

NEXT-OF-KIN MARRIAGES

OLD IRAN

BARBAR DASTUR TESHOTAN SANJANA, B.A.

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NEXT-OF-KIN MARRIAGES

IN

OLD IRÂN;

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE
Bombay Branch Royal Asiatic Society,
ON THE 15th AND 22nd APRIL, 1887.

BY
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Ostîrânische Kultur, etc., etc.*

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TO

The Honourable Raymond West, C.S.,
M.A., LL.D., F.R.C.S.,

PRESIDENT OF THE B. B. ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY,

IN HUMBLE RECOGNITION OF THE INTEREST EVINCED BY

THAT HONOURABLE GENTLEMAN IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF

ASIATIC STUDIES IN BOMBAY,

This Discourse

ON THE

ALLEGED PRACTICE OF

NEXT-OF-KIN MARRIAGES IN OLD IRÂN

IS, WITH HIS GRACIOUS PERMISSION,

most respectfully inscribed

BY

THE AUTHOR.

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P R E F A C E.

As an humble exposition of the standpoint of a Zoroastrian priest on one of the most difficult problems at issue in Irânian Antiquities, *viz.*, the alleged practice of next-of-kin marriages in old Irân, the following Address was delivered by me before the Bombay Branch Royal Asiatic Society, on the 15th and 22nd of April last, under the Presidency of the Honourable Mr. Justice West. The paper has been printed in the Society's *Transactions*, whereof this is almost a reprint, which, it is hoped, will prove convenient for gratuitous circulation among the Parsi Community.

I would take the liberty of expressing my acknowledgments to the *Trustees* of the *Sir Jamshedji Jijibhai Translation Fund*

for the kindly patronage which they have been good enough to accord to the following discourse. Besides, I cannot submit to the public judgment this my humble share in ascertaining the Zoroastrian position with regard to the question of next-of-kin marriages in old Irân, without professing briefly my obligations to the devoted authorities that guide the destinies of the Sir Jamshedji Jijibhai Zartoshti Madresa (an Institution unrivalled in its cultivation of difficult Pahlavi studies), especially to the Trustees who are presided over by the most worthy head of the Zoroastrian Community, Sir Jamshedji Jijibhai, Bart., C.S.I., for the kindly encouragement which they have always been pleased to offer me in my Zend-Avestâ and Pahlavi studies. Chiefly, however, I have to acknowledge my heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Kharsedji Fardunji Parakh, who endowed that Institution more than twenty years ago with the magnificent

donation of Rs. 55,000, for the foundation of the Sir Jamshedji Fellowship (in Zend-Avestâ and Pahlavi), which it has been my good fortune to hold since the beginning of 1885, and which, I am happy to say, has encouraged me to undertake the arduous task of translating into English an elaborate German work on the civilization of Eastern-Irân, by which my co-religionists have been made acquainted with the ideas entertained by foreigners on Zoroastrianism.


D. D. P. S.

BOMBAY,
September 1887.

NEXT-OF-KIN MARRIAGES

IN OLD IRÂN.

INTRODUCTION.

N the history of primitive marriage there are few subjects which exceed in gravity and interest the much-discussed question of the existence of next-of-kin marriages in ancient Irân—in other words, of marriages between blood-relations of a near or remote degree among the early Zoroastrians. Although the attention of Parsi students of Zoroastrianism has often been drawn to this delicate question by the labours of esteemed European Oriental scholars, still it is strange to find how few of us have endeavoured to throw any light upon it, merely contenting ourselves with a bare denial of the existence of

any trace of such marriage practices in our Sacred Writings. The causes of this remarkable omission may be easily traced to the manifold difficulties attending an examination of the evidence on the subject, which is met with in Western classical history and in Irânian archives. These difficulties are attributable partly to want of acquaintance with the languages of the original works ; partly to the obscurities of those Avestâ and Pahlavi passages which are supposed by foreigners to refer to marriages between nearest kinsfolk ; and partly to the discouragement arising from the way in which some of the best European authorities have acquiesced in accepting the accounts given by Greek historians.

GENERAL REMARKS.

In all the inquiries which have long engaged the attention of European Orientalists, their efforts have been directed almost exclusively to verifying the testimony of classical reports to the effect that marriage between the nearest blood-relations was not an uncommon practice among the old Irânians in the times of the Achæmenidæ, the Arsacidæ and the Sâsânidæ. Nay, it has even come to pass that several European *savants* have claimed to have discovered positive evidence of such marriages in the Sacred Writings and in the later Pahlavi works of the Irânians themselves. Guided solely by their opinions, the Rev. J. van den Gheyn, S.J., in his well-known French Essay on “Comparative Mythology and Philology,” has been led to remark with reference to the moral tenets of the Avestâ¹ :—

¹ *Vide ‘Essais de Mythologie et de Philologie Comparée,’ par J. van den Gheyn, S. J.; VII. Études Éraniennes, II. Les Études Avestiques de M. Geldner, § 4—Morale, pp. 231-234 :—*

“ If the Mazdian writers delighted in psychological analysis, they were still more fond of discussions relating to morals. The Mazdian religion can boast of having the soundest, the sublimest, and the most rational system of morals among all the non-Christian religions. The basis of these morals rests on the free volition of man

“ Si les écrivains mazdéens aimaient les distinctions psychologiques, ils étaient bien plus épris des discussions de morale. La religion mazdéenne peut se vanter d'avoir, parmi tous les cultes non-chrétiens, la morale la plus saine, la plus haute et la plus raisonnable. Les bases de la morale s'appuient sur la libre volonté de l'homme.....

“ Mais à côté de ces doctrines si saines et si raisonnable, on peut s'étonner de voir approuver une doctrine qui contraste étrangement avec nos idées de moralité. Nous voulons parler du fameux Khvêtk-daç, exalté comme une des œuvres les plus méritoires et les plus saintes. Et cependant, ce terme désigne le mariage incestueux entre proches parents, voire même entre père et fille, fils et mère, frère et sœur ! Quoi de plus rebutant ? Comment une religion d'une nature si élevée que le mazdeisme, a-t-elle pu inculquer une telle pratique ? C'est là une question historique qui se rattache à l'Avesta. Nous devons donc la laisser de côté.”

“ Les Parsis modernes, on le comprend, n'ont pas gardé ces habitudes immorales. Même ils protestent énergiquement contre l'accusation d'avoir jamais enseigné pareille doctrine. Malheureusement, ils ne peuvent anéantir leurs anciens livres, implacables témoins qui déposent contre eux.”

“But side by side with these doctrines, so perfect and so rational, one may well be astonished to see that Mazdism approved of a doctrine which strangely contrasts with our ideas of morality. We mean to refer to the well-known *Khvéta*-*das*, exalted as one of the most meritorious and sacred acts. This term, however, designates the incestuous marriage between near relations, even between father and daughter, son and mother, brother and sister. What could be more repulsive? How could a religion of so sublime a nature as Mazdism have inculcated such a practice? That is an historical question relating to the Avestâ. We ought, therefore, to put it aside.

“The modern Parsis, it is true, have not preserved such immoral customs. They even protest with energy against the accusation of having ever taught any such doctrine. Unfortunately, they cannot burn their ancient books, the unimpeachable testimony borne against them.”

Such is the observation of the Rev. Mr. Gheyn. It is not, however, the outcome of personal inves-

tigations in the field of Irânian literature, but is almost exclusively founded on the latest sources of Oriental knowledge in the series of the "Sacred Books of the East" planned by Prof. Max Müller. But far more important observations on the subject, which claim our earnest attention, have been put forth by some of those European *literati* who have delved deep in the mines of Oriental learning, and brought to light some of the most precious gems which will ever remain as monuments marking an important epoch in the history of Oriental literature. I beg to draw attention to the opinion of Dr. F. von Spiegel, a veteran Avestâ scholar, which I have translated from the 3rd Vol. of his German work on "Irânian Antiquities" (*Erânische Alterthumskunde*, Vol. III., pp. 678-679). He says :—"Much offence has always been caused in Europe by the marriages between near relations, namely, between brothers and sisters, between fathers and daughters, between sons and mothers. They have their origin in the tribal relationship amongst the Irânians.

They married in their own tribe, since no *mésalliance* could be contracted, and everybody regarded his own tribe and his own family as the most preferable one. So early as in the Avestâ the marriage of near relations is recommended (Ys. XIII. 28, Vsp. III. 8); and it is also to the present day a custom among the nomads, whose daughters very often decline the most favourable offers of marriage out of their family circle, because they think that such marriages might convey them into a town, and likewise into a different tribe. The extreme case of such marriages between relations is the marriage of brothers and sisters. According to Herodotus, Cambyses first introduced the custom of marriage between brothers and sisters; but this is probably an error. The custom certainly existed already before him. That the kings were accustomed to take in marriage only the spouses of their rank from the family of the Achæmenidæ is witnessed in two passages by Herodotus. For this reason the marriages between brothers and sisters were

much in favour with the royal family. Cambyzes married his sisters (Her. III. 31); Artaxerxes his two daughters (Plutarch, Art. C. 27); Ter-tuchmes his sister Roxana (Ktes. Pers. C. 54); the satrap Sysimithres even his mother (Curtius 8, 2, 19); Qôbâd I. his daughter Sambyke. Agathias tells us that this custom also continued to later times."²

Such, gentlemen, is the position of the European view fortified by fragmentary references to ancient history, and frowning against the most

² Compare Dr. Geiger, *Ostirânische Kultur*, p. 246:—"Auch den Westirâniern war die Heirat von Blutsverwandten nicht fremd. Schon die klassischen Autoren wissen davon zu berichten. Herodot ist der irrigen Ansicht, dass Kambyzes sie eingeführt habe, als er seine Schwester Atossa zum Weibe nahm. Gerade in der königlichen Familie kam sie häufig vor. Man hatte hier besonderes Interesse daran, den Stammbaum rein zu bewahren und das eigene Geschlecht möglichst von anderen Familien zu separieren. Ausser Kambyzes wäre Artaxerxes anzuführen, der seine beiden Töchter heiratete, sowie Terituchmes, der mit seiner Schwester Roxane, und Kôbâd I, der mit seiner Schwester Sambyke sich vermählte."—Also cf. L'Muséon (1885), *Les Noms Propres Perso-Avestiques*, par Th. Keiper, pp. 212 seq.

glorious edifice of the old Irânian ethology universally acknowledged to be the sublimest among the oldest religions of the world. This position it is the solemn duty of every Zoroastrian student of Irânian antiquities to inspect with the light of evidence furnished abundantly by history, both Occidental as well as Oriental. It is as undesirable as it is unphilosophic to dwell with idle complacency on the high praise which European scholars have almost invariably bestowed on Zoroastrianism for its sublime ethical conceptions, and to ignore allegations as to the practices in question of the early followers of Zoroaster. One of the true criteria of the morality of a nation is its marriage institution. The moral life of society begins and is nurtured in the family. It is, therefore, scarcely possible to conceive how a nation, much less a religion, which has been generally extolled for its pure system of morals, and proverbial for its strictly moral habits, should have sanctioned or tolerated a custom which must naturally have demoralized the highly valued

precept of "*pious mind, pious words, pious actions.*"³

But, here, I may be allowed to observe that the Greeks who charged the Persians with the crime of next-of-kin marriages, and who were distinguished among the Western nations before the Christian era for the high stage of civilization they had reached, were not unfamiliar with incestuous enormities. (1) In the *Prefatio* of Cornelius Nepos, the contemporary of Cicero, it is said that "Cimon, the greatest of the Athenians, was not dishonoured for having espoused his sister on the father's side." (2) The celebrated comic poet Aristophanes, who flourished in the 5th century

³ Comp. my ed. of C. E. Irânians, vol. I., pp. 162-163 :— "It affords indeed proof of a great ethical tendency and of a very sober and profound way of thinking, that the Avestâ people, or at least the priests of their religion, arrived at the truth that sins by thought must be ranked with sins by deed, and that, therefore, the actual root and source of everything good or bad must be sought in the mind. It would not be easy to find a people that attained under equal or similar historical conditions to such a height of ethical knowledge."—Also cf. "Christ and Other Masters," by the Rev. Mr. Hardwick, p. 541 :—"In the measure of her moral sensibility, Persia may be fairly ranked among the brightest spots of ancient heathendom."

B. C., relates in verse 1371 of his comedy of *The Frogs*:—"He began reciting some of the verses from Euripides, where one perceives a brother miserable, having married his uterine sister." (3) Demosthenes in his *Appeal against Eubulides of Miletus*, asserts: "My grand-father had espoused his sister not uterine."⁴ According to the *Scholiast* the marriage with a half-sister was permitted by law among the ancient Greeks. The details which M'Lenan has gathered on this subject, go to prove that the old Spartans were also accustomed to marry even their uterine sisters. Again Mr. Robertson Smith remarks in his "*Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*" (p. 162):—"At Athens we find marriage with a half-sister not uterine occurring in later times, and side by side with this we find an ancient tradition that before Cecrops there was a general practice of polyandry, and consequently kinship only through mothers."

* For these references to Greek incest I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Justice West, President of the B. B. R. A. Society, and of Prof. James Darmesteter.

Mr. Wm. Adam points out that Xenophon's memoirs of Socrates refer to the intercourse of parents with children among the Greeks (*vide* his dissertation on "Consanguinity in Marriage," contributed to the *Fortnightly Review*, vol. II., p. 719).

These are some of the facts which plainly indicate that the custom of consanguineous marriages did actually exist in ancient Greece at a very remote period. These facts are preserved in its native archives, which it is difficult to controvert. But, hence, it is allowable to infer that the Greek historians of old Irân were not unfamiliar with next-of-kin marriages, before they wrote a word upon any Oriental history or religion, and that their sweeping assertion of the incestuous practices of the civilized Arians was to a certain extent due to their knowledge of the existence of such practices amongst Semitic nations⁵ as well as amongst themselves.

⁵ In some of the sacred documents of the Jews, particularly in the books of Genesis and Exodus, it is recorded that Abraham was married to his half-sister Sarai, Nahor to his niece Milcah, Amram to his aunt Jochebed, and Lot to his

In reference to the reports of Greek historians on Oriental customs, what assertion could be more sweeping and loose than that of Ptolemy, who, (relying upon the authority of the *Paraphrasis* of Proclus, who flourished in the 5th century B. C).,

two daughters. Genesis xix. 36-38 says :—"Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father ; and the first-born bare a son, and called his name Moab ; and the younger, she also bare a son and called his name Ben-ammi."—At a much later period, the grand-daughter of King Herod the Great is said to have married her uncle Philip. Again, the Assyrians are charged by Lucian² (*Lucian de Sacrificiis*, p. 183) with the guilt of close consanguineous marriages.—Also Orosius, a Spanish Presbyter who flourished in the 5th century after Christ, relates in his *Historiarum adversus Paganos Libri VII.*, that Semiramis, the widow of Ninus, married her own son, and authorized such marriages among her people in order to wipe out the stain of her own abominable action (*cf.* Adam, *F. R.*)—The old Egyptians seem to have legalized the marriage between brothers and sisters (*vide* Rawlinson's *History of Herodotus*, vol. II., p. 429, note 1); and, according to Philo, the Alexandrian Jew, there was no restriction even as to marrying one's whole sister (*Philo de Specialibus Legibus*, p. 778).—The recently published work of Mr. R. Smith illustrated the existence of the practice of marriage between nearest blood-relations among the early Arabs.

But how far all these statements as regards those Oriental nations may be reliable, I leave it to the students of their histories and religions to prove with positive evidence.

when treating of India, Ariana, Gedrosia, Parthia, Media, Persia, Babylonia, Mesopotamia and Assyria, relates that "very many or most of the inhabitants of those countries intermarry with their own mothers" (*vide* Adam, F.R., "Cons. in Mar.," p. 713). But can this vague statement support so grave a charge? In the absence of something definite to go upon, some well-attested instances, must we not pause before believing that the Indô-Irânians, even as individual peoples, could ever be guilty of the heinousness they are charged with?

With these preliminary remarks I address myself to my task, and lay before you what I purpose to demonstrate in the following propositions:—

I. That the *slight authority of some isolated passages* gleaned from the pages of Greek and Roman literature, is wholly insufficient to support the odious charge made against the old Irânians of practising consanguineous marriages in their most objectionable forms.

II. That no trace, hint or suggestion of such

a custom can be pointed out in the Avestâ or in its Pahlavi Version.

III. That the Pahlavi passages translated by a distinguished English Pahlavi *savant*, and supposed to have references to such a custom, cannot be interpreted as upholding the view that next-of-kin marriages were expressly recommended therein. That a few of the Pahlavi passages, which are alleged to contain actual references to such marriages, do not allude to social realities but to supernatural conceptions relating to the reaction of the first progenitors of mankind.

IV. That the words of the Prophet Zarathushtra himself, which are preserved in one of the strophes of the Gâthâ Chap. LIII., express a highly moral ideal of the marriage relation.⁶

⁶ Here let me draw attention to the opinion of Dr. L. H. Mills on the contents of the Gâthâs. In S. B. E. Vol. XXXI., p. 1., the translator observes:—"So far as a claim to a high position among the curiosities of ancient moral lore is concerned, the reader may trust himself freely to the impression that he has before him an anthology which was probably composed with as fervent a desire to benefit the spiritual and moral nature of those to whom it was addressed as any

I. CLASSICAL TESTIMONY ON THE SUBJECT.

Without presuming to attack any particular European theory, I beg to put forward my humble impressions in confirmation of the first statement. Among the Western classical writers, who are concerned with Persian history or religion, there are about fifteen who have touched upon the subject of next-of-kin marriages in old Irân, and who belong to different periods, from the 7th century B. C. to the 6th century A. D. They are Xanthus (I. about B. C. 650) ; Herodotus (B. C. 484-409) ; Ctesias (I. about B. C. 440) ; Strabo (B. C. 54 to A. D. 24) ; Plutarch (b. A. D. 66) ; Curtius (b. A. D. 70) ; Tertullian (A. D. 160-240) ; Origen, Clemens Alexandrinus, Diogenes Laertius and

which the world has yet seen. Nay, he may provisionally accept the opinion that nowhere else are such traces of intelligent religious earnestness to be found as existing at the period of the *Gâthâs* or before them, save in the Semitic Scriptures." Elsewhere he also remarks: "Nowhere, at their period, had there been a human voice, so far as we have any evidence, which uttered thoughts like these. They are now, some of them, the great common places of philosophical religion; but till then they were unheard (*agushtâ*)."

Tatian (f. in the 2nd century A.D.); Minutius Felix and Athenæus (f. in the 3rd century A.D.); and Agathias (f. about A. D. 536-538). Of these Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Diogenes Laertius, Athenæus, Curtius, and Minutius Felix ascribe incestuous marriages to the Persians generally, according to Mr. Adam, 'without any distinction or qualification.' The spurious works of Xanthus, as well as the genuine books of Strabo and Tatian, impute such practices to the Magians alone, without drawing any line of separation between the different Magian orders among the Chaldæans or the Persians. Herodotus, Ctesias, Plutarch and Agathias make special mention of names of persons of rank, whom they charge with the guilt of such incest. Now, if we were to inquire to what different sources these reports owe their origin, we should find that Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus and his pupil Origen, as well as the true Plutarch, based their statements with regard to this question on the authority of Ctesias (Adam, p. 715; Rawlinson, Herodotus, Vol. I., p. 78).

Diogenes Laertius, Strabo and Curtius seem to rely upon the spurious works of Xanthus (*vide* Dr. Windischmann, *Zoroastrische Studien*, p. 268 *seq.*; Adam, p. 717). The works of Athenæus and Curtius are supposed to be collections of extracts from the writings of historians, dramatists and philosophers, who preceded them (comp. Smith's 'Classical Dictionary,' s. v.). In the absence of any available information, it is difficult to trace the isolated reports of Tatian and Minutius Felix to Xanthus, Ctesias, or Herodotus. Consequently, the only independent sources of information more or less authentic, seem to issue from only four of the classical writers above-named:—Xanthus, Herodotus, Ctesias, and Agathias. Their reports may be considered to have modelled the tone of classical history relating to ancient Iran.

However, in an enquiry with regard to their evidence, the questions most important and most natural are: What is their authenticity? How far may their testimony be relied upon? Are there any conflicting statements in these historians

which should deter us from trusting implicitly to their guidance?

It is admitted that no two nations have ever succeeded in thoroughly understanding the manners and customs of each other. If this is so in our own day, when the means of information are numerous and ready to hand, what can we expect in those remote ages when the sources of information were very few and very uncertain. Again, it is necessary to be on our guard against putting absolute faith in any particular Greek writer.—Regarding Xanthus, Dr. Windischmann, in his German essay on classical testimony relating to Zoroaster, published in his posthumous work *Zoroastrische Studien*, states (p. 268) :—"As to the authenticity of the works of Xanthus (B. C. 529), a later writer, Artemon of Cassandra, advanced some doubts, and believed that they were substituted five centuries after by one Dionysius Skytobra-chion (f. about B. C. 120), a native of Alexandria." This view is supported, as the writer says, by his tutor, Prof. Welcher. Also it is the opinion

of Dr. Smith, expressed in his 'Classical Dictionary,' that "The genuineness of the Four Books of Lydian History, which the ancients possessed under the name of Xanthus, and of which some considerable fragments have come down to us, was questioned by some of the ancient grammarians themselves. There has been considerable controversy respecting the genuineness of this work among modern scholars. It is certain that much of the matter in the extant fragments is spurious."

"The Persian informants of Herodotus," says Mr. G. Rawlinson in his Introduction to the 'History of Herodotus' (pp. 67, 69), "seem to have consisted of *the soldiers and officials of various ranks,*⁷ with whom he necessarily came in contact at Sardis and other places, where strong bodies of the dominant people were maintained constantly. He was born and bred up a Persian subject; and though in his own city Persians might be rare

⁷ These and several other words in the following quotations are put in italics by me.

visitants, everywhere beyond the limits of the Grecian states they formed the official class, and in the great towns they were even a considerable section of the population. There is no reason to believe that *Herodotus ever set foot in Persia Proper, or was in a country where the Arian element preponderated*. Hence his mistakes with regard to the Persian religion which he confounded with the Scythic worship of Susiania, Armenia and Cappadocia. ... Herodotus, too, was by natural temperament inclined to look with favour on the poetical and the marvellous, and where he had to choose between a number of conflicting stories would be disposed to reject the prosaic and commonplace for the romantic and extraordinary. ... Thus his narrative, where it can be compared with the Persian monumental records, presents the curious contrast of minute and exact agreement in some parts with broad and striking diversity in others. Unfortunately, a direct comparison of this kind can but rarely be made, owing to the scantiness of the Persian records at present discovered ; but we are

justified in assuming, from the coincidences actually observable, that at least some of his authorities drew their histories from the monuments ; and it even seems as if Herodotus had himself had access to certain of the most important of those documents which were preserved in the archives of the empire."

Whatever might be the opinion of Mr. Rawlinson, one thing is clear on its face, that the truthfulness of the Persian informants upon whom Herodotus had depended was not quite beyond suspicion, *viz.*, the utter silence of Herodotus upon the founder of the Persian religion. While Xanthus is believed to have made mention of Zoroaster and his laws, while Plato, who flourished 55 years after Herodotus, and must have drawn his materials consequently from sources as old as those of the latter, freely alludes to Zoroaster, it is impossible to conceive how Herodotus, who has described Persian life and Persian religion so elaborately, should have been unfamiliar with the name of the Prophet of the land and the founder

of the religion. Should we not assume that Herodotus became acquainted with the Magian belief merely through oral tradition recounted by persons who were ill-disposed towards the Magi, and who, therefore, were loth to divulge the name of their renowned Prophet?

Mr. G. Rawlinson remarks further on (pp. 77 *seq.*):—"Several ancient writers, among them two of considerable repute, Ctesias the court physician to Artaxerxes Mnemon, and Plutarch, or rather an author who has made free with his name, have impeached the truthfulness of the historian Herodotus, and maintained that his narrative is entitled to little credit. Ctesias seems to have introduced his own work to the favourable notice of his countrymen by a formal attack on the veracity of his great predecessor, upon the ruins of whose reputation he hoped to establish his own. He designed his history to supersede that of Herodotus, and feeling it in vain to endeavour to cope with him in the charms of composition, he set himself to invalidate his authority,

presuming upon his own claims to attention as a resident for seventeen years at the court of the great king. Professing to draw his relation of Oriental affairs from a laborious examination of the Persian archives, he proceeded to contradict, wherever he could do so without fear of detection, the assertions of his rival; and he thus acquired to himself a degree of fame and of consideration to which his literary merits would certainly never have entitled him, and which the course of detraction he pursued could alone have enabled him to gain. By the most unblushing effrontery he succeeded in palming off his narrative upon the ancient world as the true and genuine account of the transactions, and his authority was commonly followed in preference to that of Herodotus, at least upon all points of purely Oriental history."

Now regarding Ctesias, the same writer observes:—"There were not wanting indeed in ancient time some more critical spirits, *e.g.* Aristotle and the true Plutarch, who refused to accept as indisputable the statements of the Cnidian physi-

cian, and retorted upon him the charge of untruthfulness which he had preferred against Herodotus. It was difficult, however, to convict Ctesias of systematic falsehood until Oriental materials of an authentic character were obtained by which to test the conflicting accounts of the two writers. A comparison with the Jewish Scriptures and with the native history of Berosus first raised a general suspicion of the bad faith of Ctesias, whose credit few moderns have been bold enough to maintain against the continually increasing evidence against him. At last the *coup de grâce* has been given to his small remaining reputation by the recent Cuneiform discoveries, which convict him of having striven to rise into notice by a system of 'enormous lying,' to which the history of literature scarcely presents a parallel."

Hence it is that the historian Grote is perfectly justified in remarking :— "This is a proof of the prevalence of discordant, yet equally accredited, stories. So rare and late a plant is historical authenticity."

As for Agathias, the Byzantine writer who flourished in the middle of the sixth century after Christ, his works ought to be consulted with greater caution. Besides, Diogenes Laertius is very often called ‘an inaccurate and unphilosophical writer.’ Even the true Plutarch’s testimony is frequently questioned by modern critics. The reference to consanguineous marriages amongst the Magi : *τούτοις δὲ καὶ μητρὰς συνερχεσθαι πατρίων νενομίσται*, in Strabo’s Geography, Bk. XV., is a very short and isolated sentence, which has not the least connection with the main subject of the passage wherein it occurs, *viz.*, the mode of disposing of the dead among the early Persians.⁸ It might, therefore, be justly regarded as an interpolation by some unknown reader, similar to the interpolations noticed in the work of Xenophon, Bk. VIII., Ch. V., p. 26, and condemned as such by all his critics of authority, *viz.*, Bornemann, Schneider and Dindorf.

⁸ ‘*Géographie de Strabon*’ traduit du Grec en Français, tome cinquième, à Paris, de l’Imprimerie Royale, 1819, pp. 140-141.

It must also be remembered that the works of some of those Greek philosophers who were well-known for their somewhat authentic description of the Zoroastrian religion and customs, *viz.*, Democritus (f. B. C. 460), Deinon the contemporary of Ctesias, Plato, Eudoxus, Hermippos, Theopompos, and Aristotle, do not contain the slightest trace or hint as to the alleged practice of next-of-kin marriages in ancient Irân.

Thus a majority of opinions may be cited to prove that the reports of classical writers on the subject of consanguineous marriages in old Irân, are not at all beyond question. Moreover, I do not mean to deny that some of those Greek writers who have ascribed the marriage practices in question in the case of individuals to the old Irânians may have had some grounds for their averment; but who can reconcile their conflicting evidence? Who can decide between the two inconsistent statements upon this subject by Xanthus and Agathias, where the former charges the Magi with the crime of marrying their parents, while the latter puts into

the mouth of King Artaxerxes II. words which plainly denounce such practices as being inconsistent not only with the laws of the land, but with the commandment of Zoroastrianism (*vide* Agathias, Lib. II., C. 24). The Achæmenian monuments do not allude to such practices, nor have we any indigenous historical record of the Achæmenidæ or the Arsacidæ, upon which we could place any reliance for comparison.—Alas ! for the dispersion and destruction of our ancient literature, which, had it been preserved, would not only have assisted us to know the exact history of the old Iranian civilization, but also to controvert with ease all such discreditable allegations.

Nevertheless, the question arises : Granted that the classical statements are to some extent doubtful ; still are we not justified in believing that such marriages were customary or regarded as lawful during the rule of the Achæmenian kings, since the Greek reports refer to certain Persian monarchs or men of authority who contracted marriages with their nearest blood-relations ? It is true, Herodo-

tus and Plutarch ascribe them to Cambyses III. and Artaxerxes II. Herodotus states in his accounts respecting Cambyses (*vide* Bk. III. 31 *seq.*) :—

“The second (outrage which Cambyses committed) was the slaying of his sister, who had accompanied him into Egypt, and lived with him as his wife, though she was his full sister, the daughter both of his father and his mother. The way wherein he had made her his wife was the following :—It was not the custom of the Persians, before his time, to marry their sisters ; but Cambyses, happening to fall in love with one of his, and wishing to take her to wife, as he knew that it was an *uncommon thing*, called together the royal judges, and put it to them, ‘whether there was any law which allowed a brother, if he wished, to marry his sister ?’ Now the royal judges are certain picked men among the Persians, who hold their office for life, or until they are found guilty of some misconduct. By them justice is administered in Persia, and they are the interpreters of the old laws, all disputes being referred to their

decision. When Cambyses, therefore, put his question to these judges, they gave him an answer which was at once true and *safe* :—‘ They did not find any law,’ they said, ‘ allowing a brother to take his sister to wife, but they found a law that the king of the Persians might do whatever he pleased.’ And so they neither warped the law through fear of Cambyses, nor ruined themselves by over stiffly maintaining the law ; but they brought another quite distinct law to the king’s help, which allowed him to have his wish. Cambyses, therefore, married the object of his love, and no longer time afterwards he took to wife another sister. It was the younger of these who went with him into Egypt, and there suffered death at his hands.”.....“ The story,” concerning the manner of her death, “ which the Greeks tell, is, that Cambyses had set a young dog to fight the cub of a lioness—his wife looking on at the time. Now the dog was getting the worse, when a pup of the same litter broke his chain and came to his brother’s aid ; then the two dogs together

fought the lion, and conquered him. The thing greatly pleased Cambyses, but his sister, who was sitting by, shed tears. When Cambyses saw this he asked her why she wept: whereon she told him that seeing the young dog come to his brother's aid made her think of Smerdis (her brother), whom there was none to help. For this speech, the Greeks say, Cambyses put her to death."

But from these statements of the historian of Halicarnassus, is it not plain enough that the marriage of Cambyses with his sister—if we may rely upon the Greek evidence alone—was nothing more than the individual act of one of the wickedest tyrants that ever reigned in Persia, and that it was owing to the cruel and ferocious character of their ruler that this most irreligious marriage from the stand-point of the Magi was acquiesced in by the priests as well as the people? And is this action of a vicious and wicked king sufficient to justify us in affixing the stigma of such a custom to the whole Irânian nation, or in tracing it to their religious writings? Further, it should

be remembered that Cambyses utterly disregarded his priesthood, defied the old sanitary ordinances of his people, and set small store by his religion.⁹ He gave proof of this by attempting to encourage in his kingdom the practice of interring the dead amongst a people by whom it was detested. It is not, therefore, unreasonable to assume that the alleged marriage of Cambyses with his sister was suggested by his familiarity with such marriages among the Egyptians and the Greeks conquered by the Persians, and that it was carried into effect by a man of such

⁹ Compare S. B. E., Vol. IV., 'The Zend-Avestâ' by Prof. Darmesteter, Part I., p. XLV.:—"If we pass now from dogma to practice, we find that the most important practice of the Avestâ law was either disregarded by the Achæmenian kings, or unknown to them. According to the Avestâ, burying corpses in the earth is one of the most heinous sins that can be committed. We know that under the Sasanians a prime minister, Ceoses, paid with his life for an infraction of that law. Corpses were to be laid down on the summits of mountains, there to be devoured by bird and dogs; the exposure of corpses was the most striking practice of Mazdian profession, and its adoption was the sign of conversion. Now under the Achæmenian rule, not only the burial of the dead was not forbidden but it was the general practice."

violent passions as would brook no contradiction, and would not be balked of their gratification.

Here I may be allowed to observe in passing, that it is difficult to agree with those European scholars ¹⁰ who doubt the accuracy of the assertion of Herodotus, that Cambyzes was the first Persian to intermarry with his sister. I believe that their hypothesis, that the institution of such marriages had existed long before Cambyzes reigned, is much more open to question than the statement of the Greek historian; and this will be demonstrated further on when I come to prove my second statement.

¹⁰ Cf. Keiper, *L'Muséon*, 1885, pp. 212-213:—"Hérodote tâchait d'expliquer le mieux possible cette habitude qu'il savait être de la plus haute antiquité, parce qu'elle semblait étrange aux Grecs. Il rattacha donc cette innovation prétendue au nom de Cambyse, parce qu'un fait de ce genre lui parut être conforme au caractère despotique et capricieux de ce prince. Peut-être aussi a-t-il tiré cette information de ceux à qui il devait ses autres renseignements sur Cambyse. Nous reconnaissons ici un procédé pareil à celui dont Xénophon use régulièrement dans la *Cyropédie*, quand il veut expliquer l'origine d'une habitude ou d'une institution des Perses qui était réellement ancienne ou qu'il croyait ancienne."—*Vide Spiegel's* remarks, p. 7.

There is another Achæmenian monarch who is alluded to by Plutarch, on the authority of Ctesias and his followers, as having married his sister. According to Langhorn's translation of Plutarch's *Life of Artaxerxes II.*, the Greek biographer relates:—"Artaxerxes in some measure atoned for the causes of sorrow he gave the Greeks, by doing one thing that afforded them great pleasure: he put Tissaphernes, their most implacable enemy, to death. This he did, partly at the instigation of Parysatis who added other charges to those alleged against him.....From this time Parysatis made it a rule to please the king in all her measures, and not to oppose any of his inclinations, by which she gained an absolute ascendant over him. She perceived that he had a strong passion for one of his own daughters named Atossa. He endeavoured, indeed, to conceal it on his mother's account and restrained it in public. Parysatis no sooner suspected the intrigue, than she caressed her grand-daughter more than ever, and was continually praising, to Artaxerxes, both her beauty

and her behaviour, in which she assured him there was something great and worthy of a crown. At last she persuaded him to make her his wife, without regarding the laws and opinions of the Greeks: 'God,' said she, 'has made you law to the Persians, and a rule of right and wrong.' "

Now, what do we gather from this passage? Nothing more than that Artaxerxes regarded his passion for his daughter as being in every way hurtful to his reputation, in every way unacceptable to his people or unjustified by law, and, therefore, endeavoured to hide it from his mother as well as the public. Hence we may, likewise, infer that the statements of Herodotus as well as Plutarch harmonize with each other, in showing that the marriage of an absolute monarch with a sister or a daughter was an act in which neither the Persian law nor people was acquiescent. If, according to a few scholars, it was a deed not unauthorized by the Avestâ,—if it was a practice quite familiar to the Persian people of by-gone ages,—what earthly reasons could have persuaded Cambyzes, the most

passionate of monarchs, to ask for the decision of the judges on the question, or Artaxerxes to conceal his love for his daughter from the knowledge of his people ? Besides, we have the evidence of Agathias, that Artaxerxes contemptuously declined every offer to contract marriage with his nearest-of-kin relation, on the ground that it was quite inconsonant with the faith of a true Iranian. If we believe this, it is impossible to conceive that such a king could ever have taken his own daughter to wife. On the basis of this very evidence from Agathias, Mr. Wm. Adam observes (p. 718) :—" But if this could be alleged by Artaxerxes belonging to the royal race, what becomes of the worst charges brought against, not only the Persian people, but even against the Magians or the ruling class ?"¹¹

¹¹ The question regarding the alleged marriage of Artaxerxes Mnemon with his daughter, reminds me of a statement of Firdausi, in his well-known Persian Epic, the *Shâh-nâmeh*, that Behman (Pahl. *Vôhuman*), son of Isfand-yâr (Av. *Spentô-dâta*, Pahl. *Spend-dâd*), who is also called the Artakhshtar of the Kayânians—hence his identification with Artaxerxes Longimanus and his successors down to

Although Ctesias' books were generally acknowledged by his own countrymen to be teeming with incredible and extravagant fables and fictions,—according to Plutarch, with great absurdities and palpable falsity,—still we must admit that for the Greek writers who flourished after him no other historian would have been

Artaxerxes Mnemon—was married to Hûmâî, his daughter. This is a statement which is unique in the *Shâh-nâmeh*, nevertheless it is based, however erroneously, on a reference contained in the *Bundehesh*, Chap. XXXIV. 8, which admits of two different ideas on account of the occurrence therein of a word سپهر, which is employed in Pahlavi in two different meanings. The passage upon which Firdousi must have relied runs:—سپهر سپهر و سپهر سپهر. Here the word سپهر may mean (1) a daughter, (2) one who is coupled or joined in wedlock with another. Thus the passage may be rendered (1) Hûmâî, the daughter of Vôhûman, (reigned) thirty years; (2) Hûmâî, who was coupled with (married to) Vôhûman, (reigned) thirty years. The latter rendering is the more correct interpretation, and also in harmony with the elaborate biography of Behman, written in the reign of سلطان محمود ملکشاہ سلجوق (Hijra 537-551), and known as the *Behman-nâmeh*, which relates that the Hûmâî whom Vôhûman married, was not his own daughter, but the daughter of an Egyptian king named نصر جارت Nasrjârs. Here it is, likewise, said that Behman:

more reliable as regards the family life of Artaxerxes Mnemon than one who lived at the Court of Persia for seventeen years in the quality of physician to that king. Hence it is that most of the Greek historians who followed him, seem to generalize the practice of consanguineous marriage in ancient Irân, probably from Ctesias' coloured narrative of the alleged marriage of Artaxerxes with his daughter. Whatever may be the degree of truthfulness and honesty so far as Ctesias is concerned, it is not impossible to argue from the

فرستاد برزین یل را بخواند	وزین درقراوان سخنابرا ند
کر پیری بنزدیک من یافت را	همی پشت من کرد خواهد تباہ
چنین روزگارم بی پایان رسید	نیامد کس از گهر من پدید
دل من چنان کرد یکبارہ رای	کر آرام گیرد جهان برہمای
چہ گوی سپارم بدو تخت گاہ	جز آن کی کند کس تو بیند سپاہ

.....

.....

نگہدار تاج کیان برہمای	فرامش مکن بند آن رہنمای
زمن باردارد چو آید پدید	از او شہریاری نباید برید
اگر دختر آرد گر آرد پسر	بند بر زمان بر سرش تاج زر
زمانہ سخن درد ہانش شگفت	بدندان آن اژدہا کش بخت

character and intrigues of Parysatis, the mother of Artaxerxes, that a slanderous story of the nature described by Ctesias might have been set afloat in the king's harem to gratify the rancour and most wicked vengeance of the queen-mother against the children of Statira, the innocent victim of her revenge for the murder of her own daughter Amistris, the wife of Terituchmes and sister of Artaxerxes. It is also not improbable that Ctesias' narrative of the marriage of Atossa with her father owed its origin to the vindictive Parysatis alone, and was adopted by a writer who preferred to relate astounding inventions instead of sober truths. Oriental history is not unfamiliar with the malignant accusations of the crime of incest by step-mothers or even by mothers-in-law against their daughters or daughters-in-law. It might, therefore, be inferred that if the Greek writer did not invent any fiction as to the domestic life of the Persian ruler, there was another and a more powerful cause which would have given rise to such an abominable story and established it as

sober truth in the mind of the original biographer of Artaxerxes.

Besides this, a few European scholars seem to point to another such instance in the history of Artaxerxes Mnemon. They discover in Ctesias that Terituchmes, the brother-in-law of the king, and husband of Amestris, was married to his sister Roxana. However, with all deference to their scholarship, I may be permitted to draw attention to the original words of the Greek writer, wherein, as far as I am able to comprehend, the notion of marriage is by no means involved. According to a passage occurring in the English translation of Plutarch's *Lives*, by Langhorne (III., p. 451), Ctesias relates:—"Terituchmes, the brother of Statira (the wife of king Artaxerxes II.), who had been guilty of the complicated crimes of adultery, incest, and murder,married Hamestris, one of the daughters of Darius, and sister to Arsaces; by reason of which marriage he had interest enough, on his father's demise, to get himself appointed to his Government. But in the

meantime he conceived a passion for his own sister Roxana, and resolved to despatch his wife Hamestris." It is said further on, that "Darius, being apprised of this design, engaged Udiates, an intimate friend of Terituchmes, to kill him, and was rewarded by the king with the government of his province." Such is the plain evidence of Ctesias; but it does not assert that Terituchmes was ever married to Roxana. Here is evidently the case of a passion conceived by a licentious brother for his sister. It must, however, be remembered, we have again to deal with a story of Ctesias, a story which may naturally be regarded as the outcome of a general hatred at court against Terituchmes, and also as the invention of a motive for his most cruel murder of his wife, the daughter of Parysatis—a queen who had contrived the most wicked means of gratifying her vengeance against her son-in-law and all other unfortunate victims who were suspected of abetting him. Whatever may be the source to which we may trace this story, it is

still difficult to determine whether Terituchmes married again at all after having murdered his wife Amestris.

As regards Sysimithres, a single isolated reference in a writer like Curtius is hardly sufficient to claim our attention.

Next we turn to the name that belongs to the period of the Sāsānidæ, a single positive illustration, indeed, of incestuous marriage, according to the Greeks, during the long period of more than 450 years. That name is Kôbâd I., father of the famous king Noshirwân. He is reported by Agathias to have married his daughter Sambyke. However, it is remarkable that neither Professor Rawlinson nor Ferdôsi seem to notice this occurrence. Nevertheless, trusting implicitly to the account of Agathias, a writer who was contemporaneous with Kôbâd's son, we must here consider the influences under which the king might have been persuaded to yield to such an act. Let us refer to the history of that part of his reign which described the imposture of Mazdak and the

effect which the latter produced upon that weak-minded king by preaching his abominable creed. "All men," Mazdak said, "were by God's providence born equal—none brought into the world any property, or any natural right to possess more than another. Property and marriage were mere human inventions, contrary to the will of God, which required an equal division of the good things of this world among all, and forbade the appropriation of particular women by individual men. In communities based upon property and marriage, men might lawfully vindicate their natural rights by taking their fair share of the good things wrongfully appropriated by their fellows. Adultery, incest, theft, were not really crimes, but necessary steps towards re-establishing the laws of nature in such societies." (*Vide* Rawlinson, "The Seventh Great Oriental Monarchy," pp. 342, *seq.*)

Such being the teaching of Mazdak, it is easy to see what attractions it would have for a licentious prince who would willingly substitute

it for the moral restraints of his purer faith. Be this as it may, Kôbâd's apostacy was followed by a civil commotion, which ended in the deposition of the king and his imprisonment in the "Castle of Oblivion." Now does not this successful popular resistance to royal incest and adultery prove that the minds of the Irânians were averse to any violation of the moral law as to the relation between the sexes? There is one important point to be observed in the accounts of Agathias bearing on the doctrines which the Mazdakian heretics professed, *viz.*, his assertion that consanguineous marriages were enormities recently introduced in Irân. If we accept this remark of a contemporary writer, does it not give a death-blow to all preceding authorities? Mr. Adam justly remarks (p. 716) :—" But if 'those enormities were recent,' this contradicts all the preceding more ancient authorities, which affirm their earlier prevalence from Ctesias downwards."

Now, discarding all the fanciful hypotheses in-

dulged in by speculative thinkers upon early human ideas and practices, I shall make a few assumptions that naturally strike me, while examining the evidences above-mentioned. The first point to be remarked upon is that great care is required to avoid the confusion arising from the indiscriminate use of the words 'sister,' 'daughter,' 'mother.' Among some Oriental peoples the designation 'sister' is not merely applied to a sister proper or daughter of one's own parents, but, as an affectionate term, also to cousins, near or distant, to sisters-in-law, to female-friends, &c. Likewise, the word for daughter is used to denote, not only one's own daughter, but also the daughter of one's own brother or sister, and generally the daughter of a relative, &c. Similarly, the term 'mother' does not signify the female parent alone, but is employed as a respectful form of address to an elderly lady who enjoys the honour of being the materfamilias of a household. It is also necessary to observe that in Old-Persian or Pahlavi there

are rarely any distinct expressions to distinguish sisters from sisters-in-law or female-cousins. It is not, therefore, too strained an interpretation to believe that what Herodotus, Ctesias and others supposed to be sisters and daughters, should have been perhaps next-cousins or relations. In the same manner, it might be surmised that a mistake would be made owing to the same name being borne by several female members of a family. Thus wife and daughter, or wife and sister, or wife and mother, having the same name, what was asserted of one might be wrongly applied to the other. Innumerable instances may be found in Parsi families where the name of the mistress of the house coincides with that of one of her daughters-in-law, nieces, &c.

But, one can scarcely infer from the particular illustrations of classical testimony on the subject, which are met with in Herodotus, Ctesias and Agathias, and are open to many objections, that incestuous marriages were common and legal among the old Irânians as a people, and especially

among the Magi. The very statement of the Greeks, that the Achæmenian monarch was supposed to be above the law of the land and of religion, indicates that his adultery or incest was not in accordance with the established institutions of his realm. Nor did the people in the time of Kôbâd I. allow such incest to pass without vehement opposition. Even if we accept the evidence of the Western historians who charge Cambyses, Artaxerxes Mnemon, Kôbâd and Terituchmes with incest, it must be noted that these few are the only instances they have been able to gather in the long period of upwards of a thousand years, and that they are insufficient to support so sweeping a generalization as that incestuous marriages were recognized by law, and commonly practised among the old Irânians. It is just as unreasonable as to ascribe the custom of marriage between brother and sister to the civilized Grecians, because we discover references to it in Cornelius Nepos, Demosthenes and Aristophanes. If the *Mahâbhârata* tells us that the five Pandava

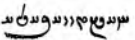

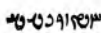
princes who had received a strictly Brāhmanic education were married to one wife, should we, therefore, ignore the existence of the Brāhmanic law,¹² which clearly lays down (Max Müller, *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, p. 53; M'Lennan, p. 215) "they are many wives of one man, not many husbands of one wife," and charge with the custom of polyandry all the ancient Brāhmanic Indians who constituted one of the most eminent and highly intellectual nations of the early Oriental world.

From what I have said above, it is not difficult to see that the doubtful evidences of the Greeks neutralize themselves, and that it is absurd to form,

¹² Compare "Tagore Law Lectures" (1893), by Dr. J. Jolly, p. 155:—"But I have been led recently to consider my views," remarks Dr. Jolly, "by the investigations of Professor Bühler, who has pointed out to me that a certain sort of Polyandry is referred to in two different Smritis. Apastamba (II. 10, 27, 2-4) speaks of the forbidden practice of delivering a bride to a whole family (kula). Brihaspati refers to the same custom in the same terms." Further on he says: The text of Apastamba refers to the custom as to an ancient one, which was enjoined by the early sages, but is now obsolete.

with any reliance upon them, definite opinion as regards the marriage customs of the old Irânians. I, therefore, repeat my conviction which I have set forth in my first statement—*That the slight authority of some isolated passages gleaned from the pages of Greek and Roman literature, is wholly insufficient to support the odious charge made against the old Irânians of practising consanguineous marriages in their most objectionable forms!*

THE MEANING OF THE AVESTA WORD *Qaêtvadatha*.

II. In proof of the second statement—*That no trace, hint or suggestion of such a custom can be pointed out in the Avestâ, or in its Pahlavi Version*—it is first of all necessary to enquire what is the opinion of the Avestâ on the subject; whether we are able to trace to any Avestâ precept the alleged custom of next-of-kin marriage in old Irân. According to European scholars, the term that expresses such a marriage is  *Qaêtvadatha* in the Avestâ, and  *Khvêrûk-dât* or  *Khvêrûk-dasih* in Pahlavi. It has, there-

fore, been our object to examine the evidence put forward in favour of the European stand-point of Ys. XII. 9, (Spiegel's edition, Ys. XIII. 28), which, it is assumed, contain under the word *Qaêtvadatha* an allusion to next-of-kin marriages in question.

In the Avestâ the term *Qaêtvadatha* occurs in five passages only, each of which belongs to five different parts of the text, excepting the *Gâthâs*, namely, *Yasna* XII. 9; *Visperad* III. 3; *Vendidâd* VIII. 13; *Yasht*. XXIV. 17; and *Gâh* IV. 8 (Westergaard's edition). Of these, the idea expressed in *Gâh* IV. 8 is repeated or almost quoted in *Visperad* III. 3, and in *Yasht* XXIV. So we have only to consider three references in the *Yasna*, the *Gâh* and the *Vendidâd* respectively, and to see to what extent they can be used to throw light on the meaning of *Qaêtvadatha*. The word as it stands in the Avestâ is employed as an epithet or a qualifying word. In one place it forms an epithet of the Avestâ religion, in the second an attribute of a pious youth, in the third a qualification for a pious male or female.

Etymologically *Qaêtvadatha* may be regarded as a compound word composed of *qaêtu* and *datha*, of which the first part may be compared with Skr. *svay-am*, Lat. *suus*, Pahl. *kh'ish*, and Mod. Pers. *kh'ish* derived from Av. *qa* = Skr. *sva* = Lat. *sibi* = Eng. *self*. Hence it may originally mean 'self,' 'one'sself,' 'one's own,' 'relation,' or 'allied.' The second part, *datha*, which is transliterated into Pahl. *das*, comes from the Av. root *dā* = "to give," "to make," "to create." *Dath* is properly a reduplication peculiar to the Irânian dialect, from the Indo-Irânian root *dā* "to give," &c. Thus the derivation of the word itself might suggest for it a number of definitions. It may mean "a gift of one's self, to one'sself, or from one's self"; "a gift of one's own, to one's own"; "a gift of relation or alliance"; "a making of one's self"; "self-association"; "self-dedication"; "self devotion"; "self-sacrifice," &c.¹³ These are some of the

¹³ Compare Prof. Darmesteter's remarks on the derivation of the word suggested by Dr. Geldner in his *Ueber die Metrik des jüngeren Avestâ* (*Etudes Irâniennes*, Vol. II.,

omission of any definite interpretation in the Pahlavi Version, may perhaps be that the technical meaning of the word was, even centuries after the compilation of the Avestâ, a thing too familiar to the native Zoroastrians to require any interpretation; or that the nature of the good work implied by *Qaêtvadatha* was too doubtful in the minds of the old Irânian priests to be definitely and lucidly explained.

Consequently, very little help can be obtained from the indigeneous authority of the Pahlavi translation of those Avestâ passages wherein the term *Qaêtvadatha* occurs. Fortunately, however, there is no lack of passages in the Pahlavi, which though sometimes very obscure and difficult, give us a meaning for the first member of the compound, viz., *Qaêtu*, and which is *kh'ish* or *kh'ishih*, meaning "self," "himself," "one's own" or "allied," "relation," "individuality," &c. The Pahlavi meaning of self or relation is still preserved in the Mod. Pers. word *kh'ish*, and accords best with the etymology and the context. Dr. Spiegel translates

Qaêta by ‘*der Verwandte*’ (Ys. XXXII. 1, &c.) “the allied or relation,” and remarks in note 7’ page 125, of his German translation of the Avestâ, that it denotes ‘the spiritual relation to Ahura Mazda, as though one feels himself almost in communion with Him.’¹⁴ It is characteristic that in the Gâthâs *Qaêtu* very often stands in connection with the terms *Verezenya*¹⁵ and *Airyamna*, signifying “an active labourer” fulfilling the desires of Mazda, and “joyful devotion” towards Him (XXXII. 1; XXXIII. 3, 4; XLIX. 7; XLVI. 1; LIII. 4). The Gâthâ XXXII. 1, says:—“Unto Him may the allied¹⁶ aspire, his deeds coupled with devotion.” In XXXIII. 3 and 4 Zarathushtra speaks:—(3) “He is the best for the Righteous Lord, O Ahura, who, having knowledge, becomes Thy ally, Thy active labourer

¹⁴ Comp. *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Vol. XVII. (1863), “Bemerkungen über einige Stellen des Avestâ,” by Dr. F. von Spiegel, pp. 58-69.

¹⁵ According to Pahlavi, *Verezenya* may mean “an active neighbour” of the Almighty

¹⁶ The Rev. Dr. Mills., S. B. E., Vol. XXXI.:—‘lordly-kinsman.’

and Thy true devotee, and who arduously fosters the cow ; it is he who thinks himself to be in the service-field of *Asha* (Righteousness) and *Vôhu Manô* (Good Mind).”—(4) “ O Mazda ! I hate whosoever is disobedient and evil-minded towards Thee, disregarding of Thy *ally*, a demon in close conflict with Thy *active labourer*, and the scorner of Thy *devoted one*, the most evil-minded against the nourishment of Thy cow ? ”

These and several other like passages enable us to understand that *Qaêtu* denotes one of the three spiritual qualifications which are requisite for human sanctity, viz., a communion with the Almighty, the practical fulfilment of His will, and the free mental devotion. Likewise, *Kh'ishih-i-Yazdân*, relationship or communion with the Deity, is the frequent desire and motive of the pious *Mazdayasna* while discharging his moral or religious duties. It is a gift to which he aspires every moment.

Relying upon this meaning of *Qaêtu*, it is not difficult to assign an idea to *Qaêtvadatha*, which

Avestâ, that in Vendidad VIII. is so difficult and obscure, that almost all the European translators have failed to discern any definite sense in it. Even the Pahlavi does not help us here, because of the mere transliteration of the Avestâ words. What is most important to be considered is Yasna XII. 9, (Sp. Ys. XIII. 28), a passage in which Dr. Spiegel and several German *savants* who follow his opinion, seem to discover traces of the precept of consanguineous marriage (*vide* Geiger, *Ostîrânische Kultur*, p. 246; Justi, *Altbaktrisch*, s. v.; Noeldeke; *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. XVIII., s. v. Persia; Geldner *Metrick*, s. v.). I have already remarked upon this passage in the first volume of my English translation of Dr. Geiger's *Ostîrânische Kultur* (p. 66, note), and I beg to repeat that there is not the slightest indication that the passage in question has any reference to conjugal union of any kind; but on the contrary, the term *Qaêtvadatha* agreeing with the noun *Daêna*, 'religion,' in case, number and gender, is evidently one of the epithets applied to the

Mazdayasnān religion, and implies the virtue of that religion to offer the sacred means of alliance with Ahura Mazda, or of self-devotion towards Him. The Pahlavi Commentary plainly tells us that the manifestation of this gift of communion with the Deity on earth was due to Zoroastrism, while every stanza of the Gâthâs extols this highest and noblest ideal of the human spirit in the pious sentiments of Zarathushtra himself (*cf.* *Ys.* XXVIII. 3, 4, 6, 7, &c.).

I translate the passage (*Yasna* XII. 9) literally:—

“I extol the Mazda-worshipping religion, that is far from all doubt, that levels all disputes,¹⁸ the sacred one, the *gift of communion* (with God); the greatest, the best, and the purest of all religions that have existed and will exist, which is (a manifestation) of Ahura and of Zarathushtra.”

Here it is impossible to conceive the idea of marriage between nearest relations in a passage

¹⁸ Comp. S. B. E. Vol. XXI., Dr. Mill's translation: “the Faith which has no faltering utterance, the Faith that wields the felling halbert” (p. 250).

which glorifies the virtues of a religion. Happily, my own humble conviction has been supported, with reference to the Avestâ, by Dr. E. W. West, of Munich, a scholar whose high and unrivalled attainments in Pahlavi in the European world of letters, will ever be a matter of pride to every English Orientalist. In his essay on the "Meaning of Khvêtâk-das," appended to Vol. XVIII. of Prof. M. Müller's "Sacred Books of the East," (pp. 389-430), the learned writer summarizes the result of his examination of all the passages referring to *Qaêtvadatha* in the Avestâ in the following manner (p. 427):—

"The term does not occur at all in the oldest part of the Avestâ, and when it is mentioned in the later portion it is noticed merely as a good work which is highly meritorious, without any allusion to its nature; only one passage (*Vend.* VIII. 13) indicating that both men and women can participate in it. So far, therefore, as can be ascertained from the extant fragments of the Avestâ—the only internal authority regarding the

ancient practices of Mazda-worship—the Parsis are perfectly justified in believing that their religion did not originally sanction marriages between those who are next-of-kin.”

THE REFERENCES TO *Khvêtk-dât* OR
Khvêtk-dasih IN PAHLAVI.

III. In reference to the third proposition :—
That the Pahlavi passages translated by a distinguished English Pahlavi savant, and supposed to refer to such a custom, cannot be interpreted as upholding the view that next-of-kin marriages were expressly recommended therein ; and that a few of the Pahlavi passages, which are alleged to contain actual references to such marriages, do not allude to social realities, but only to supernatural conceptions relating to the creation of the first progenitors of mankind.—I beg to call your attention again to the exhaustive essay on this subject by the English Irânist, Dr. West, who seems to have raked the extensive field of Pahlavi literature, and collected with laborious industry all the Pahlavi passages bearing

on the term *Khvêrûk-das*. This learned scholar couches the result of his patient useful research in the following words :—

“Unless the Parsis determine to reject the evidence of such Pahlavi works as the *Pahlavi Yasna*, the book of *Ardâ-Virâf*, the *Dinkard*, and the *Dâdistân-i-Dînik*, or to attribute those books to heretical writers, they must admit that their priests in the later years of the Sâsânian dynasty, and for some centuries subsequently, strongly advocated such next-of-kin marriages, though probably with little success.” (*Vide* S. B. E. Vol. XVIII., p. 428).

Thus, while Dr. West serves us as a useful champion to guard from any adverse stigma the sublime tenets of the Avestâ regarding marriage, while he seems to doubt the authenticity of Greek historians as regards Persian matters (p. 389), we are deprived of his powerful support the moment we enter the field to defend ourselves against the obscure and detached evidences brought from Pahlavi tomes. Here I refer to the proofs which

are put forward by the Pahlavi *savant* for his personal view, that next-of-kin marriages were advocated by Persian priests in the later years of the Sāsānian monarchy.

It must be noticed here that this later opinion of Dr. West differs completely, as regards the age in which the alleged custom might have prevailed, from what was previously asserted in the first part of his "Pahlavi texts" (S. B. E., Vol. V., p. 389, note 3), where the learned author observes :—" But it is quite conceivable that the Parsi priesthood, about the time of the Mahomedan conquest, were anxious to prevent marriages with strangers, in order to hinder conversions to the foreign faith, and that they may, therefore, have extended the range of marriage among near relations beyond the limits now approved by their descendants." Again, in a note to Chapter IV. of his English translation of the " Dînâ-î-Maînôgî-Khirad," Pahlavi texts, Part III. (S. B. E., Vol. XXIV., p. 26), he says that some centuries before the composition of that book, *i. e.* long before the reign of Noshîr-

wân, the term *Khvêtûk-dasih* was only confined to marriages between first cousins.

But all these remarks, gentlemen, go to show that Dr. West does not agree with other scholars in tracing in the Sacred Writings of the Irânians the existence of such a custom in the times of the Avestâ, the Achæmenidæ, the Arsacidæ, or the Sâsânidæ generally ; but he gives as his opinion, that it may perhaps have been advocated by some priests in Irân in the sixth century A.D. or later. Thus the speculation of several European *savants*, from Kleuker downwards, that the custom in question prevailed among the Avestâ people, has been dissipated by the inquiry of one of their own learned body.

However, in his essay on the "Meaning of *Khvêtûk-das*," Dr. West attempts to translate about thirty Pahlavi passages to show how far *Khvêtûk-dasih* may denote next-of-kin marriage in Pahlavi. Five of these reference are contained in the Pahlavi Translation of the Avestâ, and two in the Pahlavi Commentary (P. T. Fs. XII. 9 ; *Vsp.*

III. 3; *Gáh* IV.; *Vishtásp* *Yt.* 17; *Vend.* VIII. 13; P. C. *Ys.* XLIV. 4; *Bahman* *Yt.* Chap. II., 57, 61); eight of them belong to the *Dinkard* (*Dk.* Bk. III., Ch. 80, Ch. 193, Ch. 285; Bk. VI., Bk. VII., *Varstmānsar Nask*, *Fargard* XVIII.; *Bagān Nask* XIV., XXI.); eight to the *Dádistān-i-Díník* (Ch. XXXVII. 82, LXIV. 6, LXV. 2, LXXVI. 4, 5; LXXVII. 6, 7; LXXVIII. 19); three to the *Maínóg-i-Khirad* (Ch. IV. 4, XXXVI. 7, XXXVII. 12); and one to the later *Pahlavi Ravāyet*.

It is needless to point out that of these thirty citations more than twenty-two may be excluded from our inquiry, since, according to the result of Dr. West's own survey of them, it is admitted that "there is nothing in those passages to indicate the nature of the good work" meant by the word *Khvêstúk-dasih* (*Ys.* XII. 9; *Vsp.* III. 3; *Gáh.* IV; *Vend* VIII. 13; *Vishtásp* *Yt.* 17; *Dk.* Bk. III., Ch. 193, Ch. 285; *Dk.* Bk. VI.; *Maínóg-i-Khirad.* Ch. IV. 4; XXXVI. 7; XXXVII. 12; *Bahman Yasht.* II. 57, 61). Besides, the first five passages

abovementioned of the *Dâdistân-i-Dînik* contain, according to him, mere “allusions to the brother and sister,” who were the first progenitors of mankind ; as for the last three, he says it is not certain that “the term is applied in them to the marriages between the nearest relatives.” Consequently, we have to examine a few passages only, viz., two of the *Bagān Nask*, one from *Varshtmānsar Nask*, three of the *Dinkard*, one of Ys. XLIV. 4, one of the book of *Ardâ-Vîrâf*, and one from the later *Pahlavi Ravâyet*, which, in the opinion of Dr. West, contain direct or indirect traces of the practice of marriage between the next-of-kin.

Before we set out to consider those references, it will be useful to know the extent to which the work of *Khvêrêk-dasih*—whatever may be its nature or meaning—is extolled or regarded as a righteous or meritorious action in the Pahlavi writings :—

In Chap. IV. of the Pahlavi ‘*Dînâ-i-Mâinôg-i-Khirad*,’ the reply to the query “Which particular meritorious action is great and good?” is

“The greatest meritorious action is liberality, the second is truth and *Khvêtûk-dasih*, the third is the *Gahânbâr*, the fourth all the religious ritual, the fifth is the worship of the sacred beings.” Here *Khvêtûk-dasih*, in connection with liberality and truth, might imply some moral habit almost equal to them in degree of excellence.

The *Shâyast-Lâ-Shâyast*, Ch. VIII. 18, says : “*Khvêtûk-dâd* extirpates sins which deserve capital punishments.” Also it is said by Ahura Mazda elsewhere :—“O Zaratosht ! of all those thoughts, words and deeds, which I would proclaim, the practice of *Khvêtûk-dasih* is the best to be thought, to be performed, and uttered.”

The *Bahman Yasht*, which may be regarded as one of the oldest Pahlavi works written on the *exegesis* of the Avestâ, gives us an idea of the term which best harmonizes with our notion regarding the meaning of Ys. XII. 9. It says in Chap. II. 57 :—“ O Creator ! in that time of confusion ” (*i. e.* after the conquest of Persia by the Arabs), “will there remain any people righteous ?

will there be religious persons who will preserve the *Kûsti* on their waist, and who will perform the *Izashnê* rites by holding the *Barsams*? and will the religion that is *Khvêtûk-das* continue in their family?" A little further on it says:—"The most perfectly righteous of the righteous will that person be who adheres or remains faithful to the good *Mazdayasnân* religion, whereby the religion that is *Khvêtûk-dasih* will continue in his family." These two passages are supposed by Dr. West to be translations from the original Avestâ text of the *Yasht* devoted to the archangel *Vôhu-Manô* (S. B. E., Vol. V., Part I., p. 212, note).

In a passage in the *Shâyast-Lâ-Shâyast* (Chap. XVIII. 4), it is again declared:—"Whosoever approximates four times to the practice of *Khvêtûk-dâd* will never be parted from Ahura Mazda and the Ameshaspands.

I leave it to you, gentlemen, to say what signification ought to be attached to the word *Khvêtûk-dasih* from its connection with the moral and

spiritual conceptions mentioned in the above citations. I need only say that the moral excellence of *Khvêrûk-dasih* is parallel to truth and sanctity; that its attainment, according to the *Yasna* and *Bahman Yasht*, is by the intermediary of the Zoroastrian religion of Ahura Mazda; and that the approximation to the condition of *Khvêrûk-dasih* is well nigh a participation in spiritual conference with the Almighty and the archangels. Consequently, 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.

Referring to the eight Pahlavi passages under inquiry, it is with some hesitation that I find myself differing from the English literal translations of two of them, viz., the 80th Chapter in the 3rd Book of the *Dinkard*, and the 21st *Fargard* of the *Bagân Nask*.

The difficulties of interpreting the often highly enigmatic and ambiguous Pahlavi are multifarious¹⁹; and one is often astonished at the totally

¹⁹ Comp. S. B. E., Vol. V., Introduction pp. XVI-XVII.

different versions of one and the same obscure passage, suggested by scholars of known ability, so much so that they appear to be versions of two quite distinct passages having no connection

“The alphabet used in Pahlavi books contains only fourteen distinct letters, so that some letters represent several different sounds; and this ambiguity is increased by the letters being joined together, when a compound of two letters is sometimes exactly like some other single letter. The complication arising from these ambiguities may be understood from the following list of the sounds, simple and compound, represented by each of the fourteen letters of the Pahlavi alphabet respectively :—

ⲁ a, ā, h, kh. Ⲃ b. ⲃ p, f, v. Ⲅ t, d. ⲅ ch, j, z, v.

Ⲇ r, l. ⲇ z. Ⲉ s, yī, yad, yag, yaj, dī, dad, dag, daj, gī,

gad, gag, gaj, ji, jad, jag, jaj (17 sounds). ⲉ sh, s̄h, yā,

yah, yakh, īh, īkh, dā, dah, dakh, gā, gah, gakh, jā, jah,

jakh (16 sounds). Ⲋ gh. ⲋ k, g, ī. Ⲍ m. ⲍ n, v, w, ū,

ō, n, l. Ⲏ y, ī, ē, d, g, j.

. . . . There are, in fact, some compounds of two letters which have from ten to fifteen sounds in common use, besides others which might possibly occur. If it be further considered that there are only three letters (which are also consonants as in most Semitic languages) to represent five long vowels, and that there are probably five short vowels to be understood, the difficulty of reading Pahlavi correctly may be readily imagined.”

whatever with each other. Accordingly, it is permissible to assume that the ambiguous passages adduced by Dr. West, as seeming to allude directly or indirectly to next-of-kin marriage, will bear quite another meaning from a still closer research than the first efforts of the learned translator seem to have benefited by. I think, therefore, it is as reasonable as appropriate to defer for the present any attempt on my part to give a definite translation of any of these extensive passages which are acknowledged by Dr. West himself to be obscure and difficult (S. B. E., Vol. V., p. 339), contenting myself with giving briefly what remarks I have to make upon them.

One of these obscure passages constitutes the 80th Chapter in the 3rd Book of the *Dinkard*. It is very extensive, and contains a long controversy between a Zoroastrian and a Jew,²⁰ concerning the

²⁰ The antagonism between the religious beliefs of the early Jews and those of the Mazdayasna is well known to the *Dinkard*, the *Maînôgî-khirađ*, the *Shâyast-Lâ-Shâyast*, and the *Shikand-Gûmânîk-Vizâr*. The *Maînôgî-khirađ* records the destruction of Jerusalem by Kai Lohrasp and the pre-

propriety or impropriety of the doctrine of the Avestâ as regards the creation of mankind, the different uses of the term *Khvêrâtûk-dasih*, &c., in which it is difficult, owing to the confusion of different ideas as well as to the obscurity of the text, to distinguish the words of the Jew from those of the Zoroastrian. Any sentence that would seem to be a point in favour of the European view, may naturally be ascribed to the Zoroastrian as well as to the Jew. It is not, therefore, easy to determine whether it is the Zoroastrian or the Jew who advocates or condemns a particular position or custom. However, the portions wherein both the

dominance of the Zoroastrian faith therein. The Shikand-Gûmânîk-Vizâr points to some inconsistencies in the Jewish belief regarding the birth of Messiah. The Chapter, XV. 31, says: "And there are some even" (according to Dr. West's translation) "who say that the Messiah is the sacred being himself. Now this is strange, when the mighty sacred Being, the maintainer and cherisher of the two existences, became of human nature and went into the womb of a woman who was a Jew. To leave the lordly throne, the sky and earth, the celestial sphere and other similar objects of his management and protection, he fell for concealment into a polluted and straitened place."

Translators (Dastur Dr. Peshôtanji and Dr. West) agree, show that the term *Khvêtûk-dasih* is technically applied in this passage to supernatural unions, what are called the *Khvêtûk-dasih* between the father and the daughter, the son and the mother, the brother and the sister. We know that in the Avestâ, *Spentâ Armaiti*, Pahl. *Spendârmat*, is the female archangel, and as Ahura Mazda is called the Creator and Father of all archangels, *Spendârmat* is, therefore, called His daughter. Now, *Spendârmat* is believed to be the angel of the earth; and since from the earth God has created the first human being, *Spendârmat*, in the later Pahlavi writings, is alleged to have been spiritually associated with the Creator for such a mighty procreation as that of Gayômar, the first man according to Irânian cosmogony. Thus this supposed supernatural union passed into an ideal conception, and technically denoted what is called 'the *Khvêtûk-dasih* between the father and the daughter.' Again, it is said that the seed of Gayômar fell into the mother-earth by whom

he was begotten. So Mashih and Mashyânih were called the offspring of that union between Gayô-mard and Spendârmât, or of 'the *Khvêôtûk-dasih* between the son and the mother'; and since the first human pair was formed of brother and sister, viz., Mashih and Mashyânih, their union, which was an act in consonance with the Divine Will, came to denote 'the *Khvêôtûk-dasih* between the brother and the sister.' This idea of *Khvêôtûk-dasih*, it must be remembered, is a later development of the abstract and religious notion of a direct spiritual alliance with the Deity, or of self-devotion. The term was afterwards applied to the unions of the first progenitors of mankind, which were believed to have been brought about by the operation of the Creator Himself. In creating Man endowed with the knowledge of His Will, it was the Creator's design to raise up an opposition against the morally evil influence of Ahriman on earth. Accordingly, wherever the *Khvêôtûk-dasih* between the father and the daughter, the son and the mother, the brother and the sister, are referred

to in the later Pahlavi writings, they do not imply any commendation of such unions among ordinary men, but only among the first human beings to whom they were naturally confined, to produce an uniform and pure race of mankind without any promiscuous blending with irrational creatures or animals. What are called the *Khvêrûk-dasih* between the father and the daughter, the son and the mother, the brother and the sister, are, therefore, expressly the supernatural association between *Ahura Mazda* and *Spendârmât*, between *Gayômarôd* and *Spendârmât*, and the union between *Mashih* and *Mashyânî*.

Now, as to the signification of the word *Khvêrûk-das*, the transition from meaning the gift of communion with the Almighty and with the supernatural powers, to meaning the gift of moral union between the human sexes or among mankind generally, is an easy and a natural step. Such an idea of a bond of union in a tribe, race, or family, is suggested by the writer of this 80th Chapter in question. Notwithstanding, it is in

the first passage and in the thirteenth that the English translator seems to have discovered a definite reference to next-of-kin marriages. I may, therefore, be allowed to put forward in this place my own interpretation of these paras., to show that it is not next-of-kin marriages that they in any way recommend, but only moral or social union in a tribe, race, family, or near relations; and that the 13th passage explicitly condemns incestuous marriages as unlawful practices indulged in by lewd people. My version of the passages is as follows:—

“*Khvêrûk-dasih* means a gift of communion. Thus honour is obtained, and the union of power acquired by adherents, relatives, or fellow-creatures through prayers to the Holy Self-existent One. In the treatise on human relationship, it is the (moral) union between the sexes in preparation for, and connection to, the time of the resurrection. In order that this union might proceed more completely for ever, it should subsist between the innumerable kindred tribes, between

adherents or co-religionists, between those who are nearly or closely connected." What follows describes the application of the term to the three kinds of supernatural unions which were necessary for the procreation of a kindred human pair in this world. The passage says: "There were three kinds of *hampatvandih*: "co-relation," for example, between the father (the Deity) and the daughter (Spendârmât); between the son (Gayômard) and the mother (Spendârmât); between the brother (Mashih) and the sister (Mashyânih). These I regard as the most primitive on the basis of an obscure exposition by a high-priest of the good religion." What follows is again a clear explanation regarding the propriety of such unions in the creation of mankind.

The thirteenth passage of the same Chapter says:—

"If a son be born of a son and a mother, he (the begetter) would be reckoned the brother as well as the father; that would be illegal and incestuous (*yo jêh*). If so, such a person has no

part in the prayers (of the Deity) and in the joys (of Paradise); he produces harm, and does thereby no benefit; he is extremely vicious and is not of a good aspect." (*Cf.* Dastur Peshotanji's *Dinkard*, Vol. II., p. 97.)

It must also be observed that the allusion in this same passage to an *Arumân*, or an inhabitant of Asia Minor, somewhat strengthens the opinion of the translator of the *Dinkard* as to the advocacy of the Jew himself for the marriage with a daughter, sister, &c. Dr. West admits that, in the portion where anything like 'conjugal love' is meant, "marriages between first cousins appear to be referred to" (p. 410). The passage runs as follows:—"There are three kinds of affection between the offspring of brothers and sisters" (according to Dr. West, p. 404): "one is this, where it is the offspring of brother and brother; one is this, where the offspring is that of brothers and their sister; and one is this, where it is the offspring of sisters."

It is only to this passage, or to the period when

it may have been composed, that we can ascribe the development of the idea of marriage relationship between cousins attached to the term *Khvê-tûk-dasih* under the erroneous interpretation of its ambiguous paraphrase *Khvish-dehêshnih*, which occurs in it. Here the term implies the different degrees of union,—first, between supernatural powers and the Deity ; next, between supernatural powers and mankind ; then, between the first man and woman,—hence the bond of moral or social union in a tribe, race, or family. But it confines, as is expressly indicated in the Persian *Ravâyats*, love or marriage union among mankind only to such of the cousins as are described in the quotation abovementioned. The idea of *Khvê-tûk-dâd*, denoting an act of forming relationship between cousins, has rarely been expressed again in the subsequent Pahlavi writings, nevertheless it has been preserved in the later Persian *Ravâyats* by *Kâmah Behreh*, *Kâus Kâmah*, and *Narimân Hôshang*.

Now, regarding the passage in the earlier part

of the 14th *Fargard* of the *Bagân Nask*, it may well be remarked that the *Khvêôtúk-dasih* of *Spendârmât* and *Ahura Mazda* here referred to, according to Dr. West's translation, is again an allusion to the communion of two spiritual powers for the creation of man, and not an indication of marriage between a father and a daughter. Dr. West, likewise, observes (p. 196):—"This quotation merely shows that *Khvêôtúk-das* referred to connection between near relations, but whether the subsequent allusions to the daughterhood of *Spendârmât* had reference to the *Khvêôtúk-das* of father and daughter is less certain than in the case of *Pahl. Yasna*, XLIV. 4." The same might also be said concerning the passage from the Seventh Book of the *Dinkard* mentioned at page 412,²¹ where we are informed, according to Dr. West's translation, only about the *Khvêôtúk-dasih* of *Mashih* and *Mashyânih*.

Likewise, concerning the passage inserted ir-

²¹ *Vide* S. B. E., Vol. XVIII.

relevantly in the Pahlavi Commentary to stanza 4, Yasna, Chapter XLIV., which refers to the *fatherhood of Ahura Mazda* and to the *daughterhood of Spendârmât*. The passage is rendered by Dr. West (p. 393) thus:—

“ Thus I proclaim in the word that [which he who is Aûharmazd made his own] best [*Khvêôtúk-das*]. By aid of righteousness Aûharmazd is aware who created this one [to perform *Khvêôtúk-das*]. And through fatherhood (of *Aûharmazd*) Vôhuman (referring to Gayômar) *was* cultivated by him, [that is, for the sake of the proper nurture of the creatures, *Khvêôtúk-das was* performed by him]. So she who is his (Aûharmazd’s) daughter is acting well, [who is the fully-minded] Spendârmât, [that is, she did not shrink from the act of *Khvêôtúk-das*]. She was not deceived, [that is, she did not shrink from the act of *Khvêôtúk-das*, because she is] an observer of everything [as regards that which is] Aûharmazd’s, [that is, through the religion of Aûharmazd *she* attains to all duty and law].”

Zoroastrian household should be given to devotion or pious resignation to the Will of the Supreme Lord of the Zoroastrian religion.

There now remain two passages which claim our particular attention. One of these belongs to the book of the *Ardâ Virâf*, another to the *Dinkard* in the Twenty-first Fargard of the *Bagân Nask*. The passage in *Virâf* in which European scholars discover the alleged practice of marriage between brothers and sisters, runs as follows:—
“*Virâf* had seven sisters, and all these seven sisters were like a wife unto *Virâf*.”—They spoke thus: “Do not this thing, ye *Mazdayasna*, for we are seven sisters and he is an only brother, and we are all seven sisters like a wife unto that brother.” Here arises an important question, whether it is possible to conclude hence that those seven sisters were actually married to *Virâf*, or that they were merely dependent upon him for their sustenance, just as a wife is dependent upon her husband. It is, indeed, characteristic that the sisters do not call *Virâf* their husband,

but their brother, and they further regret that the disappearance of their brother from this life should deprive them of their only support in this world. Again, the Pahlavi word ~~we~~ *chegún*, "like," implies a condition similar to that of a wife and not the actual condition of a wife. Such an expression of similarity was quite unnecessary, if those sisters were actually the wives of Virâf. On the other hand, there is a difference in the words of the two oldest texts from which all subsequent copies were transcribed. A copy which is preserved in the collection of Dr. Haug's MSS., and dated *Samvat* 1466, has quite a different word—*zanân*, "wives,"—instead of *akhtman*, "sister." If we should accept the former word, the meaning would be "Virâf had seven wives, who were all sisters." By-the-bye it is difficult to conceive how Virâf, one of the most pious men of his day, should have been so luxurious or licentious as to take as his wives all his seven sisters, an instance altogether unparalleled in the whole history of Ancient Persia. The passage in

question, I believe, expressly points to an instance of the dependent condition of women not unknown to the Zoroastrian community, of unmarried sisters or daughters being wholly supported in life by parents, a brother or even a brother-in-law, as well as to an extreme case of rigid seclusion on the part of Virâf, and of his austere exercise of acts of piety, devotion, and self-denial.

The other passage which is assumed by the English translator to be a reference to the marriage of father and daughter, and "too clear," according to him, "to admit of mistake, though the term *Khvétūk-das* is not mentioned," is cited from the middle of the *Veheshtūk-Yasht* Fargard of the *Bagân Nask*. The contents of this Fargard are summarized in a Pahlavi version of it, and found about the end of the *Dinkard*. Regarding this ambiguous citation, it may be observed that it admits of more than two significations, the choice between which is made to suit the particular construction and interpretation

adopted by the translator. Generally speaking, this Twenty-first Fargard of the *Bagân Nask* seems to esteem, among other acts of religious credit, the exaltedness of a modest attitude of respect, which a woman observes towards her father or husband. “*Tarskâsih dyen abitar va shôé*” is an expression which denotes, literally, “awful respect to one’s father or husband,” and is a special point of female morals frequently urged in the sayings of old Irânian sages or high priests. The same idea appears to have been inculcated by this passage of the *Bagân Nask*, which, if rendered accordingly, would put forward a meaning quite different from the one expressed by Dr. West, who gives his version of the Pahlavi text as follows (p. 397) :—

“And this, too, that a daughter is given in marriage to a father, even so as a woman to another man, by him who teaches the daughter and the other woman the reverence due unto father and husband.”

According to my humble interpretation, the

passage would convey quite a different idea. I translate the passage thus :—

“And this, likewise, (is a virtuous act), that a woman pays respect to another man (or stranger), just as it is paid by a daughter to her father, in her womanhood or married condition, through him who teaches his own daughter or any other woman respect towards one’s father or husband.”

Here we have a religious position ascribed to a person who inculcates on women a modest and respectful behaviour towards male strangers and nearest male relations. This passage does not expressly imply any notion of marriage ; on the contrary, it points to modest reverence which in every Oriental community is due from a woman to a male stranger, from a wife to her husband, or from a daughter to her father, &c.

Even if we should accept the interpretation of Dr. West,—as one might be constrained to do by the ambiguity, obscurity, or erroneous transcription of the original text of all the Pahlavi passages under inquiry,—still it would be difficult to

prove that next-of-kin marriages were actually practised in Irân even "in the later years of the Sāsānian monarchy." His statement only indicates that incestuous marriages were merely advocated²² by one or more Pahlavi writers on account of their misapprehension of the Avestā tenets, and also "with very little success."

Finally, in support of the view that even the genuine Pahlavi writings do not proclaim as meritorious a practice which in the eye of reason and culture is highly discreditable, I may be allowed to adduce a passage from the Seventh Book of the *Dinkard*, on the supernatural manifestations of Zoroaster's spiritual powers. This passage expressly ascribes to the Mazdakian followers the vicious practice of promiscuous intercourse between the sexes, denouncing those who indulged in it as of the nature of wolves or obnoxious creatures. Among the different divine revelations communicated to Zarathushtra by

²² This may well be ascribed to the ignorance or erroneous notions of the subsequent Pahlavi copyists.

Ahura Mazda, and recorded as such in the *Dinkard*, of the changes and events which were to happen during the millenniums that followed the age of Zoroaster, there is one which predicts as a calamity to befall the religious welfare of the early Sāsānian period, the birth of Mazdak in this world, the abominable influence of his creed and the consequent beastly condition of his imbecile adherents. The passage in question may be rendered as follows :—

(“Ahura Mazda spoke”) : “And again of the adversaries of the *Mazdayasnān* religion, and of the disturbers of piety, the *Aharmôg* (Mazdak) and they who will be called also Mazdakians..... will declare one’s offspring as fit for mutual intercourse, that is, they will announce intercourse with mothers, and they will be called wolves, since they will act like wolves, they will proceed according to their lustful desire just as one born of the wolf does with its daughter or mother, and they will also practice intercourse with their mothers, their women will live like sheep or goats.”

This revelation plainly indicates how abhorrent the practice of promiscuous intercourse between the sexes, was to the idea of the early Zoroastrians, and that it was to be expressly the teaching of a heretic who was to rise for the annihilation of the social morality of the Sāsānian Irân, and to preach to the imbecile monarch Kôbâd I., what, according to *Ahuramazdian* revelation, was the detestable doctrine of sexual intercourse between the next-of-kin. Such was not the creed of Zoroastrism, but of its opponents and enemies, of Mazdak and his immoral beastly followers.

IV.—Finally, in support of the theory that the *Avestâ* comprehends a purer and nobler idea of the marriage-relationship, no better proof could be adduced than a stanza in the *Gâthâs*, wherein, according to Dr. Geiger, the bond of marriage is regarded “as an intimate union founded on love and piety.” This stanza must have formed part of the *marriage formula* which seems to have been recited by Zoroaster on the occasion of the celebration of the marriage

of fragments in its present condition, still there is no lack of references which show us that the custom of contracting marriages amongst the Irânians in the age of the Avestâ, cannot at all be reconciled with any theory of incestuous wedlock. The expressions *moshu-jaidhyamna*, "courting or solicitation," direct or indirect, for the hand of a maiden, and *vadh* or *vaz*, "to convey or take home the wife" (*ducere puellam in matrimonium*), presuppose that intermarriage between different families or citizens was not unknown to the Avestâ nation. The idea of conveying a bride to the house of the bridegroom, which is implied in the root *vadh* (signifying in the Zend-Avestâ "to marry"), implicitly contradicts the notion of several European scholars that the Avestâ people were fond of marrying in their own family only, and with their nearest relations. Besides, the moral position of the wife in the Irânian house, was in no way inferior to that of an English *materfamilias*. Similar as she was in rank to her husband, her chastity was an ornament to the house, and her

piety and participation in private and public ceremonials a blessing. Moreover, the prayer of an Irânian maiden imploring the *yazata* Vayu for a husband, does not at all allude to any desire for marrying a next-of-kin relation, but simply an Irânian youth who may be valiant, wise and learned :—

“Grant us this grace, that we may obtain a husband, a youthful one, one of surpassing beauty, who may procure us sustenance as long as we have to live with each other ; and who will beget of us offspring ; a wise, learned, ready-tongued husband ” (*vide* my C. E. Ir. p. 61 ; Yt. XV. 40.)

Further, there is no trace to next-of-kinship in *Vendidâd*, Chap. XIV., where one of the meritorious acts of a Zoroastrian priest or layman, is to give his daughter in marriage to any pious *Mazdayasna*. It is characteristic that wherever the subject of marriage is alluded to in the Avestâ, the word *Qaêtvadatha* is never mentioned. It is also to be remembered that Zarathushtra having six children born to him, three sons and three

daughters,—did not think of marrying his own son with his own daughter, nor did he ever take his own mother or one of his own daughters to wife. If it was actually the creed of the Prophet, Zoroaster ought to have realized it first of all in his own family and among his primitive supporters!

The question as regards the existence of the practice of next-of-kin marriages in old Irân, will not, I hope, create a difficulty for any longer time. Not only has the meagre testimony upon it of Greek and Roman historians been shown to be unreliable and erroneous, but also the attempt to trace it to the Old Irânian Sacred Books, *viz.*, the Zend-Avestâ, has entirely failed.

So long as no cogent proofs are brought to bear on the question, sufficient to convince a student of Irânian antiquities or religion, I shall be content with the arguments or remarks I have been able to put forward on the other side, repeating at the conclusion of this paper the convictions with which I set out, *viz.*:—

I. That the *slight authority of some isolated*

passages gleaned from the pages of Greek and Roman literature, is wholly insufficient to support the odious charge made against the old Irânians of practising consanguineous marriages in their most objectionable forms.

II. That no trace, hint, or suggestion of a custom of next-of-kin marriage can be pointed out in the Avestâ or in its Pahlavi Version.

III. That the Pahlavi passages translated by a distinguished English Pahlavi *savant*, and supposed to refer to such a custom, cannot be interpreted as upholding the view that next-of-kin marriages were expressly recommended therein. That a few of the Pahlavi passages, which are alleged to contain actual references to such marriages, do not allude to social realities but only to supernatural conceptions relating to the creation to the first progenitors of mankind.

IV. That the words of the Prophet himself, which are preserved in one of the Stanzas of the Gâthâ, Chap. LIII., express a highly moral ideal of the marriage relation.

[*Extract from the Proceedings of the Bombay Branch Royal Asiatic Society for the month of April 1887.*]

A Meeting of the Society was held on Friday, the 15th April 1887.*

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice West, *President*, in the Chair.

The minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

Dastur Darab Peshotan Sanjana read the first part of his paper on "The Alleged practice of next-of-kin or consanguineous marriages in ancient Irân."

Mr. Justice West, in proposing a vote of thanks to the lecturer, said they would all agree with him that the paper that had been just read

* There were present on the occasion: Sir Jamshedji Jijibhai, Bart., C.S.I., Mr. Justice Jardine, Mr. C. E. Fox, Mr. Kharshedji Fardunji Parakh, Mr. Sorabji Shapurji Bengali, C.I.E., Mr. Jehangir Kavasji Jehangir Ready-money, Dr. J. G. da Cunha, Mr. Kharshedji Rustomji Cama, Mr. Jamshedji Bahmanji Wadia, Surgeon Steele, Dr. Atmaram Pandurang, Dr. de Monte, Mr. Jamshedji Kharshedji Jamshedji, Segnior O. S. Pedraza, Mr. Javerilal Umiashankar Yajnik, and others.

was a very important one, and that they were very much indebted to Mr. Sanjana for reading it and adding so much to the treasures of the Society. He hoped it would be ranked amongst the papers which deserved to be printed and enshrined in their records. There was a special appropriateness in a Parsee priest bringing forward the subject which affected the honour and credit of his race and religion, and he could have scarcely imagined that the work could have been done with better spirit, greater clearness, and better appreciation of the historical and scientific evidentiary method in which to go to work upon a task of that particular kind.

A Meeting of the Society was held on Friday, the 22nd April 1887. The Hon'ble Mr. Justice West, *President*, in the Chair.

The minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

Dastur Darab Peshotan Sanjana then read the 2nd part of his paper on "The alleged practice of next-of-kin marriages in ancient Iran" in proof of the third statement "that a few of the Pahlavi passages which are alleged to contain actual references to next-of-kin marriages, do not allude

to social realities, but only to supernatural conceptions relating to the creation of the first progenitors of mankind.”

The President said—

I cannot pretend to the knowledge of Zend and Pehlavi that would enable me to discuss with any profit the proper sense of the much-debated expression on which Mr. Sanjana has expended such close and searching criticism. I will but offer a few remarks on the general aspects of the question which he has handled with so much learning and zeal. It is evident, on a reference to Herodotus, who is the only one of the Greek writers quoted to whom I have been able to make a direct reference, but equally evident from the, no doubt, correct quotations from the other Greek authors, that they wrote rather from loose popular stories, and with a view to satisfy their reader's taste for the marvellous than from a thorough and critical examination of the subject of consanguineous marriages as one of momentous importance.

Herodotus has been confirmed in so many instances in which it seemed most unlikely that he has gained, and well deserves just confidence whenever he relates anything as within his personal knowledge; but of the subject of King Cambyzes' marriage, he must needs have gathered his information at second-hand. The other Greek

writers hardly profess to do more than retail their stories out of a stock gathered with industry no doubt, but entirely without the control of the critical spirit which in modern times we have learned to consider so indispensable. Ctesias, who must have known a great deal about Persia and its people, from original observation, has told so many undoubted falsehoods that his evidence is unworthy of credit on any contested point. The first sources of European information on the subject before us are thus remarkably unsatisfactory, yet it is to be feared that it is with impressions derived from these sources that the Western scholars have approached the Parsee literature. So influenced they may very naturally have construed the mysterious and rare phrases supposed to involve a sanction of incestuous unions, in a frame of mind which had led to illusions such as the Dastur has insisted on and striven to dispel.

One would gather from the narrative in Herodotus that the marriage of Cambyses was of a kind to startle and shock the sensibilities of his people—else why recount it? That would indicate very probably the survival in the popular legends, drawn from a pre-historic time, of some ancient tale of wrong which the popular fancy was pleased to annex to a king who had played so great a part and had so terrible a history as Cambyses. In

almost every country one may observe a tendency, when some ruler or chief has taken a strong hold of the popular imagination, to tack on to his biography any floating legend that wants a personal centre that story-tellers and readers can clothe with a certain reality. In England the group of legends that gathers round the British hero, King Arthur, affords an illustration of this. Some scholars have assigned a similar origin to the stories of Achilles and Odysseus in the two great poems commonly ascribed to Homer. At a later time many stray legends went to add to the glory of Robin Hood, and in Ireland still unowned achievements of daring and ferocity are commonly assigned to Cromwell. In Eastern countries the sovereign and the royal family are looked on—and still more were looked on—as standing so entirely apart from the common people, that any tale of wonder or horror would almost inevitably be connected with them. They really do so many things exceeding ordinary experience, that listeners of uncritical character, not knowing where to draw the line, would accept without question statements of other things quite incredible or even unnatural.

It must be admitted, too, that these Eastern monarchs and royal families might easily learn in ancient times, as they have in modern times, to think there was something sacred about their

persons which made ordinary offences no sins in them. A course of adulation and superiority to legal coercion readily breed a contempt of moral restraints. It commonly produces an inordinate pride. We might thus have a Persian prince indulging in unions like the king of Egypt and the Incas of Peru, which would, after all, be only in them the practice, or the casual excesses, of tyrants besotted with despotic power. Germany in the last century was full of royal foulness, which yet stood quite apart from the general life of the people. Unbridled lust disturbs the reason almost more than any other passion. History abounds in instances of it, and if Persian despots and their children were sometimes incestuous in their moral delirium, we should not be justified in reasoning from such instances to any custom of the people. The stories rather imply that these excesses were startling, and probably revolting, as were the tales at one time current about James the Sixth of Scotland and First of England.

If one applies to the narratives of the Greek writers the tests by which one would pronounce on the guilt or innocence of an accused, it may, I think, safely be said the evidence is insufficient. It would then surely be *wrong to convict an otherwise highly moral nation*, endowed with fine sensibilities, of a revolting practice, *on testimony on which one would not condemn a pick-pocket.*

It is very likely, indeed, that the ancient Persians, like other nations, before their emergence from the savage state, looked without disfavour on connexions that we now cannot think of without a shudder. The prevalence of family polyandry is as well authenticated as any fact in Anthropology. The ancient Britons had one or more wives for a group of brothers, so had the Spartans. A similar arrangement prevails among some of the Himalayan tribes, and traces of it are to be found in the Hindu law literature. The children in such cases are formally attributed to the eldest brother. A communal system under which all the females were common to the tribe, seems in many cases to have preceded the family polyandry on the arrangements that we may see still amongst the Nairs. Where such a system prevailed it would very often be impossible to say whether a young woman about to be taken by a young man, was or was not his sister. If she had been borne of a different mother, she could not be more than his-half-sister, and as civilization advanced and the family was founded on the basis of single known paternity, the half-sister in Greece continued to be regarded as a proper spouse for her half-brothers. A marriage of such persons furthered the policy of the Greek statesmen by keeping the family estates together. Amongst the Jews also, who, as we know, recognized the levirate

which the Hindus first commanded and afterwards condemned, union with a half-sister by a different mother must have been recognized as allowable, at any rate by dispensation from the chief in David's time. This is evident from the story of Amnon and Tamar; and we may gather that the practice had once been common. In the Polynesian Islands there are tribes of which all the women are common to all the men of other particular tribes. When the children, as commonly, take their classification from the mother, it is obvious that consanguineous unions must be frequent. They seem even to be regarded in some cases as connected with religious needs, since at certain festivals all restraints on licentiousness are cast aside even amongst males and females of the same family who do not ordinarily even speak to each other. There seems to be everywhere tendency to connect sexual anomalies with the mysteries of religion, and with persons of extraordinary national importance. The account given of the parentage of Moses, if taken literally, makes him the offspring of a nephew and an aunt. Beings who are so highly exalted, are supposed to be quite beyond the ordinary standard.

Both these sources of legends may have been in operation in ancient Persia, as it was known, and but superficially known, to the Greeks. There

too, no doubt, as elsewhere, the transition from female to male gentileship was attended with a period of great confusion. A similar change took place, it seems, amongst the Hindus at a very early time; and in Greece Orostes is almost inclined to insist that he was not related to his own mother. As one set of relationships took the place of another, many apparently strange connections would be formed which yet would not really be incestuous when properly understood. Language would adapt itself, as we see in fact it did, but imperfectly, to the change of the family system. The Greeks probably knew Persian very imperfectly. In this country the young civilian is continually puzzled by finding words of relationship received in a much wider sense than their usual English equivalents, and the Greeks may well have found equal difficulty in catching the precise sense of Persian terms of relationship in the tales that were told to them. Their own system would make them take some narratives as quite rational, which to us are revolting; in other cases the strangeness of the story told of a king or prince would prevent a critical examination of the terms employed. It would be welcome just in proportion as it was outrageous.

It seems likely that such considerations as these may not have been allowed due weight by European scholars in their interpretation of the few

passages in which an ambiguous phrase seems to countenance the notion that incest is recommended. I venture to suggest, as I have been able to do in my conversation with my learned friend, Mr. Sanjana, that a sense akin to that of *svayamdatha* in Sanskrit—an idea of self-devotion, varying according to the context in its precise intention—would satisfy the exigencies of all or nearly all the doubtful passages. This, however, is no more than a speculation : I cannot judge its worth. I can only thank Mr. Sanjana on behalf of the Society, and most sincerely, for the very valuable addition he has contributed to our transactions. I trust it will form a new starting-point in history and criticism by the view it presents to European scholars.



APPENDIX.

MÂDÎĠÂN-Î-LAK-YOM.*

1. *Aûharmazd* being the name of the Creator of the Universe, be this day devoted to the remembrance of God, abstaining from all worldly business. It is auspicious for the holding of rejoicings and weddings, for benedictions (blessings), and other righteous actions. This day is of good omen for the first entrance into a newly-built house or garden, and for other occasions of joy and delight.

2. *Bahman* being the name of the greatest of the angels, it is fortunate for people to assemble on that day to discuss topics concerning wisdom, and also for kings to hold councils composed of

* This interesting Pahlavi tract, which is otherwise called *Mâdîġân-î-sî-rôz*, is believed by Dr. E. W. West to be one of the sententious fragments which have been ascribed to Dastur Âdarbâd Marespand, and which comprise his pious monitions to his son Zartôsht. It dwells on the peculiar virtues of the thirty days of the Zoroastrian month, describing in detail the special fitness or auspiciousness of each day for particular actions. This book was first translated by me at the desire of Mr. Dosabhai Framji Karaka, C.S.I., and is contained in the first volume of his invaluable Edition. (pp. 134 *seq.*)

wise men and officers of state, to call into their presence wise and friendly people, and inquire after their health and welfare. It is auspicious for people to show wisdom, and to be merciful in all good actions pertaining to justice.

3. On the day of *Ardavahisht* (it befits the inhabitants of a country) to enter into terms of peace, and to show marks of amity towards each other, to prepare healing drugs and to take them, to discuss the operations of the human soul and the highest conception of it, to cause children to enter religious institutions, to remain in harmony with one's own masters or kings, and to do such works as are worthy of praise by the 'good creation.'

4. On the day of *Shahrivar* (it is auspicious for the king) to appoint the great officials, chiefs, secretaries (ministers), and other functionaries of the state, and to award them their salaries; to call into his presence venial but loyal offenders, and to lighten in due measure the weight of their penalties, and to pardon those who are deserving of clemency. This day would be also propitious for great men to be generous towards their inferiors, or to entrust to them vocations according to their choice; to add to the almshouses for darvishes; to alleviate the misery, and check the oppression and injustice practised against the needy; and it is desirable to take measures for

their assistance and to look after them, and to keep them in a decent condition by giving them adequate recompense for their labours.

5. On the day of *Spendârmât* it is good to solicit the hand of a woman, to take her as a bride to one's own house, to remove into a new house or residence, to repair an old mansion, to carry on agriculture, and to render the soil thereby fertile. The work that is begun on this day requires a long time for its completion. Those who are born on this day are very appropriately characterised by patience, mental skill, contentment, grandeur, and liberality.

6. The day of *Khurdâd* is good for purifying and adorning the body, for raising a new fountain, for digging a fresh well, for laying open a new road, for the gratuitous distribution of water, and for storing water and crops, which bring prosperity. In all kindred actions the auspiciousness of this day is witnessed.

7. The day of *Amerdâd* is the last day of the first week of every Zoroastrian month. This day is set apart as one of rest. On this day a man should be at his ease in body and soul; on this day he should form an estimate of the income accruing from his accumulated riches, from his cattle, his increase of wealth, from agriculture, his garden, beds of flowers, and forests. Be this day considered as important for working to ac-

quire whatever objects tend towards human security and health, and particularly, by the *Mazdayasna*, for calling to mind such of their actions as are imposed upon them as a (religious) duty.

8. The day of *Dîpâdar* is the day of the Creator of the Universe. On this day it is fit that the sublime knowledge of the (Zoroastrian) religion be acquired, and that pious people be endowed with charitable gifts, and be maintained in delight and prosperity.

9. On the day of *Âdar* (it is good) to bestow liberal alms upon the diseased, as well as to invoke the help of the Almighty by offering prayers to Him in the sacred places of worship belonging to the *Âdarâns* or fire-temples. Hence on this day, too, let numerous offerings be presented to fire-temples, and all solemn intentions for performing deeds of righteousness be fulfilled.

10. The day of *Âvân* is for making a voyage over the sea, for irrigation and the digging of canals for the passage of water, for cleaning the waters of a well, for planting trees and sowing corn. This day is reckoned as the principal one for undertaking works that are advantageous and beneficial to agriculture. On the other hand, let all such actions as contaminate the 'pure water of God,' be guarded against and avoided.

11. The day of *Khûr* (*Khûrshêd*) is named

from the light of the sun and the (consequent) appearance of objects (in this world), and is (therefore) regarded as the best time, for they have said that all good actions should be unhesitatingly done on this day.

12. The day of *Māh* is favourable to the fullness of earnings. On this day let prayers be recited for the acquisition of happiness and delight unto the soul, and let good works be commenced. The *Yazdānparasts* (i.e. God-worshippers) of Irān disapproved of occupying themselves on this day in any worldly business or profession, and regarded it as necessary, for those who are submissive to the Almighty, to acquire a high knowledge respecting Him. Such also is their precept, that to keep himself in comfort, and to earn a good income, one should labour with great eagerness in any work connected with religion.

13. On the day of *Tīr* one might enter a scientific institution, and there learn the four branches of science (viz.)—1, Letters; 2, Astrology; 3, Navigation; 4, How to erect fountains of water, how to dig wells, how to form canals for the passage of river and other water, to learn the art of building bridges, boats, ships, and other like conveyances; and for the improvement of the body and the soul (mind) to learn the art of swimming.—This day is reckoned as the best one for numerous sorts of actions.

14. The day of *Gósh* is the last day of the second week. On this day (it is auspicious) to saddle and ride quadrupeds, such as mules, horses, etc., to reflect upon actions done during the past week, and perform such deeds as would improve one's own person and soul, and to render one's self worthy of a good reward. On this day one should not make cattle, *i.e.*, oxen and other species of cattle *i.e.* or sheep work, but keep them in ease. He should not eat their meat, but only use their milk. On the day of *Gósh*, as on that of *Anírán*, it is good to clean the hoofs of beasts of burden, and to shoe them, and to keep them in good condition.

15. The day of *Dípamih*r is the fitting one for (undertaking) new works concerning wisdom and religion. Let this very day be regarded as proper for (giving a religious) mandate, for legal decisions, and for the distribution of property.

16. The day of *Mitró*.—As amongst the Yazads only Mithra decides upon (the good or evil actions of) all creatures; on this day it is fitting to better the condition of criminals, to increase one's love for the good people, to arrange a feasting party for the entertainment of friends, to have an earnest regard for deserving people, to repent of one's sinful actions, to perform public penance, to forgive the guilty and to relieve them from the fear of their guilt, to

occupy one's self in pious actions, and to repress and relinquish any vengeful thought or struggle, and to be continually kind and friendly (towards fellow-creatures).

17. The day of *Srōsh* is glorious and life-giving, for the God *Aûharmazd* has appointed *Srōsh* a ruler and watcher over this world. On this day it is incumbent (upon the *Mazdayasna*) to abstain from sinning, to preserve himself from guilt, and to approve of actions which can absolve him from moral crimes by means of repentance. Those also who are respectable and venerable, of famous power, and possessing the kingly throne and crown, should wash their faces and carefully comb their hair.

18. On the day of *Rashnû* thou shalt never utter falsehood or practise deceit of any kind, and never commit any blemishing deeds; and thou shalt attend to such acts as are of a higher character. Never utter any false promises. Speak only what is true and just. Abstain from swearing and from doing any action of a doubtful nature.

19. The day of *Fravardîn* is itself the time (for the coming) of the *Frôhars* (into this world). Hence on this day let the *Yazashnî*, *Darân Myazd*, or the *Afrîngân* ceremonies be performed in the name of all the pious *Frôhars*, and (more-over) let the *Frôhars* of all who have skilfully

worked (in this world) be extolled and remembered. Be this day passed in the doing of as many meritorious actions (enjoined by religion) as possible, and in forming familiar acquaintance and friendship with many people.

20. The day of *Bahrám*.—Amongst the invisible Yazads, *Bahrám* is the commander-in-chief of the army, and possesses the most splendid banner. In his *Khshnúman* he is called ‘the Courage and Victory of the Religion.’ In the battles between the Yazads and the demons, in races, on the hunting-ground, and amongst those who perform good actions acceptable to *Aúhar-mazd*, he (*Bahrám*) is the most excellent leader, the most courageous and invincible one. Everywhere does he go to make people daring, and to grant them victory. On this day one should put on the dress made ready for wearing in the chase and in the battle of heroes; and let the sheep and goats that are fit to be selected for the day of *Rām* be preserved, similarly as (mankind is protected) by the king of the world, by the brave and unconquerable hero, or by the lighted fire.

21. The day of *Rām* is the day of the Genius of Pleasure. Be this day, therefore, passed in preparing and decorating military arms, implements, and garments, and select them for wearing in token of rejoicing.

22. The day of *Vát* is the last day of the

third week. This day is set apart for rest, and is called the day for reckoning up one's profitable or injurious actions (done during the past seven days). On this day one should go into the company of virtuous people, and should feel a desire for listening to their moral teachings, so that no perverse actions may take place. And one should continue to be a participator in the works (conducive to) the felicity of the soul, and should repel from his mind any heartaching or sorrowful thought that has occurred to him; for if on the day which has to be passed happily one should continue his grief and should not avoid business, he would be fatigued and would not obtain any rest, but be much injured in his health. On the day of *Vât*, therefore, one should quickly repress his grief and sorrow, and suppress by all means sad and mournful sighs, that by the power of *Vât* he may become altogether happy.

23. On the day of *Dipadîn* (it befits one) to expound the religion to good people and to encourage them to perform righteous deeds (enjoined by it), and to dissuade them from every sinful action, and to incite them to do wisely many works pertaining to religion.

24. On the day of *Dîn* let an assembly be formed for delivering a lecture on fidelity towards the (Zoroastrian) religion, let one improve the condition of one's household, make preparations

for a wedding, solicit the hand of a woman, and take measures for the education of religious people.

25. On the day of *Ard* (*Arshisang*) the masters and mistresses of houses should adorn their children with golden dresses or ornaments. And let the poor be continually looked after and assisted.

26. On the day of *Āshtād* let those who are deserving of a good recompense be respected and honoured, and the imprisoned criminals, and those that are worthy of chastisement, be punished. On this day people should refrain from going to battle, from feats of heroism, from quarrels or disputes, as well as from following trade, and they should prefer sedentary employment.

27. On the day of *Āsmān* no debt should be incurred . . * but deserving and good actions—viz. those pertaining to pious worship, commerce, and war—be performed.

28. The day of *Zamyād* is auspicious for laying out beds of flowers in a garden, for consecrating a newly-built house or dwelling, for planting trees, for tilling the ground, for garnering up ripe corn, and for storing corn and stacking grass. One should attend to other similar actions, but he ought not to take any medicine (on this day). *

* The passage is too obscure to be easily understood.

29. The day of *Mâraspand* is the fitting one for increasing one's eager desire for knowledge and wisdom pertaining to religion, and for restoring, preparing, and improving the body by means of medicine or remedy, and for pronouncing blessings. This day is also preferred as a propitious one for the beginning and continuing of righteous actions for the glory of religion, and for extirpating the houses of idols, and for expiating sins committed through necessity, and for purifying the body and the soul from pollutions.

30. The day of *Anîrân* is the last day of the month. This day is for taking rest and for the cessation of business, and for reckoning up the virtuous actions (done during the past month). In the beginning of this day one should give the poor their wages, one should form a determination and make a vow for the praising and adoration of some special Yazad according to his own intention. From this day one should begin to make preparations for the works to be achieved on the day of *Aûharmazd*. On this day people should undergo purification of the body and put on decent clothing, should perform penance for the expiation of sins, suppress anger, forget revenge, be reconciled to enemies, and let such actions be done as would make friends of other people, and give pleasure to body and soul.

The five days at the end of the twelve months ought to be added for the completion of the year. Of these *Ahunavat-gâs* resembles the day of *Aûhar-mazd*; and the other four—namely, *Ushtavat-gâs*, *Spentômat-gâs*, *Vohûkhshatra-gâs* and *Vahishtô-yasht-gâs*—resemble *Vôhuman* (*Bahman*), *Âtrô* (*Âdar*), *Mithra* (*Mehr*), and *Din* respectively.



OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

THE CIVILIZATION OF THE EASTERN IRÂNIANS IN ANCIENT TIMES, by Dr. Wm. Geiger, translated from the German, with a Preface, Notes, and a Biography of the Author, by Darab Dastur Peshotan Sanjana. (London: Henry Frowde, 1885.)

‘ We have to thank the translator for an excellent version of a most interesting book. Dr. Geiger has devoted much earnest labour to the investigation of the history and religion of the primitive Zoroastrians. Indeed, there are few more interesting histories than that which belongs to the development of the Zoroastrian faith among the early inhabitants of Eastern Iran. The translator has done his work admirably, expressing the German original in singularly clear, terse, and idiomatic English. He has also added some very valuable notes.’—*Guardian*.

‘ A considerable contribution to Oriental study.’—*Scotsman*.

‘ Dr. Wilhelm Geiger’s extensive and careful researches into the religion and life of the primitive Zoroastrians have excited much interest throughout Europe, and his great work is well known to all who are occupied in kindred studies. Those who cannot read German easily will now be able to read a good English translation, which is doubly valuable from the fact of the writer being a Parsee, and therefore naturally understanding and sympathising with the subject and being able occasionally to correct errors of the author. The translation will be valuable even to those who possess the work in the original German.’—*Westminster Review*.

‘ A German scientific work translated into English by a Parsi priest is a novelty in literature ; and when to this is

added the fact that the original work is the best and most complete that has been written on the subjects of which it treats, and that the translation is as good as can be expected from any Englishman, it may safely be recommended as a book well worth perusal by any one who wishes to learn all that can be really ascertained from the *Avesta* texts about the manners and customs of the ancient Zoroastrians. A short but comprehensive essay on the religion of the *Avesta* its sacred beings and demonology, has been contributed by Dr. Geiger as an introduction to the English translation, and forms by no means the least interesting part of the work.'—*Dr. E. W. West in the 'Academy.'*

'It is a pleasure, in passing, to refer to the debt of gratitude which Eranian scholars owe both to the High-Priest (Dastur Dr. Peshotan) himself for his various editions of hitherto inaccessible Pehlevi texts, and to his accomplished son Darab Dastur, for the really excellent English versions and editions of the German writings of Spiegel and Geiger, on Avestic subjects,—particularly his handsome translation of the latter's *Civilization of the Eastern Iranians in Ancient Times*, of which the second volume has just appeared.'—*The Babylonian and Oriental Record.*





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