



AHLOMŌG

AHLOMŌG, Middle Persian form of Younger Avestan *ašəmaoya-* “one who produces confusion of Truth,” a term applied to Iranian priests who deviated from Zoroastrian doctrine. Its use may have developed with the spread of Zoroastrian belief and practice through Iran, since there continued to exist ancient *daiva*-worshipping rites incompatible with the orthodoxy of the magian hierarchy. The *ašəmaoyas* are listed among the archetypal enemies of the Mazda-worshipping religion (Y. 9.18, 31) and most closely associated with *sāstars* “tyrants,” presumably their patrons (Y. 61.4, 65.8; Yt. 3.7; Vd. 21.1). They are described as “non-righteous and life-destroying, knowing the words of this religion, not observing by means of deeds” (Y. 9.31). Their non-orthodoxy is further specified by their condition “without temporal lord, without spiritual lord” (Yt. 13.105). The *Vidēvdād*, besides its expected depiction of *ašəmaoyas* as hostile to the righteous creations (5.36-38, 21.1), notes that they practice purification, but not according to the rites of the Mazda-worshipping religion (9.52). It forbids the sharing of *haoma-* or sacrificial food with them.

Consistent with the religious problems of the Sasanian period and later, *ahlomōgs* are frequently mentioned in Middle Persian texts. The priest Kirdēr, in developing the Sasanian church structure, disciplined them: “The *ahlomōgs* and fornicators who, among the mages, did not maintain themselves correctly in the Mazda-worshipping religion and the services of the gods—those I punished and rebuked until I made them better” (his Ka’ba-ye Zardošt inscription, lines 13-14, publ. in M. Sprengling, *Third Century Iran, Sapor and*



Kartir, Chicago, 1953; his Naqš-e Rostam inscription, lines 43-44, publ. in *Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum*, Part III, Vol. II, portfolio II, London, 1957). In the Pahlavi texts, chiefly the Avesta translations and the *Dēnkard*, *ahlomōgs* are of two types. Unobservant or ignorant *hērbeds* and *daswards* compose one sort (Y. 9.31, Vd. 9.52); practitioners of deviant rites and doctrines form the other. These bring confusion to the Mazda-worshippers and harm the religion (Y. 32.11, 13; Dk [Sanjana] 7.6.3, 9.53.1). The aberrations (from an orthodox Sasanian point of view) of such *ahlomōgs* are not precisely described. The Mazdakites are branded as such (*Dēnkard* [Dk] 7.6.21); this usage may either show a broadening of the term or indicate that the Mazdakite movement subverted a number of the Zoroastrian clergy. It is not surprising that secretiveness is regarded as characteristic of the second type of *ahlomōg*. A gloss on “secret doctrines” (Y. 48.3) says: “speech in secret which, in *ahlomōg*-fashion, they speak as a remedy.” Dk. 9.40.10-11 warns against this danger. But, whatever the strife occasioned by the *ahlomōgs* now or in the future (*Zand ī Wahman Yasn*, ed. B. T. Anklesaria, Bombay, 1957, 9.13-14), the ultimate triumph of the Good Religion over them is regarded, in the Pahlavi books, as assured (Dk. 9.52.2).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Given in the text.