Iran und Turfan

Beiträge Berliner Wissenschaftler, Werner Sundermann zum 60. Geburtstag gewidmet

Herausgegeben von Christiane Reck und Peter Zieme

1995

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden
VORWORT

Der vorliegende Band mit vorwiegend philologischen Studien über iranistische und zentralasienkundliche Gegenstände ist eine Festgabe zum 60. Geburtstag von Werner Sundermann.

Für die Idee, eine Sammlung von Beiträgen ausschließlich von Berliner Wissenschaftlern zusammenzustellen, war zunächst der engere Wirkungskreis des Jubilars ausschlaggebend. Doch schien uns auch der zeitliche Rahmen von der Idee bis zu ihrer Verwirklichung zu begrenzt zu sein, um eine internationale Festschrift ins Werk setzen zu können. So bleibt uns nur, alle anderen Freunde und Kollegen, die sich, wovon wir überzeugt sein dürfen, auch gern beteiligt hätten, um Nachsicht und Verständnis zu bitten.

Wir, die wir beide Schüler des Geehrten, wenn auch zu sehr unterschiedlichen Zeiten, waren, danken auf diesem Wege allen Beteiligten für ihre Mitarbeit. Trotz vielfältiger Verpflichtungen sind sie dieser zusätzlichen Aufgabe gern nachgekommen.

Vor allem richtet sich unser Dankeswort an Maria Macuch. Sie hat unsere Idee freudig und initiativreich aufgegriffen und zum fertigen Buch begleitet. Ohne zu zögern erklärte sie ihre Bereitschaft, das Projekt in die von ihr betreute Reihe I ranica aufzunehmen. Claudius Naumann und Brigitte Höhn brachten fachkundig die Manuskripte in eine druckreife Form.

So ist zu Ehren Werner Sundermanns ein Band entstanden, der, so dürfen wir hoffen, zugleich Einblick in das weite Spektrum iranistischer und zentralasienkundlicher Forschungen im Berliner Raum Auskunft gibt.

Berlin, im Mai 1995

Christiane Reck  Peter Zieme
INHALTSVERZEICHNIS

Zum Geleit 1

Schriftenverzeichnis Werner Sundermann (1960–1994) 5

ALAVI, BOZORG: Forūg Farrohzād 23

COLDITZ, IRIS: "... werdet mit den Schriften vertraut!" Schriftgelehrtheit, Mehrsprachigkeit und Bildungsvermittlung in manichaïschen Gemeinden 35

COLPE, CARSTEN: Das Magiertum, die Mageia, der Magus. Der Fehlschlag einer Annäherung an das Altfremde durch Herbeiführen einer neuen Verfremdung 59

HINTZE, ALMUT: The Rise of the Saviour in the Avesta 77


JUNG, ANGELIKA: „Prosaische“ oder „poetische“ Melodien? Zu den Begriffen nāτr und nāzm in der Musik 127

LORENZ, MANFRED: Zur Sprache Ahmad Dānişs in seinen Prosawerken 139

MACUCH, MARIA: Herrschaftskonsolidierung und zoroastrisches Familienrecht: zum Verhältnis von Kirche und Staat unter den Sasaniden 149

NEUMANN, REINGARD: Safawidische Blüten in Brandenburg. Eine kulturhistorische Untersuchung zu einer Kasel im Domstift zu Brandenburg (mit einer Gewebeanalyse von Isa Hesse) 169
ZUM GELEIT


Während der Herausgeber dieses Bandes den Jubilar schon Ende der 50er Jahre an einer Berliner Volkshochschule als Arabisch-Lehrer kennenlernen durfte, gehörte die Herausgeberin zu den Studenten, die ihn im Rahmen des Iranistik-Studiums an der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin in den 80er Jahren als Lehrer auf dem Feld der mitteliranischen Philologie schätzen gelernt haben. Zum Gelingen der in dieser Zeit entstandenen Dissertationen trugen seine strenge Kritik und seine überaus großzügige Hilfe bei, die er ihr und anderen gewährte. Eine Hilfe, die über die Beratung zu
THE RISE OF THE SAVIOUR IN THE AVESTA

ALMUT HINTZE

1. Introductory

The eschatological aspect of the Old Iranian religion is generally regarded as one of the most important innovations introduced by Zarathustra. One of the central terms referring to eschatological events is Avestan saoshyant. This term has been considered rightly by KELLENS in his important article on the subject to be "au cœur du problème de la sotériologie mazdéenne", but finally he concluded that saoshyant - "ne peut suffire à l'élucider. Il faudra un jour établir si elle résulte d'un développement secondaire ou de la réapparition d'une vieille croyance" (Stir 3 [1974], 209). With these words, KELLENS has well described the central problem connected with the Avestan notion of saoshyant. For it seems that in the Gathas saoshyant has a broader meaning than it has in the Younger Avesta, and even more than the term has in Pahlavi. As it was already observed by LOMMEL (1930, 230) the number of Saosyiants decreases gradually from the Gothic period down to the Sasanian period, where Pahlavi sošyans is used in particular as a proper name of the "final Saviour who will bring about frašqārd".²

BARHOLOMAE (1904, 1551-2) was influenced by the meaning of Pahlavi sošyans when he thought that Gothic saoshyant also meant 'saviour' ("Retter"). HELMUT HUMBACH maintained in an article published first in

---

1 I should like to acknowledge here that this article has benefited greatly from discussions of the problems involved with JOHANNA NARTEN, BERNFRIED SCHLERATH and MARY BOYCE, who were kind enough to read through the paper at various stages and gave me valuable comments and suggestions. I would also like to thank FARROKH JAL. VAJIDAR for his discussion at the Seminar on Iranian Studies held at the Ancient India and Iran Trust, Cambridge in May 1994, where an earlier version was read as a paper.

1952 that the Gothic saošiánt- was closely related with the ritual and played a central role in it. He thought that the ritual function of the saošiánt- in the Gathas was that of the ‘Opferherr’, comparable to the role the yádjamána- plays in the Vedic ritual. He drew this conclusion from an interpretation of the texts and from a reconstruction of the historical background to the Gathas concerning the social and religious situation at Zarabústra’s time on the basis of comparison with Vedic ritual practice. In his translation of the Gathas, published in 1959, HUMBACH renders saošiánt- accordingly by ‘Kraftspender’, whereas he translates the term by ‘benefactor’ in his English edition of 1991. In this later work he seems to agree again more with BARTHLOMÆAE and to abandon the ritualistic interpretation when he states that saošiánt- would have been used “to designate both himself [Zarabústra] and his adherents as belonging to the party pursuing the work of salvation. But asauuan- and saošiánt- are terms implying moral evaluation rather than being technical terms in the strict sense of the word”.

The ritual function of the Gothic saošiánt- has been strongly claimed again by KELLENS in his article on saošiánt- of 1974, mentioned above. He considers the saošiánt- to be “le sacrifiant” who takes part in the exchange of gifts between god and man, following the principle of do ut des. The basic meaning of saošiánt- would be “celui qui va ou qui veut prospérer” insofar as “le sacrifiant” receives material goods and well-being in body and spirit as a reward for his rich, munificent sacrifice. It is a great merit of KELLENS’ article, and he is certainly right in this, that he establishes the basic intransitive meaning of saošiánt- as ‘the one who will prosper/wants to prosper’, linking it semantically with Vedic śu, śváyati ‘swells, prospers’.

rather than with its Middle Persian cognates e.g. swt ‘utility, advantage’. However, it may be questioned whether KELLENS’ description and interpretation of saošiánt- cover the entire semantic range and especially whether his ritualistic definition of this important term can be upheld. Furthermore, the question remains how the notion of saošiánt- as it appears in some passages of the Younger Avesta developed, particularly how it happened that the saošiánt- became the final World Saviour.

In what follows I want to examine once again the Old Avestan attestations of saošiánt- and try to describe the characteristics of the term on the basis of that evidence, and then to look at the Younger Avestan texts in order to do the same there. Finally, I want to describe the semantic differences between the use of saošiánt- in the Older and in the Younger Avesta and show the semantic development of this term. On this basis it should be possible to draw some conclusions concerning the development and history of the Mazdaean religion in the Old Iranian period, and of eschatology in the Avesta in particular.

2a. Saošiánt- in the Gathas

The word saošiánt-, which is not attested in the Yasna Haptajháiti, is found six times in the Gathas, being used both in the singular (Y 45.11, 48.9, 53.2) and in the plural (Y 34.13, 46.3, 48.12). In the singular, saošiánt- is found in the following contexts:

Y 45.11:

\[\text{Yastā daētōn āparō māsiāscā} \]
\[\text{‘who as a second one despised with him Daēvas and men} \]
\[\text{tarā maštā yoi tm tarā mainiantā} \]
\[\text{who despise him,} \]
\[\text{aništē orna y hōi arēm mainātā} \]
\[\text{(those, who are) other than this one, who conforms in mind to} \]
\[\text{saošiánto dōṅg patioś spōnta daēnā} \]
\[\text{he is through the beneficient Daēnā of a Saošiánt, of the house-lord,} \]

possible for Av. śu in saošiánt-: ‘the one who will prosper/wants to prosper’ or ‘the one who will be strong/wants to be strong’ (practically as a ‘future’ of śīra-śīna- ‘hero’). On the interpretation of the future see below under 2d.
The Rise of the Saviour in the Avesta

Y 48.9:

kada vaeda yei cohiai xaiiaida
'When shall I know whether You have control over some (danger),
maida aša yehiai mà ašiti duvaeda'
through truth, O Wise One, the fear of which scares me.

Ars moı̂ jorjiaçaum vaphaš vaʃuʃ mananjoh
Let the pronouncement of good thinking be told to me rightly;
vidiiyı̂ saosienia yaça hoi ašiš aŋhaat
may the Sosiajot know of what kind his reward will be.

Y 53.2:

aša hoi scantu mananjau xuiaši ʃtiaodanaišca
and they shall follow readily the recognition of the Wise one and his
venerations
*xiri₃m₃* mazda vanhmazı a fraorat yasnacsa
for his praise with thought, words and deeds,
kaùucia vištaspo zaraduširiz spitamо farasaošrascasca
Kauui Vištasp, (and) the Zaraduštra-son, the Spitamid, and Farasaštra,

The attestations of saosiation- in the plural are the following:

Y 34.13:

tım aдуu남om ahurà yım mòi mraoʃ vajhıuʃ mananjoh
'(Teach us) this path, O Lord, which you point out to me as the one of good
thinking.
daen saosiationam yà "hù.kerat aʃacet uruwaʃsat
on which well-made (path) the Daenās of Sosiajants walk with truth
hiat 'cuuișița "hudabiio mizdem mazda yehia tir deaδrom
towards the reward which you present on the well-giving, (and of which
you are) the one who sets (it).'

Y 46.3:

kada mazda voi uʃanɔ asnam
'When, O Wise One, will rise the bulls of the days'


7 The reading *xiri₃m₃* here and in Y 48.12 (see below) follows HUMBAUGH 1959, II, 94 and KELLENS 1974, 201, fn. 35. KELLENS/PIRART 1988, I, 189 read xiri₃m and translate this by ‘choyer’ (II, 234: ‘accueil amical’); but PIRART’s analysis of *xiri₃m* (MSS 47 [1986], 189) is improbable.

8 The translation of this line follows BARTHOLOMAE 1904, 1624 (an older view of him is found BARTHOLOMAE 1904, 571 below). The question is whether the expression consists of three or of two members. Since zaraduširiz spita molto is not connected by -ca with the preceding, KELLENS/PIRART 1988, I, 9 assume that it belongs with kaùucia vištaspo. Their view that Vištasp was the son of Zaraduštra was based on this passage. Although their view cannot be disproved, the material basis of a missing -ca is too weak for setting up such a new genealogy. Most other authors consider the expression as consisting of three members, although there is no explanation for the missing middle -ca. The interpretation of spita molto as the name of one of Zaraduštra’s sons (so HUMBAUGH 1952, [1957], 11; 1959, I, 157; 1991, I, 192; KELLENS 1974, 202) has little to recommend it, since spita molto is always used as the name of the family. The patronymic adjective zaraduširiz may refer to Isat.vatra, the oldest son of Zaraduštra, as

9

10 It emerges from HUMBAUGH’s (1959, II, 94) comparison of Y 53.2 yım daenam ... saosiationat dada with Y 49.4 ya drugaatu daenat that saosiation- is opposed to drugaantu-

11 The reading ‘cuuișița’ is found in K5: GELDNER edits with JV Ptu4 and other MSS. cuuișița. The form is 2.Pl.Inj.root-Aor.ACT. (disyllabic, < coisiţa, cf. HUMBAUGH 1959, II, 47: ‘cuuișița steht fur *coisiţa wie cuuiși $t_1$ Y 51,15 fur *coisiţa’) from the root cişt ‘to assign’, see NARTEN 1975, 82 with fn.4.

12 deaδrom- is used here metonymically, see BARTHOLOMAE 1904, 679: ‘ciuus tu (es) constitutio (sua. constitutor)’ and NARTEN 1975, 83 f. (‘Bestimmer’), who noticed that in several passages cişt goes parallel with deaδrom (= ved. dhā). For a neuter verbal abstract noun formed with the suffix -tra- and used as a predicative nominative with as or bhī referring to a masculine noun, cf. Ved. (MS 3.3.7: 40.7.8 = KS 21.10: 50.2.3) sā rāstrām abhava ‘he became the rule (= ruler)’, WACKERNAGEL/DEBRUNNER: Altindische Grammatik II, 2, Göttingen 1954, p.704, cf. also HOFFMANN: German Scholars on India, vol. II, Bombay 1976, 106 f. fn.6 (= Auflzäte zur Indoiranistik III [1992], 721 f. fn. 6).

13 uʃanɔ asnam was explained as a metaphor for dawn by BARTHOLOMAE 1904, 383. As a second instance of this usage he quoted Y 50.10, where the metaphor is clear: moča xding asnam uʃanɔ aŋhilsa ‘das Sonnenlicht, der schimmernde Stier der Tage’, HUMBAUGH (WZKSO 2 [1958], 23-24) connects this metaphor with the ritual: ‘Die vielbezügige
The Rise of the Saviour in the Avesta

Y 48.12:

\[ \text{aț toi aŋhōn saosīiantō dasīiunam} \]

‘They will be Sāosīants of the countries,
vi ‘xšnām vohū manahā hacāntē
who pursue recognition with good thinking,
šiaodanais aša ḍāhhiia mazda šingahiiia
(the recognition) of your teaching, o Wise One, with their actions through truth;
toi zi dātā hamaēstārō "aēṃahiiia
for they are created as defectors of Rage.’

2b. Characteristics of Gothic saosīiant-

The difference between the use of saosīiant- in the singular and in the plural has been explained by Bartholomae 1904, 1551, in this way that the singular would refer to Zarābūstra as the ‘saviour’, the plural to those who help Zarābūstra with his work of salvation. With reference to Y 43.312, Lommel 1930, 228f. maintained that saosīiant- could refer in the singular to a yet greater man who would bring Zarābūstra’s work to completion, cf. also Boyce 1975, 234f. However, the text passages where saosīiant- occurs in the singular are not clear about this. In Y 53.2 it is Kauvi Vištāspa, Zarābūstra’s son and Faraşoastra who are said to follow ‘the straight paths of giving’, and in doing so they have the Daēnā of a Saosīant. In Y 45.11 saosīiant- has the apposition dāng patōiš and therefore may refer to any ‘lord of the house’ (see on this below p. 84). The only attestation which could be used in support of the view that saosīiant- in the singular would refer to Zarābūstra is Y 48.9, where three forms in the first person (vaēdā, mā, mōi) are found.17 But since in the last line, in which saosītaq occurs, the person switches to the third person, an impersonal interpretation of this line is also possible: ‘may one know as a Saosīant, how his reward will be’. However this may be, Zarābūstra would certainly be a Saosīant, but he would not be the only one. It does not seem that a certain specific person is thought of in the Gathas when saosīiant- is used in the singular, and especially not such a person who is to become the Saosīant par excellence in the later tradition. It rather seems that in the singular saosīiant- is used in a generic sense, not very different from its use in the plural.

For in the plural, saosīiant- is used in similar contexts: the Daēnās of the Saosīants are said in Y 34.13 to walk on the path of good-giving, cf. the last line of Y 53.2, and similarly as in Y 53.2 they are said in Y 48.12 to follow the recognition (xšnām) of Mazdā. Whereas in the singular a Saosīant is called a ‘lord of the house’ (Y 45.11), in the plural they are called ‘Saosīants of the countries’ (saosīiantō dasīiunam, possessive genitive, Y 48.12). That could mean that there are Saosīants everywhere, in every country, and that they are important for the welfare of the country. In the hierarchy of social organization, the ‘country’ (daŋhu-) is the largest unit going down through zantu- ‘tribe’ and vīs- ‘clan’ to dam- ‘house,

---

16 In this stanza the wish is expressed that ‘that man ... may teach us the straight paths of prosperity of this corporeal existence and (of that) of thought’ (cf. Humbach 1991, I, 152, who, however, translates sawahāpo by ‘benefit’).
17 Humbach 1952 (1957), 31 fn.31 assumes that saosīiant- refers here to Vištāspa: “Mit dem Sāosīantar dürfte Kavi Vištāspa, nach Y 53.2 der Erste unter den Sāosīyants gemeint sein”.

---

Frase nach den Stieren der Tage, die den mit dem Aša identifizierten Kuhherden der Morgennute voran das Dunkel der Nacht durchbrechen und ihnen so den Weg bahnen sollen, folgt auf Zarastrustrulas Klage über seinen geringen Viehbestand in Y 46.2. Im Unterton führt sie so die dort schon anklingende Forderung nach dem vom Oppoherrn zu spendenden, aus Milchkühen bestehenden Oppolohn weiter, die in voller Deutlichkeit allerdings erst in der Schlüsselstrophe Y 46.19 ausgesprochen wird (MSS 2’, 1952 [1957], 29 Anm.30), cf. also Humbach 1991, I, 177: “The whole is an allusion to the patrons, who are expected to contribute to an improvement of Zarābūstra’s material conditions by granting him a prize consisting of cattle”. However, since in the present passage xšnām asām is obviously parallel with saosīiantam xrautau, the expression is here rather a metaphor for the ‘wits of the Saosīants’.}

14 On vōdī see below with fn.26.
15 For the translation see Hintze 1994, 152f.
family’ as the smallest unit. Thus it happens that the Gathas testify to the existence of Sāosūniants in the smallest and in the largest units, and it may be implied that a Sāosūniant of the house (dam-) is also a Sāosūniant of the country (daŋhu-) at the same time. It seems that even as there can be Sāosūniants in every land, so every head of a family (dāŋ pati-) can and should be a Sāosūniant - that it is within the grasp of virtually everyone to be a Sāosūniant. As Sāosūniants they resist and defeat Aēšma (Y 48.12). The Sāosūniants constitute the “army” of Ahura Mazdā among people, and for this reason it is important that they are numerous.

From three out of the six Gothic attestations (Y 45.11, 53.2, 34.13) it emerges that the most important characteristic of Sāosūniants of the Older Avesta is the possession of a very good daēnā- 19, an Avestan term difficult to translate: daēnā-, morphologically a derivative from the verbal root di ‘to see’ (especially with the inner eye) with the suffix -anā- (< Proto-Iranian *dhaiH-ānā-), basically refers to the mental view and attitude of a person towards his own life and towards the world around him. The quality of the individual’s daēnā- depends on whether he chose Good or Evil to follow during his lifetime. If he chose Good, his words and deeds will be good during lifetime, if he chose Evil, they will be bad. His daēnā- is shaped by his words and deeds and insofar the daēnā- is that part of the human inner self which is shaped deliberately by the will of the individual, 20 it is part of the human inner being. After death the individual parts of a person are separated (Av. vi-uruuišiti-), whereby uruuan- and daēnā-become individual beings and appear in their real shape. It is only after death when the soul (uruuan-) of the individual, coming to the Cinvat-Bridge, will see the real shape of his own daēnā-. Since the decision of the individual person for Good or Evil is a religious choice, daēnā- may also be considered as referring to one’s attitude towards religion, therefore: ‘religious view’. 21

The daēnā- of a Sāosūniant is characterized as sponta- ‘beneficent’: it is through the beneficent daēnā- of the Sāosūniant, of the house lord, that people are united with each other, so that one might become to the other ‘a companion, a brother or a father’ (Y 45.11). Thus the daēnā- of the Sāosūniant strengthens the social bonds between individual people. Furthermore, the daēnā- of a Sāosūniant is described as one that walks on the prepared path of good thinking, and as one that walks towards a reward apportioned by Ahura Mazdā to those who give generously (Y 34.13). It is the daēnā- of the Sāosūniant that causes him to follow the ‘straight path of giving’, the venerations (yasna-) of Ahura Mazdā and his recognition (xšnā-, Y 53.2). Thus the main characteristic of the Sāosūniant is his spiritual ability, to which belongs first of all his inner, mental view and disposition, his daēnā-. The visible reflex of his daēnā- is his willingness to give generously (huďā-) and to pay homage to Ahura Mazdā (yasna-): that is how he follows the straight path of good thinking (Y 34.13). By knowing and going along these ‘straight paths’ the Sāosūniant will receive his well-deserved reward (mūţda-, aši-). A second component of the Sāosūniant’s spiritual ability is his mental power, his intellect (xraatū- Y 46.3), which is also called ‘the bulls of the days’. By his mental power the Sāosūniant has grasped Ahura Mazdā’s teachings and continues to strive for the recognition of Mazdā and his teachings (Y 53.2 and 48.12), and he also seems to care for the diffusion of Mazdā’s teachings (Y 46.3).

---

19 The Gothic attestations of daēnā- have been translated by F.-T. Lankarany: Daēnā im Avesta, eine semantische Untersuchung, Hamburg 1985, 82–108.
20 See BOYCE 1975, 238–9. The concept has been judged to be perhaps Zarathustra’s “profoundest contribution to the history of religion”, see BOYCE 1991, 464. An intrinsic difference between the Avestan notions of daēnā- and uruuan- is that the shape of the daēnā- lies in the hands of the individual, but the shape of uruuan- not (see LOMMEL 1930, 170 ff.).
21 HUMBACH 1991 passim renders daēnā- by ‘religious view’. Earlier (HUMBACH 1959, I, 56-58) he maintained that daēnā- may be used in the Gathas as a synonym for uruuan-. But Y 49.11, which HUMBACH quotes as an example for this, rather seems to describe the situation when the souls of those deceitful people who have already died and who are already in the House of Deceit welcome the newcomers with evil-smelling food (akāiš xarātdaš pašt uruuanan paštītīn). These newcomers have just fallen down from the Cinvat-Bridge because of their evil rule, evil deeds, words, Daēnā and mind. A similar situation is described in Hādōxt-Nask II 34-36. Cf. LOMMEL 1930, 191 ff., 198 and his interpretation of Y 49.11 in LOMMEL 1971, 166: “Hier wird den Lügenr, über die noch sonstiges Schlimmes ausgesagt wird, künftiger Aufenthalt im Haus der Lügen und übel Speisen, die sie dort erhalten sollen, vorausgesagt”. – In Y 51.13 it is the question whether xraodaiti is transitive or intransitive; if it is used in an intransitive sense, it may describe the soul (uruuan-) of the deceitful one arriving at the Cinvat-Bridge.
2c. The ritualistic interpretation of saosinian-

For a ritualistic interpretation of saosia and words like hudah-, asi-, mizda-, adwana-, pad-, udha-, vahma-, yasna-, which occur in the same stanza as saosia, have been referred to. Thus, for instance, in Y 34.13 a ‘well-made path’ is mentioned on which the Danas of the Saosians proceed towards the reward (mizda) they desire, because they are ‘well-giving’ (hudah-), and in Y 53.2 ‘the straight paths of giving’ are spoken of: in both passages the ‘straight’ or ‘well-prepared path’ is described as the path of the one who gives generously. The Saosian’s daena- walking on the ‘well-made path of good thinking’ towards a reward presented by Ahura Mazda to the munificent may be interpreted in this way, that the ‘munificent’ is the one who gives generously in sacrifice, as Kellens 1974, 202 supposes. The ‘straight path’, on which the daena- of the Saosian walks, may then be considered as a poetic description of the sacrifice which connects man and god. A similar expression is known also from the Vedic ritual language. In the Rigvedic hymns the ‘straight path’ may be used as a metaphor for the sacrifice, and it may be assumed that this expression formed part of the Indo-Iranian poetic language of ritual: the gods are invited to come down to the well-prepared place of sacrifice in order to receive the strengthening (Av. izza-, Ved. ila-), and the gods in their turn give well-being and prosperity to the sacrificer. Thus a ‘straight path’ between man and god is established through sacrifice. It can be gathered from this and from a number of other usages that Zaraustra’s language is deeply rooted in the Indo-Iranian religious ritual language. The image of the ‘straight path’ on which walk those who are well-giving, found in Y 34.13, is likely to be a poetic image inherited from that language.

However, it is by no means certain that these terms and images as they occur in the Gathas refer to ritual practice in the same way as they do in the Rigveda. For in the Rigveda the ritual context of the hymns is obvious; in the Gathas, however, it is not. Certainly, the language used in the Gathas is indebted to the inherited Indo-Iranian ritual and poetic language. But the function and context of Vedic poetry seem to be different from what is known of the Rigveda. All the terms quoted above which have been interpreted as referring to the ritual may be interpreted differently, i.e. they may refer not to ritual but to religious matters. Thus it may well be that ancient poetic formulas are used in the Gathas, but that they are given a new content. For instance, the ‘path’ may no more be the path that connects gods and sacrificer during the sacrifice, but the ‘path of Good Thinking’, i.e. something spiritual or ethical. The only term that may refer to a ritual of sacrifice is udha- in Y 46.3, if it is linked with YAv. udha- which denotes the ‘fat’ of a human or animal body. Ritual use of YAv. udha- is only clear from a passage in Nirangistan 65, where it is described how the fat of the sacrificial animal is offered. In the other two passages, Vd 6.10 and 16.17, udha- is used of a dead body polluting earth and fire and can hardly refer to a sacrificial offering. There is no evidence that udha- is used as a ritual term in a technical sense. In the Vedic passage, it may be interpreted as a metaphor for ‘prosperity’.

On the other hand, saosia occurs in passages which evidently have no connection with the ritual, as Y 45.11, and in that passage Kellens 1974, 199 assumes that saosia- would be “purement adventice”. The passages in which saosia- occurs may refer to something outside the ritual context and thus to something quite different from what is known from Vedic,

23 E.g. RV 10.51.5:

ehi mānur devayur yajñākāmo ramkṛtī tamāsakṛṣey age
sūgandha pāthah kṣruhi devayādān vāha havyāni sumanasayāmanah

‘Come! Manu devoted to the gods, having made ready, wishes to sacrifice. You are dwelling in the dark, o Agni. Make the paths going to the gods to be walked on well! With propitious mind convey the sacrificial!’

Cf. also Thieme: Der Fremdling im Rigveda. Leipzig 1938, 120 f.


25 Cf. the etymological use of ḫû and ḫûtû-, both terms inherited from Ilr. language, in Y 49.5 at hūhu mazda īzāc āziūtāsc yā daenam voxa ‘sārašā manaŋhā: ‘But that person, O Wise One, (is) abundance and fat, who shelters (his) religious view with good thought’ (translation by Humbauch 1991, 1, 181), see on this passage Humbauch, Indogermanische Forschungen 63 (1957/58), 41.


27 Cf. Humbauch’s translation of Y 46.3 (Humbauch 1991, 1, 168): ‘To which people will one come with good thought (to provide them with) fat?’
which has no equivalent to *saošiānt-. It does not emerge from the Gothic passages that *saošiānt- is a ritual technical term as e.g. the IIr. *f̣aunis-; it rather seems to emerge from the texts that the Saošiānts are persons who play a central role in early Mazdayasianism and its religious conception, but not necessarily in the ritual inherited from the Indo-Iranian period.

2d. The basic meaning of *saošiānt-

The question remains what is the basic meaning of the future in the form *saošiānt-. It may either denote a declaration of will (‘the one who wants to be strong/wants to prosper’) or it may denote a simple future tense (‘the one who will be strong/will prosper’; cf. KELLENS 1974, 204: “celui qui va, ou qui veut, prospérer”. KELLENS’ interpretation of the *saošiānt- as a participant in the exchange of goods between god and man following the principle of do ut des requires the interpretation of the future participle as an expression of will: ‘the one who wants to be strong/wants to prosper’, for by interacting with god the sacrificer wants to prosper. Otherwise (i.e. ‘the one who will be strong/will prosper’) one would rather expect a general present, not a future: the one who prospers because he enters into interaction with god, as the prosperity resulting from sacrifice should materialize in the sacrificer’s earthly welfare. Yet the interpretation of *saošiānt- as denoting a future tense also requires an explanation, because who can say of himself that ‘he will be strong’? But if *saošiānt- is a religious, and not a ritual, term, then nothing speaks against an eschatological interpretation: ‘the one who will be strong’ because once he has chosen to fight Evil he is destined by Ahura Mazda to be stronger than Evil.

A significant passage which may allow one to describe the synchronic meaning of Gothic *saošiānt- is Y 48.12. The phrase *tōi anhən *saošiāntō daxiηunam ‘they will be Saošiānts of the countries’ actually contains a double expression of future. Here ‘the one who will be strong’ could be understood as ‘the one who will overcome Evil’ and in that case, *saošiānt- would be used as an eschatological term. This interpretation is supported by the last verse line of that stanza *tōi zi daitā hamaēstrō ‘aēšmahīti ‘for they are created (or: destined) as defeaters of Rage’. The agent of that clause is Ahura Mazda who has destined the Saošiānts to overcome Evil. The Saošiānts are conceived as opponents to Aēsma and as his defeaters. LOMMEL 1930, 227f., compares the Saošiānts of this passage with the ‘companions of Astuuaṭarata said in Yt 19.95 to fight and defeat Aēsma, and points out that this is one of the individual features which indicate the continuity of the tradition. Here the term has an aggressive notion, the Saošiānt being described as someone who fights. If this interpretation is correct, *saošiānt- has acquired the meaning ‘saviour’ already in the Gathas.

3. *saošiānt- in the Younger Avesta

In the Younger Avesta, *saošiānt- is used in most attestations in the plural, but in a few instances also in the singular. BARTHOLOMAE 1904, 1551–2, thinks that in the Younger Avesta *saošiānt- in the plural would refer on the one hand to the priests as those who continue Zaraḫūstra’s work of salvation and on the other hand to the future saviours at the end of time. Thus, for instance, *saošiānt- denotes the priests in Y 14.1, where the zaatar-speaks of himself as one of the Saošiānts and puts them as a group into opposition to the Amāša Spāntas:

Y 14.1 (= Vṛ 5.1, 11.20)

yātā dīī azm yō zaotā awaēbāiemi...
yunmakām vānāica vāhāica xnaoθrāica frasastāiāeca
yaj aμaśaŋan spantān
ahmakām “hauuuav hāica natafrītaiāeca aśawastāica vauθrā-θiāica
haruniiāica yaj saošiāntam aśaνan
(‘We dedicate them,...’ as I, the priest, dedicate them
for veneration, praise, strengthening und laudation of you, the Amāša Spāntas,
for good life, pleasing of the Ratus, truthfulness, victory and peace of the soul
of us, the truthful Saošiānts.’

28 Since *saošiānt- has no Vedic equivalent, it cannot be reconstructed for the Indo-Iranian period; it seems to be an Iranian innovation, maybe even coined by Zaraḫūstra himself. Thus it is misleading to describe *saošiānt- as “un vieux terme du rituel” (KELLENS 1974, 209). The term is neither old nor ritual. It rather seems that the term *saošiānt- denotes a new person with a new function in a new religious concept of which Vedic has no evidence. Therefore, in the case of *saošiānt- comparison with Vedic material does not help, because the concept of the Saošiānt is a genuine Iranian creation that developed after the splitting up of the Indo-Iranian community.

29 The figure of Astuuaṭarata, however, has no Gothic antecedent, see below under 4.
In Y 9.2 the Sāosšiants are described as future persons who give right veneration to Haoma:

aoi ṭaṃ... stiuīī ēa ṭa mā aparacī saošiiantō staunaṃ
‘praise me [Haoma], as the future Sāosšiants will praise me’.

These examples show that in the Younger Avesta the Sāosšiants play a role in the worship not only of Ahura Mazda, but also of the Amēša Spāntas (Y 14.1) and of Haoma (Y 9.2), but it cannot be concluded from these passages that saošiiant- was a technical ritual term. Nor can it be upheld that saošiiant- would refer to the priests in all instances listed by Bartholomae. Most passages rather testify to the interpretation that all good people can aspire to be Sāosšiants.

The semantic component of the Sāosšiant as someone who fights against enemies, which is attested explicitly in one of the Gothic passages (Y 48.12), becomes much more prominent in the Younger Avesta. As Sāosšiants people fight against Daēvić creatures, especially against Falsehood, Av. druji-, thus Y 61.5:

kaēa drujiṃ niś ahaat ā niś.nasama
“How shall we remove Falsehood from here?”

niś.nasama saošiiantō "drojim
“As Sāosšiants we shall remove Falsehood.”

kaēa niś.nasama
“How shall we remove?”

yaēa him janama xšiaiamnō "xšiaiamnām
“We shall slay her as being powerful over the powerless,

vispaīh haca karṣuunā yāis ḫapta
from all seven climes,

hamistē niźherstē vispaītā druīato stōis
so to smite, to remove all deceitful existence,

staunaṃ aśa ā ḫudō yōi ḫint
praising with truth (the one) who is well-giving (among those) who exist.”

In Y 70.4 the ‘truthful men’ (naro ašaunāno) with good thoughts, words and deeds say that they want to be Sāosšiants and victorious:

yaēa ēa vācim naśīma
‘because through strengthening we want to raise our voice

yaēa va saošiiantō dātīunām sutiama vācim bārnewt
as the Sāosšiants of the countries, becoming strong, shall raise their voice;

buiama saošiiantō buiama vōrājana
we want to be Sāosšiants, we want to be victorious,

buiama ahuara ha márđa friia vāziša astāiū
we want to be dear, strongest guests of Ahura Mazda,

yaēa naro ašaunāno humātaś mainīma
we truthful men who are thinking with good thoughts,

hūxāiś miṇuātū hūxāriśa vōrēžiánto
speaking with good words, acting with good deeds’.

In the singular, saošiiant- occurs only with the epithet vōrēžiánt-, and in that case the word refers to one particular Sāosšiant, namely to Astuatu. ārata. His name is explained in Yt 13.129:

yō anhaat saošiis vōrēžai nāma astuatu. ārata ca nāma
who [the] Sāosšiant is yātā vīspāt ahu astuautānām sauwaišt
as a former Astuatu. ārata yōa astuāt hā ustauauvā
astuauta “aihīiēihih paitīšāt
‘Who will be ‘victorious Sāosšiant’ by name and Astuatu. ārata by name.

Sāosšiant insofar, as he will strengthen all corporeal life.
Astuua,ara insofar, as being corporeal (and) living
he will provide corporeal freedom from danger.'

In this passage, the victorious Sasoiiiant, being himself ‘the one who will be
strong’, is described as someone who causes ‘the corporeal life’ to be
strong: the transitive interpretation of sasoiiiant- is coming in.

In Y 59.28 sasoiiiantam varadrajanam yazamaide the ‘victorious Sasoiiiant’
is being worshipped, and in Y 26.10 (= Y 59.27) the ‘victorious Sasoiiiant’
denotes the final point in the history of mankind, opposed to the first mortal,
gaiio maratan:-

vispa aṣaunam vaṛhiṣ surā frauvasaiio yazamaide
‘We worship all good (and) strong Frauvasis of the truthful ones,
yā haca gaiiāt maradna a sasoiiianta varadrajanat
those from Gaiio Marsan up to the victorious Sasoiiiant’.

The conception of the history of mankind found in this passage shows that a
final Sasoiiiant is expected who marks the final point of this age and implicitly
ushers in a new age. Furthermore, there are two other passages which show that a
myth is connected with the ‘victorious Sasoiiiant’. In Vd 19.5 it is
said that the victorious Sasoiiiant is expected to be born out of Lake Kāsaoia:

janādi pairi karṇam yam xnaṇaaiti
yahnau us.zaitiite
sasitius varadraja
haca apat kəssaoiia
usastara haca naemat
usastaraeviiiio haca naemaeviiiio
‘I shall slay the witch Xnaṇaiti,
until the victorious Sasoiiiant
will be born
out of Lake Kāsaoia,
from the eastern side,
from the eastern sides.’

The birth and rise of the ‘victorious one among the Sasoiiiants’, i.e.
Astuua,ara, and his actions are described in more detail in the eight final
stanzas of the Zamāy Yāṣ, starting from stanza 89. In stanza 89 it is said that the ‘glory’, the x’arman-, accompanies the victorious one among the
Sasoiiants, and also his other companions, so that he will make life wonderfull,
unaging, undecaying etc.32:


(The glory) which accompanies the
victorious one among the Sasoiiants
and his other companions,
in order that he makes life wonderful .....

In the next section, starting from stanza 92, it is told that Astuua,ara,
the son of Vispa.tauruairi, steps forth from Lake Kāsaoia as a messenger
of Ahura Mazdā. He is brandishing a weapon, a missile providing victory,
which other heroes bore before him: Thraetaona bore this weapon and slew
Azi Dahāka, Frauvasian slew Zainigau, Kauui Haoosrauah slew Frauvasian
and Kauui Vištāspa slew the enemies of Truth. It is this weapon with which
Astuua,ara will remove Falsehood from the world of truth (stanza 93).

This myth recalls the ancient myth of the hero slaying a dragon,
inherited from Indo-Iranian and even Indo-European times, and this myth is
explicitly referred to in stanza 92 immediately after the mentioning of
Astuua,ara. The verb which describes the killing of a dragon in that
stanza as well as in the Indo-European myth is the verb jan (IE *gωto\n\33, and it occurs four times in stanza 92–93 (jain ‘he was slain’). Myths of the
slaying of a dragon are alluded to several times in the Zamāy Yāṣ:
in stanza 37 it is told how Thraetaona slew the dragon Dahāka who is also
called ‘Dāevic falsehood’ (Av. daeuum drujim), and stanza 40 tells how the
hero Karasāspa slew the horn-bearing dragon (aži- sruanu-). Thus
Astuua,ara also is described as a hero, similar to the heroes of ancient
times who slew dragons: as the ancient heroes slew a dragon, so
Astuua,ara slays Falsehood.

4. Mingling of religious and heroic traditions

In the Younger Avestan passages which speak of a single ‘victorious Sasoiiiant’ the Sasoiiiant is connected with a tradition different from the religious
tradition which prevails in the Gathas. Here it is the tradition of heroic
myth and epic. Thus it seems that two different traditions have merged in
the notion of the sasoiiiant- of the Younger Avesta. That the religious and
heroic traditions are mingled in the Yāṣts quite widely (e.g. heroes sacrifi-
cing to Yazatas, and tales of their deeds being thus introduced) is of

33 See WATKINS 1987, 270–299.
course obvious, and it has become even more readily comprehensible with the realisation that these are from an oral tradition, so to describe the Sāosjānt’s future feats in heroic terms was a natural development within the religious tradition.

The link between the two traditions may be seen in the root sū ‘to be strong’ from which the future participle saoṣijant- is derived as well as the noun sūra- ‘hero’, the Indo-Iranian term for the hero who slays a dragon. In Vedic, sūra- is an epithet of Indra in most instances and Indra is the god who slays the dragon vṛtrā-, cf. e.g. RV II 11.5 atann āhim sūra vṛtvēna ‘you [Indra] slew the dragon, 0 hero, with strength’. For this reason Indra, being the slayer of the dragon Vṛtra, is also called vṛtrahān- ‘slayer of Vṛtra’, literally: ‘breaking the defence’. That also the Avestan saoṣijant-bears the epithet vṛtrahājan- may be due to the connection of the concept of the Sāosjānt with the myth of the hero slaying a dragon.

The name which was given to the final, heroic and victorious Sāosjānt, Aštuuārta, is strongly ethical and was created by Mazdayasian theologians of the Younger Avestan period through theological speculation within the religious tradition on the basis of the Gothic passage Y 43.16 astuwat aṣom xitaat uṣṭāna ‘aṣom xitaat uṣṭāna ‘truth may be corporeal, strong through vitality’. In creating this name the priests used their own dialect form, for aṣom- corresponds to normal Avestan aṣa-. Since the myth of Aštuuārta is closely connected with the region of lake Hāmūn (Av. kṣavātia-), it is likely that the name itself is a dialect form of that region. KARL HOFFMANN and JOHANNA NARTEN have listed a considerable number of other dialectal peculiarities which do not comply with Avestan sound laws. Thus the region of Arachosia/Drangiane seems to have played an important role during a significant period of the development of the Mazdayasian faith and the diffusion of Zoroastrianism, and the priests of that region exerted an influence on the form of the Avestan text as it has come down to us. It is therefore not unlikely that the name of Aštuuārta is a product of their theological speculations. Aštuuārta was connected with them in ancient Iranian history by placing him in a line with the heroes of ancient times.

But not only the name of Aštuuārta is their creation. The whole myth of a saviour stepping forth from lake Kāšaοoia and bringing about the renovation of the world may have entered the Avesta during that period. All Avestan passages in which kṣavātia- or hāētumant- are mentioned are either geographical descriptions (so Yt 19.66) or deal with eschatology (Yt 19.92 and Vd 19.5). This reveals a rather rationalistic attitude of the priest-poets. One gets the impression that they wanted to make clear that it is this certain lake in Sistān which plays such an important role in Frašō.kāri and that it is this very lake from which Aštuuārta steps forth. GHERARDO GNOLI has described the importance of Sistān in his book “Ricerche storiche sul Sistān antico” although I cannot accept that the origins of Zoroastrianism should also be sought there. It rather seems that at a certain stage the priests of that region influenced strongly the development of the Mazdayasian faith, see BOYCE 1992, 4–5.

5. Conclusion

The Gothic concept of the Sāosjānt forms an essential part of Zarabustra’s religious message. The Sāosjānt constitute a group of people who oppose Evil actively. Without their action Good could never be stronger than Evil. Thus they play a decisive role in the Renovation of the World, in fact they are those who actually bring it about. The emphasis in the concept of Sāosjānt lies in this, that he fights Evil actively and by doing so he contributes to the final victory over Evil. In this sense, Sāosjānt is per se an eschatological term, and this already in the Gathas. The term is coined and filled with content from the perspective of the final victory over Evil. This concept...
ception underlies the formation of the word as a future participle. Because the semantic content is reflected in the morphology, it may be assumed that saošíant- was coined as a term by Zaraftuṣṭa himself to denote these new persons who form such an important and essential part in his religious message.

The notion of the saošíant- as a ‘saviour’ resisting Aeśma and implicitly also bringing about the final victory over all evil creatures is present in the Gathas (Y 48.12, see above 2d.), but is conceived of there as a collective work of the Saōsīants. The concept of the Saošiante as it is reflected in the Gathas is a concept of numerous Saōsīants: the more the better. This concept is continued also in the Younger Avesta, e.g. in Y 70.4, where ‘the truthful men’ pray to be Saošiante and to be victorious. But the mingling of the religious Saošiante-concept with the heroic tradition of the myth of the hero slaying a dragon changed the religious concept of Saošiante by introducing a new semantic component not present in the Gathas: it is the idea of a single Saošiante who brings about the final and exter defeat of Evil and who is therefore called ‘victorious’. The idea of a single Saošiante as a final World Saviour bringing about exter destruction of Evil is a post-Gathic development. An eschatological myth of a victorious Saošiante named Aštuaŋ.ara was fully developed in south-eastern Iran in the region of the river Haētumant and connected with the local places there. Thus the originally collective work of defeat of Evil brought about by all Saošiante of the Gathas gradually becomes in the Younger Avesta the work of a single person, of a heroic man, a final World Saviour who is to become the Sōsyants of the Pahlavi texts.

References


