



and their testimony has been lately corroborated, in a most unexpected way, by a Greek inscription (discovered at Deremendjik, near Magnesia, on the Maeander: by Cousin and Deschamps, Bulletin de Correspondance hellénique, XIII: 529), emanating from no less an authority than King Darius himself, who congratulates his satrap in Asia Minor, Gadates, "for working well the King's earth and transplanting in lower Asia the fruits of the country beyond Euphrates.

The third Fargard may serve as a Commentary to those texts. The principal subject is, as the Denkard has it:

What comforts most the Genius of the Earth (§§ 1-6)?

What discomfords most the Genius of the Earth (§§ 7-11)?

What rejoices the Earth most (§§ 12-35)?

In each of these three developments a series of five objects is considered. Series I and II, though expressed in symmetrical terms, do not answer one another: there is greater symmetry, as to the ideas, between the second series and the third. Series I and II are a dry enumeration. The third series contains two interesting digressions, one on the funeral laws (§§ 14-21), and the other on the sanctity of husbandry (§§ 24-33).

The Fargard ends with a development forbidding the burial of the dead (§§ 36-42); it is a sort of commentary to § 8.

The subject of this chapter has become a commonplace topic with the Parsis, who have treated it more or less antithetically in the Mainyai-khard (chaps. 5 and 6) and in the Rivayats [ch. 98] (Gr. Riv. pp. 434-437).

### FARGARD 3. The Earth

#### I.

1. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! Which is the first place where the Earth feels most happy?

Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is the place whereon one of the faithful steps forward, O Spitama Zarathushtra! with the log in his hand 2, the Baresma 3 in his hand, the milk 4 in his hand, the mortar 5 in his hand, lifting up his voice in good accord with religion, and beseeching Mithra 6, the lord of the rolling

country-side, and Rama Hvastra 7.'

Notes:

1. 'The Genius of the Earth' (Comm.)
  2. The wood for the fire altar.
  3. The Baresma (now called barsom) is a bundle of sacred twigs which the priest holds in his hand while reciting the prayers. (See Vd19.18 seq. and notes.)
  4. The so-called *jav* or *javam*, one of the elements of the Haoma sacrifice.
  5. The Havana [hawan] or mortar used in crushing the Haoma or Hom.
  6. Mithra, the Persian Apollo, sometimes like him identified with the Sun, is invoked here as making the earth fertile. 'Why do not you worship the Sun? King Yazdgard asked the Christians. Is he not the god who lights up with his rays all the world, and through whose warmth the food of men and cattle grows ripe?' (Elisaeus.)
  7. The god that gives food its savour: he is an acolyte to Mithra.
- 2,3. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! Which is the second place where the Earth feels most happy? Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is the place whereon one of the faithful erects a house with a priest within<sup>8</sup>, with cattle, with a wife, with children, and good herds within; and wherein afterwards the cattle continue to thrive, virtue to thrive<sup>9</sup>, fodder to thrive, the dog to thrive, the wife to thrive, the child to thrive, the fire to thrive, and every blessing of life to thrive.'
8. With the domestic chaplain (the Panthaki).
  9. By the performance of worship.
4. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! Which is the third place where the Earth feels most happy? Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is the place where one of the faithful sows most corn, grass, and fruit, O Spitama Zarathushtra! where he waters ground that is dry, or drains ground that is too wet<sup>10</sup>.'
10. Under the Achaemanian kings countrymen who brought water to places naturally dry received the usufruct of the ground for five generations (Polybius, X, 28). But for those underground canals (called qanats), which bring water from the mountains all through the Iranian desert, Persia would starve.
5. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! Which is the fourth place where the Earth feels most happy? Ahura Mazda answered:

'It is the place where there is most increase of flocks and herds.'

6. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! Which is the fifth place where the Earth feels most happy? Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is the place where flocks and herds yield most dung.'

II.

7. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! Which is the first place where the Earth feels sorest grief? Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is the neck of Arezura<sup>11</sup>, whereon the hosts of fiends rush forth from the burrow of the Druj<sup>12</sup>.'

11. The neck of Arezura (Arezurahe griva) is "a mount at the gate of hell, whence the demons rush forth"

(Bund. 12.8

Dadistan 33.5); it is also

called "the head of Arezura" (Vd19.45),

or 'the back of Arezura' (Bund. 12.2).

Arezura was a fiend, son of Ahriman, who was killed by the first man, Gayomard (Menog-i Khrad 27.15). The

mount named from him lies in the North (which is the seat of the demons):

it seems to belong to the Alborz chain, like the Damavand

(Bund. 12.8), where

Azi Dahaka [Zohak] was bound (Vd1.18, notes).

12. Hell, the Druj being assimilated to a burrowing Khrafstra.

See Vd7.24.

8. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! Which is the second place where the Earth feels sorest grief? Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is the place wherein most corpses of dogs and of men lie buried<sup>13</sup>.'

13. 'It is declared in the good religion, that, when they conceal a corpse beneath the ground, Spendarmad, the archangel, shudders;

it is just as severe as a serpent or scorpion would be to any

one in a sleeping-garment, and it is also just like that to the

ground. When thou makest a corpse beneath the ground as it were

apparent, thou makest the ground liberated from that affliction'

(Saddar 33, tr. by West, in

the Sacred Books of the East, XXIV).

See Vd. 6.51;

Vd7.45.

9. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! Which is the third place where the Earth feels sorest grief? Ahura Mazda answered:

'It is the place whereon stand most of those Dakhmas on which the corpses of men are deposited<sup>14</sup>.'

14. With regard to Dakhmas, see Vd6.45.

'Nor is the Earth happy at that place whereon stands a Dakhma with corpses upon

it; for that patch of ground will never be clean again till the day of resurrection' (Gr. Riv. 435, 437). Although the erection of Dakhmas is enjoined by the law, yet the Dakhma in itself is as unclean as any spot on the earth can be, since it is always in contact with the dead see (Vd7.55).

The impurity which would otherwise be scattered over the whole world, is thus brought together to one and the same spot. Yet even that spot, in spite of the Rivayat, is not to lie defiled for ever, as every fifty years the Dakhmas ought to be pulled down, so that their sites may be restored to their natural purity (see Vd7.49 ff. and this Farg. verse 13).

10. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! Which is the fourth place where the Earth feels sorest grief? Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is the place wherein are most burrows of the creatures of Angra Mainyu<sup>15</sup>.

15. 'Where there are most Khrafstras' (noxious animals).

11. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! Which is the fifth place where the Earth feels sorest grief? Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is the place whereon

the wife and children of one of the faithful<sup>16</sup>,  
O Spitama Zarathushtra! are driven along the way of captivity,  
the dry, the dusty way, and lift up a voice of wailing.'

16. Killed by an enemy.

III.

12. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! Who is the first that rejoices the Earth with greatest joy? Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is he who digs out of it most corpses of dogs and men <sup>17</sup>.'

17. This joy answers the second grief of the earth (§ 8; cf. note). There is no counterpart given to the first grief (§ 7), because, as the Commentary naively expresses it, "it is not possible now so to dig out hell," which will be done at the end of the world (Bund. 30.32).

13. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! Who is the second that rejoices the Earth with greatest joy? Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is he who pulls down most of those Dakhmas on which the corpses of men are deposited<sup>18</sup>.'

18. This answers the third grief (§ 9; cf. note).

14. Let no man alone by himself<sup>19</sup> carry a corpse<sup>20</sup>.

If a man alone by himself carry a corpse,

the Nasu<sup>21</sup> rushes upon him, to defile  
him, from the nose of the dead, from the eye, from the tongue,

from the jaws, from the sexual organs, from the hinder parts. This Druj Nasu falls upon him, [stains him] even to the end of the nails, and he is unclean, thenceforth, for ever and ever.

19. No ceremony in general can be performed by one man alone. Two Mobeds are wanted to perform the Vendidad service, two priests for the Barashnum, two persons for the Sag-did (Anquetil, II, 584 n.) It is never good that the faithful should be alone, as the fiend is always lurking about, ready to take advantage of any moment of inattention. If the faithful be alone, there is no one to make up for any negligence and to prevent mischief arising from it. Never is the danger greater than in the present case, when the fiend is close at hand, and in direct contact with the faithful.

20. A corpse from which the Nasu has not been expelled by the Sag-did ceremony (described Vd8.14-22).

21. The word Nasu has two meanings: it means either the corpse (nasai), or the corpse-demon (the Druj Nasu, that is to say the demon who takes possession of the dead body and makes his presence felt by the decomposition of the body and infection).

15. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! What shall be the place of that man who has carried a corpse [alone]<sup>22</sup>? Ahura Mazda answered: 'It shall be the place on this earth wherein is least water and fewest plants, whereof the ground is the cleanest and the dryest and the least passed through by flocks and herds, by the fire of Ahura Mazda, by the consecrated bundles of Baresma, and by the faithful<sup>23</sup>.'

22. He cannot purify himself like the Nasa-salar (Vd8.13).

'He who carries a man, knowing that the man is dead and that the Sag-did has not been performed, commits a sin worthy of death (margarzan).' As the absence of Sag-did makes the infection worse, it is the same crime as if a man were to introduce a plague into the country.

23. To avoid any contact of that man with pure beings.

16. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! How far from the fire? How far from the water? How far from the consecrated bundles of Baresma? How far from the faithful?

17. Ahura Mazda answered: 'Thirty paces<sup>24</sup> from the fire, thirty paces from the water, thirty paces from the consecrated bundles of Baresma, three paces from the faithful.

24. A pace (g&acirc;ma) is as much as three feet (p&acirc;dha; Vd9.8).

18,19. 'There, on that place, shall the worshippers of Mazda erect an enclosure<sup>25</sup>, and therein shall they establish him with food, therein shall they establish him with clothes, with the coarsest food and with the most worn-out clothes. That food he shall live on, those clothes he shall wear, and thus shall they let him live, until he has grown to the age of a Hana, or of a Zaurura, or of a Pairishta-khshudra<sup>26</sup>.

25. The Armesht-g&acirc;h, the place for the unclean; see Introd. V, 15.

26. Hana means, literally, 'an old man;' Zaurura, 'a man broken down by age;' Pairishta-khshudra, 'one whose seed is dried up.' These words have acquired the technical meanings of 'fifty, sixty, and seventy years old.'

20,21. 'And when he has grown to the age of a Hana, or of a Zaurura<sup>27</sup>, or of a Pairishta-khshudra, then the worshippers of Mazda shall order a man strong, vigorous, and skilful<sup>28</sup>, to cut the head off his neck<sup>29</sup>, in his enclosure on the top of the mountain: and they shall deliver his corpse unto the greediest of the corpse-eating creatures made by the beneficent Spirit, unto the vultures, with these words: "The man here has repented of all his evil thoughts, words, and deeds. If he has committed any other evil deed, it is remitted by his repentance<sup>30</sup>: if he has committed no other evil deed, he is absolved by his repentance, for ever and ever."

27. When he is near his death. The carrier alone (&acirc;vak-bar), being margar&acirc;n (see note 22 above), ought to have been put to death at once. The rigour of theory was abated in practice and delayed to the moment when the guilty man was to have paid to nature the debt due to religion.

28. 'Trained to operations of that sort' (Comm.); a headsman.

29. Perhaps: 'to flay him alive and cut off his head.'  
See Vd9.49, text and note.

30. By the performance or the Patet.

22. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! Who is the third that rejoices the Earth with greatest joy? Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is he who fills up most burrows of the creatures of Angra Mainyu<sup>31</sup>.'

31. This joy answers the fourth grief or the earth (§ 10).

23. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! Who is the fourth that rejoices the Earth with greatest joy? Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is he who sows most corn, grass, and fruit, O Spitama Zarathushtra! who waters ground that is dry, or drains ground that is too wet<sup>32</sup>.

32. This is identical with § 4, which is developed in the

following clauses (§§ 24-34).

24. 'Unhappy is the land that has long lain unsown with the seed of the sower and wants a good husbandman, like a well-shapen maiden who has long gone childless and wants a good husband.

25. 'He who would till the earth, O Spitama Zarathushtra! with the left arm and the right, with the right arm and the left, unto him will she bring forth plenty of fruit: even as it were a lover sleeping with his bride on her bed; the bride will bring forth children, (the earth will bring forth) plenty of fruit<sup>33</sup>.

33. The text has: 'she brings either a son or plenty of fruit,' she being either the woman or the earth.

26,27. 'He who would till the earth, O Spitama Zarathushtra! with the left arm and the right, with the right arm and the left, unto him thus says the Earth: "O thou man! who dost till me with the left arm and the right, with the right arm and the left, here shall I ever go on bearing, bringing

forth all manner of food, bringing corn first to thee<sup>34</sup>."

34. 'When something good grows up, it will grow up for thee first' (Comm.) Perhaps: 'bringing to thee profusion of corn' ('some say, she will bring to thee 15 for 10;' Comm.)

28,29. 'He who does not till the earth, O Spitama Zarathushtra! with the left arm and the right, with the right arm and the left, unto him thus says the Earth: "O thou man! who dost not till me with the left arm and the right, with the right arm and the left, ever shalt thou stand at the door of the stranger, among those who beg for bread; the refuse and the crumbs of the bread are brought unto thee<sup>35</sup>, brought by those who have profusion of wealth."

35. 'They take for themselves what is good and send to thee what is bad' (Comm.)

30. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! What is the food that fills the Religion of Mazda<sup>36</sup>? Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is sowing corn again and again, O Spitama Zarathushtra!

36. Literally, 'what is the stomach of the law?'

31. 'He who sows corn, sows righteousness: he makes the Religion of Mazda walk, he suckles the Religion of Mazda; as well as he could do with a hundred man's feet, with a thousand woman's breasts<sup>37</sup>, with ten thousand sacrificial formulas<sup>38</sup>.

37. 'He makes the Religion of Mazda as fat as a child could be made by means of a hundred feet, that is to say, of fifty

servants walking to rock him; of a thousand breasts, that is,  
of five hundred nurses' (Comm.)

38. With the recitation of 10,000 Yenghe hatam,  
that is to say, as if one had performed for his weal as many sacrifices as  
contain  
10,000 Yenghe hatam.

32. 'When barley was created, the Daevas  
started up<sup>39</sup>; when it grew<sup>40</sup>, then fainted the Daevas'  
hearts; when the knots came<sup>41</sup>, the Daevas groaned;  
when the ear came, the Daevas flew away<sup>42</sup>. In that  
house the Daevas stay, wherein wheat perishes<sup>43</sup>. It is  
as though red hot iron were turned about in their throats, when  
there is plenty of corn<sup>44</sup>.

39. John Barleycorn got up again / And sore surpris'd them all.

40. Doubtful.

41. Doubtful.

42. The general meaning of the sentence is how the Devs are broken  
down 'by the growing, the increasing, and the ripening of the  
corn' (Denkard, 1.1. § 10  
[Dk8 44.10]).

43. Doubtful.

44. Doubtful. Wolff: "When the grain is rightly placed (for threshing),  
then the Daevas perspire (with fear);. when the mill is rightly placed (to  
grind the  
grain), then lose the Daevas lose their composure, if the flour is rightly  
placed (for  
making dough), then the Daevas cry, if the dough is rightly placed (for  
baking), then  
the Daevas perish (Av. paredhen; Wolff follows AirWb 869 in reading farzen)  
(with fear); kept  
permanently in the house, flour dough is effectual for striking down the  
Daevas, in the mouth, it is very hot (to them) ? you see them turn to  
flee. Thus grain grows abundantly, so one should recite the M&atilde;thra..."

33. 'Then let people learn by heart this holy  
saying [manthra -JHP]: "No one who does not eat, has strength to  
do heavy works of holiness<sup>45</sup>, strength to  
do works of husbandry, strength to beget children.  
By eating every material creature lives, by not eating it dies  
away.'"

45. 'Like the performance of the dv&acirc;zda h&ocirc;m&acirc;st'  
(the longest and most cumbersome of all Zoroastrian ceremonies).

34. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! Who is the fifth that rejoices the Earth with greatest joy?

Ahura Mazda answered: '[It is he who kindly and piously gives<sup>46</sup> to one of the faithful who tills the earth,] O Spitama Zarathushtra!

46. The Asho-dad or alms. The bracketed clause is from the Vendidad Sada.

35. 'He who would not kindly and piously give to one of the faithful who tills the earth, O Spitama Zarathushtra! Spenta Armaiti<sup>47</sup> will throw him down into darkness, down into the world of woe, the world of hell, down into the deep abyss<sup>48</sup>.'

47. The Genius of the Earth offended.

48. Conjectural translation.

IV.

36. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! If a man shall bury in the earth either the corpse of a dog or the corpse of a man, and if he shall not disinter it within half a year, what is the penalty that he shall pay?

Ahura Mazda answered: 'Five hundred stripes with the Aspahe-ashtra<sup>49</sup>, five hundred stripes with the Sraosho-charana<sup>49</sup>.'

49. See Introduction.

37. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! If a man shall bury in the earth either the corpse of a dog or the corpse of a man, and if he shall not disinter it within a year, what is the penalty that he shall pay?

Ahura Mazda answered: 'A thousand stripes with the Aspahe-ashtra, a thousand stripes with the Sraosho-charana.'

38. O Maker of the material world, thou Holy one! If a man shall bury in the earth either the corpse of a dog or the corpse of a man, and if he shall not disinter it within the second year, what is the penalty for it? What is the atonement for it? What is the cleansing from it?

39. Ahura Mazda answered: 'For that deed there is nothing that can pay, nothing that can atone, nothing that can cleanse from it; it is a trespass for which there is no atonement, for ever and ever.'

40. When is it so?

It is so, if the sinner be a professor of the

Religion of Mazda, or one who has been taught in it<sup>50</sup>.

'But if he be not a professor of the Religion of Mazda, nor one who has been taught in it<sup>51</sup>, then his sin is taken from him, if he makes confession of the Religion of Mazda and resolves never to commit again such forbidden deeds<sup>52</sup>.

50. A born Zoroastrian or a catechist: in both cases, he must have known that he was committing sin.

51. He did not know that he was committing sin.

52. He makes Patet and says to himself; 'I will never henceforth sin again' (Comm.)

41. 'The Religion of Mazda indeed, O Spitama Zarathushtra! takes away from him who makes confession of it the bonds of his sin<sup>53</sup>; it takes away (the sin of) breach of trust<sup>54</sup>; it takes away (the sin of) murdering one of the faithful<sup>55</sup>; it takes away (the sin of) burying a corpse<sup>56</sup>; it takes away (the sin of) deeds for which there is no atonement; it takes away the worst sin of usury<sup>56</sup>; it takes away any sin that may be sinned.

53. If not knowingly committed; see § 40 and the following notes.

54. Doubtful. From the commentary it appears that draosha must have meant a different sort of robbery: 'He knows that it is forbidden to steal, but he fancies that robbing the rich to give to the poor is a pious deed' (Comm.)

55. Or better, 'a Mazdean,' but one who has committed a capital crime; 'he knows that it is allowed to kill the margarz&acirc;n, but he does not know that it is not allowed to do so without an order from the judge.' See Vd8.74 note.

56. 'He knows that it is forbidden to bury a corpse; but he fancies that if one manages so that dogs or foxes may not take it to the fire and to the water, he behaves piously (Comm.) -- He fancies that the prohibition of burying the dead is meant only for the protection of the fire and the water, not of the earth herself.

57. Or, possibly, 'the sin of usury.' 'He knows that it is lawful to take high interest, but he does not know that it is not lawful to do so from the faithful' (Comm.)

42. 'In the same way the Religion of Mazda, O Spitama Zarathushtra! cleanses the faithful from every evil thought, word, and deed, as a swift-rushing mighty wind cleanses the plain<sup>58</sup>.

'So let all the deeds he doeth be henceforth good, O Zarathushtra! a full atonement for his sin is effected by means of the Religion of Mazda.'

58. 'From chaff' (Comm.)

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