



# MARRIAGE II. NEXT OF KIN

## MARRIAGE IN

### ZOROASTRIANISM

---

#### MARRIAGE

##### ii. Next-Of -Kin Marriage In Zoroastrianism

In Zoroastrian Middle Persian (Pahlavi) texts, the term *xwēdōdah* (Av. *xʷaētuuadaθa*) is said to refer to marital unions of father and daughter, mother and son, or brother and sister (next-of-kin or close-kin marriage, nuclear family incest), and to be one of the most pious actions possible. The models for these unions were found in the Zoroastrian cosmogony. The meaning and function of the Avestan term is not clear from the contexts.

To what extent *xwēdōdah* was practiced in Sasanian Iran and before, especially outside the royal and noble families (“dynastic incest”) and, perhaps, the clergy, and whether practices ascribed to them can be assumed to be characteristic of the general population is not clear (see, e.g., Mitterauer, pp. 235-36). Evidence from [Dura Europos](#), however, combined with that of the Jewish and Christian sources citing actual cases under the Sasanians, strengthen the evidence of the Zoroastrian texts. In the post-Sasanian Zoroastrian literature, *xwēdōdah* is said to refer to marriages between cousins, which have always been relatively common (see Polak, I, pp. 200-1;



Darmesteter, 1891, p. 367; Givens and Hirschman; Herrenschmidt, 1994; Bittles et al., p. 75). When Anquetil Duperron visited the Parsis in the mid-18th century, he was told the term referred to marriage with cousins (see below), and, according to James Darmesteter (1891, pp. 366-68), it was rare for a Parsi to marry out of the family; marriage between cousins (a marriage made in heaven) was both practical and normal, while incestuous marriage was illegal.

The longest Pahlavi texts on *xwēdōdah* are chap. 8 of the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* accompanying the *Dādestān ī dēnīg* (ed. Williams, I, pp. 48-61: text; II, pp. 10-17: translation, pp. 126-37: commentary) and book 3 chap. 80 of the *Dēnkard*, which purports to be an *ēhrbed*'s answer to a Jew's questions about the *xwēdōdah* and contains a lengthy discussion of the meaning of the term (ed. Dresden, pp. [53]-[59]; tr. de Menasce, pp. 85-90; see below for additional references).

*Literature and studies.* There are few in-depth studies, and most modern reference works cover the topic summarily (e.g., Asmussen, p. 938). Most of the Pahlavi texts concerning *xwēdōdah* were gathered with comments in Edward W. West's "The Meaning of Khvêtûk-das or Khvêtûdâd," in idem, 1882, pp. 389-430. Surveys and brief references include Friedrich Spiegel, 1855, p. 687, and 1871-78, III, pp. 678-79; van den Gheyn, pp. 232-34; Darmesteter, 1891 and 1892; Justi, pp. 434-37 (with references to earlier literature); Gray, 1915; Dalla Volta, chap. IV (pp. 22-41); Mazahéri, chap. II (pp. 113-31); Choksy, 1989, pp. 89-90, and 2002, pp. 77, 91, 129; Morony, 2005, pp. 610-11; Panaino, pp. 252-56; and the standard handbooks on Zoroastrianism (e.g., Boyce, 1975, p. 254 and n. 24). Good modern surveys with discussions are Macuch, 1991 (the most comprehensive); Herrenschmidt, 1994; and d'Arx. See also the commentary in Williams, 1990, II, pp. 126-37, and Shaked's brief, but pertinent, remarks (pp. 119-24). For the mythology, see, e.g., Yarshater, pp. 417, 472; Bucci (footnote 1) contains a comprehensive bibliography.

On the Achaemenids, see Boyce, 1982, *passim*; Brosius (with critical review of the sources: Cambyses, pp. 46-47, Artaxerxes II, pp. 66-67, 69); Adamson (dynastic incest). On the Seleucids and Parthians, see Anahit Perikhanian, p. 644; Colpe, p. 825; Boyce, 1979, p. 97; Boyce, Grenet, and Beck, p. 303 and *passim*; Wiesehöfer, pp. 84-85. On the Sasanians, see Christensen, 1944, pp. 323-25; Boyce, 1979, p. 111; Wiesehöfer, pp. 180-81. For Sasanian law, see de Menasce, 1962, pp. 82-88; Hjerrild, pp. 167-204 (translations of the *Rivāyats* need updating). On the Parsis, see Boyce, 1979, pp. 174-75; Stausberg, I, pp. 52-53 (with biblio. in n. 98), 355; III, p. 422.



On the Classical sources, see Moulton, 1913, p. 204; Gray, 1915, p. 457a; Beck in Boyce, Grenet, and Beck, pp. 520-21; de Jong, 1997, pp. 424-32; Bucci; and Olalla García (comparing the Pahlavi and Classical sources). On Roman law in late Antiquity, see Chadwick; and Lee. On the Syriac sources, see de Menasce, 1938, pp. 593-601.

On the evidence for next-of-kin marriages in documents from Dura Europos dated 344 Seleucid era = 32-33 C.E. (Cumont) and from Roman Egypt, see Hopkins, and Scheidel, 1966, and 2005 (further refs., p. 106 nn. 4, 11).

On the Arabic sources, see Gray, 1915, p. 457; van Gelder, pp. 36-39 (very brief survey of the Iranian data; the Pahlavi texts are cited from West; later editions and translations are ignored). On the South- and East-Asian sources, see Silk, 2008a-c.

Travelers' accounts provide little information. Adam Olearius (1603-71), for instance, who traveled in Persia in the years 1635-39, mentions the levirate, but was unable to confirm the claim of the Classical authors that sons would "meddle with" their mothers, or brothers with sisters (VI, p. 243 for the year 1637). In the mid-19th century, Jakob Polak observed consanguineous marriages and noted that he observed no deleterious effects of such unions (1865, I, pp. 200-1).

Anthropological studies are few and of limited value. James Slotkin's study was published in an anthropological journal, but it is only a brief collection of non-Iranian and Iranian sources to show that there have been societies without an incest taboo. He was criticized by Ward Goodenough, who cited Ernst Herzfeld's opinion (see below; on both of these, see Herrenschildt, 1994, p. 113, and Spooner, p. 53). Michael Fischer accepted Sanjana's arguments that the texts do not refer to next-of-kin marriages (see below) and pointed out that allegation of such marriages was a common form of abuse in the Middle East (1973, pp. 72-73; idem, 1978, pp. 198, 211, n. 17; see also Mitterauer, and Scheidel, 1996, on the incest taboo with references to the *xwēdōdah*, and Bittles, 2005, pp. 47-48, on dynastic and non-dynastic incest among Zoroastrians). On consanguineous marriage in South Asia, see the articles by Alan H. Bittles et al. (e.g., 2001). On the incest taboo and the "Westermarck Effect" (with reference to Parsi marriages), see Bittles, 2005, and Scheidel, 2005. Arthur Wolf presents a survey of opinions among the 20th-century anthropologists on the correlation of inbreeding and genetic disorders and the origin of the "incest taboo" (in Wolf and Durham, ed.,



Introd.). Gregory Leavitt, in the chapter on “Institutionalized Incest Practices,” cites only Slotkin for ancient Iran (p. 135, earlier published in 1990).

On the attempts, especially by Parsis, in the wake of West’s 1882 discussion in the late 19th and 20th centuries to challenge the historical reality of the *xwēdōdah*, see, for instance, Sunjana, 1888; Katrak, 1965; for responses to these attempts, see, for instance, Darmesteter, 1891; Casartelli, 1884, pp. 148-50, tr. pp. 156-60; idem, 1889; Mazahéri, pp. 121-22; Macuch, 1991, pp. 141 n. 4; on all these, see below.

*The term.* The Young Avestan forms are the nouns (masculine) *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa* and (feminine) *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaiθī* (*Videvdad* 8.13) and the adjectives *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa* (*Vispered* 3.3, etc., with *yuuānəm* “the youth”) and (feminine) *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθā* (*Yasna* 12.9, etc., with *daēnā*). The 19th-century spelling *qaētvadatha* (with *q* for Avestan *x<sup>v</sup>*) and similar spellings occasionally resurface in modern literature.

The first part of this compound appears to be *x<sup>v</sup>aētu* “family” (or similar), commonly thought to be derived from *x<sup>v</sup>aē-* “own” with the suffix *-tu-*, although this is not entirely unproblematic (see below). The second part, *vadaθa*, is today commonly thought to be derived from a verb *vada-* (from *\*vadh-*) “lead into marriage,” related to words in other Iranian and Indo-European languages denoting marriage or a marriage partner (cf. Old Indic *vadhū* “wife,” Av. *vaδū*; see *Frahang ī oīm* 2f, ed. Reichelt, p. 185; *AirWb.*, col. 1345), Pahlavi *wayūg* (Pers. *bayu*) “bride”; Avestan *vaδut* “nubile” (*Yašt* 13.141); Pahlavi *Psalm* *wayūdag* “bridal chamber” (*Ps.* 132 can.; ed. Andreas, p. 112); English *wed*. This etymology was proposed by Karl Geldner (1877, p. 21 n. 1) and accepted by Christian Bartholomae (*AirWb.*, col. 1860) and Emile Benveniste (1962, pp. 34-38; idem, 1969, I, pp. 239-40, with Indo-European cognates), after which it became the common opinion among Western scholars. There is no (unambiguous) present stem *\*vadha-* in Vedic or *\*vada-* in Avestan from the root *vadh*, however (on *vadəmnō*, see below); in Avestan “to lead” is *vāδaya*, and *upa.vāδaiia-* is “to lead (into marriage)” (*Videvdad* 14.15 with *x<sup>v</sup>aṇha vā duγda* “sister or daughter” plus *nāiriθβanāi* “for wifehood/marriage”), and *uzuuāδaiia-* is “to lead out (of the father’s house)” (*Yašt* 17.59, with *kainiiō* “young women”; *AirWb.*, cols. 1343-44).

This Vedic *vadh-*, Avestan *vad-*, should not be confused with Vedic *vah-* “convey,” Avestan *vaz-* (Indo-European *\*weǵh-*), with passive forms *uhyā-* (*Rigveda* 10.17.1 and 10.85.13, in descriptions of wedding ceremonies) and



*vaziia-* (*Yasna* 53.5, see below).

The Pahlavi form is today commonly given as *xwēdōdah*, but *xwēdūdah* is also possible (the outcome of older *-uwa-* being uncertain). In the earliest post-Avestan attestation of the term (inscriptions of Kerdīr, ca. 270 C.E. [see [KARTĪR](#)]; see below), the word is spelled <*hwytwd'hy*>. In Pahlavi, the word is spelled regularly as <*hwytwds, -dyh*>, perhaps the older spelling, more similar to the Avestan form, or <*hwytwkds*> (with <*wk*> = *-ō-* or *-ū-*). Spellings with <*dt*> for *-dah* are found occasionally (e.g., *Videvdad* 8.13 in ms. K1 fol. 163r), while <*d't*> is common in the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* and also found in the *Dādestān ī dēnīg* and the *Mēnōy xrad*. The *Persian Rivāyats* have forms such as *ketudat*, *kvedyudat*, *kvetudat*.

The indigenous Pahlavi tradition analyzed the term *xwēdōdah* as “giving of/to one’s own,” an analysis that was also adopted by the Parsis (see “*xwēdōdah* in the Pahlavi texts,” below), but an etymological analysis as *x<sup>v</sup>aētūua-daθa* is less likely because of the morphologically isolated *\*daθa*. It was adopted by Darmesteter, however, who criticized Geldner’s *x<sup>v</sup>aētu-vadaθa* as being too logical and too much in agreement with the meaning (Darmesteter, 1883, II, p. 37) and preferred parsing the Avestan form as *x<sup>v</sup>aētūua-daθa* “following the manuscripts” (*Avesta*, tr. Darmesteter, 1892, I, p. 126 n. 1). Similarly, Ferdinand Justi argued that Pahlavi *xwēdōdah* pointed to an Avestan form *\*x<sup>v</sup>aētūuō.daθa*, which would also rule out Geldner’s parsing (Justi, p. 434 n. 5), while Bartholomae accepted Geldner’s etymology, pointing out that the Pahlavi forms could not be used against it (*AirWb.*, col. 1860).

*The mythical origin and function of xwēdōdah and the three proto-xwēdōdahs.*

According to the Pahlavi texts, the *xwēdōdah* was initiated by Ohrmazd at the time of the creation and will connect and guide humanity through the period of the Mixture, when good and evil vie for supremacy, and on to the *fraškerd* (see [FRAŠŌ.KERĒTI](#)) when the world will again become the way Ohrmazd had originally made it (cf. Molé, 1963, p. 123). In *Yasna* 45.4, *Spəntā Ārmaiti* is said to be Ahura Mazdā’s daughter, but details of how Ahura Mazdā sired her are found nowhere. In the *Bundahišn* (ed. Anklesaria, chap. 1.53, etc.), for instance, all the heavenly beings are simply said to have been “fashioned” (*brēhēnīd*) by Ohrmazd, including himself. On the other hand, Ohrmazd is also said to have been both father and mother of the creation; its mother, when he nurtured it in the world of thought (*mēnōy*), and its father, when he transferred it to the world of the living (*gētīy*; ed. Anklesaria, chap. 1.59). In



the *Dādestān ī dēnīg* chap. 65 [64] about the first *xwēdōdah* of Maši and Mašyānī (the first two humans, see below), it is also said that the creator (= Ohrmazd) felt pleasure (*urwāhmenīh*) at the “action” (*warzišn*) from which all the creations were made (ed. Anklesaria, p. 127 [64]), where “action” is a word that can refer to a sexual act, as in Pahlavi *Yasna* 45.4 (below), but is not unambiguous. The author of *Dēnkard* (5.18.3) says people should perform it because it is well established that the creator did so when he made the creations (ed. Amouzgar and Tafazzoli, pp. 56-57).

According to the commentary on *Yasna* 45.4 in the *Warštmānsr nask* in *Dēnkard* book 9 (see SÜDGAR and WARŠTMĀNSR NASK), before producing [Gayōmard](#) in the world of the living, Ohrmazd and Spandarmad, by their first *xwēdōdah*, had produced (*warzīd*) Wahman as their first child (*zahag*), whereby (*pad ān warzišnīh*) the two creations were set in motion, people multiplied and were “connected (by their lineages)” (*paywast*) to *fraškerd*, and Spandarmad received the Fortune (*xwarrah*) of motherhood; the “lineage” (*paywast*) of Wahman is described as a sequence of various forms of light (*Dēnkard* 9.38.6; ms. *DH*, p. 223; ed. Madan, II, p. 855; tr. West, 1892, p. 274). The other Life-giving Immortals ([Aməša Spəntas](#)) were then, presumably, the offspring of Spandarmad and Wahman, as suggested in *Vispered* 11.12, where they are said to have been “measured(?)” (*māta*) and “become” (*būta*) from Vohu Manah, where the Pahlavi translation understood this as explaining their “mother-hood” (*mādarīh*) and their “becoming” (*bawīšnīh*) from Wahman. Elsewhere in the Avesta, the seven Life-giving Immortals are said to have [Ahura Mazdā](#) as their common father (*Yašt* 13.83 = 19.16).

In the “Zurvanite” accounts of the beginnings, we also find speculations about Ohrmazd and his mother. Thus, in the Syriac *Acts of Ādurhormizd and Anāhīd*, the author polemizes against the story he has heard that Ohrmazd’s intercourse with his mother produced the sun, dogs, pigs, asses, and cattle (ed. Bedjan, II, 1891, p. 36; cf. Nöldeke; de Menasce, 1938, p. 594; Zaehner, pp. 435-36). In the Arabic work on the true religion by the Syrian Christian Arab Abu Qorra (755-after 829), in the chapter on the *majus*, Magi (pp. 201-3), Zurvan is said to have had a wife, and, on the advice of the devil, Ohrmazd sired the sun with his mother and then the moon with his sister, providing a model for humans (de Menasce, 1938, p. 601; Abu Qorra, p. 202, sec. 15).

According to the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* (ed. Williams, chap. 8a), three primordial *xwēdōdahs* provide the mythical prototypes for the human ones. That of a father and daughter producing a son is like that of Ohrmazd and Spandarmad



producing Gayōmard; that of a son and a mother producing a brother and sister is like that of Gayōmard and Spandarmad producing Maši and Mašyānī; and that of a brother and sister producing further pairs of brothers and sisters is like that of Maši and Mašyānī. These three were extolled by Ohrmazd as he explained to Zarathustra the advantages of *xwēdōdah*, calling it the greatest good deed of all. Accordingly, when Zarathustra came into the world, he exhorted mankind to praise the *dēn* and to practice *xwēdōdah* and was exhorted by Ohrmazd to practice it himself, thus setting an example for all to follow (*Pahlavi Rivāyat*, ed. Williams, chap. 8m-n).

In the *Dādestān ī dēnīg*, it is stated that Maši and Mašyānī were the first couple to perform *xwēdōdah*, whereby the lineage (*paywand*) and “fullness” (*purrawišnīh*) of all mankind was established (chap. 65, tr. West, pp. 199-200; ed. Anklesaria, p. 127 [chap. 64]), but also that, by establishing *xwēdōdah* in the beginning, the lineage of mankind would continue (*paywandīhēd*) until *fraškerd* (chap. 77.4-6; tr. West, p. 225; ed. Anklesaria, p. 147 [chap. 76]; see also chap. 36.68-69, ed. Jaafari-Dehgani, pp. 136-37; tr. West, pp. 105-6 [chap. 37.82-84]). Also, in *Dēnkard* book 7, chap. 1.9-10, Maši and Mašyānī are said to be the first offspring of Gayōmard and to have praised Ohrmazd and gone about their duties (*xwēškārīh*) and performed *xwēdōdah*, which would greatly benefit the world by establishing linkages by birth (*zāyišn-paywandišn*), creating fullness among the creatures of the world (ed. Dresden, p. [471]; ed. Madan, pp. 592-93; tr. Molé, pp. 4-5; similarly in *Dēnkard* 3.80, ed. Dresden, p. [54]; ed. Madan, pp. 73-74; tr. de Menasce, p. 86; see also *Dēnkard* 8.13; ed. Dresden, p. 109; ed. Madan, p. 688).

Somewhat differently, according to the *Dādestān ī dēnīg*, Ohrmazd made from the endless lights a form of fire (*āsrō-kerb*), inside which he made the living thing (*gētīy*) called man (*mardōm*). It was injured by the Lie (*druz*), and life became mortality (*margōmandīh*), whence the name *gayō-mard*, which means “life prone to death” (*zīndagīh ī mīrāg*). When Gayōmard died, his semen flowed into the earth, where it was protected by the gods and wherefrom a human son and daughter grew up, who, in due time, united and bore children (*Dādestān ī dēnīg*, chap. 64; tr. West, pp. 197-98; ed. Anklesaria, p. 127 [chap. 63]; cf. *Pahlavi Rivāyat*, ed. Williams, chap. 46.36-38).

The insistence on the connectedness of the linkages or lineages (*paywand*-) through *xwēdōdah* from Gayōmard to *fraškerd* seems to imply that, rather than the generations simply succeeding one another, the generations of the descendants of Gayōmard are intertwined in interlocking loops, as it were,



and thus gaps are avoided, and “fullness” (*purr-rawišnīh*) achieved, literally a rendering of Avestan *pourutāt-* “many-ness,” but understood as going forth to fill the time and space of human existence in this world with their offspring.

*Xwēdōdah* in the *Old Avesta* and its Pahlavi commentaries.

On *Yasna* 45.4, where Spəntā Ārmaiti is said to be Ahura Mazdā’s daughter, and its Pahlavi commentaries, see below.

*Yasna* 53.4. In the *Old Avesta*, the word *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa* itself is not found, but, in *Yasna* 53.4, we find *x<sup>v</sup>aētauuē* “for the *x<sup>v</sup>aētu*,” followed by *vadəmnō* in almost identical position (second line) in *Yasna* 53.5. Since *x<sup>v</sup>aētu* here occurs outside of its usual context of what is commonly thought to be social divisions (*x<sup>v</sup>aētu*, *vərəzəñna*, *airiīaman* [and *daχīiu*]), this is not unlikely to be an encrypted reference to the *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa* of Zarathustra and his daughter Pourucistā, which is mentioned explicitly in *Yasna* 53.4 by “to her father and master = husband (*fəδrōi ... paiθīiāēcā*)” just before *x<sup>v</sup>aētauuē*. According to the Pahlavi rendering of *Yasna* 53.4, Pōručist is to give (*bē dahišn*) herself in “wife-hood” (*tan pad zan-īh*) to his “father-hood” (*pidar-īh*), as well as “to her own ones” (*ō xwēšān = x<sup>v</sup>aētauuē*), that is, to Jāmāsp (thought to be implied in *ašaoṇī ašauuabiiō* “an orderly woman to orderly men,” Pahlavi *ahlaw Pōručist ō ōy ahlaw Jāmāsp*). The syntax and meaning of *vadəmnō* is debated; Geldner thought it meant “the one who marries,” which was disputed by Bartholomae (*AirWb.*, col. 1345), who rendered it as “admonishing” (*mahnend*). After Humbach (1956, p. 75; idem, 1959, I, p. 158: *Brautführer*) and Benveniste (1969, I, pp. 239-44, see above), Geldner’s interpretation was usually followed (Kellens and Pirart: *paranymphe*; Insler: *bridegroom*, but Humbach later changed his mind, pointing out that “lead in marriage” is Avestan *upa.vāδaiīa-*, and analyzed *vadəmnō* as the present participle of \**vada-*, Vedic *vada-* “speak” (1991, II, pp. 242-43: “conversing [with you]”; Humbach and Ichaporia, p. 103: “By speaking to you”). The word can also be compared directly with Old Indic *vadmán* “speaker” (used of Agni, the fire) from *vad-* “speak,” which strengthens the possibility that *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa* may contain \**vada-* “speak” and mean “pronouncing/announcing (somebody) as belonging to one’s own (family)” or, conceivably, one’s appurtenance to God. This is, in fact, what seems to have been expressed in *Yasna* 39.5, where the worshippers utter the phrase “we circumambulate you with the own’ness (*x<sup>v</sup>aē-tāt*) of the good *x<sup>v</sup>aētu*,” which, according to the Pahlavi tradition, means “I am yours (*tō xwēš*), I am in your possession (*xwēšīh*).”



That *Yasna* 53.4 refers to *xwēdōdah* is stated explicitly in the commentary on this strophe in the *Waršt mānsr nask* in *Dēnkard* 9.45.4, which is about the praise of Pōručist, daughter of Zarathustra, who, loving the *dēn*, followed its advice and gave her body in wife-hood (*zan-īh*) to Zarathustra and performed (*warzīd*) work (*kār*) and respect (*tarsagāhīh*), then did (*kerd*) wife-hood and respect for Jāmāsp (ms. DH, p. 235; ed. Madan, II, pp. 870-71). Similarly, the commentary on the strophe in the *Bag nask* in *Dēnkard* 9.67.7, 9 (where Jāmāsp is not mentioned) says the text is about him who gives his daughter in daughter-hood (*duxtar-īh*) to her father and that, by giving a daughter to her father in wife-hood, one also teaches his daughter and wives respect for father and husband; also about how a woman may be a good house-wife (*kadag-bānūg*; ed. Dresden, p. [632]; ed. Madan, II, p. 935; tr. West, pp. 382-83).

In these texts, the terms *warzīd* and *kār*, besides their generic, “unmarked,” references, also have the “marked” references to sexual acts; for instance, see above and compare *Āfrīnagān ī Gāhānbār* 4: *kē-šān andar ān mādagān māyišn... warzīd estēd kū-š xwēdōdah kerd estēd* “who have ‘performed’ in desire of women, that is, he has performed *xwēdōdah*.” That the term “wife-hood” implied sex is clear from *Dēnkard* 8.31.6 (ed. Dresden, p. [563]; ed. Madan, p. 739; tr. West, p. 100) that a husband should admonish his wife when she says, “I am your wife, (but) I will not perform wife-hood for you” (*tō zan ham zanīh ī tō nē kunam*).

Reading *Yasna* 53.4 in the context of the Zoroastrian tradition, without preconceptions about (a historical) Zarathustra’s thoughts on the matter, one can only interpret “father and master/husband” as referring to the *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa*, probably encrypted in the text that follows. Moreover, *Yasna* 53.7 is commonly thought to refer to sexual activity, and the poem ends with a curse against the evil ones “of bad virility” (*dužuuarəšnah*; *AirWb.*, col. 760). Since *Yasna* 53 is the concluding poem of the *Old Avesta* and so, presumably, also of the Old Avestan cosmic regeneration ritual, it is likely to refer to the final actions: the (real or enacted) sexual coupling of the priest and his daughter. This act, being the re-performance in the world of the living of the primordial coupling of Ahura Mazdā and Spəntā Ārmaiti, heaven and earth (thus Gray, 1904, pp. 367-68), brings about their coupling in the world of thought, which, in turn, causes dawn to reappear and makes the existence (*ahu*) *fraša* (produces *fraškerd*), the purpose of the Old Avestan ritual (cf. *Yasna* 30.9, 34.15, 46.3, 19, 50.10-11). The name Pōru-cistā, meaning approximately “she who is noticed by many,” but also implies brilliance



(*ciθra*), may well be an epithet of dawn (cf. *Rigveda* 1.113.15-16, where dawn is characterized by the verb *cit-* and is said to bring the new *asu* “living existence” = Av. *ahu*). If so, then Pouru-cistā may have been born from her father’s “perfect sacrifice” or “best desire” (*vahištā išti*), and she unites with him now to make the new *ahu*, the new day and the new existence.

*Yasna* 45.4. The Pahlavi commentaries of the Avesta contain further references to *xwēdōdah* in *Yasna* 45.4, where Vohu Manah is said to be Ahura Mazdā’s son and Spəntā Ārmaiti his daughter, although the *Old Avesta* contains no further explicit indications that Spəntā Ārmaiti was the mother of his creations. In this strophe, the poet declares his intent to proclaim the best (one) of this existence (*aṇəuš ahiiā vahištəm*), namely Ahura Mazdā, father of Vohu Manah, who knows who established (*dāt*) it (*īm*, masc.). The Pahlavi translation, however, explains the best (thing) and what was established/given (*dād*) as the performing of *xwēdōdah*. Vohu Manah’s epithet “who invigorates” (*varəzaiiantō*) is interpreted as referring to when Ahura Mazdā “produced” (*warzīd*) Wahman by *xwēdōdah* to foster the creatures. Ārmaiti’s epithet here, “of good works/actions” (*hu-šiiāoθanā*, Pahlavi *hukunišn*) probably refers to the earth’s production of all good things for living beings, but can also have sexual meaning; the Pahlavi, in fact, comments that she did not shy (*abāz nē estād*) from *xwēdōdah*. The last line of the strophe states that Ahura Mazdā is “not to be deceived” (Pahl. *nē frēft*), which the Pahlavi again interprets to mean that Ahura Mazdā did not shy from *xwēdōdah*. The strophe concludes with the comment that, in the *dēn* of Ohrmazd, all action and justice (*kār ud dādestān*) is in that way (see above for the commentary on *Yasna* 45.4 in the *Waršt mānsr nask* in *Dēnkard* 9.60.2-5).

According to the commentary on *Yasna* 45 in the *Bag nask* (*Dk.* 9.60.1-3, ed. Dresden, pp. [622-23]; ed. Madan, II, pp. 921-22; tr. West, pp. 365-66), the poem is about the praise of the family, in particular of *xwēdōdah*, and about Spandarmad being Ohrmazd’s daughter. It further elaborates on the concept of *bowandag-menišnīh*, “complete thinking” (or similar), the Pahlavi rendering of Ārmaiti, which is said to be the child (*zahag*) of Ohrmazd’s *xrad* “wisdom” in the same way that Spandarmad is Ohrmazd’s child (*Dk.* 9.60.4).

*Yasna* 48. Another reference to *xwēdōdah* is made in *Yasna* 48.12. The *Waršt mānsr nask*, in its commentary on *Yasna* 48.12, which is regarded as dealing with eschatological matters, elaborates on the effect of *xwēdōdah*, presumably prompted by the reference to the “profit-bringers” (Pahlavi *sūdōmand*, Av. *saošiiants*), who were made to be the opponents of the one



possessed by Wrath (demon of the night sky, see below), and the occurrence of “acts” (*šiiāoθnāiš*, Pahlavi *pad kunišn*): brothers and sisters will perform *xwēdōdah*, and, before midday, beautiful children will be born, and, after midday, they will learn how to drive out the Lie (*druz*) from the previous Assault of evil upon Ohrmazd’s creation (*ēbgad*; *Dk.* 9.41.26-27; ms. DH, p. 230; ed. Madan, II, p. 864; tr. West, pp. 288-89), thus bringing about *fraškerd* (see above).

*Xwēdōdah in the Young Avesta.*

The *Avesta* does not provide any explicit details on the *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa*, and evaluating the Avestan evidence on the basis of the Pahlavi texts and the Sasanian tradition is problematic.

In *Videvdad* 8.13, Ahura Mazdā gives rules for what kind of urine (*maēsman*) can be used to wash a “corpse-cutter,” the mortician: urine from animals is fine, but not that from people, except men and women in *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa*. This injunction is reflected as late as in the *Persian Rivāyats*, where *k<sup>v</sup>etyudaṭ* is recommended to remove pollution (*riman*; tr. Dhabhar, pp. 292-93).

In the *Yasna*, the adjective *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθā* is applied to the *daēnā māzdaiiasniš*, the *daēnā* (see DĒN) of a (true) Mazdayasnian in a description of how she unharnesses her horses from the chariot and lays down her weapons, presumably after being victorious in the ritual competitive race (*Yasna* 12.9). The passage is in the conclusion of the *Frauarānē*, the *āstuiiē*, approximately: “I present my (good thoughts, words, deeds, *daēnā*) with praise,” in which the poet-sacrificer defines himself as someone who praises and sacrifices to Ahura Mazdā and states his adherence to the powers of good against those of evil, anticipating the result of the *yasna* and the victory over the powers of darkness (the suggestion that the passage may be an interpolation is baseless, e.g., Boyce, 1975, p. 254 n. 24; idem, 1982, p. 75). The past, present, and future victories of the *daēnās* of the sacrificers is also referred to in the *Yasna haptanḥāiti* (39.2), and the reference to *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθā* here is presumably to be seen in the same light as in *Yasna* 53, as part of the victory over the forces of darkness and evil (see above). For the connection between the *āstuiiē* and *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa*, cf. *xwēdōdah* and *āstawān* in Kerdīr’s inscription (see below).

The term *xwēdōdah dēn* is also in the Pahlavi text *Zand ī Wahman Yasn* (5.5), where it is said that the best of the righteous is the one who stands by the *dēn* of the Mazdayasnians and in whose family the *xwēdōdah dēn* goes forth (ed.



Cereti, pp. 106-6, 158-59; also in the Persian version in *Persian Rivāyats*, tr. Dhabhar, p. 466). The concept expressed here may be the same as that found in the Aramaic Arebsun inscription, which may date to Achaemenid times and in which the *dymzdysnš* (\**dainā-māzdayasniš*) is said to be sister and wife of Bēl, the king (see Boyce, 1982, p. 275).

In the *Videvdad sadeh*, *Vispered* 3 and 4 are inserted into *Yasna* 11, the last section of the *Praise of Haoma* (*Yasna* 9-11), which precedes the *Frauarānē*. The insertion comes at the point where Zarathustra utters his reverence (*nəmō*) to Haoma (*Yasna* 11.8), after which the text continues with a description of the “setting-up” (*āstaiia* “I shall now set up”) of the ritual components, beginning with the eight priests and followed by the three classes (see CLASS SYSTEM) and the masters of the three social divisions (*vīs*, *zaṇtu*, *daṅhu*). Next come the components of the family: the young man who thinks, speaks, performs good thoughts, words, deeds, and whose *dēn* is good; the *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa* (or: who is “set up” as adhering to *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa*); the house-lady of the house (*nmānahe nmānō.paθni*; *Vispered* 3.3), who is then “set up” as the “woman” (*nāirikā*) who has thought, spoken, performed more good thoughts, words, deeds, who is easy to instruct and whose authority (in the home) is correct, and who is a “Spəṅtā Ārmaiti” (*Vispered* 3.4). *Vispered* 3 is followed by the *āstuiē* of *Yasna* 12.8-9 (= *Vispered* 4.0). Note also that the list in *Vispered* 3 concludes with the “house-lady of the house,” Pahlavi “house-lady” (*kadag-bānūg*), which recalls the commentary on *Yasna* 53.4 in *Dēnkard* 9.67.9 (above).

The function of the “young man” in *Vispered* 3.3-4 is not clear, but the identification of the “woman” as Ārmaiti suggests that she is here in her role as the mother of all men, as stated, for instance, in the Pahlavi *Pand-nāmag*: “my mother is Spandarmad, and my father is Ohrmazd.” Since she is also Ahura Mazdā’s daughter, she is the “young man”’s mother and sister. The statement in *Yasna* 39.5, “we circumambulate you with the ownness (*x<sup>v</sup>aē-tāt*) of the good *x<sup>v</sup>aētu*” (see above), is similarly followed by “with (our) good Ārmaiti” (as is the reference to Pourucistā in *Yasna* 53.3, see above) and may carry the same implication.

The Pahlavi does not comment further on the *xwēdōdah* in these passages but it is not unlikely that the young man represents the first man (Pahlavi Gayōmard), whose semen fertilized Spandarmad, the earth, who bore the first human couple (see below). Thus, the ordering of the world and the success of the sacrifice would depend on the adherence to the model of *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa* given by Ahura Mazdā through his *daēnā* and his daughter, Spəṅtā Ārmaiti,



the earth, and their offspring, the first man.

*Xwēdōdah in Middle Persian inscriptions and the Pahlavi texts.*

The earliest attestation of the Middle Persian term *xwēdōdah* is in the high priest Kerdīr’s inscription on the Ka’ba-ye Zardošt at Naqš-e Rostam near Persepolis. Here, Kerdīr (see [KARTĪR](#)) tells us that he accompanied Warahrān II (274-93; see [BAHRĀM ii](#)) on his campaigns in Asia Minor and the provinces south of the Caucasus and lists the various actions he took to strengthen Mazdaism in these areas. With the help of the gods and the king, he says, he established numerous Warahrān fires, made or performed (*kerd*) *xwēdōdahs*, turned non-believers (*anāstawān*) into believers (*āstawān*), made people who “held belief (*kēš*)” in the *dēws* “relinquish that belief” and “seize the belief” in the gods, celebrated *rad-passāgs* (*gāhānbār* ceremonies, see [GĀHĀNBĀR](#)), and memorized/enumerated (*ōšmurd*) the *dēn* in various ways (ed. MacKenzie, sec.17; ed. Gignoux, 1991, pp. 64-65, 72; cf. the lists of good deeds, below). Although the inscription does not elaborate, it confirms the existence of the term and the importance of the concept at the beginning of the Sasanian period, but the literary connection with the Pahlavi texts goes deeper.

A much later, implicit reference is perhaps to be found in the Pahlavi-Chinese bilingual funerary inscription in Xi’an from 872 or 874, where the deceased woman, a princess of the Sūrēn family, is called “wife” in the Chinese text, but “daughter” in the Pahlavi text, but the interpretation of the inscription is not certain (see Sundermann and Thilo, 1966, pp. 445-46, 450).

The Pahlavi commentators analyze the term *xwēdōdah* as containing *xwēš* “own” or *xwad* “self” and the verb *dah-* “give.” In *Dēnkard* 3.80, the term is rendered as “giving of one’s own” (*xwēš-dahišnīh*), which is further explained as the transmission of one’s (procreative) strength (*paywandišn ī nērōg*) to one’s own by protecting and saving them in order to facilitate the production of *fraškerd* by the union of men and women (ed. Dresden, p. [53]; ed. Madan, I, p. 73; tr. de Menasce, pp. 85-86; cf. *xwēšān hamdahišnān* in the explanation of *xwēdōdah* in *Dēnkard* 3.290; ed. Dresden, p. [229]; ed. Madan, pp. 300-1; tr. de Menasce, p. 286; see also Macuch, 1991, p. 143). In *Dēnkard* 9.38.6, we find the expression *xwadīh-dahišnīh xwēdōdah* “giving of one’s self-hood: *xwēdōdah*” (ed. Dresden, p. [659]; ms. *DH*, p. 223; ed. Madan, pp. 854-55). This type of analysis was also that of the modern Parsis (cf. Anquetil-Duperron, I, p. 123 n. 1, II, p. 556: “to give one’s parent”; Sunjana, pp. 51-56, see below).



In *Dēnkard* 3.290 (ed. Dresden, p. [229]; ed Madan, pp. 300-1; tr. de Menasce, pp. 286-87), on the two terms *dādestān* (justice) and *ābādīh* (prosperity), “prosperity” is apparently defined in similar terms in the context of one’s expected behavior (*xwēškārīh*) toward one’s “own” (*xwēšān*; note the Pahlavi gloss in *Yasna* 12.1 on “all prosperity, i.e., all in the *xwēšīh* ‘ownership’ or ‘possession’ of Ohrmazd”). The same juxtaposition is given in chapter 80. Starting with a comparison with legal procedure and the meaning of justice (*dād*), it then cites the explanation as “giving of one’s own” (note that de Menasce reads one and the same word as *abādīh* “prospérité” in chapter 80 [p. 85], but *āzādīh* “noblesse” in chapter 290 [p. 286]). This interpretation persisted into modern times, and Anquetil-Duperron was told that *xwēdōdah* was also called *k̄vēši* (Anquetil-Duperron, I, p. 123 n. 1, II, p. 556).

The notion of “own” was, moreover, interpreted as referring to family and religious or legal ownership (*xwēšīh*). In the religious sense, through *xwēdōdah*, humans become the inalienable property of Ohrmazd. This is stated in several sources, among them, the brief text about Wrath (Hešm, see AĒŠMA) conversing with Ahrimen (e.g., *Bundahišn*, ed. Anklesaria, chap. 36A.1; *Pahlavi Rivāyat*, ed. Williams, chap. 56.13-16; *Supplementary Texts to the Šāyest nē šāyest*, par. 18, ed. Kotwal, pp. 76-77; West, 1880, pp. 387-89; Bartholomae, 1915, pp. \*8, 36, 70). Here Ahriman tells Wrath not to try to destroy the *xwēdōdah*, for, he says, it is possible to break the good effects of the *gāhānbār*s and the *myazd*, but not the *xwēdōdah*, because he who has “approached” his wife (in *xwēdōdah* marriage) three/four times can never be separated from belonging to (*xwēšīh ī*) Ohrmazd and the *amahrspands* (from being Ohrmazd’s and the *amahrspands*’ “own”). According to the commentary on *Yasna* 53 in the *Waršt mānsr nask* in *Dēnkard* book 9, Pōručist, Zarathustra’s daughter, received a great reward from Ohrmazd on account of her adhering to the *dēn* and for being the property of the gods (*pad ān dēnīgīh ud yazdān xwēšīh*; *Dk.* 9.45.4, ms. *DH*, p. 235; ed. Madan, pp. 870-71). Wištāsp’s wife, Hudōs, is mentioned here after Pōručist (*Dk.* 9.45.4), presumably with implicit reference to her being his sister/wife (see below).

According to *Dēnkard* 3.80, the three kinds of “linkage” (*ham-paywandīh*) achieved in *xwēdōdah* are “father and daughter,” “son and birth-mother” (*burdār*), and “brother and sister” (ed. Dresden, p. [53]; ed. Madan, p. 73; tr. de Menasce, pp. 85-86). Similarly, the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* gives the hierarchy of *xwēdōdah* as one’s mother, daughter, sister, but the rules are complicated by the fact that one’s sister may also be one’s daughter (ed. Williams, chap. 8d).



According to *Dēnkard* 3.80, the linkage will be the more efficient the closer the relationship between the two is: “of the same species” (*ham-srādag*), “closely connected” (*nazd-paywand*), and *nabānazdišt*, an Avestan term of uncertain meaning, but approximately “closest relatives” (ed. Dresden, p. [53]; ed. Madan, p. 73; tr. de Menasce, p. 86). The best *xwēdōdah* is that by which a son sires a son-brother with his birth mother, because, having come from her body, he is nearer to his origin; thus offspring from siblings with the same parents is more valuable than when the parents are different (ed. Dresden, p. [55]; ed. Madan, p. 75; tr. de Menasce, p. 87; see also Macuch, 1991, pp. 143-45). Examples of (apparent) *xwēdōdah* marriages include that of Ardā Wirāz with his seven sisters (*Ardā Wirāz-nāmag* 2.1-6, ed. Gignoux, pp. 40-43, tr. pp. 150-51: “and those seven sisters were like wives [*čiyōn zan*] to Wirāz”) and that of Wištāsp with Hudōs (*Ayādgār ī Zarērān*, ed. Monchi-Zadeh, sec. 68).

Several objects in the world of thought are classified as male and female, and several engage in *xwēdōdah* to produce “offspring.” Thus, according to *Dēnkard* 3.80, when the creator made the two kinds of *xrad* “wisdom,” he made the *gōšōsrūd-xrad* “wisdom acquired through hearing” male and *āsn-xrad* “inborn wisdom” female. By their *xwēdōdah*, all of man’s knowledge is born from these two (ed. Dresden, pp. [58-59]; ed. Madan, p. 79; tr. de Menasce, p. 90; see also Herrenschildt, 1994, p. 123; Macuch, 1991, pp. 150-51, citing Mar Aba, also to the effect that *xwēdōdah* produces knowledge [Sachau, III, pp. 265-66; see also Hutter, p. 171], though it is not entirely clear that Mar Aba is ascribing this to the followers of Ohrmazd). All that matures and is formed comes from unions, such as that of the male fire and the female water, who are to be regarded as brother and sister (*Dēnkard* 3.80, ed. Dresden, pp. [58-59]; ed. Madan, pp. 79-80; tr. de Menasce, p. 90; Gignoux, 2004, p. 273).

Also in the commentary on *Yasna* 45.6 in the *Bag nask* in *Dēnkard* 9.60.5, after a reference to *xwēdōdah*, the *xrad* is said to belong to Ohrmazd and *bowandag-menišnīh* “complete thinking” [the standard rendering of Ārmaiti] to Spandarmad and that *bowandag-menišnīh* is the child of the *xrad* in the same way that Spandarmad is Ohrmazd’s child (ed. Dresden, pp. [622-23]; ed. Madan, p. 922; tr. West, pp. 365-66; cf. Gray, 1904, pp. 367-68).

*The ethics of xwēdōdah.*

Throughout the Pahlavi literature, there are scattered references to *xwēdōdah* focused on the benefit of performing and the evil consequences of not performing *xwēdōdah*.



*The value of xwēdōdah.* The relative value of *xwēdōdah* in the hierarchy of good deeds plays an important role in the Pahlavi texts. Kerdīr's claims to behaving as a good Mazdayasnian also include generosity (*rādīh*) and truthfulness (*rāstīh*), as well as performance of the *yasna* at each *gāh*, which are precisely the four greatest good deeds listed in the *Mēnōy xrad* (3.4-5, ed. Anklesaria, p. 36): namely, generosity; truthfulness and *xwēdōdah*; celebration of the *gāhānbārs*; and the whole *dēn*. This is not the only list, however; in the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* (ed. Williams chap. 8c1-2), the following are said to be the four best things: the sacrifice to Ohrmazd; the gift to the fire of firewood, incense, and libations; making the righteous man favorable to oneself (*šnāyēnīdan*); and performing *xwēdōdah* with one's birth mother, daughter, or sister (cf. *Persian Rivāyats*, tr. Dhabhar, p. 285). Then it stresses that the greatest and best of them is the practice of *xwēdōdah* (cf. the *Sad dar-e Bondaheš*, chap. 74.9 in *Persian Rivāyats*, tr. Dhabhar, pp. 554-55). Also, according to the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* (chap. 45.1), various means of striking down Ahriman include *xwēdōdah*, offering of *myazd*, and sacrifice to the gods (cf. *Persian Rivāyats*, tr. Dhabhar, pp. 44-45; see also Macuch, 1991, pp. 149-50).

In the list of advice ascribed to Zarathustra in *Dēnkard* 5.9.13-14, we are told that the foremost ways of thwarting (*padīrag*) the worst sins include belief (*āstawānīh*) in the good *dēn* (that of *ērīh*, Iranian-ness); performing sacrifices, *xwēdōdah*, the Avesta, and the *gāhānbārs*; and making the righteous favorable to oneself (ed. Amouzgar and Tafazzoli, pp. 44-45).

One of the arguments offered by the Sasanian priests for *xwēdōdah* is that good human qualities are more likely to remain and even improve the closer the offspring is to the parent. *Dēnkard* 3.80 gives numerous examples (that might fail to convince us) why this is true (ed. Dresden, p. [55]; ed. Madan, pp. 75-76; tr. de Menasce, pp. 87-88). In a list of advice ascribed to the high priest Ādurbād son of Mahrspand (see ĀDURBĀD Ī MAHRSPANDĀN) in *Dēnkard* 3.199, it is recommended to take a wife from one's own "seed" (*tōhmag*), in order that one's lineage (*paywand*) may go straighter (*rāsttar rawād*; ed. Dresden, p. [169]; ed. Madan, p. 216; tr. de Menasce, p. 208 no. 4); the similar list ascribed to him in the *Pahlavi Texts* (manuscript MK) has *paywand* for *tōhmag* and *dūrtar* "farther" instead of *rāsttar*, commenting that most of the harm that came to Ohrmazd's creatures resulted from the fathers' giving their daughters away to others to marry and asked for the daughters of others to marry their sons (ed. Jamasp-Asana, p. 145, secs. 11-12). Zādspram, in a brief note, lists the three best things that Zarathustra taught mankind, the third of



which was the *xwēdōdah*, which served to make the pure “seed” go forth (*abēzag tōhmag-rawišnīh*) and to ensure the good birth of children (*huzāyišnīh ī fraزندān*; see *Wizīdagīhā*, chap. 26.3, ed. Gignoux and Tafazzoli, pp. 86-89). According to the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* (ed. Williams, chap. 8a9), all kinds of evils came about when foreigners came and contaminated the Iranian stock by marrying their daughters.

*Performing xwēdōdah against the forces of evil.* As the supreme good sexual act, the *xwēdōdah* is contrasted with the worst sexual act of all, the *kūn-marz* (anal intercourse; see HOMOSEXUALITY i). In the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* (ed. Williams, chap. 8d1-2), Ahriman’s intercourse with himself, which is said to be more grievous than those he committed with the demons, is thus contrasted with that of a son with his mother (as opposed to with someone not his closest relative). In fact, most evil in the world arose when mankind turned away from following the divine example and began imitating the anal intercourse practiced by Ahriman and the demons (chap. 8a7-8). Only when the Sōšāns comes at the end of the world will all mankind practice *xwēdōdah*, and evil will be banished forever (chap. 8c6; see also *Zand ī Wahman yasn* 5.1-5; ed. Cereti, pp. 105-6, 158-59).

Also, according to the *Rivāyat* of Ēmēd son of Ašwahišt (*REA.*; see ĒMĒD Ī AŠAWAHIŠTĀN), the only sin that nullifies (*appār bē kunēd*) the merit of *xwēdōdah* is active and passive anal intercourse, also if it is performed after or before *xwēdōdah*. Thus, performing *xwēdōdah* after does not make up for the evil deed. The performer can be forgiven, however, if he confesses and repents and atones by punishment, and, when he is completely redeemed at “the third dawn,” all his merits will be restored to him (*REA* 29). Compare the statements in the *Šāyest nē šāyest* 8.18 (ed. Tavadia, p. 113; ed. Mazdāpur, p. 101) and the *Persian Rivāyats* (tr. Dhabhar, p. 210) that *xwēdōdah* obliterates (*bē kanēd*) a *margarzān* (capital) sin. According to the *Persian Rivāyats* (tr. Dhabhar, pp. 210-11), *xwēdōdah* does not remove a *hamēmāl* sin, however, a category of sins that included some of the worst sins imaginable (see *Dēnkard* 8.19, tr. West, pp. 43-53).

Conversely, *xwēdōdah* keeps the *dēws* away. In *Dēnkard* 3.80, it is told how every performance of *xwēdōdah* is a reminder to them of the first *xwēdōdahs*, which produced humans, their adversaries, and inflicts such doubt and pain on them that they lose the urge to harm and destroy them. In the list of advice ascribed to Zarathustra in *Dēnkard* 3.195, 196, we are told that, by performing *xwēdōdah*, the demons are kept away from men’s bodies and the Dahmān



Āfrīn (Mary Boyce, DAHM YAZAD) is given room in them (ed. Dresden, pp. [54-55, 163, 165]; ed. Madan, pp. 74, 209, 211; tr. de Menasce, pp. 86-87, 203-4 no. 8; note that Mary Boyce's notion (ibid) that the Dahmān Āfrīn represents the "prayer" is unlikely; rather, the Zoroastrian texts suggests it is an entity that contributes to the upholding of the cosmos [*Pahlavi Rivāyat*, ed. Williams, chap. 46.4], which Boyce regards as "scholastic schematizing"). The story of how Jam (*Jamšid*) gave his sister Jamag to a demon and himself wedded the demon's sister is also in the *Pahlavi Rivāyat*. In other texts, Jamag refuses to have intercourse with Jam, but here, while Jam and the demon are drinking, Jamag switches places with the demon's sister and sleeps with her brother, whereby the demons are chased back to hell (ed. Williams, chap. 8e). According to the *Pahlavi Rivāyat*, the first time one performs *xwēdōdah*, 1,000 demons and 2,000 sorcerers and witches die, etc. (ed. Williams, chap. 8f3).

A bit surprisingly in view of the rest of the literature, the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* also tells us that Zarathustra expressed some doubt about the *xwēdōdah*, pointing out that it appeared to him, like to other people, as a bad and difficult thing, and, even more surprisingly, Ohrmazd answered that he would agree, were it not the best thing of all (ed. Williams, chap. 8o). In what is an elaboration on the *Frauarānē* (*Yasna* 12) in *Dēnkard* 7.4.5-8, when Zarathustra recommends (*franāmišn* = Av. *frauar-*) *xwēdōdah*, the Turanians were revealed to feel shame toward this practice (ed. Dresden, pp. 130-31; ed. Madan, pp. 626-27; tr. Molé, pp. 42-43; cf. Macuch, 1991, p. 152, citing the Christian Išō'boxt that the Mazdayasnians tended to object to *xwēdōdah* [Sachau, III, pp. 34-35], but Išō'boxt says this about incest in general, not specifically about the Zoroastrians, although he says Zarathustra was the only one among heresiarchs to have crossed walls inside which God has sealed up incest: human nature, the commandments, and fear of being cursed). Zarathustra's objection is elaborated upon in *Dēnkard* 3.80, where the author proposes that beauty and ugliness are relative and differ from time to time and place to place. In some places, he says, it is considered beautiful to be naked, in others ugly. The ancestors thought it was beautiful to shave one's head, but that is no longer so (ed. Dresden, pp. [57]-[58]; ed. Madan, p. 78; tr. de Menasce, p. 89). The discussion recalls that in the *Dissoi logoi* (2.15; ca. 400 BCE) about whether things can be good or bad by nature, where the author cites the Persian practice of having sex with (*sunímen*) one's mother, daughter, and sister (ed. Robinson, pp. 108-11).

*Rewards and punishments.* The rewards for performing *xwēdōdah* and so



contributing to the progress of the world toward *fraškerd* (see FRAŠŌ.KĒRĒTI) and the punishments for refusing to do so are both considerable. The relative sinfulness of failure to perform *xwēdōdah* is said, in the *Ardā Wirāz-nāmag*, to be of the same order as failure to perform *yasnas* and recite the *Gāθās* (cf. above). The souls of these sinners do therefore not reach paradise, but, if they have also not occupied any position of government, remain on the star-level, otherwise on the moon-level (*Ardā Wirāz-nāmag* 7.4, 8.3; ed. Gignoux, pp. 54-55, tr. p. 161); this is also the place for the soul of a child who dies before the age of nine and who will proceed to paradise only if her (*xwēdōdah*?) father and/or mother is righteous (*Pahlavi Rivāyat*, ed. Williams, chap. 8d7). Those who have occupied positions of government remain on the sun-level (*Ardā Wirāz-nāmag* 9.4, ed. Gignoux, pp. 56-57, tr. p. 162). Those who have performed *xwēdōdah*, however, are said to radiate light as high as a mountain and are in the same place as the generous (*rād*), the truthful (*rāst-gōwišn*), those who performed sacrifices, recited the *Gāθās*, and “believed in” (*āstawān*) the Mazdayasnian *dēn* (*Ardā Wirāz-nāmag* 12, ed. Gignoux, pp. 60-61, tr. p. 165).

Also, according to the *Rivāyat* of Ēmēd son of Ašwahišt (ed. Anklesaria, pp. 96-98; ed. Safa-Isfahani, pp. 175-78, 1997, pp. 164-66), the punishment for the sin of someone who breaks up a *xwēdōdah* marriage by snatching the girl before the contract can be notarized is never to reach the Best Existence. In the *Mēnōy xrad* (35.7, ed. Anklesaria, p. 104), the ruining (*wišōbišn*) of *xwēdōdah* is listed together with anal intercourse, active and passive, murder of a righteous man, and others as the most grievous of sins. Similarly, someone who prevents (*abāz dārēd*) a *xwēdōdah* marriage will go to hell (*Pahlavi Rivāyat*, ed. Williams, chap. 8k). The sin of breaking (*škastan*) *xwēdōdah* is listed in the *Patīt pašēmānīh* (9th *kardag*, ed. Dhabhar, 1927, p. 73, tr. Dhabhar, 1963, pp. 140-41). In the *Persian Rivāyats*, the sin of preventing (*man’ kardan*) someone from performing *xwēdōdah* ranks third among the worst sins, after pederasty (*gōlām-bāragi*) and wife-swapping (*zan-e kas-i badala kardan*; tr. Dhabhar, p. 286).

Conversely, practicing *xwēdōdah* cancels the most grievous sins and saves from hell (*Pahlavi Rivāyat*, ed., Williams, chap. 8b1-3). According to the *Rivāyat* of Ēmēd son of Ašwahišt, if someone is destined for hell, the milk and goodness of the divine *xwēdōdah* he has performed will keep his soul away from hell, as if it were surrounded by a fortification (*Rivāyat* 27, ed. Anklesaria, pp. 104-5; ed. Safa-Isfahani, 1980, pp. 189-92, 1997, pp. 176-79). In



the *Mēnōy xrad*, performing *xwēdōdah* for the love of one's soul is listed among the good deeds that lead to paradise (*wahišt*; *Mēnōy xrad* 36.12; ed. Anklesaria, p. 107), and, according to the *Pahlavi Rivāyat*, if a person maintains a *xwēdōdah* marriage for four years, he is assured of *Garōdmān* or, at least, paradise (*wahišt*; ed. Williams, chap. 8h).

It is also noteworthy that, according to some Pahlavi texts, when humanity is resurrected, those without husband or wife on earth, will have Ohrmazd and Spandarmad, their heavenly parents, as husband and wife (e.g., *Māh ī Frawardīn rōz ī Hordad* 43, *Pahlavi Texts*, p. 107).

*Xwēdōdah in religious law.*

The texts dealing with religious law, notably the *Hērbedestān*, the *Šāyest nē šāyest*, and the *Rivāyats* of Ēmēd son of Ašwahišt and Ādur-Farnbay son of Farrozzād, also address the ethical value of *xwēdōdah*. Thus, the *Hērbedestān*, in the first of its two references to *xwēdōdah*, states that the merit (*kerbag*) of “studying to become a priest” (*hērbedestān kerdan*) is different from that of *xwēdōdah*, because the former is “one thing,” the latter “two things,” while another authority says they are the same (*Hērbedestān* 2.9; ed. Kotwal and Kreyenbroek, pp. 32-33, cf. ed. Humbach and Elfenbein, 1990, pp. 26-27 [2.25]).

In the *Rivāyat* of Ēmēd son of Ašwahišt (*REA.*) and that of Ādur-Farnbay son of Farrozzād (*RAF.*), where the questions center on issues of merit and sin of promised and neglected *xwēdōdah* and of shared merit, we find the following cases. *REA.* 22: a man asks for his sister in marriage, and the parents agree, but, for some reason, he does not marry her and, after some time, hires another to marry her in return for his merit (*pad kerbag ī man*); does this man then acquire the merit attached to the *xwēdōdah* marriage? The authority says both men will possess the merit in full measure (*bowandagīhā*, i.e., not half each?). *REA.* 27: their merits are said to be exactly equal (*ēwtom rāst*) if the person hired agrees to “joint merit” (*hamkerbagīh*); if he does not, then the one who pays will have less than the actual performer. *REA.* 28: the merit that accrues from *xwēdōdah* with mother, sister, or daughter does not depend on whether there is hope of offspring; it accrues in full measure. *REA.* 30: intent is all that counts, even when the performance comes to nought, for instance, because of old age or illness. *RAF.* 20.1-2: if a man “needs” (*andar abāyēd*) to marry his daughter or his sister and they do not agree, may he use violence (*stahmb*)? And if he does, will the merit of the *xwēdōdah* accrue to him? The legal authority says yes to both, but adds that, if the husband does not agree,



then he is not authorized to do it, and, if he does, then it is a sin. *RAF.* 143.1-4: a priestly student acquired merit by accepting his sister in marriage (once adult?), but never did marry her and so kept her from marrying, although, in the end, he did give her to someone else. Although he acquired merit by accepting her, by not marrying her, evil accrued to him. So, therefore, is he qualified to perform *yasnas* for others? The legal authority says that, if he accepted to marry his sister and perform *xwēdōdah* without reflecting much on it, then merit accrued to him. If, after that, he did not perform his duty as he could have, then he would be responsible for the time his sister had lost after turning fifteen, by counting her periods. Whatever merit he might have acquired would turn into a heavy sin. Another authority says that abandoning a wife is a *margarzān* (capital) sin, (while) yet another says it is a lighter sin, but (they agree that) the sin of (abandoning) a *xwēdōdah* (wife) is heavier. Ādur-Farnbay himself has a more lenient view of the case, assuming that the brother was unable to perform and had in vain sought remedies (*darmān*) to regain his potency and that he then did the only decent thing, namely to give her to a good Mazdayasnian man (for *REA.*, see the editions and translations by Anklesaria and Safa-Isfehiani; for *RAF.*, those by Anklesaria and Bāḡbidi).

*Xwēdōdah in Sasanian secular law.*

The *Mādayān ī hazār dādestān* (*MHD.*) contains a few references to *xwēdōdah* relationships (see the editions and commentaries in Macuch, 1981 and 1993). The term itself is not used, perhaps because it was not precise enough, denoting a variety of relationships (Macuch, 2010).

Following are the cases in the *Mādayān ī hazār dādestān*. *MHD.* 44.8-14: a discussion regarding the heritage of the older of two daughters of an intestate father, when the father has already given her share as daughter as absolute property; should she then also be entitled to a part of the remaining estate to maintain and reap benefit from as *stūr* (trustee). The case is compared with one in which the father has given his daughter her share as daughter, but then marries her. According to one authority, she would then also get her share as wife; according to another, she would not, only what she was entitled to as *stūr*; and a third says the older will be *stūr*, but the younger will inherit. *MHD.* 104.9-14: a man assigns a golden object to his wife and a silver one to his daughter. If he marries his daughter, the question arises whether she is entitled to both objects. *MHD.* 105.5-10: a man has left the two parts of his grounds, one to his son's first-born (if a boy?) and one to his daughter's first-born (irrespective of gender). The son and daughter get married and have a



daughter, then a son, and the daughter inherits first, since they can have only one first-born child. *MHD*. 18.7-12: a father wills something he owns to be given (as *stūr*) to his son after ten years. If the son marries the father's daughter, it will be his property after ten years and his *stūr* if he marries her before the ten years are up. Differently, if the father wills it saying it will be given to him after ten years and (also) if he marries the father's daughter, then it will be his property (from the time of the marriage). If he does not marry her, it will not be his absolutely. There is no case involving mother-son marriage.

Various legal issues also come up in the texts on religious law. For instance, in the second of its two references to *xwēdōdah*, the *Hērbedestān* states that, if a girl has reached sexual maturity (? *pad tan mad ēstēd*) before the age of nine, a man may have intercourse with her as a (regular) wife or a *xwēdōdah* (wife) in the usual way (*Hērbedestān* 6.7; ed. Kotwal and Kreyenbroek, p. 45; cf. ed. Humbach and Elfenbein, pp. 52-53, 6.34).

*Xwēdōdah in the Persian Rivāyats and the Šāh-nāma.*

By the time the texts incorporated in the collection of *Persian Rivāyats* were composed in the 15th-17th centuries, *xwēdōdah* was interpreted as marriage between first cousins, for instance, Narimān Hōšang, citing predecessors, stated that the greatest merit is *hamā-din*, the second *k̄vetyōdat*, both of which had been abandoned because the ruler was not a Zoroastrian, though an effort should be made to contract marriages between first cousins (easier now that the ruler was a Muslim than before, when he was an infidel), with which several authorities agreed (tr. Dhabhar, pp. 292-94; see also West, 1882, pp. 424-25). Even this practice was apparently not always that common, as suggested by the author of a *rivāyat* cited by Bartholomae (1915, p. 96), who writes that he has heard that *k̄idyudat* has fallen out of use among Indian Zoroastrians, no doubt because the ruler was not a *behdin*. According to the *Dēn wizīrkerd*, sec.18 ("a Rivāyat in Pahlavi writing," West, 1892, p. 438 n. 1), the *Duzd-sar-nizad* contained the reasons for *xwēdōdah* (tr. West, 1892, p. 445; cf. Haug, 1884, pp. 132-33).

Ferdowsi mentions only one next-of-kin marriage, that between Bahman Derāzdast (BAHMAN 2) with his sister Homā (ed. Khaleghi, V, p. 483; see KAYĀNIĀN x).

*Xwēdōdah in the Classical sources.*



A common feature of the non-Iranian sources is that they rarely, if ever, cite the opinions of Iranians themselves, other than, occasionally, the priests.

Several Classical and later authors refer to the practice of close next-of-kin marriages in the Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sasanian royal families. Some of the earliest Greek references to non-royal incest are those by Xanthus of Lydia in his *Magica*, quoted by Clement of Alexandria, that the Magi have sex (*coire*) with their mothers, daughters, and sisters (*Stromata* 3.2.11.1; tr. Fox and Pemberton, p. 2; he also says the Magi shared their wives: *communes esse uxores*) and Ctesias of Cnidus about a brother-sister marriage (tr. Auburger, pp. 83-84; Clemen, p. 108; tr. Fox and Pemberton, p. 124). Herodotus (3.31) mentions that Cambyses lived with (*sunoikéein*) his sister, although the Persians had never lived with their sisters before that. Some of the earliest Roman references are found in Catullus (ca. 84–54 BCE; poem no. 90, where he calls the offspring of someone who, allegedly, has intercourse with his mother, a *magus*). Ovid (43 BCE–17 CE), in his *Metamorphoses*, tells the story of Cinyras, king of Panchaia to the east of Arabia, whose daughter Myrrha was consumed by an illicit love for her father (their son was Adonis) and, pointing out that animals mate with their offspring, cites peoples (*gentes*) among whom sons join with their mothers and daughters with their fathers so that their sense of duty/devotion (*pietas*) is increased by their double love (*geminato amore*), wishing she was born there (10.331-334; ref. in Silk, 2008a, p. 447). Ovid's story is also in (pseudo-)Plutarch's *Parallela Graeca et Romana* 22 (p. 289) and is related to one told by Panyasis, a 5th-century BCE epic poet cited by [Apollodorus](#) in his *Bibliotheca* (3.14.4). In this version, the father is Theias, king of the Assyrians (Fragment 25 K, pp. 120-25). Only Ovid has the reference to other "peoples," however, which is therefore likely to have the same kind of sources as Catullus's poem and refer to the Persians. The assumption of increased duty/devotion by "double love" recalls the reasons given in the Pahlavi texts (see above). Quintus Curtius Rufus, in his *History of Alexander* (8.2.19; comp. mid-1st cent. CE), recounts the story of the Sogdian governor Sisimithres, who married his mother and had two sons with her, remarking that parents there were allowed to have indecent intercourse (*stupro coire*) with their children (II, pp. 252-53; cf. Boyce and Grenet, p. 8).

Xwēdōdah in the Jewish sources.

The Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria (20 BCE-50 CE) referred to Persians of high status marrying their mothers and the high status of the offspring of these unions (*De specialibus legibus* III, iii, 13, tr. 1993, p. 595; Clemen, p. 37, tr.



Fox and Pemberton, p. 40; see de Jong, p. 428). Much later, the *Babylonian Talmud* (*Bavli*, ca. 600, but, like the Pahlavi literature, containing traditional material probably reaching back to the 3rd cent. CE) has several references to next-of-kin marriages. In *Yevamot*, fol. 97b, which deals with levirate marriage (after Deuteronomy 25:5-10) and other topics, a series of riddles are posed about idolaters (i.e., non-Jews) whose relationship to their close relatives would seem to be self-contradictory, but make sense within the rules of *xwēdōdah*. The family constellations envisaged are: a man has a son with his daughter, who thus is also her brother. A man has a son with his daughter, then a grand-daughter with his daughter, thus, both the daughter and the granddaughter would be the boy's "mothers" as well as his sisters. A man has a son and the son a daughter; the man has a great-grandson with his son's daughter; both the son and the great-grand-son are the man's sons, hence brothers, and the great-grandson's mother is his brother's daughter. A man has a daughter with his mother, then he marries his daughter; then his father marries his granddaughter and has sons with her; thus, the man and his daughter have the same mother and are brother and sister; her father and her grandfather are both her husbands. A man has two daughters with his mother and a son by one of his daughters; the son and daughters are all brother and sisters, thus the unmarried daughter is the boy's sister and aunt (ed. Epstein, *Seder Nashim* II, pp. 666-67).

Some of these constellations are possible also according to some rabbis; for instance, a man has a daughter with his first wife and a son with his second wife, after which the son marries the father's first wife, making the daughter her brother's wife's daughter. The following is generally allowed: of three brothers, one (e.g., Reuben) has two daughters, the second's (e.g., Levi) son marries one daughter and has a son, and the third (e.g., Simeon) marries the other daughter and has a son; Simeon's son and Levi's grandson are thus the children of two sisters, Simeon's father and the boy's grandfather are brothers, and Simeon's son and Levi's grandson's mother are sisters. According to *Yevamoth* 62b, marriage with one's sister's daughter is to be recommended (ed. Epstein, *Seder Nashim* II, p. 419).

In a Mishnah based on Leviticus 18 and 20 cited in the Babylonian Talmud (*Makkoth*, fol. 13a), sexual crimes punished by flogging are specified, including sexual relations with one's sister, father's sister, mother's sister, wife's sister, brother's wife, wife of father's brother, or a menstruant woman. In the discussion that follows, however, although it contains no explicit reference to



Zoroastrian practices, the example in fol. 14a of a “sinner the son of a sinner,” who has sexual relations with his sister, who is also his father’s and his mother’s sister, is quite typical of the family constellations described in the Pahlavi texts and the secondary sources: A man had two daughters (sisters) with his mother, then a son/grandson with one of the daughters. The son/grandson had sexual relations with his aunt (= his own sister, his father’s sister, and his mothers’s sister; ed. Epstein, *Seder Nazikin* I, p. 90).

*Xwēdōdah in the Christian sources.*

Numerous references are found in Christian (Greek, Syriac, Armenian) literature from the fifth century on to close and not so close next-of-kin marriages, including those of the (Greek) *magousai* (Syriac *mgušē*), the Magi. Eusebius, in his *Praeparatio Evangelica* (VI, 16; tr. Gifford, 1903) cited [Bardesan](#) (2nd cent. C.E.) as saying that the Persians brought the practice with them when they left Persia and that the Magi still practiced it and handed it down to their children (similarly, [Pseudo-Clement](#) [2nd half of 4th cent.] in his *Homilies* 9.20; ed. Clemen, p. 84; tr. Fox and Pemberton, p. 91; see also Boyce and Grenet, 1991, p. 256). Sextus Empiricus (late 2nd cent.) contrasted the Christian prohibition against intercourse with mothers with the custom of the Persians (ed. Clemen, p. 70; tr. Fox and Pemberton, p. 76; see de Jong, p. 429). St. Basil of Caesarea wrote a letter dated 377 to Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, in which he complained about the Magi “being crazy about” (*epimainontai*) unlawful marriages (letter 258.4, ed. Clemen, p. 86; tr. Fox and Pemberton, p. 94; see also Boyce and Grenet, p. 277).

At the Council of Aštišat in about 354, when St. Nersēs established the new canons for the Armenian Church, he specifically outlawed next-of-kin marriage (Moses of Khorene [Khorenats’i], III, 20; tr. Thomson, p. 275; Faustus, tr. Garsoïan, p. 114; Hübschmann, pp. 310-12; Russell, 1987, p. 95). The practice was again condemned at the Council of Šahapivan (576; Faustus, tr. Garsoïan, n. 25 p. 273). Of special interest is Elišē Vartabed’s (q.v.) description of the revolt in 450-51 CE against Yazdegerd II (r. 439-57), who had ordered forced conversions of the Armenians with dire threats if they did not comply. A small group of them, who the Christian leaders decided would feign conversion, received detailed instructions for how to become a Mazdean: the sons and daughters of the nobility were to be instructed by the Magi; they were to take many wives to increase the (Mazdean) Armenian population; daughters should be the wives of fathers, sisters those of brothers, sons those of mothers, and grandchildren those of their grandparents; and so on (tr. Thomson, pp.



103-4; cf. Jerome, below). See also Faustus, tr. Garsoïan, notes 24-25 pp. 272-73; Eḫšē, tr. Thomson, p. 104 n. 7; and Russell, 1987, pp. 94-95. *Eznik of Kolb* accused Zoroaster (Zardašt) of having invented the myths of next-of-kin marriage to seduce his people to perform it (sec. 192, tr. pp. 119-20).

Most references, however, are simply included in general statements about wrong kinds of marriages from the point of view of current Christian dogma. Exaggerating a good story (Frye, p. 449), St. Jerome, in the fourth century, ascribed to the Persians, Medians, Indians, and Ethiopians intercourse with their mothers, grandmothers, daughters, and granddaughters (*Adversus Jovinianum* 2.7; Clemen, p. 88; tr. Fox and Pemberton, p. 99; cf. Eḫšē, below). Also, interestingly, the Synod of *Bēt Lāpaṭ* (484) complained that there were even believers who imitated the practice of the Magi, not only against Christian law, but also the opinion of all peoples other than the Magi (Chabot, p. 624; tr. Braun, 1900, p. 143 n. 2; ed. Sachau, III, pp. 265-66: “a dirty thing, detested by all nature”), a point taken up by the patriarch Mar Aba I (himself a convert from Zoroastrianism; see Hutter, pp. 171-72; see also, e.g., the reports from the 544 synod under Mar Aba I in his *Epistola Pragmatica* in Chabot (pp. 335, 561; tr. Braun, 1900, pp. 131, 133 n. 2 and p. 143; tr. Braun, 1915, pp. 200-2; see also Hutter, pp. 168, 171-72). For Mar Aba on incest, in particular Persian incest and the Zurvanite myth, see Sachau, III, pp. 261-67 (see also above).

Rabban Mār Bābai’s martyrology from the reign of Ƙosrow II Parvēz (r. 590-628) contains an account of the conversion of Mār Gīwargīs, whose original name was Mihrāmgušnasp and who had been brought up and educated by the Magi. He had married his sister Hazārway, but, during a plague, he lost his faith and began imitating the Christians, was baptized, and from then on was disgusted by his sister. She then married another man, one of the grandees of the realm (tr. Hoffmann, 1880, pp. 93-96; tr. Braun, 1915, pp. 223-31; another text mentioning the two is in Braun, tr., 1900, p. 279; on other converts, see de Menasce, 1938, p. 596).

Traces of next-of-kin marriages in Roman Mesopotamia are seen in a law issued by the emperor Justinian in 535/6 against “unlawful marriages” (*gamoi athemitoi*; see Chadwick, p. 150) and endorsed by Justin II in 566, who singled out provinces that were not far from the Persians and so may refer to the Persian practice adopted by some of their Christian neighbors (Lee, 1988).

The “deplorable” practices of the Magi outlawed by Timothy I, Nestorian patriarch of Persia (780-823), however, which Isaac de Beausobre (1659-738; I,



pp. 183-84) assumed referred to next-of-kin marriages, were not clearly such (see also Darmesteter, 1891, p. 373; idem, 1892, p. 132). For instance, section 19 refers to father and son or two brothers marrying two sisters, sections 21, and 24 to a man marrying his brother's or sister's daughter, and section 25 to an uncle marrying his nephew's wife (ed. Sachau, II, pp. 72-75).

*Xwēdōdah in the Arabic sources.*

The Muslim authors also mention the practice. For instance Ṭa'ālebi writes that Zardošt had made *ḥalāl* the marriages between brothers and sisters and fathers and daughters because Adam had married his sons to his daughters (*Ḡorar*, pp. 259-60). According to several authors, in the 8th century, *Behāfarid* prohibited next-of-kin marriages (Biruni, *Āṭār*, p. 194; Gardizi, p. 20; Šahrastāni, p. 187, tr. Gimaret and Monot, I, p. 645). Mas'udi mentions the Zoroastrian incest (*Moruj* I, p. 63) and reports that *Ardašir I* told his people to marry their close relatives in order to tighten the family ties (*Moruj* II, p. 163). He is the only author to report that *Ferēdun* had daughters with his granddaughter (daughter of Ērij), etc., to the seventh generation (*Moruj* II, p. 145; Darmesteter, 1883, pp. 217-19). Several historians report the story that Bahman son of *Esfandiār* married his own daughter *Ḳumānā/Ḥumānā* (etc.), by whom he had the son *Dārā* (Pahlavi *Humā*; Dinavari, pp. 29-30; Ṭa'ālebi, *Ḡorar*, pp. 389-99; Ṭabari, 1st ser., vol. 2, p. 689, tr., IV, p. 83; Maqdesi, III, p. 150: “she was pregnant with her father's child when he died”). In addition, there are numerous references of various kinds to the marriages of the Magi scattered throughout Arabic literature, several cited by G. J. van Gelder (chap. 2): the tenth-century Abu Ḥayyān Tawḥidi gave this practice and its invention by Zarathustra as an example of the depravity, feeble-mindedness, and deceptions of the non-Arab Persians, stressing the fact that it resulted in birth defects, though he did not refer to any contemporary cases (pp. 40-44). Interestingly, it was alleged that the practice is also not found among animals (horses and camels), the opposite of Ovid's claim (above). Van Gelder also quotes sources to the effect that Persians no longer practiced *xwēdōdah* by the 11th century (pp. 44-46), which agrees with the *Persian Rivāyats*. Zoroastrian next-of-kin marriage was often the object of jokes and anecdotes and of polemics against their religious practices, including fire worship, washing with bull's urine (*gōmēz*), and unions with next-of-kin, notably mothers (van Geldner, pp. 60-62, 66-74).

The issue of Zoroastrian incest also came up in discussions about the status of the Zoroastrian religion. Like the Jews and the Christians, they belonged to the



*demma*, and they were occasionally classified as *ahl al-ketāb*. Their *demma* status was guaranteed by the *jezya*, poll tax, imposed on them, and, as long as they paid the *jezya*, they were permitted, to some degree, to continue their own practices. According to some Muslim scholars, this included incest, as reported of Šāfe'ī (150-204/767-820), who pointed out that the Magi were allowed to practice their unbelief, which was worse than incest (*Ketāb al-omm* V, p. 10; cited in Friedmann, p. 73, cf. van Gelder, pp. 110-11). After Šāfe'ī and others who agreed with him, stronger objections arose, and Ebn al-Qayyem Jawziya wrote in his *Aḥkām ahl al-demma* (I, pp. 395-56) that removing the practice would please God more than confirming it (van Gelder, p. 111). In the discussion whether the Zoroastrians should be included among the *ahl al-ketāb*, it was suggested that they had, once, had a book, but it had been taken from them because of their king's incest with his daughter or sister (Friedmann, p. 74 [the king(s) may have been *Jamšid* and/or *Ferēdun*]).

*Xwēdōdah in South and East Asian sources.*

References to next-of-kin unions in Indic and East Asian sources have recently been studied by Jonathan Silk (2008a-c, for details of the texts and text references). In the Buddhist *avadāna* about the previous life of the Buddha's disciple *Dharmaruci* (*Divyāvadāna* no. 18), a mother seduces her son unbeknownst to him and cites an aphorism about the universal availability of women followed by a specific reference to “a bordering (*pratyanta*) country,” in which it is normal for a son to have sex with the same woman as the father (p. 257.13-20; Silk, 2008b, p. 148). More specifically, in two *abhidharma* (doctrinal) texts, the *Karmaprajñapti* (early centuries ce, preserved in Tibetan) and the *\*Abhidharma-Mahā-vibhāṣā* (preserved in Chinese), the practice of having sex with a mother, a daughter, or a sister is ascribed to the *\*maga-brahmins* (Tibetan *bram-ze mchu-skyes*) or Magas (目迦 *mujia*) living “in the West” and justified by variants of the same aphorism. The Maga-brahmins are known also from other sources, where they are said to be sun-worshippers living in western India, and are thought to have been Zoroastrians (see Silk, 2008a, pp. 439-40; Srivastava). The same claim shows up also in later Buddhist literature. More specifically, in the *\*Satyasiddhi* (preserved in the Chinese translation of Kumārajīva, 5th cent.), Anxi (安息, see AN-HSI) is given as an example of such “bordering countries,” (邊地), where the practice is found, and, in later literature, the practice is routinely ascribed to the *Pārasīkas*, that is, Persians, as an example of immoral behavior; for instance, Vasubandhu gives it as an example of *moha-ja* “born from a delusion” (*mohajo yathā*



*pārasīkānām mātrādigamanam*; *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* IV.68d, ed. Pradhan, 1975, p. 241, see Silk, 2008a, pp. 440-42). The Persians (Tibetan *par-sig*) are also specified in the *Tarkajvālā* (preserved in Tibetan), where the same practices are ascribed to them (mother, sister, daughter, etc.; *ibid.*, pp. 436-37). The \**Satyasiddhi* reports that such unions produced “merit and felicity” (*ibid.*, p. 442), in agreement with the Pahlavi texts.

Travelers, too, referred to this Persian custom; for instance, the Chinese Buddhist scholar and traveler Xuanzang, in his account of Persia, called their marriage customs “promiscuous intercourse” (ed. Beal, II, p. 278), and the Korean Buddhist pilgrim Hyech’o (Hye Ch’o) reported marriages with mothers and sisters in Sogdiana (胡國) and with mothers in Persia (波斯國; Yang et al., eds., text pp. 104-5, tr. p. 54). References are also found, but rarely, in non-Buddhist works, for instance, the 10th-century Jaina work *Yaśastilaka* and the 13th-century *Smṛticandrikā* (mothers).

Chinese histories contain several references (see Silk, 2008a, pp. 450-52). The early seventh-century history of the Sui Dynasty, in its account of Anguo (安國 the land of An, perhaps Bukhara), reports that the people married their sisters and mothers and behaved like animals, while the history of the Zhou Dynasty characterizes Persian marriage customs as the lewdest among barbarians. The mid-seventh-century history of the Northern Dynasties, mentions only marriage with sisters, which makes them the lewdest of barbarians. More interestingly, the *Tongdian* (comp. 801) contains the report by a Chinese who had been prisoner of the ‘Abbasids, in which he specifies the *xunxun* as the most perverse among the barbarians, where *xunxun* 尋尋, apparently, is a term for Zoroastrian (Chen, 1998, p. 79, n. 70; Silk, 2008a, p. 451).

#### *Western opinions on the meaning of xwēdōdah*

Thomas Hyde, in his *Historia Religionis veterum Persarum* (1700), does not appear to have talked about the issue, although he must have known the Classical references to Persian incest, but Humphrey Prideaux, Dean of Norwich, who, to a large extent, relied on Hyde for his description of Zarathustra and his teachings, cited Diogenes Laertius, Strabo, Philo, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria (1716, p. 226). Prideaux was in turn cited in the anonymous *An Universal History, from the Earliest Account of Time to the Present*, where the editors, however, pointed out that, although this may have been the practice of the Persian kings, the Classical testimonies do not prove that Zarathustra allowed it anymore than the contemporary Parsi



practice proves he did not (V, pp. 175-76). *The Universal History* was in turn cited by Henry S. Olcott (see below).

Anquetil Duperron, reproducing the opinion of his *dastur*, assumed the term referred to marriage between first cousins (1771, II, pp. 556, 612) and translated it as “the act of marriage.”

Still in 1843, the Reverend John Wilson made no mention of *xwēdōdah* in his *The Parsi Religion*, where he “proved” that Zoroastrianism is inferior to Christianity.

From the 1850s on, however, Western scholars writing on Zoroastrianism began assuming that *xwēdōdah* as described in the various sources actually referred to next-of-kin marriages, and, in the wake of Charles Darwin’s discussion of incest, the Iranian institution began attracting interest in the wider scholarly community. Thus, William Adam, “whip of the Liberal Party in Gladstone’s first ministry,” among other instances, cited the Classical authors on the Persians and the Magi and concluded that incest was practiced only by the highest class of Persian society (1865, pt. 1, p. 717), but also that the practice was not biologically harmful to the species, though it was to the society (pt. 2, p. 87; see Anderson, p. 83).

Among Iranists, Friedrich Spiegel, in his essay on the Iranian tribal system (1855), may have been the first to propose a sociological rationale for *xwēdōdah* as next-of-kin marriage; it arose, he suggested, out of concern to keep the blood pure, and, the higher the social position of a family, the less it would wish to mingle with other families (p. 687), but, in his work on ancient Iranian culture, he stated that the Young Avestan passages referred to the common practice of marriage within the family, especially among nomads, the extreme consequence of which was next-of-kin marriage (1871-78, III, p. 678).

Adolf Rapp, suggested that, while consanguineous marriages were common among Persians, Medes, Bactrians, and Sogdians, and therefore an ancient Iranian custom, the claim that incest was permitted among Persians and Medes was an exaggeration. He agreed with Spiegel on the reason for the custom and added that the practice had no “demoralizing” effect on the Iranians, who were as yet unaware that incest was immoral (p. 113).

Western scholars frequently expressed their repulsion toward what they regarded as a highly immoral practice. Spiegel showed restraint in referring



to it as a practice often found offensive “to us” (1855, p. 687), and Charles de Harlez simply explained in footnotes to the translations the meaning of the term as next-of-kin unions, as did Darmesteter (see below). On the other hand, Joseph van den Gheyn, for instance, called it most repulsive and wondered how a religion of such elevated nature as Zoroastrianism could have taught it (p. 233), while Geldner, who translated the term as “having married into the family (*verwandtschaft*)” regarded *Videvdad* 8.13 as interpolated because of being unmetrical and much too silly to be taken seriously (1881, pp. 571, 582 n. 15: “wegen der grossen albernheit”; see also Casartelli, 1884).

In 1882, in his book on ancient East-Iranian culture (pp. 245-47), Wilhelm Geiger contrasted the absence of consanguineous marriages in ancient India with the Avesta, in which, he says, the practice was encouraged as a pious and meritorious act (citing *Yasna* 12.9 and the *Wahman yasn*), and (echoing Spiegel) the extreme consequence of a desire to keep the blood pure and avoid foreign elements. He pointed out that, in western Iran, it was especially common in the royal families and that the Persians still practiced consanguineous marriage, citing Jakob Polak (see above).

In the same year, Edward West’s essay on the meaning of *xwēdōdah* appeared in part two of his translations of Pahlavi texts for the then prestigious Sacred Books of the East (XVIII, pp. 389-430). Referring to Peshotan Bahramji Sanjana’s discussion (see below), he agreed that the statements of non-Iranians were not necessarily reliable and applicable to the entire Zoroastrian population and set out to gather the indigenous evidence of the Avesta and the Pahlavi texts to confront it with the foreign evidence (West, 1882, pp. 389-90). In conclusion, he pointed out that the term is not in the *Gāθās* and is mentioned in the *Young Avesta* only as a meritorious act, which means there is no evidence for next-of-kin marriages for the oldest period other than the foreign sources (p. 427). The Pahlavi texts, however, he pointed out, contain numerous reference to this practice, which could only be rejected by disowning the Pahlavi literature (p. 428). In an attempt to put the question into a kind of historical perspective, West pointed out that, the fact that later Zoroastrians, especially the Parsis, rejected the practice carries as little evidence for the earlier period as the absence of slavery and the burning of witches and other judicial murders in Christian communities today for earlier, historically well attested practices (pp. 428-430). The origin of *xwēdōdah*, West surmised, was probably, on the one hand, the need for offspring without duties to other families to maintain the ceremonies for the dead; on the other



hand, the concern to prevent marriages to non-Zoroastrians (p. 429).

Martin Haug echoed West in the 1884 edition of his *Essays*, where he compared the present rejection of what had been the custom ten centuries earlier with the burning, etc., of witches and heretics, which at the time was considered meritorious, but now would be called “judicial murders” (Haug, p. 103).

James Darmesteter basically agreed with Sanjana’s analysis of the sources (see below). He regarded the Pahlavi commentary on *Yasna* 45.4 (see above) as the *jeu d’esprit* of a casuist looking for scriptural proof (1881, p. 369), and suggested the mythical incest was eventually imitated in practice in the general population as a religious duty (1877, p. 106 n. 2). The theory of the incestuous *xwēdōdah* arose from that between cousins, and the pressure to maintain purity of the blood and unity of the religion and race eventually led to incest (1881, pp. 373-74). When a priest told someone to marry his sister, he simply meant he should marry within the family (1881, p. 375). In fact, the incest “was probably a creation by logicians, seeking the impossible ideal of the unity of the blood.” The practice, he suggested, must always have been the exclusive right of the high nobility or high clergy (1881, p. 374; idem, 1892, p. 134). He also adhered to the indigenous interpretation of Avestan *xʷaētuuadaθa* (1892, p. 126 n. 1).

In 1882, the American-born Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907), a cofounder of The Theosophical Society (1875), gave an invited lecture on “the Spirit of the Zoroastrian Religion” at the Town Hall, Bombay. Here, as one of the “ridiculous mistakes” Western scholars of Zoroastrianism make when relying on the Western sources, he quoted Prideaux and the *Universal History* on Persian incest (see above). The truth, he contended, is to be found in one of the “Mesrobian manuscripts,” where it says that the Magus who wants to learn the secrets of the Fire, must first unite himself “to the Earth, his *mother*, to Humanity, his *sister*, and to Science, his *daughter*,” something which he, presumably, thought the Classical authors had misunderstood (pp. 308-9). Olcott’s interpretation of the “Persian incest” was cited as recently as 1977 (June/July) by Eloise Hart in the theosophical *Sunrise Magazine* in a series of articles on Zoroastrianism to explain the statement about Ardā Wirāz and his seven sisters.

Heinrich Hübschmann, while declaring himself incompetent to judge the Pahlavi evidence and agreeing with Sanjana that the Avestan evidence said



nothing about the nature of the institution, disagreed with him on the reliability of the Greek evidence and, in support, cited the Armenian evidence from Faustus and Eznik. Edward Westermarck referred to Rapp (see above) and Hübschmann for ancient Persia in the chapter on “Prohibition of Marriage between Kindred” (p. 291).

Cornelis Tiele, in the first comprehensive modern survey of Zoroastrianism (1898), pointed out that the term was not found in the *Gāθās*, and that the practice was “neither Zoroastrian nor Aryan” (II/1, p. 165). He explained away the union of Ārmaiti and Ahura Mazdā by stating that her original husband had been *Gəuš Tašan*, who later merged with Ahura Mazdā (II/1, p. 148 n. 1, cf. p. 13 n. 2).

Ferdinand Justi, in his article on the government of the Persian Empire in *Grundriss*, also argued against Geldner’s etymology (see above) and accepted Sanjana’s argument that the term referred to a spiritual relationship and interaction between married people (p. 434); he recognized that this “to us disgusting” practice, probably existed, but that it, perhaps, had been adopted from the Pharaohs and was not as common as the sources might suggest (p. 435).

A. V. William Jackson (q.v.) thought that it was Zarathustra himself who taught next-of-kin marriage at the beginning of his preaching (1919, pp. 42-43), but, in his *Zoroastrian Studies*, he suggested that this teaching may have turned many against him (1928, p. 20, with ref. to Gray, 1915).

Early on, therefore, as with other features of Mazdaism that modern Western scholars have felt were not compatible with their image of the historical Zarathustra and his lofty ethical teachings, the *xwēdōdah* was ascribed to post-Zarathustrian (post-Gathic) developments. Thus, West tried to soften the implications of the cosmogonic myth of Ohrmazd and Spandarmad’s union by suggesting that, since the earth is “metaphorically” the mother of man and Ohrmazd his father, in “later superstition,” this was taken literally and cited to justify marriage between father and daughter (West, 1882, p. 393 n. 2). In a similar vein, Western scholars, taking the scarce mythological/legendary Zarathustra *vita* as historical truth and interpreting it to suit their individual notions of what he may have considered to be proper, have rejected the notion that (the historical) Zarathustra might have married his daughter (West, 1892, p. 299 n. 3, calls it “unlikely”; see further, e.g., Bartholomae, 1905, pp. 115-20; see also Boyce, 1975, pp. 188, 265), and modern translators and commentators



have taken it for granted that “to her father and master = husband (*fəδrōi ... paiθiiaēcā*)” of *Yasna* 53.4 refers to two different persons, as claimed by a part of the indigenous tradition (see above).

Recently, Albert de Jong has expressed doubt that the myth of the primordial hierogamy goes back to the *Old Avesta*, regarding it as an innovation, arguing, among other things, that the idea that Ahura Mazdā had a wife is not stated in the Avesta, which implies it is “alien” to early Zoroastrianism (1995, p. 33; idem, 1997, p. 431 n. 58). There must, however, have existed numerous Old Iranian myths that are not told in the extant Avesta, where they are, with a few exceptions, at most, alluded to, but are told in greater detail in the Pahlavi texts and, by the method of comparative mythology, can be shown to have existed in pre-Iranian times, even. One could easily argue, on the basis of the later literature, that the mere reference to his daughter implies that she was also his spouse.

In the first half of the twentieth century, attempts were made to eliminate the *xwēdōdah* from the teachings of Zarathustra, too morally elevated to have condoned, let alone, supported it, by ascribing it to the Magi and its presence in the later Zoroastrian literature as due to their influence (e.g., Sunjana, p. 17; Moulton, 1913, pp. 204-8, 322); for instance, especially Moulton, who states (1917, p. 63) “the Persians rejected the Magian doctrine with abhorrence,” refers to it (p. 112) as an esoteric doctrine “in which the Magi never carried the Zoroastrian community with them, ... a practice which Parsi and Christian alike view with the utmost abhorrence” (p. 113), but the Magi maintained “with perfect good faith” and which should not be “regarded as a taint on the morality of an entire race of priests” who condemned all forms of “lust” (see also Gray, 1915, pp. 458-59; Justi, p. 437; Benveniste, 1938, p. 19; Slotkin, p. 613; Frye, p. 453; Macuch, 1991, p. 149).

In the Enlightenment literature of the eighteenth century, the topic of next-of-kin marriage was occasionally referred to. Bernard Mandeville, in his *Fable of the Bees* (1705), referred to Eastern men marrying their sisters and mothers, to make the point that, even if it seems abhorrent to some, there is nothing in nature to reject it, as it is based on fashion and custom. In Letter 67 of Montesquieu’s *Lettres persanes* (1721), a story is told by Aphéridon, a man of the “Gabar nation,” and his unswerving love for his sister Astarte (refs. in Silk, 2008a, pp. 448-49).

Social and historical reasons for the custom were proposed early on. Spiegel,



for instance, saw its origin in the old Iranian tribal system, where marriage within the tribe was preferred (1855, p. 687; cf. idem, 1871-78, III, p. 678), and West suggested the practice might have been instituted by the Parsi priesthood to prevent marriages outside the Zoroastrian community and conversions to other religions (1882, p. 429), but added that advocacy of next-to-kin marriages probably met with little success (p. 428; see also Macuch, 1991, pp. 145-47). Keeping the blood pure (within the tribe or among the nobility) was proposed as a reason by several authors (Spiegel, Geiger, see above, and still by Morony, p. 296, and Melvinger, p. 1110). Ernst Herzfeld thought that the *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa* was practiced only “inside the *vis*” and, especially, between half-brothers and sisters, was common among nobility and priests; also, in such a marriage, a son could inherit from his father as son of the father’s sister (I, p. 119). Mary Boyce suggested that the early Zoroastrian community found itself compelled by small numbers to solemnize such unions (1982, p. 76; see Shaked’s remarks, pp. 120-21).

The notion that *xwēdōdah* was primarily practiced by or limited to nobility and royalty has been discussed throughout the history of scholarship, cf. Geiger (above), and, to Henrik S. Nyberg, who assumed that the *x<sup>v</sup>aētu* was the nobility and it was self-evident that *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa* referred to a type of marriage strictly limited to this class (1937, p. 99). Since anthropological research has come up with no societies permitting and practicing incest among parents and children, which renders common practice of the *xwēdōdah*-type of next-of-kin marriages unlikely, Brian Spooner, for instance, suggested that the practice was not part of the social structure in general, but a restricted religious practice, which disappeared with the Sasanian state religion (p. 56).

#### *Modern Parsi opinions on the meaning of xwēdōdah*

In the second volume of his edition of the *Dēnkard* (1876), Peshotan Bahramji Sanjana translated the Pahlavi of *Dēnkard* 3.80 (pp. 90-102) quite freely (West, 1882, p. 399 n. 4) so as not to imply any incestuous unions other than the mythological ones, except the passage in de Menasce (pp. 87-88) and West (1882, pp. 404-5), where he renders the text so as to imply that it is talking about customs of other nations and that it was practiced by “inferior descendants of some person of a different race and of a perverse religion” (p. 96). In the note on p. 96, he then appears to ascribe the practices to the sect described in the *Dabistan* (*Dabestān-e maḍāheb*) as founded by a certain Mowbed Akhshi, where the reliability of the ancient testimonies is rejected (I,



pp. 209-10). In the glossary, he rendered the term as “marriage, the relationship established by marriage; relationship, affinity” (II, p. 7 [Devanagari]). He accordingly also rendered the chapter title *abar xwēdōdah* in *Dēnkard* 5.9.13-14 as “worshipping God and the Yazads and the Amahraspands by the recital of the Avesta, with a view to putting oneself into relation with them” (IX, p. 630) and 5.18 as “On contracting Matrimony” (IX, pp. 639-40; ed. Amouzgar and Tafazzoli, pp. 56-59; see above on West’s response, 1882).

In 1887, Darab Dastur Peshotan Sanjana gave his response to West in a speech to the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, in which he criticized West’s description and interpretation of *xwēdōdah*. In a note to his English translation (1885-86, p. 66 n. 2) of Geiger (1882, p. 245), Sanjana had already contested the current understanding of *Yasna* 12.9, which he claimed referred to a relationship between God and man, and, in the monograph (1888), he discussed the issue in detail. He began by pointing out the vagueness of the terms “sister, daughter, mother,” which in some Oriental languages do not necessarily have the same meaning as in English, but often refer to more remote relatives. It was therefore possible, he argued, that the ancient authors might simply have misunderstood (pp. 44-46). Achaemenid royal incest should be understood in light of the reports that the king was above the law and the religion and so not in accordance with common law and custom (p. 47). Next, Sanjana argued for the correctness of the traditional etymology of the word as “a gift of/to/from oneself,” “gift of alliance,” “self-dedication,” etc., citing Darmesteter (1883, II, p. 37, against Geldner, 1877, see above); moreover, the notion of “conveying a bride to the house of the bridegroom” contradicts the notion of marriage within the family (p. 91). He further refined the meaning of *x<sup>v</sup>aētu* as “communion with the Almighty,” concluding that *x<sup>v</sup>aētūua-daθa* means “the gift of communion” (pp. 50-56; 1899 ed., pp. 229-33). As for the Pahlavi passages cited by West, he stressed that several of them are about mythological situations or are inconclusive as to what kind of relationships the term refers to (pp. 60-89). Moreover, the spiritual value assigned to *xwēdōdah* (see above) shows that “it is a gift or power that must be by far higher and nobler than any abominable idea of marriage between the next-of-kin” (p. 68). As for the passages in which the relationship is defined, Sanjana opted for translations that differed from those of West to show that they belong in the previous categories or mean more or less the opposite of what West thought; he also suggested that some of the statements in *Dēnkard* 3.80 should properly be ascribed to the Jewish interlocutor (pp. 75-87; cf. Casartelli, 1884). Other



passages, he thought, refer to marriage between first cousins (pp. 77-78, citing West, pp. 404, 410 [these passages from *Dēnkard* 3.80 are not very clear; besides, West says that marriages “between first cousins appear to be also referred to”]). Finally, *Dēnkard* 7.7.22-24 shows clearly that, at the time of Mazdak, intercourse with one’s mother was abhorred (pp. 87-89; ed. Dresden, p. [505]; ed. Madan, pp. 653-54 [in fact, the text appears to talk about matrilineality; see ed. Molé, pp. 74-75: *awēšān-iz paywand pad mādarān kunēnd* “they also make family connections through their mothers”]). In his translation of the *Dēnkard*, he rendered *xwēdōdah* variously; for instance, *Dēnkard* 7.1.9-10: “practised self-sacrifice for procreation” (XIII, p. 5); 7:4.5-8: the Turanians misinterpreted the prophet’s teaching about *xwēdōdah* to signify next-of-kin relations (XIV, p. 3 n. 7); 9.45.4 “wife-hood” (*zan-īh*) = filial service to Zarathustra, but connubial service to Jāmāsp (XVIII, p. 40), 9.67.7, 9 = filial service to father (XIX, p. 53) [but *zan* “woman, wife” never refers to daughters]; 9.38.6 *xwadīh-dahišnīh xwēdōdah* (see above) as “the gift of self-sacrifice of oneself.”

[Tahmuras Dinshah Anklesaria](#) (1840-1903) suggested that the term refers to relationships, especially that of marriage, but also marriage within one’s own, rather than an alien, community. *Yasna* 12.9 refers to peaceful coexistence and the religion’s preference for married rather than unmarried life, while *Videvdad* 8.13 refers to cattle (pp. 48-50, see Katrak, p. 34).

His son, [Behramgore T. Anklesaria](#) (1873-1944), in his translation of the Pahlavi *rivāyats* (1969) adopted Sanjana’s translation as “holy communion.” He explained the meaning of *xwēdōdah* as the act of dedicating oneself to the interests of humanity and the victory over evil, for which propagation of the human species is necessary. It is by leading a clean life and having virtuous children that married men and women perform the act of “holy communion with their creator and father” (intro. to ed. of Ādur-Farnbay ī Farrozzādān, II, pp. 40-41). He therefore translated the texts so as to imply the marriage was to someone else, not to one’s own next of kin; for instance, *RAF*. 20.1: “*There* is a man whom *it* behoves *that he should give* his daughter or his sister in marriage” (where the italics indicate translator’s additions) instead of, literally, “A man who needs (*andar abāyēd*) his daughter or sister in wife-hood”; and *RAF*. 143.1 “*There is* a disciple man who promises his sister in *the* assembly *for giving away* as wife” instead of “A man, a student, who accepted (*padtrift*) his own sister in wife-hood in the assembly.”

[Sohrab Jamshedji Bulsara](#) (1877-1945), in his edition of the *Hērbedestān* and



*Nīrangestān*, also stated that the term refers to divine kinship and the relationship between God and men and added that, if the term in the Pahlavi texts implied incest, it was to “be attributed to such communistic philosophers of the time of Mazdak” (p. 10 n. 5; cf. Sanjana, pp. 42-44; see also above and Shaked, pp. 124-31).

[Sheriarji Dadabhai Bharucha](#) (b. 1843) agreed with Sanjana’s definitions, but also adduced linguistic arguments to prove that the term refers to marriage among cousins: *x<sup>v</sup>aētū*, he argued, did not apply to next-of-kin relatives, who were *taoxma*, but to members of the larger family. Thus, if marriage with next-of-kin relatives had been intended, the term would have been \**taoxma-vadaθa*, which it is not (pp. 49-57, cited in Katrak, pp. 66-68). In his book on Zoroastrian religion (1893), he stressed that the term referred to “marriage among relations,” not to next-of-kin marriages, a “vile” but unfounded charge (1979, pp. 72-73).

[Bamanji Nusserwanji Dhabhar](#) (1869-1952), in the preface to his edition of the the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* (1913, pp. 4-5), suggested that the fulsome praise of the practice in *Pahlavi Rivāyat*, chap. 8, is evidence that the author’s attempt at “palming it off on the people in the name of religion” was a failure, though based on a fear that members of the community might be “perverted” to other religions.

Among more recent Parsi criticisms of the Western understanding of *xwēdōdah* and their interpretation of the sources is that of Jamshid Cawasji Katrak from 1965, an endeavor to “refute the heinous charge against Ancient Iranians” and to remove “this unjust and unfounded stigma attached to” them (p. ii). Katrak argues in detail that the accusations found in the non-Iranian sources are incorrect, that the Western image of Zarathustra and his teachings is distorted, including marriage, and that, in fact, Iranians held monogamous marriage in high regard even before the birth of the other world religions (e.g., p. xvii). He points out that the Avestan passages in which the term is used do not refer specifically to next-of-kin marriages, as also stressed by Sanjana and others. He discusses in some detail the passages assembled by West, pointing out that they do not specifically refer to next-of-kin marriages, but to mythical situations or to women’s respect for their fathers or husbands (pp. 60-64). As for the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* chapter 8, he cites Dhabhar’s opinion (above) and stresses that *Dēnkard* 3.80 speaks of mythological unions and spiritual relationships with God and shows how the original meaning of “gift of communion” with God came to mean “the gift of moral unions between the



human sexes or among mankind generally” (pp. 74-75).

Ali Akbar Jafarey, an Iranian convert to Zoroastrianism and cofounder of the Zarathushtrian Assembly in Los Angeles, posted an article on *xwēdōdah* at [vohuman.org](http://vohuman.org) in March 2005, in which he repeated most of the same arguments: the lack of clear contexts in *Young Avestan*; the uncertain semantics of the word, accepting the traditional Parsi interpretation, but suggesting that *x<sup>v</sup>aētūua* in *x<sup>v</sup>aētūua-daθa* means “independent, self-reliant” and that the intrinsic meaning of the term was “self-reliance-giving,” “a promoter of self-reliance.” Jafarey also adduced the silence of the Arabic authors as evidence that *xwēdōdah* was not practiced (as we have seen, this argument does not hold).

All these discussions are, understandably, predicated on the conviction that the elevated morals of Zoroastrianism would never have tolerated such an immoral practice.

The Khsnumists incorporated the concept of *x<sup>v</sup>aētūuadaθa* in their interpretation of Zoroastrianism, adapting the traditional Parsi interpretation to their own views. Thus, *khvaetva* interpreted as “independence” became “independence from the yokes of the flesh, freedom from the shackles of the flesh”; when such a person became *vahišta* “selfless, working for the redemption of his own kith and kin ... getting and purchasing for them such *khvaetva*,” they combine according to *ahûra-dât* “becoming whole,” through *khvaêtva-datha* (Chiniwalla, pp. 20-21). Thus, *khvaêtva* and *khvaêtva-datha* are stages in man’s spiritual development (ibid., pp. 111-12, 117). The first human couple were husband and wife, but not brother and sister, and so beautiful that the *Yazata* fell in love with them and bestowed *khvaêtva-datha* on them (ibid., p. 164). For a modern Khsnumist reading of *Yasna* 53, see K. Navroz Dastoor (at <http://tenets.zoroastrianism.com/KhaetvodathAndMarriage.pdf>).

References to incest among Zoroastrians in modern times appear to be non-existing, with the exception of a statement by Christine Dobbin (p. 151), who cited letters by Manockjee Cursetjee, judge of the Bombay Court of Small Causes, in the *Bombay Times* 1844-45, to the effect that certain Panchayat members, in addition to committing bigamy, married their illegitimate children (Cursetjee, pp. 21-24). On the pages cited, however, this is not mentioned, and I suspect the statement is due to superficial reading of a sentence on p. 26, that there were “individuals who not only ... recklessly live with ... unprincipled women, but even their bastard children are admitted



among Zoroastrians.”

### *Zoroastrian genetics*

Zoroastrians were the objects of genetic research from the 1940s (see Undevia, pp. 14-16). In his book from 1940, Sapur Faredun Desai devotes a chapter to inbreeding, with a section on consanguinity and the question of *xwēdōdah*: “‘Qaetvadatha’ and its Historical Interpretation” (pp. 43-48) and one on the question whether Parsis are deteriorating (pp. 49-59). His proposal, however, that a plan should be put in place in order to curtail the number of the “unfit” and replace them “by the fit—mentally and physically” (p. 133) must have jarred among anthropologists in the aftermath of World War II (Undevia does not mention Desai’s work).

The first relatively comprehensive study was that of J. V. Undevia, who, in his Ph.D. dissertation (1969), conducted research on Zoroastrian married couples, commenting on the high incidence of inbreeding (first cousins and remoter). Undevia’s samples were mainly from Parsi and Irani Bombay-resident pregnant women and their husbands and smaller numbers of Iranian Zoroastrians. Among his conclusions: the rarity of the Ry chromosome in the Iranis and its high frequency among the Parsis are both due to inbreeding, in Iran after the Muslim conquest and in India after the migration, but with opposite results according to the theory of random genetic drift (1973, pp. 48-49). Absence of G6PD enzyme deficiency in Iranis correlates with their largely desert habitation, while high frequency in the Parsis may have various causes (pp. 62-65). Absence of the Hb-S (sickle cell) gene in Iranis shows they did not mingle with Muslims, while it would have been introduced into the Parsi gene pool from the local population (pp. 85-91); it also shows that the Zoroastrians did not spread by conversion (p. 109). On the whole, the biological attributes of the Iranian Zoroastrians remained stable throughout history, while that of the Parsis changed due to their changing circumstances. This also answers the question of ethnic purity, about which there has been much confusion (p. 109).

Paul Axelrod, in his study of the population decline of the Parsis, mentions spurious reports of “unusually high incidence of mental retardation among the Parsis” (p. 415), but concludes that numerous factors contributed to the decline (p. 419), among which he does not mention inbreeding.

Numerous studies on the genetic makeup of Zoroastrians have appeared since



Undevia, 1973, but there are (as far as I have been able to verify) none devoted to the question of inbreeding.

In February 2008, the biotechnological company Avestha Gengraine Technologies Pvt. Ltd., (Avesthagen) launched its ambitious AVESTAGENOME™ project, which “aims to study the basis of longevity that is noticed in the Parsi-Zoroastrian population, and also to create a medical database of the community” (<http://www.avesthagen.com>, press release February 13, 2008). The Avesthagen website does not mention inbreeding, but other web reports suggest the Parsis were chosen because of their long history of inbreeding (see, e.g., interview with project leader and founder of Avesthagen, Viloo Morawala Patell, in *Nature* 446/7135, 29 March 2007, p. 475).

The issue of genetic degeneration among Zoroastrians is mentioned throughout the literature, but genetic research has been careful not to focus on this aspect. Undevia found it necessary to add a cautionary note at the end of his study of the Hb-S gene frequency in Parsis to the effect that the study said nothing about the “biological fitness of the present Parsis of India” (p. 91, perhaps with tacit reference to Desai, above).

The issue shows up occasionally in literature, as in Keki N. Daruwalla’s (b. 1937) poem *The Parsi Hell*, where the I refers to his “semen, brown with inbreeding. Genetic rust?” (p. 45; see also Luhrmann, p. 50; and Sharafi, p. 337, on the image in Indian movies of the Parsi as a fool).

Today, the discussion in the Zoroastrian communities is overshadowed by the question of “mixed marriages” and conversions, but occasionally reverts to the question of whether marriages among first cousins is conducive to birth defects or genetic disease; see, for instance, Maneck Bhujwala’s report (<http://tenets.zoroastrianism.com/cousin33.html>) on Denise Grady’s article in *The New York Times*, April 4, 2002, on research published in *Journal of Genetic Counseling* 11/2, 2002, pp. 97-119.

*Concluding remarks.*

The impossibility of assigning a specific meaning from the contexts to Young Avestan *xʷaētuuadaθa* is a problem. If we assume that the ideological origin of the *xwēdōdah* was the hierogamy between Heaven and Earth, which in Iran became that between Ahura Mazdā and Ārmaiti (the Earth, see Darmesteter,



1877, chap. III and secs. 200, 205; idem, 1891, p. 374; idem, 1892, pp. 133-34; Skjærvø), then it is not improbable, that, when Ahura Mazdā became the greatest god in the Iranian pantheon and demiurge, it followed that Ārmaiti must have been “created” by him. Since creation in the *Old Avesta* takes one of two forms: either fashioning like a carpenter or by siring and giving birth to (the exceptions are the cosmic order, *aša*, and the heavenly lights, which Ahura Mazdā produced with his thought), it followed that Ārmaiti must also have been his daughter and that the other first-created entities were their offspring, first of them Wahman (see above). That this myth goes back to Indo-European times is made likely, for instance, by Hesiod’s description of Ouranos and Gaiē (*Theogony* 176-77) and so on (cf. Darmesteter, 1891, p. 374; idem, 1892, pp. 133-34) and the mention in the *Rigveda* of how father heaven placed a fruit in the womb of his daughter (*Rigveda* 1.164.33; cf. Darmesteter, 1877, p. 257).

Old Iranian religion thus featured an original human couple, incestuous offspring of the celestial union and from whom humanity, by necessity, was descended through further incest. In contrast, the Old Testament does not say where Cain and Abel’s wives came from, but the question was discussed in the *Babylonian Talmud*, where it is suggested that Adam did not marry his daughter so that Cain could marry his sister so that the world could be “built up”; to which Rabbi Huna added that heathens marry their daughters, but that Adam did not do so for this reason (*Sanhedrin* 58b, ed. Epstein, *Seder Neziḳin* I, p. 397; see also, e.g., Mar Aba, in Sachau, III, pp. 269-70 sec. 4).

As the Young Avestan morning sacrifice (*yasna*) is a recreation, that is, re-ordering and re-generating, ritual, which replicates the primordial creation (see Skjærvø), it would follow that the performer of the ritual, imitating Ahura Mazdā, would also unite with his consort (wife/daughter). We would have a ritual parallel if Ārmaiti in the ritual context represented the ritual ground, in which case the spatial relationship between the sacrificer and her might be considered a replica of that of Heaven with respect to Earth and she, too, might function as his *xvaētuuadaθā* (wife/daughter; on *Yasna* 12, see above). According to *Yasna* 12.9, however, the sacrificer’s *xvaētuuadaθā* (wife) is his *daēnā* (see DĒN), whom he has sent into the other world to guide the sacrificial offerings, presumably conveyed on a sacrificial chariot through the dark, pre-dawn, heavenly spaces, and who returns victorious (see above). Applying the same logic to *Yasna* 53, it would seem that Zarathustra, too, unites with his *daēnā*, appropriately called *pourucistā*, who is remarked by many for her



splendor, which agrees with the Pahlavi descriptions of the *dēn*, presumably to produce the new dawn; compare the description of the luminous (*rōšn*) *dēn* coming from the east (*hwarāsān* “direction of the sunrise”) in Kerdīr’s inscriptions (see MacKenzie, 1989, sec. 17; ed. Gignoux, 1991, pp. 47, 72). The *daēnā*’s function is not likely to have been that of mother(/wife), however, but she would fit the role of sister(/wife); note that, in *Yašt* 17.16, Aši’s mother is Ārmaiti, her sister the Mazdayasnian *daēnā*, and her brothers Sraoša, Rašnu, and Miθra.

*Yasna* 12.8-9 is important also because it begins with the reciter’s utterance expressing his allegiance to Ahura Mazdā (*mazdaiiasnō ahmi*), with which we may compare the Pahlavi expression “I belong to Ohrmazd” (*Ohrmazd xwēš ham*), which takes us back to the possibility that the term may have been understood as “saying (*vada*) one’s own-hood (*x<sup>v</sup>aētu*),” that is, one’s appurtenance to God or one’s own (family)” (see above). In the context of the *āstuiē*, this would make perfect sense (see above).

If the *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa* was a conceptual ingredient of the ritual, it may have Indo-Iranian forebears. The story of Śunaḥśepa in the *Aitareya-brāhmaṇa* of the *Rigveda*, told during the *rāja-sūya* ritual (anointing of the king), contains a text on marriage, according to which sons born from mothers in turn mount their mothers and sisters because “a sonless one cannot attain heaven,” comparing animals, among whom this is normal behavior (vii.13, tr. Keith, pp. 300-1, who suggests that this is not an allusion to the Persian practice, although it cannot be ruled out).

The *Videvdad* passage, however, does talk about both *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa* men and women, so it is possible that the hierogamies performed by the deities in the world of thought and “symbolically” by the priests in this world were imitated in practice in the general population, first as a religious duty (as suggested by Darmesteter, 1877, p. 106 n. 2), then, perhaps, for practical reasons, for instance, of inheritance. It is possible, however, that the state of *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa* was achieved through some ritual, for instance, the *kusti* ritual, during which, too, *Yasna* 12.8-9 is recited. It should be kept in mind that the *kusti* is, in fact, identical with the Mazdayasnian *daēnā*, as implied in *Yasna* 9.26, where **Haoma** is said to be girded with (*aiβiiāstō*, that is, wear it as his *aiβiiānhana*, the *kusti*) the *daēnā māzdaiiasni*, and frequently stated in the Pahlavi texts (e.g., *Dādestān ī dēnīg* 38.11-15, ed. Jaafar-Dehaghi, pp. 158-59; tr. West, pp. 126-27). Thus, in *Yasna* 53.4-5 (see above), the participants in what is probably a sacrificial chariot race are enjoined to “find by their *daēnās* the new



existence of Good Thought,” which may imply a ritual *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadaθa* performed, perhaps, symbolically.

The actual practice in historical times, which is difficult to deny, should also be seen in the context of the Zoroastrian world view, where the cosmic battle between good and evil during the period of Mixture, in which mankind finds itself, is conducted on three levels: by the deities in the other world; by the sacrificers, who provide the link between the two worlds; and by humanity in this world. Thus, the behavioral prototypes provided by the gods and the priests (including the kings) may have been interpreted literally and led to the extension of the practice among royalty (the king being also the high priest) and, to an unknown extent, in the population in general. Modern Parsi scholars, being more concerned with how they were seen and judged by Muslims, Hindus, and Christians, in their discussions of *xwēdōdah*, do not seem to have considered this particular aspect of their religious traditions. It is explicitly stated in the *Frauarānē*, by the uttering of which the Zoroastrian chooses sides in the battle between good and evil: “I praise Order, I scorn the *daēuuas*, etc.,” imitating Zarathustra, who was the first to do so (*Yašt* 13.89).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, see Vasubandhu.

Tāwduros (Theodor) Abu Qorraḥ, *Maymar fi wujud al-kāleq wa'l-din al-qawim*, ed. Ignace Dick as *Traité de l'existence du créateur et de la vraie religion*, Lebanon, 1982.

William Adam, “Consanguinity in Marriage,” pt. 1, *Fortnightly Review* 2, 1865, pp. 710-30; pt. 2, *Fortnightly Review* 3, 1865, pp. 74-88.

P. B. Adamson, “Consanguinous Marriages in the Ancient World,” *Folklore* 93, 1982, pp. 85-92.

Ādur-Farnbay ī Farrozzādān, *Rivāyat*, ed. by Behramgore T. Anklesaria as *The Pahlavi Rivāyat of Āturfarnbag and Farnbag-Srōš*, 2 vols., Bombay, 1969 (posthumously; preface by Kaikhusroo M. JamaspAsa); ed. by Ḥasan-Režā'i



Bāgbidi as *Revāyat-e Ādar Farnbaġ-e Farroġzādān*, Tehran, 2005.

Jaleh Amouzgar and Ahmad Tafazzoli, see *Dēnkard*, book 5.

*An Universal History, from the Earliest Account of Time to the Present: Compiled from Original Authors And Illustrated with Maps, Cuts, Notes, Chronological and Other Tables*, 20 vols., Dublin, 1744-47.

Nancy F. Anderson, “The ‘Marriage with a Deceased Wife’s Sister Bill’ Controversy: Incest Anxiety and the Defense of Family Purity in Victorian England,” *The Journal of British Studies* 21/2, 1982, pp. 67-86.

Fridrich Carl Andreas, *Bruchstücke einer Pehlevi-Übersetzung der Psalmen*, ed. Kaj Barr, SPAW, Berlin, 1933, pp. 91-152,

Behramgore T. Anklesaria, see *Bundahišn, Mēnōy xrad, Ādur-Farnbay ī Farrozzādān*. Tehmuras D. Anklesaria, see *Dādestān ī dēnīg*.

Abraham Hyacinthe Anquetil-Duperron, *Zend-Avesta: ouvrage de Zoroastre, contenant les idées théologiques, physiques et morales de ce législateur, les ceremonies du culte religieux...*, Paris, 1771; repr. New York and London, 1984.

*Ardā Wirāz-nāmag*, ed. and tr. Martin Haug and Edward W. West as *The Book of Arda Viraf: The Pahlavi Text Prepared by Destur Hoshangji Jamaspji Asa ...*, Bombay, 1872; ed. and tr. Philippe Gignoux as *Le livre d’Ardā Virāz*, Paris, 1984.

Brigitte d’Arx, “Le mystère du choix de la deuxième vertu: Courte réflexion sur l’inceste à l’iranienne,” *Barbares et civilisés dans l’Antiquité*, Cahiers KUBABA VII, Paris, 2005, pp. 249-66.

Jes P. Asmussen, “Christians in Iran: The History of Christian Expansion in Iran,” in *Camb. Hist. Iran* III/2, 1983, pp. 924-48.

*Avesta*, ed. Karl F. Geldner as *Avesta: The Sacred Book of the Parsis*, 3 vols., Stuttgart, 1896.

Paul Axelrod, “Cultural and Historical Factors in the Population Decline of the Parsis of India,” *Population Studies* 44, 1990, pp. 401-19.

*Ayādgār ī Zarērān*, ed. Davoud Monchi-Zadeh as *Die Geschichte Zarēr’s*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Indoeuropaea Upsaliensia 4, Uppsala, 1981.



Mehrdād Bahār, see *Bundahišn*.

Christian Bartholomae, *Die Gatha's des Awesta: Zarathustra's Verspredigten*, Strassburg, 1905.

Idem, *Die Zendhandschriften der K. Hof- und Staatsbibliothek in München*, Catalogus codicum manu scriptorum Bibliothecae Regiae Monacensis I/7, Codices Zendicos Complectens, Munich, 1915.

Isaac de Beausobre, *Histoire critique de Manichée et du Manicheisme*, 2 vols., Amsterdam, 1734-39.

Paul Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*, 7 vols., Paris and Leipzig, 1890-97.

Emile Benveniste, *Les mages dans l'ancien Iran*, Paris, 1938.

Idem, *Hittite et indo-européen: études comparatives*, Bibliothèque archéologique et historique de l'Institut français d'archéologie d'Istanbul 5, Paris, 1962.

Idem, *Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes*, 2 vols., Paris, 1969.

Sheriarji Dadabhai Bharucha, *A Brief Sketch of the Zoroastrian Religion and Customs*, 3rd ed., Bombay, 1928, repr. as *Zoroastrian Religion and Customs*, Bombay and Queens Village, N.Y., 1979.

Idem (Šeheriārajī Dādābhāī Bharūcā), “Janma, lagna ane maraṇa: Bulanda Māzadayasnī Zarathuśtrī dharmane ādhāre jāṇavājoga resālāo,” in Hośaṅga Tehamurasa Aṅkalesarīā, ed., *Ganj-e irāni* 2, Mumbai, 1934.

Alan H. Bittles et al., “Genetic Aspects of Inbreeding and Incest,” in Arthur P. Wolf and William H. Durham, eds., *Inbreeding, Incest, And the Incest Taboo: The State of Knowledge at the Turn of the Century*, Stanford, 2005, pp. 38-60.

Alan H. Bittles et al., “Human Inbreeding: A Familiar Story Full of Surprises,” in Helen Macbeth and Prakash Shetty, eds., *Health and Ethnicity*, Society for the Study of Human Biology Series 41, London, 2001, pp. 68–78.

Mary Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism I: The Early Period*, Leiden and Cologne, 1975. Idem, *Zoroastrians, Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, London and Boston, 1979.



Idem, *A History of Zoroastrianism II: Under the Achaemenians*, Leiden and Cologne, 1982.

Mary Boyce and Frantz Grenet, (with contribution by Roger Beck), *A History of Zoroastrianism III: Zoroastrians under Macedonians and Roman Rule*, Leiden and Cologne, 1991.

Oskar (Oscar) Braun, *Das Buch der Synhados oder, Synodicon orientale: Die Sammlung der Nestorianischen Konzilien, zusammengestellt im neunten Jahrhundert nach der Syrischen Handschrift, Museo Borgiano 82, der Vatikanischen Bibliothek*, Stuttgart and Vienna, 1900.

Idem, *Ausgewählte Akten persischer Märtyrer mit einem Anhang: Ostsyrisches Mönchsleben*, Bibliothek der Kirchenväter 22, Kempten and Munich, 1915.

Maria Brosius, *Women in Ancient Persia, 559-331 BC*, Oxford and New York, 1996.

O. Bucci, "Il matrimonio fra consanguinei (Khvêtûkdâs) nella tradizione giuridica delle genti iraniche," *Apollinaris* 51, 1978, pp. 291-319.

Sohrab Jamshedji Bulsara, ed., *Aêrpatastân and Nîrangastân or The Code of the Holy Doctorship and the Code of the Divine Service ...*, Bombay, 1915.

*Bundahišn*, ed. and tr. Behramgore T. Anklesaria as *Zand-âkāsîh: Iranian or Greater Bundahišn*, Bombay, 1956; tr. Mehrdâd Bahâr, Tehran, 1990; ed. Fażl-Allâh Pâkzâd (Fazlollah Pakzad), *Bundahišn: Zoroastrische Kosmogonie und Kosmologie*, Tehran, 2005.

Louis Charles Casartelli, *La philosophie religieuse du Mazdéisme sous les Sassanides*, Paris, 1884; tr. Firoz Jamaspji Jamasp Asa as *The Philosophy of the Mazdayasnian Religion under the Sassanids*, with prefatory remarks, notes, and a brief biographical sketch of the author, Bombay, 1889.

Idem, "Pahlavi Notes. IV. What was Khvêtûk-das?," *Babylonian and Oriental Record: A Monthly Magazine of the Antiquities of the East* 8/3, 1889, pp. 169-74.

Gaius Valerius Catullus, *The Poems of Catullus*, tr. Charles Martin, Baltimore, 1979.

Carlo G. Cereti, *The Zand ī Wahman Yasn: A Zoroastrian Apocalypse*, Rome, 1995.



Jean Baptiste Chabot, ed., *Synodicon orientale ou recueil de synodes nestoriens ... d'après le ms. syriaque 332 de la Bibliothèque nationale et le ms. K. VI, 4 du Musée Borgia, à Rome*, Paris, 1902; tr. Oskar Braun, see Braun, 1900.

Henry Chadwick, "The Relativity of Moral Codes. Rome and Persia in Late Antiquity," in William R. Schoedel and Robert L. Wilken, eds., *Early Christian Literature and the Classical Intellectual Tradition: In Honorem Robert M. Grant*, Paris, 1979, pp. 135-50.

Sanping Chen, "Some Remarks on the Chinese 'Bulgar'," *Acta Orientalia Hungarica* 51, 1998, pp. 69-83.

Framroze Sorabji Chiniwalla, *Essential Origins of Zoroastrianism*, Bombay, 1942.

Jamsheed K. Choksy, *Purity and Pollution in Zoroastrianism: Triumph over Evil*, Austin, 1989.

Idem, *Evil, Good and Gender: Facets of the Feminine in Zoroastrian Religious History*, New York, 2002.

Arthur Christensen, *Les types du premier homme et du premier roi dans l'histoire légendaire des Iraniens I*, Stockholm, 1917 (title page has 1918).

Idem, *Études sur le Zoroastrisme de la Perse antique*, Copenhagen, 1928.

Idem, *L'Iran sous les Sassanides*, 2nd ed., Copenhagen, 1944; tr. Gōlām-Rezā Rašīd Yāsami as *Irān dar zamān-e Sāsāniān*, Tehran, 1938.

Carl C. Clemen, *Fontes Historiae Religionis Persicae*, Bonn, 1920.

Carsten Colpe, "Development of Religious Thought," in *Camb. Hist. Iran* III/2, 1983, pp. 819-65.

Ctesias of Cnidus, *Histoires de l'Orient*, tr. Janick Auberger, with a preface by Charles Malamoud, Paris, 1991; tr. Fox and Pemberton.

Franz Cumont, "Les unions entre proches à Doura et chez les Perses," *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, Feb. 15, 1924, pp. 53-62.

Manockjee Cursetjee, *The Parsee Panchayet: Its Rise, Its Fall and the Causes*



*that Led to the Same: Being a Series of Letters in the Bombay Times of 1844-45, under the signature of Q. in the Corner*, Bombay, 1860.

Quintus Curtius Rufus, *History of Alexander*, tr. John Carew Rolfe and John Rowe Workman, 2 vols., Cambridge, Mass., 1971-76.

*Dādestān ī dēnīg*, pt. 1, ed. Tehmuras D. Anklesaria as, *The Datistan-i Dinik: Pahlavi Text Containing 92 Questions, Asked by Mitr-Khurshi: Atur-Mahan and Others, to Manush-Chihar Goshn-Jam, Leader of the Zoroastrians in Persia, about 881 A.D., and Their Answers. Pt. 1. Pursishn I-XL*, Bombay, 1911; ed. and tr. Mahmoud Jaafari-Dehgani as *Dādestān ī dēnīg. Part I: Transcription, Translation and Commentary*, Studia Iranica, Cahier 20, Paris, 1998; pt. 2, ed. P. K. Anklesaria, "A Critical Edition of the Unedited Portion of the Dādestān-i Dīnik," Ph.D. diss., University of London, 1958; tr. Edward W. West in *Pahlavi Texts*, pt. 2, SBE 18, pp. 1-276.

Amedeo Dalla Volta, "L'etica sessuale degli Irani ed il matrimonio incestuoso," *Atti del Reale Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti* 85, pt. 2 (9th ser. vol. 10), 1925-26, pp. 1-47.

James Darmesteter, *Ormazd et Ahriman, leurs origines et leur histoire*, Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études ... Sciences philologiques et historiques 29, Paris, 1877.

Idem, *Études iraniennes*, 2 vols., Paris, 1883.

Idem, "Le Hvaêtvadatha, ou le mariage entre consanguins chez les Parsis," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 24, 1891, pp. 366-75.

Idem, "Le Hvaêtvadatha," in idem, *Le Zend-Avesta I*, 1892, pp. 126-34.

Idem, *Le Zend-Avesta*, 3 vols., Paris, 1892-93; repr., Paris, 1960.

Keki N. Daruwalla, *The Keeper of the Dead*, Delhi, 1982.

*Dēnkard*, ms. B [and its copy MR], ed. Mark J. Dresden as *Dēnkart. A Pahlavi Text: Facsimile Edition of the Manuscript B of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, Bombay*, Wiesbaden, 1966; ms. DH, ed. in *The Codex DH. Being a Facsimile Edition of Bondahesh ... and Parts of Denkard*, Tehran, [1970]; ed. Dhanjishah M. Madan as *The Complete Text of the Pahlavi Dinkard*, 2 vols., Bombay, 1911; book 3, tr., Jean de Menasce as *Le troisième livre du Denkart*, Paris, 1973; book



5, ed. and tr. Jaleh Amouzgar and Ahmad Tafazzoli as *Le cinquième livre du Dēnkard: Transcription, traduction et commentaire*, Studia Iranica, Cahier 23, Paris, 2000; book 7, ed. and tr. Marijan Molé as *La légende de Zoroastre selon les textes pehlevi*, Travaux de l'Institut d'études iraniennes de l'Université de Paris 3, Paris, 1967; book 8, tr. Edward W. West, in *Pahlavi Texts* 4, SBE 37, pp. 1-171; book 9, tr. West, in *Pahlavi Texts* 4, SBE 37, pp. 172-397; book 9, *Sūdgar Nask*, ed. and tr. Yuhan S.-D. Vevaina, in "Studies in Zoroastrian Exegesis and Hermeneutics with a Critical Edition of the *Sūdgar Nask* of *Dēnkard* Book 9," Ph.D. diss., Harvard, 2007; *Dēnkard*, ed. Peshotan Baramji Sanjana et al. (text with translation in Gurati and English), 19 vols., Bombay, 1874-1928.

Sapur Faredun Desai, *Parsis and Eugenics*, Bombay, 1940.

*Divyāvadāna*, ed. Edward B Cowell and Robert Alexander Neil as *The Divyavadana: A Collection of Early Buddhist Legends*, Amsterdam, 1970.

Bamanji Nusserwanji (Nasarvanji) Dhabhar, 1913, see *Pahlavi Rivāyat*.

Idem, *The Persian Rivayats of Hormazyar Framarz and Others*, Bombay, 1932.

Idem, ed., *Zand-i Khūrtak Avistāk*, Bombay, 1927; tr. idem as *Translation of the Zand-i Khūrtak Avistāk*, Bombay, 1963.

Abu Ḥanifa Dinavari, *Aḵbār al-ṭewāl*, ed. Vladimir Guirgass, Leiden, 1888; ed. 'Abd-al-Mon'em 'Āmer and Jamāl-al-Din Šayyāl, Cairo, 1960.

*Dissoi logoi*, ed. Thomas M. Robinson as *Contrasting Arguments: An Edition of the Dissoi logoi*, New York, 1979.

Christine Dobbin, "The Parsi Panchayat in Bombay City in the Nineteenth Century," *Modern Asian Studies* 4, 1970, pp. 149-64.

Ebn al-Qayyem al-Jawziya, *Aḥkām ahl al-ḍemma*, ed. Šobḥi Šāleḥ, 2 vols., Damascus, 1961.

Elišē [Elišē] Vardapet, *Elišēi vasn Vardanay ew Hayoc' Paterazmin*, ed. E. Ter-Minasean, Erevan, 1957; tr. with comm. Robert W. Thomson as *History of Vardan and the Armenian War*, Cambridge, Mass., 1982.

Ēmēd ī Ašawahistān, *Rivāyat*, ed. Behramgore T. Anklesaria as *Rivāyat-i Hēmīt-ī Asavahistān*, Bombay, 1962; ed. and tr. Nezhat Safa-Isfehāni (Nezhat Šafā-Ešfahāni) as *Rivāyat-i Hēmīt-i Ašawahistān: A Study in Zoroastrian Law*,



Cambridge, Mass., 1980; *Revāyat-e Emid-e Ašavaheštān mota'alleg be sada-ye čahārom-e hejri*, Tehran, 1997.

Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, tr. Edwin H. Gifford as, *Preparation for the Gospel*, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1903.

Eznik of Kolb, *De deo*, tr. Monica J. Blanchard and Robin Darling Young as *A Treatise on God written in Armenian by Eznik of Kolb (floruit c.430-c.450)*, Leuven, 1998.

Faustus, see. Nina Garsoïan.

Michael M. J. Fischer, "Zoroastrian Iran between Myth and Praxis," Ph.D. diss. University of Chicago, 1973.

Idem, "On Changing the Concept and Position of Persian Women," in Louis Beck and Nikki Keddie, eds., *Women in the Muslim World*, Cambridge, Mass., 1978, pp. 189-215.

William Sherwood Fox and R. E. K. Pemberton, ed. and tr., *Passages in Greek and Latin Literature Relating to Zoroaster and Zoroastrianism Translated into English*, Journal of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute 14, 1929.

*Frahang ī oīm*, ed. Hans Reichelt as "Der Frahang i oīm," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 14, 1900, pp. 177-213.

Yohanan Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition*, Cambridge and New York, 2003.

Richard N. Frye, "Zoroastrian Incest," in Gherardo Gnoli and Lionello Lanciotti, eds., *Orientalia Iosephi Tucci memoriae dicata*, 3 vols., Rome, 1985-88, I, pp. 44-55.

Nina G. Garsoïan, tr., *The Epic Histories Attributed to P'awstos Buzand (Buzandaran Patmut'iwnk')*, Cambridge, Mass., 1989.

Wilhelm Geiger, *Ostiranische Kultur im Altertum*, Erlangen, 1882; tr. Darab Peshotan Sanjana as *Civilization of the Eastern Iranians in Ancient Times with An Introduction on the Avesta Religion*, 2 vols., London, 1885-86.

Geert Jan van Gelder, *Close Relationships: Incest and Inbreeding in Classical Arabic Literature*, London and New York, 2005.



Karl F. Geldner, *Über die metrik des jüngeren Avesta, nebst übersetzung ausgewählter abschnitte*, Tübingen, 1877.

Idem, "Übersetzungen aus dem Avesta. IV," *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung auf dem Gebiete der indogermanischen Sprachen* 25, 1881, pp. 465-590.

Joseph van den Gheyn, *Essais de mythologie et de philologie comparée*, Bruxelles, 1885.

Philippe Gignoux, 1984, see *Ardā Wirāz-nāmag*.

Idem, *Les quatre inscriptions du Mage Kirdīr*, *Studia Iranica*, Cahier 9, Paris, 1991.

Idem, "L'eau et le feu dans le zoroastrisme," in Gérard Capdeville, ed., *L'eau et le feu dans les religions antiques: Actes du premier colloque international d'histoire des religions organisé par l'Ecole doctorale Les mondes de l'antiquité, Paris, 18-20 mai 1995, Université de Paris IV-Sorbonne, Ecole normale supérieure*, Paris, 2004, pp. 269-82.

Philippe Gignoux and Ahmad Tafazzoli, see *Wizīdagīhā ī Zādspram*.

Benjamin P. Givens and Charles Hirschman, "Modernization and Consanguineous Marriage in Iran," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 56, 1994, pp. 820-34.

Ward H. Goodenough, "Comments on the Question of Incestuous Marriages in Old Iran," *American Anthropologist*, N.S., 51, 1949, pp. 326-28.

Louis H. Gray, "The Double Nature of the Iranian Archangels," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 7, 1904, pp. 345-72.

Idem, "Marriage. Iranian. 2: Next of Kin Marriage," in James Hastings, ed., with the assistance of John A. Selbie and Louis H. Gray, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* VIII, New York, 1915, pp. 456-59.

Charles de Harlez, *Avesta, livre sacré des sectateurs de Zoroastre*, Liège, 1875-76.

Eloise Hart, "The Vision of Arda Viraf," *Sunrise Magazine*, June-July 1977.



Martin Haug, *Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings, and Religion of Parsis*, 3rd ed., London, 1884.

Idem and Edward W. West, see *Ardā Wirāz-nāmag*.

*Hērbedestān*, ed. Helmut Humbach, in collaboration with Josef Elfenbein, as *Ērbedestān: An Avesta-Pahlavi Text*, Munich, 1990; ed. Firoze M. Kotwal and Philip G. Kreyenbroek, with contributions by James R. Russell, as *The Hērbedestān and Nērangestān*, *Studia Iranica*, Cahier 10, Paris, 1992.

Clarisse Herrenschildt, “Le xwētōdas ou mariage «incestueux» en Iran ancien,” in Pierre Bonte, ed., *Epouser au plus proche, inceste, prohibitions et stratégies matrimoniales autour de la Méditerranée*, Paris, 1994, pp. 113-25.

Idem, “Political Theology of the Achaemenids,” in Giovanni Filoramo, ed., *Teologie politiche: Modelli a confronto*, Brescia, 2005, pp. 31-44.

Ernst Herzfeld, *Zoroaster and His World*, 2 vols., Princeton, 1947.

Hesiod, *Theology*, tr. Norman Oliver Brown, New York, 1953.

Bodil Hjerrild, *Studies in Zoroastrian Family Law: A Comparative Analysis*, Copenhagen, 2003.

Georg Hoffmann, *Auszüge aus syrischen Akten persischer Märtyrer, übers. und durch Untersuchungen zur historischen Topographie erläutert*, AKM 7/3, Leipzig, 1880.

Keith Hopkins, “Brother-Sister Marriage in Roman Egypt,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22, 1980, pp. 303-54.

Hsüan-tsang, see Xuanzang.

Heinrich Hübschmann, “Ueber die persische Verwandtenheirath,” *ZDMG* 43, 1889, pp. 308-12.

Helmut Humbach, “Rituelle Termini technici in den awestischen Gathas,” *MSS* 8, 1956, pp. 74-83.

Idem, *Die Gathas des Zarathustra*, 2 vols., Heidelberg, 1959.

Helmut Humbach, in collaboration with Josef H. Elfenbein and Prods O.



Skjærvø, *The Gāthās of Zarathustra and the Other Old Avestan Texts*, 2 vols., Heidelberg, 1991.

Helmut Humbach and Pallan R. Ichaporia, *The Heritage of Zarathushtra: A New Translation of His Gāthās*, Heidelberg, 1994.

Manfred Hutter, "Mār Abā and the Impact of Zoroastrianism on Christianity in the 6th Century," in Carlo G. Cereti et al., eds., *Religious Themes and Texts of Pre-Islamic Iran and Central Asia: Studies in Honour of Professor Gherardo Gnoli*, Wiesbaden, 2003, pp. 167-73.

Thomas Hyde, *Historia Religionis veterum Persarum eorumque Magorum ... Zoroastris vita, ejusque et aliorum vaticinia de Messiah e Persarum aliorumque monumentis eruuntur...atque magorum liber Sad-der (Zoroastris praecepta seu religionis canones continens) e persico traductus exhibetur*, Oxford, 1700.

Stanley Insler, *The Gāthās of Zarathustra*, Acta Iranica 8, Leiden and Tehran, 1975.

A. V. Williams Jackson, *Zoroaster the Prophet of Ancient Iran*, New York, 1919, repr. New York, 1965.

Idem, *Zoroastrian Studies: The Iranian Religion and Various Monographs*, New York, 1928.

Albert de Jong, "Jeh the Primal Whore? Observations on Zoroastrian Misogyny," in Ria Kloppenborg and Wouter J. Hanegraaff, eds., *Female Stereotypes in Religious Traditions*, Leiden, 1995, pp. 15-41.

Idem, *Traditions of the Magi: Zoroastrianism in Greek and Latin Literature*, Leiden and New York, 1997.

Ferdinand Justi, "Geschichte Irans: Von den ältesten Zeiten bis zum Ausgang der Sasaniden," in *Grundriss II*, pp. 395-549.

Jamshid Cawasji Katrak, *Marriage in Ancient Iran*, Bombay, 1965.

Jean Kellens and Eric Pirart, *Les textes vieil-avestiques I: Intruduction, texte et traduction Répertoires grammaticaux et lexique Commentaire*, Wiesbaden, 1988-91.

Arthur B. Keith, tr. *Rigveda Brahmanas: The Aitareya and Kauṣītaki Brahmanas*



of the *Rigveda*, Harvard Oriental Series 25, Cambridge, Mass., 1920.

Firoze M. P. Kotwal, ed., *The Supplementary Texts to the Šāyest nē-šāyest*, Copenhagen, 1969.

Gregory C. Leavitt, *Incest and Inbreeding Avoidance: A Critique of Darwinian Social Science*, Lewiston, N.Y., 2005.

A. D. Lee, “Close-Kin Marriage in Late Antique Mesopotamia,” *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 29, 1988, pp. 403-13.

Tanya M. Luhmann, *The Good Parsi: The Fate of a Colonial Elite in a Postcolonial Society*, Cambridge, Mass., 1996.

David Neil MacKenzie, “Kerdir’s Inscription,” in *The Sasanian Rock Reliefs at Naqsh-e Rostam: Naqsh-e Rostam 6, the Triumph of Shapur I*, Iranische Denkmäler, Lief. 13, Reihe 2: Iranische Felsreliefs I, Berlin, 1989, pp. 35-72.

Maria Macuch, *Das Sasanidische Rechtsbuch “Mātakdān i hazār dātistān” (Teil II)*, Wiesbaden, 1981.

Idem, “Inzest im vorislamischen Iran,” *AMI* 24, 1991, pp. 141-54.

Idem, *Rechtskasuistik und Gerichtspraxis zu Beginn des siebenten Jahrhunderts in Iran: Die Rechtssammlung des Farroḫmard i Wahrāmān*, Wiesbaden, 1993.

Idem, “Incestuous Marriage in the Context of Sasanian Family Law,” in Maria Macuch, Dieter Weber, and Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst, eds., *Ancient and Middle Iranian Studies: Proceedings of the 6th European Conference of Iranian Studies, Held in Vienna, 18-22 September 2007*, Iranica 19, Wiesbaden, 2010, pp. 133-48.

Bernard Mandeville, *Fable of the Bees*, Harmondsworth, UK, 1714.

Moṭahhar b. Ṭāher Maqdesi, *Ketāb al-bad’ wa’l-ta’riḳ*, ed. and tr. Clément Huart as *Le livre de la création et de l’histoire*, 6 vols., Paris, 1899-1919; tr. Moḥammad-Rezā Šafi’i Kadkani as *Āfarineš wa tāriḳ*, 2 vols., Tehran, 1995.

Abu’l-Ḥasan ‘Ali b. Ḥosayn Mas‘udi, *Moruj al-dahab wa ma‘āden al-jawhar*, ed. and tr. Barbier de Menard and Pavet de Courteille as *Les prairies d’or*, 9 vols., Paris, 1861-77; tr. revised by Charles Pellat, 3 vols., Paris, 1962-71.



Victor J. Matthews, *Panyassis of Halikarnassos: Text and Commentary*, Mnemosyne, Bibliotheca Classica Batava. Supplementum 33, Leiden, 1974.

Aly-Akbar Mazahéri, *La famille iranienne aux temps anté-islamiques*, Paris, 1938.

Katāyun Mazdāpur, see *Šāyest nē šāyest*.

Arne Melvinger, “Madjūs,” in *EL*.<sup>2</sup> V, pp. 1110-21.

Jean de Menasce, “Autour d’un texte syriaque inédit sur la religion des Mages,” *BSO(A)S* 9, 1937-39, pp. 587-601.

Idem, “La Rivāyat de Ēmēt ī Ašavahištān,” *Revue de l’histoire des religions* 157, 1962, pp. 69-88.

Idem, 1973, see *Dēnkard*.

*Mēnōy xrad*, ed. Tahmuras D. Anklesaria as *Dânâk-u mainyô-i khard*, Bombay, 1913; tr. Edward W. West as “Dînâ-î **mainög-î** khirad,” in idem, tr., *Pahlavi Texts*, Part 3, Sacred Books of the East 24, Oxford, 1880, pp. 3-113; tr. Aḥmad Tafazzoli as *Minu-ye kerad*, Tehran, 1975; repr. Tehran, 1995.

Mahšid Mir-Faḡrā’i, see *Pahlavi Rivāyat*.

Michael Mitterauer, “The Customs of the Magians: The Problem of Incest in Historical Societies,” in Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich, eds., *Sexual Knowledge, Sexual Science: The History of Attitudes to Sexuality*, Cambridge, UK, and New York, 1994, pp. 231-50.

Marijan Molé, 1963, see *Dēnkard*.

Idem, *La légende de Zoroastre selon les textes pehlevis*, Travaux de l’Institut d’études iraniennes de l’Université de Paris 3, Paris, 1967.

Michael G. Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest*, Princeton, 1984; 2nd ed., Piscataway, N.J., 2005.

Moses Khorenats’i, *Patmut’iwn Hayoc’*, tr. Robert W. Thomson as *History of the Armenians*, Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1978.

James H. Moulton, *Early Zoroastrianism: Lectures Delivered at Oxford and in*



*London, February to May 1912*, London, 1913.

Idem, *The Treasure of the Magi: A Study of Modern Zoroastrianism*, London, etc., 1917.

Theodor Nöldeke, “Syrische Polemik gegen die persische Religion,” in *Festgruss an Rudolf von Roth zum Doktor-Jubiläum, 24. August 1893, von seinen Freunden und Schülern*, Stuttgart, 1893, pp. 34-38.

Henrik S. Nyberg, *Irans forntidiga religioner*, Stockholm, 1937; tr. Hans Heinrich Schaeder as *Die Religionen des alten Iran*, Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatisch-Aegyptischen Gesellschaft 43, Leipzig, 1938.

María Olalla García, “Xwedodah: el matrimonio consanguíneo en la Persia Sasánida: Una comparación entre fuentes pahlavíes y greco-latinas,” *Iberia: Revista de la Antigüedad* 4, 2001, pp. 181-97.

Henry Steel Olcott, *Theosophy, Religion and Occult Science: Lectures and Addresses on Theosophy*, London, 1885.

Adam Olearius, *The Voyages and Travells of the Ambassadors Sent by Frederick, Duke of Holstein, to the Great Duke of Muscovy and the King of Persia*, 2nd corr. ed., London, 1669.

*Pahlavi Rivāyat*, ed. Bamanji Nasarvanji Dhabhar as *The Pahlavi Rivāyat Accompanying the Dâdistân ī Dīnīk*, Bombay, 1913; ed. and tr. Alan V. Williams as *The Pahlavi Rivāyat Accompanying the Dādestān ī Dēnīg*, Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, hist.-fil. medd. 60, 1-2, 2 vols., Copenhagen, 1990; tr. Mahšid Mir-Faḡrā'i as *Rewāyat-e Pahlavi*, Tehran, 1988.

Antonio Panaino, “La sfera della sessualità nel mondo iranico-preislamico,” in *Comportamenti e immaginario della sessualità nell'alto Medioevo. 31 marzo-5 aprile 2005* (Settimane di studio della Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo 53), Spoleto, 2006, pp. 223-60.

*Panyassis of Halikarnassos*, see Matthews, 1974.

P'awstos Buzandats'i, see Nina Garsoïan.

Anahid Perikhanian, “Iranian society and Law,” in *Camb. Hist. Iran* 3/2, 1983, pp. 627-80.



Philo of Alexandria, *De specialibus legibus*, tr. Charles Duke Yonge as *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged*, new updated ed., Peabody, Mass., 1993 [first pub. 1854-55].

(pseudo-)Plutarch, *Parallela Graeca et Romana*, Loeb Classical Library, IV, Cambridge, Mass., 1936.

Jakob Eduard Polak, *Persien, das Land und seine Bewohner: ethnographische Schilderungen*, 2 vols in one, Leipzig, 1865; tr. Kaykāvus Jahāndāri as *Safar-nāma-ye Polāk: Iran wa Irāniān*, Tehran, 1982.

Humphrey Prideaux, *The Old and New Testament Connected in the History of the Jews and Neighboring Nations, from the Declension of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah to the Time of Christ*, 3 vols., 2nd ed., London, 1716.

Adolf Rapp, “Die Religion und Sitte der Perser und übrigen Iranier nach den griechischen und römischen Quellen” (pt. 2), *ZDMG* 20, 1865, pp. 49-140.

*Rigveda Brāhmaṇas: The Aitareya and Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇas of the Rigveda*, tr. Arthur B. Keith, Cambridge, Mass., 1920.

*Rivāyat ī Ādur-Farnbay ī Farrozzādān*, see Ādur-Farnbay ī Farrozzādān.

*Rivāyat ī Ēmēd ī Ašwahištān*, see Ēmēd ī Ašwahištān.

Thomas M. Robinson, ed., *Contrasting Arguments: An Edition of the Dissoi logoi*, New York, 1979.

James R. Russell, *Zoroastrianism in Armenia*, Harvard Iranian Series 5, Cambridge, Mass., 1987.

Eduard Sachau, *Syrische Rechtsbücher*, 3 vols., Berlin, 1907-14.

Nezhat Safa-Isfahani (Şafā-Eşfahāni), see Ēmēd ī Ašwahištān.

Moḥammad ‘Abd-al-Karim Šahrastāni, *Ketāb al-melal wa’l-neḥal*, ed. William Cureton as *Book of Religious and Philosophical Sects*, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1923; tr. Daniel Gimaret and Guy Monot as *Livre des religions et des sectes*, 2 vols., Peeters/UNESCO, 1986. Sanjana, see Sunjana.

*Šāyest nē šāyest*, ed. and tr. Jehangir C. Tavadia as *Šāyast-nē-šāyast: A Pahlavi Text on Religious Customs*, Hamburg, 1930; ed. and tr. Katāyun Mazdāpur as



Šāyast nē šāyast: *Matn-i be zabān-e pārsi-e miāna (pahlavi-e sāsāni)*, Tehran, 1990.

Walter Scheidel, “Brother-Sister and Parent Child Marriage outside Royal Families in Ancient Egypt and Iran: A Challenge to the Sociobiological View of Incest Avoidance?,” *Ethology and Sociobiology* 17, 1996, pp. 319-40.

Idem, “Ancient Egyptian Sibling Marriage and the Westermarck Effect,” in Arthur P. Wolf and William H. Durham, eds., *Inbreeding, Incest, and the Incest Taboo: The State of Knowledge at the Turn of the Century*, Stanford, Cal., 2005, pp. 93-108.

Shaul Shaked, *Dualism in Transformation: Varieties of Religion in Sasanian Iran*, London, 1994.

Mitra June Sharafi, “Bella’s Case: Parsi Identity and the Law in Colonial Rangoon, Bombay and London, 1887-1925,” Ph.D. diss., Princeton, 2006.

Nikolaus Sidler, *Zur Universalität des Inzesttabu: Eine kritische Untersuchung der These und der Einwände*, Stuttgart, 1971, pp. 86-149.

Jonathan A. Silk, “Putative Persian Perversities: Buddhist Condemnations of Zoroastrian Close-Kin Marriage in Context,” *BSO(A)S* 71, 2008a, pp. 433-64.

Idem, “The Story of Dharmaruci In the *Divyāvadāna* and Kṣemendra’s *Bodhisattvāvadānakalpalatā*,” *IJ* 51, 2008b, pp. 137-85.

Idem, “Incestuous Ancestries: The Family Origins of Gautama Siddhārtha, Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 20:12, and the Status of Scripture in Buddhism,” *History of Religions* 47/4, 2008c, pp. 253-81.

Nagendra Kr Singh, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Hinduism XXXVII*, 1999, pp. 2342-77.

Prods Oktor Skjærvø, “The Avestan Yasna: Ritual and Myth,” in Claus V. Pedersen and Fereydun Vahman, eds., *Religious Texts in Iranian Languages: Symposium Held in Copenhagen May Month 2002, Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab*, Copenhagen, 2006, pp. 53-80.

James S. Slotkin, “On a Possible Lack of Incest Regulations in Old Iran,” *American Anthropologist*, N.S. 49, 1947, pp. 612-17.

Friedrich Spiegel, “Ueber die irānische Stammverfassung,” in *Abhandlungen*



*der philosophisch-philologischen Cl. d. K. Bayerischen Ak. d. Wissenschaften* 7/3, 1855, pp. 673-93.

Idem, *Erânische Alterthumskunde*, 3 vols., Leipzig, 1871-78.

Brian Spooner, "Iranian Kinship and Marriage," *Iran* 4, 1966, pp. 51-59.

Vinod Chandra Srivastava, "The Purāṇic Records on the Sun-Worship," in

Michael Stausberg, *Die Religion Zarathushtras: Geschichte, Gegenwart, Rituale*, 3vols., Stuttgart, 2002-4.

Werner Sundermann and Thomas Thilo, "Zur mittelpersisch-chinesischen Grabinschrift aus Xi'an (Volksrepublik China)," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung* 11, 1966, pp. 437-50.

Darab Peshotan Sunjana [sic], *Next-of-Kin Marriages in Old Irân: An Address Delivered before the Bombay Branch Royal Asiatic Society, on the 15th and 22nd April, 1887*, London, 1888; published as an appendix by Darab Dastur Peshotan Sanjana, "The Alleged Practice of Consanguineous Marriages in Ancient Iran," in Wilhelm Geiger and Friedrich H. Windischmann, *Zarathushtra in the Gathas and in the Greek and Roman Classics*, Leipzig, 1899, pp. 205-56.

Abu Manşur 'Abd-al-Malek Ṭa'ālebi, *Ġorar akbār moluk al-fors*, ed. Hermann Zotenberg as *Histoire des rois des Perses*, Paris, 1900.

Moḥammad b. Jarir Ṭabari, *Ta'riḳ al-rosol wa'l-moluk*, tr. as *The History of al-Ṭabari IV: The Ancient Kingdoms*, Albany, New York, 1987.

Talmud Bavli, Eng. tr., *The Babylonian Talmud*, gen. ed. Rabbi Dr. I. Epstein, London; *Seder Nazīḳin* I, 1935; *Seder Nashim* II, 1936.

Jehangir C. Tavadia, see *Šāyest nē šāyest*.

Cornelis Petrus Tiele, *Geschichte der religion im altertum bis auf Alexander den Grossen*, 2 vols. in 3, Deutsche autorisierte Ausgabe von G. Gehrich, Gotha, 1896-1903; tr. Gushtaspshah K. Nariman as *The Religion of the Iranian Peoples*, pt. 1, Bombay, 1912.

Catholicus Timothy, *The 99 Canons and Laws*, ed. Eduard Sachau as *Richterliche Urteile des Patriarchen Chenânîschô: Gesetzbuch des Patriarchen Timotheos. Gesetzbuch des Patriarchen Jesubarnum. Aus der römischen*



*Handschrift herausgegeben und übersetzt*, Berlin, 1908, pp. 53-117.

J. V. Undevia, *Population Genetics of the Parsis: Comparison of Genetical Characteristics of the Present Parsi Population with Its Ancestral and Affiliated Groups*, ed. Henry Field, Coconut Grove, Fla., 1973.

Edward W. West, *Pahlavi Texts I: The Bundahis-Bahman yast, and Shāyast lā-shāyast*, SBE 5, 1880.

Idem, *Pahlavi Texts II: The Dâdistân-î dînîk and the Epistles of Mânûskîhar*, SBE 18, 1882. Idem, *Pahlavi Texts IV: Contents of the Nasks*, SBE 37, 1892.

Edward Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage*, London and New York, 1891.

Josef Wiesehöfer, *Ancient Persia from 550 BC to 650 AD*, London and New York, 1996. Alan V. Williams, 1990, see *Pahlavi Rivāyat*.

John Wilson, *The Pársí Religion: As Contained in the Zand-Avastá, and Propounded and Defended by the Zoroastrians of India and Persia, Unfolded, Refuted, and Contrasted with Christianity*, Bombay, 1843.

*Wizīdagīhā ī Zādspram*, ed. and tr. Philippe Gignoux and Ahmad Tafazzoli as *Anthologie de Zādspram: Edition critique du texte pehlevi*, Studia Iranica, Cahier 13, Paris, 1993.

Arthur P. Wolf and William H. Durham, eds., *Inbreeding, Incest, and the Incest Taboo: The State of Knowledge at the Turn of the Century*, Stanford, Cal., 2005.

Xuanzang (玄奘 Hsüan-tsang), 大唐西域記, ed. Samuel Beal as *Si-yu-ki. Buddhist Records of the Western World. Translated from the Chinese of Hiuen Tsiang (A.D.629)*, London, 1906.

Han-sung Yang et al., eds., *The Hye Ch'o Diary: Memoir of the Pilgrimage to the Five Regions of India*, Berkeley, Calif., 1984.

Ehsan Yarshater, "Iranian National History," in *Camb. Hist. Iran* III/1, 1983, pp. 359-477.

Zādspram, see *Wizīdagīhā ī Zādspram*.

Robert Charles Zaehner, *Zurvan, A Zoroastrian Dilemma*, Oxford, 1955.



*Zand ī Wahman Yasn*, ed. and tr. Carlo G. Cereti as *The Zand ī Wahman Yasn: A Zoroastrian Apocalypse*, Rome, 1995.

*Zand ī Xwurdag Avistāk*, ed. Bamanji Nasarvanji Dhabar, Bombay, 1927; tr. Bamanji Nasarvanji Dhabar as *Translation of Zand-i Khurtak Avistak*, Bombay, 1963.