



MALKŪS

MALKŪS, a malignant demon in Zoroastrian [Pahlavi literature](#). *Bundahišn* 33.36 (Pakzad, 2005, p. 371) describes Malkus as being of pestilential nature and as a descendent of the Turanian Brādarōrēš, who killed [Zarathustra](#) (Boyce, 1975, p. 290). *Dēnkard* III, 71 represents Malkus as an adversary figure, and *Dēnkard* V, 3.3 (Amouzgar and Tafazzoli, pp. 32 f.) lists him with some other adversary figures, [Alaksandar](#), [Agrēhrat](#), and [Dahāk](#). In the *Pahlavi rivāyat ī dādestān ī dēnīg* (pars. 10-21; Williams, I, pp. 172-77; II, pp. 230 f.) The depiction of Malkus acquires some extensions: at the beginning of the fifth century of Ušēdar's millennium (see [SAOŠYANT](#)), there will be a terrible winter. At the time of the winter, the upholders of the Zoroastrian religion will recommend to the people that they store provisions. For three subsequent years, the people will do so, but it will not rain. In the fourth year, when the unbelieving people will refuse to do so, the winter of Malkus will start, and in the three subsequent years there will be, respectively, only six, four, and two interruptions of it. In the fourth year, it will snow ceaselessly for seven months.

According to most Pahlavi accounts of Malkus (*Bundahišn* 33.36, *Dādestān ī dēnīg* 36.80 [Jaafari-Dehaghi, pp. 140 f.], *Mēnōy ī Xrad* 25.24, *Dēnkard* VII, 9.3 f. [Molé, pp. 92 f.], TD4a, pp. 608.13-609.11, *Ayādgār ī Jāmāspīg*, 17.4 [Agostini, pp. 85 f., 114]) and also to New Persian Zoroastrian literature (*Saddar Bundahišn* 35.21-5 [Dhabhar, 1909, pp. 104 f.], Malkus's winter (*Pahlavi Vd.* 2.22 [Moazami, 2014, p. 57], *Dēnkard* VII, 1.24) is the calamity which promoted Jam to build his *vara*. The question is whether the myth of *vara* and that of



Malkus's winter were connected already in the Avestan period. A. Hultgård (p. 115) suggests that they were originally two different myths, first tied together in the Pahlavi commentary of the *Wīdēwdād*. In the Avestan texts, the name of the demon has been attested as *mahrkūša*- "destroyer" (Bartholomae, 1904, p. 1147) only in one Avestan fragment, FrW 8.2 (Darmesteter, 1883, pp. 203-5; 1893, p. 19). The similarity of FrW 8.2 to *Vd.* 2.22 on the phraseological level (FrW 8.2 *stanza staxra he mārətō zaiia* ~ *Vd.* 2.22 *yahmat haca staxrō mrūrō ziiā*) allows one to conclude that the connection of both myths could date back to the Avestan period.

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