testo avestico e pahlavi, traduzione e commento. Roma: Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente (Serie Orientale Roma 88).
- Redard, Céline (2021). *The Srōš Drōn – Yasna 3 to 8*. A Critical Edition with Ritual Commentaries and Glossary. Leiden & Boston: Brill (Handbook of Oriental Studies / Handbuch der Orientalistik, Section 2, Corpus Avesticum 32/3).

- Rix, Helmut, Martin Kümmel, Thomas Zehnder, Reiner Lipp & Brigitte Schirmer (2001). *LIV. Lexikon der indogermanischen Verben*. Zweite, erweiterte und verbesserte Auflage. Wiesbaden: Reichert.
- Schaefer, Christiane (1994). *Das Intensivum im Vedischen*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht (Historische Sprachforschung (Historical Linguistics) 37).
- Scheffelowitz, Isidor (1927). Iranische Etymologien. *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 34, pp. 216–229.
- Schlerath, Bernfried (1968). *Awesta-Wörterbuch*. 2 vols. Vorarbeiten I: Index locorum zur Sekundärliterature des Awesta. Vorarbeiten II: Konkordanz. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Schlerath, Bernfried (1985). iii. The Andreas Theory. In: Wolfgang Lentz, David Neil MacKenzie & Bernfried Schlerath: Andreas, Friedrich Carl. In: *Encyclopædia Iranica*, II/1, pp. 27–30.
- Schmidt, Hanns-Peter (1968). Die Komposition von Yasna 49. In: Jan C. Heesterman, Godard H. Schokker & Vadasery Iyemperumal Subramoniam (eds.), *Pratidānam: Indian, Iranian and Indo-European studies presented to Franciscus Bernardus Jacobus Kuiper on his sixtieth birthday*. The Hague & Paris: Mouton, pp. 170–192.
- Waag, Anatol (1941). *Nirangistan*. Der Awestatraktat über die rituellen Vorschriften. Leipzig: Hinrichs (Iranische Forschungen 2).
- Werba, Chlodwig (1986 [1988]). Ghost-words in the Gāṅās. *Die Sprache* 3, pp. 333–364.