



BRAHM

BRAHM “manner, fashion, costume, etc.,” Middle Persian word borrowed in Parthian and Manichean Sogdian (*prxm*); Book Pahlavi also has the derived form *brahmag* (see Boyce, p. 28; Gershevitch, p. 9 n. 1; MacKenzie, p. 19; Nyberg, *Manual II*, p. 49; Sundermann, 1985, 1. b65). The word is rarely used alone; most often it occurs in conventional phrases, paired with words like *čihrag* “form,” *karišn* “(beautiful) shape,” *ēwēnag* “way, mode” (Parth. *abdēn*, Sogd. *ṇ’yk*), *gōnag* “manner, way,” and *xrad* “wisdom.” Whether or not *brahm* is descended from Old Persian *brazman-* (see *aša 2*: Old Persian *arta*—or rather from the dialect form **bradman*, see Henning, p. 109; Gershevitch, loc. cit.), is a matter for debate. If *brazman-* was a cultic term, possibly meaning “rite” or something similar, the limited and apparently redundant usage of *brahm* might be explained, but the older term may instead have meant *barsom*, which would leave open the question of *brahm*.

In Middle Persian and Parthian texts *brahm* is used in connection with human beings, referring either to mode of behavior, “demeanor, propriety, ceremony” (Henning, 1944, pp. 115f.), or to outward appearance, “form, gracefulness; fashion, costume, dress.” Examples of the former meaning are found in both Zoroastrian and Manichean texts: cf. *ēwēnag brahmag ī mēnōgīg kār rāyēnišn* “the way and manner to organize spiritual work” (*Zādsprahm* 31.5); *kē-š kēš jādūgīh ud dēn frēftārīh ud āmōz dušīh ud brahm nihānrawištīh* “whose [i.e. Mani’s] faith is sorcery, whose religion is deception, whose teaching is evil, and whose behavior is secrecy” (*Škand gumānīg wizār* 10.60, pp. 116-17); *pad was gōnag ud brahm* “in many ways and manners” (Boyce, 1951, p. 911); *až*



harwīn brahm “in all ways” (Boyce, 1954, pp. 120f.). Meanings related to outward appearance occur most often in Manichean texts: cf. *kū tā-š’ čihrag ēwēnag brahm [dīd bawād]* “(show her face) so that her shape, form, and appearance may be seen” (*Zādsprahm* 18.1; tr. Sohn, p. 135); *pad ān ristag ud brahm* (Bailey, *Zoroastrian Problems*, p. 161 n. 4); *čwāyōn wār sistag ke . . . hō brahm wiganēd* “as a broken rose . . . whose grace is destroyed” (*Angad rōšnān* Ia.4b, Boyce, 1954, pp. 120-21). *Brahm* also appears to have the more concrete meaning “costume, garment” in both groups of texts: cf. *pad ān ī dahibedān brahm* “in the costume of rulers” (*Ardā Wirāz-nāmag* 14.4), *pad xwarāsānīg brahmag* (ms. *nlhmk*) “in Khorasanian costume” (*Kār-nāmag* 13.4); *ān mōg ī spēd . . . [ī] Zarēr brahmag* “those white shoes . . . , Zarēr’s costume” (*Ayādgār ī Zarērān* par. 106, p. 38); *u-šān . . . brahm à andar niyust ud à bēh paḍ . . . razmyāhīg čihrag āgas būd ahēnd* “they . . . clothed themselves in a garment of joy within and without . . . they appeared in the shape of warriors” (*Mir. Man.* III, a 73, p. 6 [85 f]); *pad šahrdārān brahm abdēn* can mean “in the costume/way and manner of rulers” or “in the customary dress of kings” (thus Henning, 1944, p. 90). It should be noted that, whereas other words meaning “dress” are often qualified by descriptive adjectives, *brahm(ag)* usually is not.

In both Zoroastrian and Manichean contexts *brahm* designates the form or appearance assumed by earthly or divine beings, alternating with *paymōg* or *paymōzan* (Man. Parth. *padmōžan*) “clothing, garment.” (For the Zoroastrian texts, see Zaehner, 1955, pp. 122, 333 [*Bundahišn*], 374-77 [*Dēnkard*]; on the role of the garment, see *ibid.*, pp. 118-25, as well as Gnoli, 1983.) In the *Dēnkard* it is stated that Ohrmazd created four powers represented by costumes: the *brahm* of priesthood (*āsrōnīh*), tyranny (*sāstārīh*), warriorhood (*artēštārīh*), and self-will (*xwad-dōšagīh*), which were the garments (*paymōg*) of gods or demons. This statement may be compared with that in the *Bundahišn* to the effect that, after the assault of the evil spirit, Ohrmazd donned a white robe (*paymōzan*) with the stamp of priesthood, which was the costume (*brahmag*) of the wise (i.e., priesthood); the Good Way donned a robe (*jāmag*) of gold and silver, adorned with precious stones, the costume of the warrior; and, finally, the firmament donned a dark blue robe (*paymōzan*), the costume of the husbandman. Henning has shown that in Manichean terminology *brahm* was also used to designate the symbolic garment, as for instance in Parthian *brahm ud čihrag izwašt* “He (Christ) changed His form and appearance” (M 24 R 8 = M 812 V 3-4, referring to the assumption of human form by Christ, Henning, p. 112, cf. the use of *padmōžan* in another passage, quoted by Henning, *ibid.*). See Arnold-Döben, pp. 151-53, for the very complex Manichean garment



symbolism (earthly body, celestial “figure of light,” the elements of light, Christ’s docetic appearance).

Among derivatives and compounds involving *brahm* the following may be noted: In *Zādsprahm* (32.1) it is said that the good have a *hambrahmagīh* (someone of the same appearance) in the spiritual world (*pad mēnōg*). Compare the statements, *ibid.*, 30.48, that the *dēn* that meets the deceased in the beyond is clad in a dress (*paymōg-ēw paymōzihēd*) corresponding to his deeds in life. The word *hambrahmagīh* recalls the word *hangirb* “someone of the same shape” used by the high priest Kirdēr in his inscriptions at Naqš-e Rostam and Sar Mašhad (a.d. 2nd half of 3rd century) to designate his alter ego, who is traveling in the world of the dead (Skjærvø, *passim*). Other derivatives: *abēbrahm* “pointless,” lit. “formless” (*Škand-gumānīg wizār* 11.329), *brahmagīh* “(good) behavior” (*Dēnkard*, ed. Madan, p. 59.1; Menasce, 1973, p. 74 “le bon usage”), *brahmāwend* “pleasant” (*Mahr-nāmag* l. 314, ed. Müller, p. 19), *hāmbrahm* “of the same shape” (unpublished ms. M 728 V 17), *nazd-brahmīhātar* “most nearly connected (with)” (*Dēnkard*, ed. Madan, p. 459.9; Zaehner, 1955, p. 430), *wadbrahm* “unpleasant” (Boyce, 1975, p. 57 text *w*).

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