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## Mādayān ī Wīrāzagān: a newly discovered Middle Persian text: transliteration, transcription, and translation

Ruben Nikoghosyan

Yerevan State University, Yerevan, Armenia  
Email: [nikoghosyanruben@gmail.com](mailto:nikoghosyanruben@gmail.com)

### Abstract

In 2017, the *editio princeps* of a newly discovered Middle Persian text, the “Mādayān ī Wīrāzagān” or simply “Wīrāzagān”, was published by Raham Asha. This text, which is important not only from a literary and religious perspective, but also from a mythological point of view, was previously unknown to the scholarly community. The Middle Persian original of the text is found in the Codex TD 26 (49r–62v), preserved in the library of the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute, Mumbai. The manuscript was first discovered and studied by R. Asha in March 2011. The preliminary remarks on the Mādayān ī Wīrāzagān and other texts contained in the Codex TD 26 (Ms. R 494) were published in 2012 in the journal of the same institution. Here I present a translation (accompanied by the transliteration and transcription) of the original text published on pages 3–16 of Asha’s book.

**Keywords:** Mādayān ī Wīrāzagān; Ardā-Wīrāz-Nāmag; Pahlavi literature; Zoroastrianism; Vision narratives; Tir

### 1. Introduction

In 2017, the *editio princeps* of a newly discovered Middle Persian text, called the “Mādayān ī Wīrāzagān” (or simply “Wīrāzagān”) was published by Raham Asha.<sup>1</sup> This text, which is important not only for the insight it provides into Zoroastrian literature and religion but also for some new details it provides regarding mythology, was previously unknown to the scholarly community. The transcription, transliteration, and translation of the Mādayān ī Wīrāzagān presented here aims to explain some of the unique aspects of this little-known Middle Persian text for the wider scholarly community interested in Iranian and Zoroastrian studies.

The Middle Persian original is found in the Codex TD 26 (49r–62v) preserved in the library of the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute, Mumbai. The manuscript (which previously belonged to T.D. Anklesaria) was first discovered and studied by R. Asha in March 2011. Some preliminary remarks on the *Mādayān ī Wīrāzagān* and other texts contained in the Codex TD 26 (Ms. R 494) were published the following year in the journal of the same institution.<sup>2</sup>

In this paper I present a translation (accompanied by a transliteration and transcription) of the original text published on pp. 3–16 of Asha’s valuable book. Unfortunately,

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<sup>1</sup> Asha 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Asha 2012.

the original manuscript was unavailable to me, and I have been forced to rely on the Pahlavi text of the *Mādayān ī Wīrāzagān* (MW) as reproduced in Asha's book.<sup>3</sup>

### 1.1. What can we say about the text of the MW?

The *Mādayān ī Wīrāzagān* is the story of an Iranian righteous priest called *Wīrāz* and his other-worldly journey to heaven and hell. It resembles a similar story found in the famous text of *Ardā-Wīrāz-nāmag* (AWN), though it is considerably shorter.

Although the MW and AWN present more or less the same narrative, we cannot reliably claim that the texts are interrelated and one stems from the other. Even after a passing examination of this text, one immediately notices some essential differences between the two. This difference is apparent not only from the sheer contrast in the volume of the works, but also from differences in the introductory part of the story and the descriptions of various punishments.

The MW shows some similarities with the Paz. version of the story of *Ardā-Wīrāz* (*Ardā-Vīrāf-nāma*) in that both describe the events as taking place during the reign of Kay *Wištāsp*, the patron of Zoroaster.<sup>4</sup> However, the similarity goes no further than that and, overall, we can say that the text of the MW is not directly related to any of the available texts detailing the journey of the righteous *Wīrāz*. It would not be far-fetched to assume that MW might represent a different line of narrative-tradition of the story of the righteous *Wīrāz*, stemming from a now-extinct *Urtext* (if there ever was one) of this story.

### 1.2. The versions of the story of the righteous *Wīrāz*

We have a number of versions of the story of *Ardā Wīrāz*, preserved in a number of manuscripts in different languages or scripts.<sup>5</sup> The most important are:

- a) *Ardā-Wīrāz-nāmag* (AWN): the well-known classical Middle Persian version of the story of the righteous *Wīrāz*,<sup>6</sup>
- b) *Ardā-Vīrāf-nāma* (AVN): the Pāzand version of the story published in Antia's anthology of the Pazand texts;
- c) *Mādayān ī Wīrāzagān* (MW): the recently discovered second version of the story written in Middle Persian.<sup>7</sup> The MW and AWN are the only versions written in Pahlavi;
- d) *Nāma-yi Ardā-Vīrāf* (NAV):<sup>8</sup> the New Persian prose version of the story, composed by an unknown author.<sup>9</sup> The date of composition is unknown, though it should

<sup>3</sup> The ms. was written on day *Wād*, month *Amurdād*, in the year 1139 AY (= 1771 AD), as reported by R. Asha (2012: 9). It also contains an interesting version of the MP text of *Ōšnar ī Dānāg*, first published by Goshtasp and Hajipour (2013: 157–62). This MS was found in the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute's library by R. Asha in 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Antia 1909: 358–80. This Pazand text has an abundance of errors and misspellings which make its reading quite problematic.

<sup>5</sup> According to Kargar (2009: 29), there is also an Arabic version (written in Syriac characters) of the story of AWN in existence, which he has not seen personally, but has been informed about by Mr Zakky Sharif. According to Mr Sharif, the manuscript is preserved in the monastery of Mar Giwargis of Mosul.

<sup>6</sup> The Middle Persian text is published in Haug et al. (1870). Newer editions of the text (with transliteration and transcription) have been prepared by Gignoux (1984), and Vahman (1986).

<sup>7</sup> Asha 2017: 3–16.

<sup>8</sup> This text is generally referred to as *Ardā-Vīrāf-nāma*, which is similar to the title of the Pazand version as given here. To avoid confusion, I have placed the word "nāma" at the beginning, hence *Nāma-yi Ardā-Vīrāf*.

<sup>9</sup> Kargar 2009.

- have been written before the composition of the Zartošt Bahram Paždu's versified version (thirteenth century AD), which seems to rely on the former as its source;
- e) *Nāma-yi Ardā-Virāf-i Zartošt* (NAVZ): This is Zartošt Bahram Paždu's version written in New Persian verse. Based on the time of the author, it would have been written sometime in the thirteenth century. Zartošt seems to have relied on the anonymous NAV as the basis for his versified version.
- f) *Nāma-yi Ardā-Virāf-i Kirmāni* (NAVK): This is another New Persian versified version of the story of the righteous Wīrāz, composed sometime in the seventeenth century by Nušīrwān Marzbān Kirmāni (in a terrible verse).

In addition to these versions, we also have a number of other abridgements or translations of this story in New Persian, old and new Gujarati, and Sanskrit. Although not insignificant, they add little to the information about the narrative of the Ardā-Wīrāz-nāmag as they stem from the versions listed above.<sup>10</sup>

The above-mentioned versions represent different narrative traditions and do not appear to stem directly from the Pahl. AWN. Despite this bold claim, we cannot exclude the possibility that the NAV (despite its slightly more colourful introduction and extensive descriptions) might have been composed on the basis of the first half of the AWN.<sup>11</sup>

Nowadays the most popular version of the story of the righteous Wīrāz is the one found in the AWN.<sup>12</sup> This is the most authoritative version and has been preserved in various mss which have only minor differences.<sup>13</sup> It may be concluded from the available dates in the manuscripts<sup>14</sup> that the *terminus ante quem* for the composition of the commonly known version of the AWN was the thirteenth or fourteenth century AD (although in its current form it was most probably composed earlier).

The events, as described in this version, take place during or after the lifetime of Ādurbad ī Mahraspandān, a Zoroastrian religious leader who allegedly lived during the reign of Shapuhr II (309–379 AD).<sup>15</sup> As Gheybi points out, the current text might represent a combination of two different versions,<sup>16</sup> of which the second begins with ch. 53, when Wīrāz is “reintroduced” to Hell.<sup>17</sup>

This version is the most extensive one besides the New Persian NAV, and gives an in-depth account of both Heaven and Hell.

The Paz. AVN, as published in Antia's collection, presents us with a different and much shorter version of the story.<sup>18</sup> It is preserved in two manuscripts, both of which also contain Sanskrit and old Gujarati translations of the Paz. text. The older ms. was written in AD 1415.<sup>19</sup> Its introduction is more abridged than that of the AWN and contains a number of divergences from the latter, e.g. the events are attributed to the reign of Wištāsp-šāh (Gustāsp šāh), which naturally eliminates the need for a long description of the events that followed the reign of Alexander “the Accursed”. Curiously enough, the sins and

<sup>10</sup> For a full list of these versions, see Kargar 2009: 25–9.

<sup>11</sup> On the distinction between the first and second halves of the Pahl. AWN, see below.

<sup>12</sup> For the recent translations of this text, see Gignoux 1984 and Vahman 1986.

<sup>13</sup> For the description of the mss of the AWN (K20, K26, H6, H17, H6a, B, P), see Haug et al. (1872: iii–xxii), as well as Vahman (1986: 10–11). The ms J3, the facsimile of which was published by Jamasp Asa and Nawabi (1976), also contains an incomplete version of the text of AWN (pp. 3(l. 6)–70 and pp. 71–4(l. 8)). For a short survey on the AWN mss see Cereti 2001: 221.

<sup>14</sup> Haug et al. 1872: v–vii.

<sup>15</sup> The story is preserved in Denkart, see Madan: 413 (ll. 2–8)

<sup>16</sup> Gheybi 2001: 4–5.

<sup>17</sup> Haug (1872: lxx–lxxvi) suggests that there were two kinds of Hell: the ordinary one and the “darkest one”.

<sup>18</sup> Antia 1909: 358–80.

<sup>19</sup> Haug 1872: xi–xii.

punishments described in this Pazand version are almost identical to those in the Pahl. AWN, but only those described after ch. 53 (i.e. the second half of the AWN).<sup>20</sup>

The New Persian prose AVN is an interesting and prominent specimen of NP Zoroastrian literature, and it narrates the journey of Vīrāf in a careful and detailed fashion.<sup>21</sup> Events are described as having taken place during the reign of Ardašir son of Bābak. It would be interesting to compare the MP and NP versions in detail and see the exact relationship of these texts.

Zartošt Bahram wrote his version in the second half of the thirteenth century, which pushes us to assign an earlier date for the prose AVN.<sup>22</sup> It places the events during the reign of Ardašir Bābakān, and includes more extensive descriptions of Heaven. Nevertheless, the differences to the AWN are probably attributable to the individual creativity of the author, rather than being an echo of a different version. The sins and punishments described are very similar to those described in the first half of the Pahl. AWN (before Ch. 53), which again may point to the existence of two separate versions, from which the Pahl. AWN was compiled.

The New Persian Ardā-Vīrāf-nāme, written in 1693 AD by Nušīrwān Marzbān Kermāni, is another very interesting version.<sup>23</sup> It was published in the second volume of the Rivayat of Darab Hormozdyar by Unvala (1922b: 331–42) and contains the full version of the story of Ardā-Vīrāf. Overall, this version does not differ much from that of Zartošt Bahram, with the exception of the passage about the golden-eared dog (sag-i zarrin-gōš), whom Vīrāf meets near the Činwad bridge. The passage describing this scene has been published separately in the first volume of the Rivāyats (Unvala 1922a: 257–9), and was transcribed and translated into German by König and Nejati (2009: 318–29).<sup>24</sup>

### 1.3. The plot of MW and its comparison with the other versions

As mentioned above, the events in MW take place in the court of Wištāsp-šāh. After Wištāsp-šāh became a follower of Zoroaster by accepting his religion, there remained some uncertainties and knowledge gaps about the true nature of this faith (particularly concerning the afterlife: §10 ... *kay wištāsp guft kū šaw ud wēn ān šahr ī murdaqān ud ēn čāšt ī was ī amāh az zarduxšt padīrift ēd nē dānam kū čē ast ud čē nēst*<sup>25</sup>). To remove this uncertainty and establish a firm foundation for the Religion (Dēn), Wištāsp and some other (probably religious) officials decided to send someone to the netherworld. After casting lots, they chose one pious man, named Wīrāz, and gave him the special intoxicating drink (not mentioned in the text, but called “*mang*” in the AWN) which would separate his soul from his body without killing him. After drinking it, the soul of the righteous (*ardā*) Wīrāz descends into the netherworld and approaches the bridge of judgement, called Činwad. Here, after testifying about his innocence and piety, and encountering the golden-eared dog that guards the bridge, he meets the yazads Ādur and Srōš, who lead him to Ohrmazd. After the meeting, the two yazads accompany Wīrāz to Hell, or “the land of the dead” (*šahr ī*

<sup>20</sup> For a translation of the introductory part of this text, see Haug 1872: xii–xiv.

<sup>21</sup> For the text of the prose, see Kargar 2009, for Zartošt’s version, see Afifi 1963. On Zartošt Bahram Paždu’s biography and list of works, see Mo’in 1942. Regarding the text of Paždu’s AVN in verse, see Yastrebova 2009; 2012.

<sup>22</sup> Yastrebova (2012: 82–3) believes that it was composed sometime in the eleventh or earlier.

<sup>23</sup> The original was published in Unvala 1922a: 257–9 and Unvala 1922b: 331–42. The first part of this text, which includes the description of the golden-eared dog, has been transcribed and translated into German by König and Nejati (2009: 318–29).

<sup>24</sup> This and the previous New Persian versions were first translated into English by J.A. Pope (1816).

<sup>25</sup> “Kay Wištāsp said [to me]: ‘Go and see that world of the dead [because from] all this teaching we accepted from Zoroaster, we do not know what is [true] and what is not’”.

*murdaḡān*), where he witnesses the suffering of sinful souls. In the end, they return to Heaven, and a very brief account is given, where the names of Zarduxšt, Jamšēd, and Ōšnār are mentioned.<sup>26</sup>

As can be seen from the text itself, the narrative is very brief and abrupt. Its events are placed during the reign of Kay Wištāsp, in contrast to the AWN and the NP versions, but in accordance with Antia's Paz. version. §§ 1–5 serve as an introduction to the story of the journey, §§ 6–11 are descriptions of the netherworldly order, which include the scene at the Činwad bridge and the introduction to Ohrmazd. §§ 12–41 are the descriptions of various sins and their punishments. Lastly, §§ 41–42 contain a very brief description of Heaven and an ending where Wīrāz tries to convince Ohrmazd to let him stay in Paradise.

The narrative starts with a statement regarding the time when the book was written:

*§1. Ēn mādayān Wīrāzagān xwānēnd ud pad ān zamān nibišt ka Wištāsp-šah pad šahryārih būd ud Jāmāsp ī bidaxš ērān-kundāg būd...*

Then, without further ado, the narrative mentions the act of 'casting lots', which is falling on behalf of the pious Wīrāz. It is evident, that textual distortions have played some role in this abruptness of the text, and it is the scribal hand, that is to blame for this (cf. the transmission between passages 1, 2, and 3). Next comes the scene of the sisters of Wīrāz, which is universal to all the available versions of the AWN. Strangely enough though, unlike the Pahl. AWN and the Paz. version, in MW these are not called the wives of Wīrāz, but only his sisters. By this, MW comes closer to Paždu's version, though I think that the reasons behind this deviation are different in both versions. While in Paždu's version the underlying reason for this may be the moralizing aspect and adaptation to the new moral reality of the time of the writer, in the MW the reason remains unclear, for in other passages of the text the incestuous marriage is encouraged (cf. §§ 18, 19).

After the dismissal of his sisters, Wīrāz lays down on a bedding of silk and drinks three cups of unknown intoxicating drink (*mang*), which makes his soul depart from his body.

The scene of Wīrāz's return to this world is missing in our text. This is contrary to the majority of the narratives (Pahl. AWN, Paz. AVN, Paždu's AVN). Instead, Wīrāz immediately starts describing his journey to the netherworld. This scene (§ 6-8) contains the description of the place, where the judgement of the souls takes place. Rašn the Just and Tīr yazad are mentioned, while the golden-eared dog (*sag ī zarrēn-gōš*) is named as the guardian of the bridge. This last creature is not mentioned in the rest of the narratives, except in the version of Kirmani.

Interestingly, the next scene in the MW is also absent from the remaining versions. In this scene (§ 9), Wīrāz calls various spiritual beings (Ardā yazad, dahmān xwarrah, and Rašn the Just) as witnesses to his innocence and piety.

Next comes the crossing of the bridge and the conversation of Wīrāz with Ādur yazad, in which the latter reproaches Wīrāz for burning 7-year-old wet wood instead of 1-year-old dry wood, and shows him the pool that has come into existence from the water of that wood (§ 10, cf. AWN, ch. X, 6–13).

Then Wīrāz is brought to the presence of Ohrmazd, who asks for the reason of his arrival (§11), to which Wīrāz answers by citing the order of Wištāsp. Satisfied by this, Ohrmazd apparently orders Sroš and Ādur yazads to accompany Wīrāz to Hell and show the suffering of sinners.<sup>27</sup>

This is the list of the sins enumerated in MW (§§ 12–41):

<sup>26</sup> The name of the latter is not mentioned in any other version.

<sup>27</sup> This part is in fact broken in the text: "pas ohrmazd bay ō srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad [gōwēd]..."

- § 12. [man] a lying judge “who didn’t judge justly”;
- § 13. [man] spoke unjust speeches and appropriated others’ property;
- § 14. [man] treated animals badly;
- § 15. [man] slept with a menstruating woman;
- § 16. [man] did not feed his own [shepherd’s] dogs;
- § 17. [woman] refused to marry and died a virgin;
- § 18. [woman] refused to marry her brother (refused to commit *xwēdōdah*);
- § 19. [woman] refused to give bread to travellers and asked for money;
- § 20. [woman] refused to marry her brother; married a stranger;
- § 21. [woman] humiliated her husband (in front of his friend);
- § 22. [woman] refused to feed the poor (thus disobeying her husband);
- § 23. [woman] was the wife of a priest and did not commit herself to *religion* (?) or gave herself to *mourning* (?);
- § 24. [woman] was a mazda-worshipper and did not wear the *kustīg* (*a-kustīg frāz dwārist*);
- § 25. [woman] did not keep the laws of purity during her period;
- § 26. [woman] committed adultery;
- § 27. [man] slaughtered many males of sheep and cattle;
- § 28. [man] gave false evidence;
- § 29. [man] stole the property of others;
- § 30. [woman] was intolerant of her husband; stole from him and ate with another man;
- § 31. [woman] did not feed her milk to her own child, but instead gave it to the children of others;
- § 32. [woman] went with sinners;
- § 33. [man] was a wealthy but mean person (neither ate himself nor gave [to others]);
- § 34. [man] a seller who cheated on his weights;
- § 35. [man] gave a false oath;
- § 36. [woman] did not keep well the fire of the house;
- § 37. [man] was greedy, intolerant, and malevolent, and envied what others had;
- § 38. [man] harmed/hurt his parents;
- § 39. [man] allowed his menstruating wife close to the fire;
- § 40. [man] abandoned his sister-wife, who died;
- § 41. [man and woman] the woman sinned, the man did not prevent (no punishment).

After completing his tour in Hell, *Wirāz* is led back to Heaven, where he sees the souls of the pious people, as well as important religious and mythical figures such as Zoroaster, *Ošnar*, and *Jamšēd*.

The story ends with the entreaty of *Wirāz* to *Ohrmazd* to let him stay in Paradise, to which *Ādur yazad* answers that so long as he is a pious and good person, his place is secure in Paradise.

#### 1.4. The importance of the MW

Despite the familiar plot of the *Mādayān ī Wirāzagan*, its text contains a number of new, rather remarkable, details which are found in the introductory part. First, the very beginning of the introduction of the MW is at variance with the other better-known versions. It starts describing the time when the compilation of the book in question took place, and it places the events that are about to be described during the reign of *kay Wištāsp*. This is in contrast to the *AWN*, where the events take place in the course of an unspecified reign, during or after the lifetime of *Ādurbad ī Mahraspandān*, a well-known religious figure of the



fourth century, and the New Persian versions, which usually take place during the reign of Ardashir I. The only version that comes close to MW in this respect is the Paz. AVN.

Unfortunately, there seem to be some interruptions in the introductory part of the text (the reasons why they started drawing lots is omitted from the text of MW), which prevent us from a full comparison with other versions.

However, another remarkable scene, found in MW but not the other versions, is one in which Wīrāz is met by a certain “hufraward” (i.e. “[one who has] a good fraward”), who asks him about his actions in life (§ 8). It is difficult to determine who exactly this divine being is. When answering this question, Wīrāz brings forth some divine beings as his witnesses, and his words are accepted.

The most noteworthy of these passages, which make MW stand out among all other versions, is that referring to the Zoroastrian divinity Tīr as the scribe of the netherworld (*Tīr ī dibīr hamē nibēg kunēd, ān nibēg az sar ī zurwān ī pādixšāy kard ēstēd*). Here, Tīr is described as sitting near the scales of Rašn the Just and recording all the actions of humans. I am inclined to consider this passage extremely remarkable, because nowhere else in the entire Middle Persian corpus can we find a passage that directly describes this scribal function of Tīr.<sup>28</sup>

Besides that, we also have a curious remark (§ 5) referring to Zurwan as “the Lord” (*zurwān ī pādixšāy*), which may show some particular affiliations or influences of the unknown author(s) of the text.

Again, in the introduction, we have a couple of lines dedicated to the “golden-eared dog” (*sag ī zarrēn-gōš*) that guards the Bridge of Činwad. Of course, this is not the only time this mythical creature is mentioned in Middle or New Persian literature, but its mentions are generally rather rare, despite its antiquity and importance; for example, it does not appear in the standard Pahlavi version of the AWN. A dog guarding the bridge is mentioned once in the Bundahišn, although even there the name of the dog is not clearly stated (Bd 30.3: *...ud sag-ē mēnōyīg pad sar ī ān puhl ud dušox azēr ī ān puhl*, i.e. “... and a spiritual dog on the end of the Bridge and the Hell [is] under the bridge”). The later sources carry more importance in this respect, as we can see in the *rivāyats* of Šāpur Bharučī<sup>29</sup> where a detailed origin myth is provided for this “golden-eared” dog. As mentioned above, this dog also appears in Kirmāni’s NP version.

A new literary perspective provides different interpretations of the reasons that brought Ardā-Wīrāz to the heavenly realm. Although in the AWN the journey is justified due to the lack of reliable sources and the rise of heretical ideas following the invasion of Alexander, the MW provides a substantially different reason. This is what Wīrāz says to justify his journey:

*§10...kay wištāsp guft kū šaw ud wēn ān šahr ī murdagān ud ēn čāšt ī was ī amāh az zarduxšt padirift ēd nē dānam kū čē ast ud čē nēst*

Kay Wištāsp said [to me], “Go and see that land of the dead [because from] all this teaching we accepted from Zoroaster, we do not know which is [true] and which is not”).

This is a completely different reason for the journey. It is a more inquisitive one, directed towards the gratification of the inner spiritual necessities of the religious community, in contrast to the more defensive spirit of the AWN. The same spirit prevails in the Pazand

<sup>28</sup> We find Tīr’s scribal functions explicitly mentioned in the Armenian literature of the fifth century (Agathangelos), where he is called “the scribe of Ohrmazd (Ormizd)”. This makes the mention of Tīr’s scribal function in the current text even more remarkable, for it should represent a very early tradition.

<sup>29</sup> Unvala 1922a: 256–7.

version, which makes it possible to see some connection, albeit not a direct one, between the Paz. AVN and that of MW. All this evidence pushes us to assign to the narrative of MW an earlier date and consider this version more archaic than the AWN.<sup>30</sup>

A deeper inquiry may provide us with clues as to the relative chronology of the creation and redaction of both works, as well as the remaining versions. I hope to discuss the topic in more detail on another occasion.

### 1.5. A few words on the present translation

The transliteration, transcription, and translation of the present text are completely reliant on the version of the original text presented in the aforementioned *editio princeps* by Raham Asha. I have no doubts about the competence of that skilled scholar, and even though no one is immune to mistakes, I think that even if they exist in that version of the text, they should be of minor importance, and thus have little or no consequence for the overall reading of the text. As far as I know, this is the first translation of the text of the *Mādayān ī Wirāzagān* into a modern language.

The numbering of the passages of the text is my own, and is not reliant on Asha's edition. It differs in some respects from that given in Asha's transcription of the text.

Finally, I would like to apologize for any mistakes or typos that I may have unconsciously made in the present version of the text and translation. Mistakes are sometimes unavoidable and involuntary, but apologizing for them beforehand is never redundant. Trying to reduce them is better.

## 2. Transliteration of the text of the *Mādayān ī Wirāzagān*<sup>31</sup>

PWN ŠM W hdyb'lyh Y yzd'n  
ytk Y nywk'

<sup>30</sup> While considering the date of the AWN version of this narrative I tend to side with Gignoux (1984: 15, apud Agostini 2014: 59) who considers it to be a text of post-Sassanian origin. However, especially considering that we are not dealing with a single narrative version, but a cluster of different versions of the same narrative, I agree with Agostini (2014: 60) that this is “evergreen” literary material, which was popular in the Iranian spiritual milieu for a very long period of time. The story of *Wirāz* might have developed a couple of centuries prior to the time of *Ādurbad ī Mahrspandān*, in an oral form, and it was transformed into a written narrative much later. Otherworldly journeys were already quite a popular topic in second-century Iran, as we can see from the following passage of Lucian (“Menippus”):

καί μοί ποτε διαγρυπνοῦντι τούτων ἔνεκα ἔδοξεν εἰς Βαβυλῶνα ἐλθόντα δεηθῆναι τινος τῶν μάγων τῶν Ζωροάστρου μαθητῶν καί διαδόχων. ἤκουον δ' αὐτοῦς ἐπαρδαῖς τε καί τελεταῖς πτισιν ἀνοίγειν τοῦ Ἄιδου τᾶς πύλας καί καταίγειν ὃν ἄν βούλωνται ἀσφαλῶς καί ὀπίσω αὐθις ἀναπέμπειν.

“So one time, while I lay awake over these problems, I resolved to go to Babylon and address myself to one of the Magi, the disciples and successors of Zoroaster, as I had heard that with certain charms and ceremonies they could open the gates of Hades, taking down in safety anyone they would and guiding him back again” (Harmon 1925: 82–3).

<sup>31</sup> In presenting the transliterated version of the text here, I have remained completely faithful to the Pahlavi text (based on the Codex TD 26 (Ms. R 494), 49<sup>r</sup>. – 62<sup>v</sup>) published in Asha 2017: 3–16, with all its deviations from the standard Pahlavi orthography and simple mistakes. The corrections are to be found in the footnotes. Corrections inserted by R. Asha in the original text are left unmarked here. Those added by me are marked with (N.).



1. ZNE m'tgd'n wyl'ck'n KLYTWNd W PWN ZK zm'n npšt AMT wšt'sp' šh PWN štr'd'ryh bwt W y'm'sp Y bwthš<sup>32</sup> 'yl'n kn'd'k bwt W dyn' m'zdsn'n' BYN OL gyh'n YATWNT.

2. AHL wšt'sp' šh LWTE 'yl'n m'zdsn'n' PWN ...

3. wl W wyck' 'w' wyl'c' YHMTWNt'. AHL YATWNd 7 AHTE'hl Y 'lt'y wyl'c' W YDE PWN kš OBYDWNd OL pyš Y šh wšt'sp' YKOYMWNst YMRRWNd AYK AL ŠTRN<sup>33</sup> wyl'c' OL štr' Y mwltk'n ME LNE 'wgnw' hwm'n'k HNEm čygnw ktk'-1 Y rwšn Y b'myk AMT-š 'ywk lwcyn<sup>34</sup> AYT' W ZK lwcyn<sup>35</sup> pr'c OHDWNd W ZK tk<sup>36</sup> t'lyk BRA YHWWNy't'. W AHL wšt'sp' AYK L LA ŠTRNT<sup>37</sup> wyl'c' OL štr' Y mwr'tk'n BRA LWTE 'yl'n m'zdysn'n' wl W wyc'k 'wwlt. W PWN hwnsndyh MN pyš Y ky wšt'sp' BRA OZLWNt'.

4. YHYTYWNd ZK wstlg plnyk'n' 4 'lšnk' MDM zmyk wstlynd. wyl'c' MDM ZK wstlg HLMWNYt W YHYTYWNd ZK hwłšn' Y wyl'c' 1 tšt' Y zlyn' pr'c YBLYWNd<sup>38</sup> AP-š 'yl m'zd'sn'n'<sup>39</sup> pyš YKOYMWNd W dlwn YDBHWNd W OLE Y wyl'c' w'c' OHDWNYt. W xwlyt 1 tšt W 2 tšt W 3 tšt'.

5. stykl b'l MDM ZK wstlg HLMWNYt W lwb'n 'c-š BRA 'hcyt<sup>40</sup> W OZLWNYt 'ywk g'm PWN hwmt' W 2 PWN hwht' W 3 g'm PWN hwwłšt'. AMT YHMTWNYt OL ZK gyw'k AYK GDE Y 'p W 'thš YKOYMWNYt W lšn' Y l'st tl'cw'k Y zlyn' PWN YDE YHSNN'yt W krpk' W wn'h hnd'cyt YHOYMWNYt tyl Y dpywr hm'y npyk OBYDWNy't' ZK npyk MN sl Y zwlw'n Y p'thš' krt YKOYMNy't.

6. W ZK KLBA Y zlyn' gwš MNW PWN ZK cynwt pwhl p'nk AYT W 1 kwp b'l'y PWN zncyl Y lwdyn bst YKOYMWNYt. cygnw wyl'c' HZYTWNYt' LALA OL LGLE 'hcyt' KRKA<sup>41</sup> PWN hm znyt W KALAY<sup>42</sup> OBYDWNy't' OL wyl'c' YATWNYt' ZK čynwt pwhl OL hm YATWNYt' čygnw 'wstlk tyh'.

7. L wyl'c' tlyst HNEm W YDE OL yzd'n YHSNNm AYK ME swt' AYT' ZK yšt' yzd'n W k'l W krpk' Y L PWN zyndg'n krt' ME swt' ZK hpt AHTE Y L lth'ycwng'hn sl'y krt' W ME swt' ZK TWRA W gwspnd Y L nywk PWN OŠTENTn' d'št HNEd AP-m OL plyd't LA YHMTWNYt'.

8. BYN zm'n OL ptylk YATWNt' ZK ZY-š hwpplwlt' YMLLWNYt AYK AL tly wyl'c' mgwg-GBRA BRA shwn l'st' YMRRWN MNW MN<sup>43</sup> PWN zywndk'n krt'. L YMRRWm<sup>44</sup> 'lt'y wyl'c' AYK BYN mynwd L MNDOM ywdtl LA krt' YKOYMWNYt LA-c 'n'st' dlwb' gwpt. 'lt'y yzdt' PWN gwk's YKOYMWNYt'. dtykl shn<sup>45</sup> YMRRWm<sup>46</sup> BYN mynwd Y L MNDOM-c ywdtl LA krt' YKOYMWNYt AP-m d'hm'n GDE PWN gwk's YKOYMWNYt'. stykl b'l shwn YMRRWm<sup>47</sup> lšn Y l'st' PWN g'p<sup>48</sup> YKOYMWNYt'.

<sup>32</sup> bythš

<sup>33</sup> ŠDRWN

<sup>34</sup> lwc'n' (N.)

<sup>35</sup> lwc'n' (N.)

<sup>36</sup> ktk'

<sup>37</sup> ŠDRWNt'

<sup>38</sup> YBLWNd (N.)

<sup>39</sup> m'zdysn'n' (N.)

<sup>40</sup> 'hcyt (N.)

<sup>41</sup> KKA

<sup>42</sup> KALA

<sup>43</sup> ME

<sup>44</sup> YMRRWNm (N.)

<sup>45</sup> shwn

<sup>46</sup> YMRRWNm (N.)

<sup>47</sup> YMRRWNm. The two words that follow this in the Pahlavi text [L AP-m] were inserted by Asha, although they do not seem to add anything new to the meaning of the text.

<sup>48</sup> gwk's.

9. ZK cynwt pwhl 4 'lšn' PWN p'hn'd YHWWNyt'. 'm cygwn wydlwm<sup>49</sup> ADYN'm OL ptylk YATWNyt' 'twr' yzdt' 'm ZK YMRRWyt<sup>50</sup> AL drwyst LPME<sup>51</sup> wyl'c' Y hwyt'tm<sup>52</sup> Y hwyt'bwd. AHL L YMRRWm<sup>53</sup> OL 'twr' yzdt' AYK dwlwst'<sup>54</sup> LPME LK 'twr' yzdt' 'wltynyt'l AMT L PWN [štr']<sup>55</sup> Y zyndk'n 'ycm W bwd 7 s'lk d'št AP-m KON LK hwyt'CYBA W hwyt'bwd KLYTNyh.<sup>56</sup> AHL-c YMRRWyt<sup>57</sup> 'twr' yzdt' AYK LK wyl'c' LA YDOYTWst'<sup>58</sup> AYK CYBA W bwd 'ywk' s'lk' Y hwšk 'p'dyt' LA 7 s'lk tl MNW 3 nyck b'l'y PWN MYA BYN YKOYMWNyt' Y MN ZK CYBA W bwd BRA YATWnt YKOYMWNyt MN KON pr'c' 'ycm W bwd Y 'ywk s'lk Y hwšk YHBWN ME 'ywk' s'lk Y hwšk ŠPYL AYK 7 s'lk Y tl. AHL L wyl'c' YDLWNyt AP-m nm'yt pwhl Y wcvlg MNW pwl MN ZK MYA YKOYMWNyt Y MNW<sup>59</sup> ZK 'ycm W bwd BRA YATWnt YKOYMWNyt.

10. AP-m YDLWNyt pyš Y 'whrmzd bg ANE' wyl'c' w'ng Y 'whrmzd OŠMENm W tn' LA wynm W nkwycm<sup>60</sup> nm'c' YBLWNm KN YHMTWNyt' 'whrmzd AYK drwyst YATWnt HNEyh wyl'c' mgwgg-GBRA<sup>61</sup> ME l'd mt' YKOYMWN'y OL ZNE štr' Y mwltk'n AMTt 'hnwc YATWtn<sup>62</sup> LA zm'n. AHL L YMRWNm<sup>63</sup> AYK kd wšt'sp' gwpt AYK OZLWN W HZYTNW ZK štr' Y mwltk'n W ZNE c'št' Y KBD Y LNE MN zltwhšt' ptylpt' HNA LA YDOYTWm<sup>64</sup> AYK ME AYT' W ME LOYT'.

11. AHL 'whrmzd bg OL slwš 'l'y<sup>65</sup> W 'twr' yzdt' [YMRRWNyt]...

12. ... MN AHL krp'<sup>66</sup> wn's ... MN pyš slwš 'l'y W 'twr' yzdt' MN AHL OZLWNm 'lt'y wyl'c' W wynym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 MNW PWN 'wzw'n MN d'l 'kwht YKOYMWN't. pwrSYM L wyl'c' AYK ZNE GBRA ME wn's krt' MNW 'wgwn gl'n p'tpl's YBLWN'yt. KN YMRRWnt slwš 'l'y W 'twr' yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n' Y OLE GBRA AYT' MNW PWN zywndk'n d'twbl Y dlwcn' bwt AP-š d'twblyh LA l'st' krt'.

13. AHRN wynym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 MNW-š zncyl Y lwdyn BYN 'wzw'n bst YKOYMWNyt W BYN dwšhw 'kwht YKOYMWNyt'. pwrSYM L wyl'c' AYK ZNE GBRA ME wn's krt' YKOYMWNyt. slwš 'l'y W 'twr' yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE GBRA MNW PWN zywndk'n PWN hncmn' W gyw'k AYK YTYBWNst shwn' mdy'ncykyh' LA gwpt' W hw'stk Y LA NPŠE OL NPŠE krt AP-š mynyt AYK d'n'k YHWWNm.

14. AHRN wynym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 MNW PWN YDE' W LGLE bst YKOYMWNyt AP-š TWRA wlc'g PWN slwb' znyt' W PWN swmb' wšplyt. pwrSYM L wyl'c' AYK ZNE GBRA ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWnt slwš 'l'y W 'twr' yzdt' AYK lwb'n' Y OLE GBRA AYT' MNW PWN zywndk'n TWRA PWN k'l d'št AP-š PWN hng'm Y NPŠE MYA LA d't' AP-š PWN 'dw'n PWME pr'c' bst'.

<sup>49</sup> Perhaps OZLWNm, 'šawam'? (N.)

<sup>50</sup> YMRRWNyt (N.)

<sup>51</sup> LPNME (N.)

<sup>52</sup> hwyt'ycm

<sup>53</sup> YMRRWNm (N.)

<sup>54</sup> drwyst (N.)

<sup>55</sup> Added by RA

<sup>56</sup> KLYTWNyh (N.)

<sup>57</sup> YMRRWNyt (N.)

<sup>58</sup> YDOYTNst' (N.)

<sup>59</sup> MN

<sup>60</sup> Asha has changed this to nkwycm and reads *nigōzum*.

<sup>61</sup> mgwgg-GBRA

<sup>62</sup> YATWntn' (N.)

<sup>63</sup> YMRRWNm (N.)

<sup>64</sup> YDOYTNm

<sup>65</sup> Henceforth instead of 'hl'y (N.)

<sup>66</sup> krpk'

15. AHRN wynym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 MNW OD CWLE' BYN dšt'n' nšt' YKOYMWNYt. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE GBRA ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n' Y OLE' GBRA AYT' MNW PWN zywndk'n LWTE NYŠE Y dšt'n' HLMWNT.

16. AHRN wynym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 MNW LHMA PWN YDE YHSWNYt' OL KLBA hm'y LMYTWyt'<sup>67</sup> KLBA LHMA LA OŠTENyt BRA ns'd Y ZK GBRA hm'y OŠTENyt. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE GBRA ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n' Y OLE' GBRA MNW PWN zywndk'n šp'n bwt AP-š lwcyk' Y KLBA'n LA d't'.

17. AHRN wynym lwb'n Y NYŠE-1 MNW ns'd Y NPŠE PWN k'lt' PSKWNYt hm'y OŠTENyt. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE zn' ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n' Y OLE' NYŠE MNW PWN zywndk'n AB' W AM Y NPŠE OL šwd hm'y d't' AP-š gwpt AYK L zn'' Y ZNE GBRA LA YHWWNm W dwšyck OL mwltk'n YATWNT'.

18. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y NYŠE-1 MNW k'lt-1 BYN dyl YHSNNyt W blynyt. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE NYŠE ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n' Y ZK NYŠE AYT' MNW PWN zywndk'n bl'tl Y NPŠE PWN zn'y<sup>68</sup> BOYHWNst AP-š LA bwt.

19. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y NYŠE-1 MNW šlmg's Y NPŠE PWN 'ngšt' blycyt' W hwlyt. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE NYŠE ME wn's krt'. OLE<sup>69</sup> YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK lwb'n' Y OLE' NYŠE MNW PWN zywndk'n LHMA k'lwny'k'n<sup>70</sup> LA d't' AP-š mzd BOYHWNst.

20. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y NYŠE-1 MNW PWN LGLE-1 OL dwšhw 'kwht YKOYMWNT'. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE NYŠE ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n' Y OLE' NYŠE AYT' MNW PWN zywndk'n bl'tl Y NPŠE yh<sup>71</sup> BOYHWNst AP-š LA bwt W byk'nk GBRA zn' bwt'.

21. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y NYŠE-1 MNW myh PWN 'wzw'n' bst W OL dwšhw 'kwht YKOYMWNT'. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE NYŠE ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n' Y ZK NYŠE AYT' MNW PWN zywndk'n stmbk bwt AP-š b'st'n šwd dwst OL h'nk YDLWNYt' ZK NYŠE hšmyn OL pyš OZLWNT' šwd 'c'lynyt AP-š MNDOM OL šwd dwst LA d't' W šwd MN šlm Y OLE nngyt mlg 'p'dyt BOYHWNst.

22. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y NYŠE-1 MNW OL dwšhw 'kwht YKOYMWNYt'. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE NYŠE ME wn'h krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n' Y ZK NYŠE AYT' MNW PWN zywndk'n KRA dlgwš W mzdwbwl<sup>72</sup> W k'ld'k' MNW OLE' šwd W srd'l hwlšn' W d'lšn' plmwt d't' OLE 'c-š LWTE<sup>73</sup> OHDWNT.

23. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y NYŠE-1 MNW nkns'l<sup>74</sup> OL dwšhw 'kwht YKOYMWNYt. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE NYŠE ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n' Y OLE' NYŠE MNW PWN zywndk'n NYŠE Y mgwggGBRA-1<sup>75</sup> bwt AP-š NPŠEtn' OL dyn' d'<sup>76</sup> d't.

24. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y NYŠE-1 MNW BYN dwšhw PWN zncyl Y lwdyn' bst' YKOYMWNYt. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE NYŠE ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n' Y OLE' AYT' MNW PWN zywndk'n wyhdyn' bwt 'kwstyk pr'c db'lyst'.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>67</sup> LMYTWNYt' (N.)

<sup>68</sup> znyh (N.)

<sup>69</sup> KN

<sup>70</sup> k'lwny'k'n

<sup>71</sup> [PWN] znyh (N.)

<sup>72</sup> mzdwbwl

<sup>73</sup> LAWHL

<sup>74</sup> nkwns'l

<sup>75</sup> mgwg-GBRA-1 (N.)

<sup>76</sup> maybe LA? (N.)

<sup>77</sup> dwb'lyst'

25. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y zn'y-1<sup>78</sup> MNW nkns'l<sup>79</sup> OL dwšhw 'kwht YKOYMWNYt. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE NYŠE ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE' NYŠE MNW PWN zywndk'n dšt'n PWN MYA HLLWnt W OD g's Y NPŠE PWN gyw'k LA YTYBWNst.

26. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y NYŠE-1 MNW YDE W LGLE bst YKOYMWNT' AP-š TWRA Y wlc'k PWN slwb' znyt' PWN swmb' wsplyt'. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE NYŠE ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE' NYŠE MNW PWN zywndk'n PWN ywdt MN swy<sup>80</sup> NPŠE GBRA pr'c' NPŠE hšt'.

27. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 MN<sup>81</sup> 'twrstl PWN kpypc ptmyt W hwlyt. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE GBRA ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE' GBRA MNW PWN zywndk'n' TWRA W gwspnd Y gwsn' KBD YKTLWnt.

28. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 MNW nkwn OL dwšhw' 'kwht YKOYMWNYt. AP-š myh Y lwdyn BYN kmlbd<sup>82</sup> kwst YKOYMWNYt W hwn W lym MN PWME hm'y YATWNYt. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE GBRA ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE' GBRA MNW<sup>83</sup> PWN ...<sup>84</sup> zwlgwk'syh d't' W ZK MRYA gwpt MNW LA dyt W LA 'šnwt.

29. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 MNW nkwn bst 'kwht YKOYMWNYt AP-š PWN m'l Y syd' hm'y znnd AP-š hm'y gcyt W hm'y blmyt<sup>85</sup> W YMRRWyt<sup>86</sup> AYK-m ŠBKWNYt OL ZK štr' Y zywndk'n' OD ZK ZY-m'n MN dlwš'n' YYNCLWnt<sup>87</sup> KRA 'ywk 4 LWTE<sup>88</sup> YHBWNm. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE GBRA ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE' GBRA MNW PWN zywndk'n MNDOM MN AYŠ'n YHNCLWnt' AP-š hw'stk Y AYŠ'n PWN NPŠE pr'c OHDWnt W PWN gytydy wyd'p'n bwt.

30. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y NYŠE-1 MNW PWN d'g<sup>(?)</sup> Y 'sn'yn pyst'n Y NPŠE dc'nd<sup>89</sup> AP-š PWN d'g<sup>(?)</sup> W 'twr'n blycynd. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE NYŠE ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE' NYŠE MNW PWN zywndk'n' LWTE swd W srd'l dwš'ck bwt AP-š MN OLE Y šwy<sup>90</sup> dwcyh krt AP-š LWTE GBRA Y ks'n' BRA hwlt'.

31. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y NYŠE-1 MNW ns'd W pyst'n Y NPŠE PWN k'lt PSKWNYt hwlyt AP-š kwtk-1 'cpl hm'y BKYWN W KRA 'ls-1 MN cšm Y ZK kwtk BRA YATWNYt BRA wym-1 YHWWNYt' PWN sl W gldn<sup>91</sup> Y ZK zn' ptkwpyt. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE NYŠE ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE NYŠE MNW PWN zywndk'n šyl MN kwtk Y NPŠE LWTE<sup>92</sup> glpt' W OL kwtk Y AYŠ'n YHBWNt.

32. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y NYŠE-1 MNW PWN mwy<sup>93</sup> OL dwšhw' 'kwht YKOYMWNT.<sup>94</sup> pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE NYŠE ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE zn' MNW PWN zywndk'n LWTE wn'sk'l'n lpt.

<sup>78</sup> zn'-1

<sup>79</sup> nkwns'l (N.)

<sup>80</sup> šwd (N.)

<sup>81</sup> MNW

<sup>82</sup> kmlbd

<sup>83</sup> MNW

<sup>84</sup> add zywndk'n

<sup>85</sup> bl'myt (N.)

<sup>86</sup> YMRRWNYt (N.)

<sup>87</sup> YHNCLWnt'

<sup>88</sup> LHWAL

<sup>89</sup> dcynt

<sup>90</sup> šwd (N.)

<sup>91</sup> gltn' (N.)

<sup>92</sup> LAWHL

<sup>93</sup> mwd (N.)

<sup>94</sup> There is a typo in Asha's book (YKOYMWNT): either the "t" in the end of the word is lacking, or one bracket was inserted by mistake.

33. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 MNW m'l W 'p'ryk plstl<sup>95</sup> tn' hm'y gwwdynd.<sup>96</sup> pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE GBRA ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE MNW PWN zywndk'n' twb'nyk bwt AP-š LA BNPŠE hwlt' W LA DHBWNT<sup>97</sup> AP-š b"st'n mltwm Y dlwš PWN glcšn' W mwst 'c-š bwt HNEnd.

34. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 MNW z'hl Y m'l PWN kpyc' ptmyt' W hwlyt'. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE GBRA ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE GBRA MNW PWN zywndk'n' kpyc' W tl'cwkw' Y ks d'št'.

35. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 MNW PWN lsn' OL dwšhw 'kwht YKOYMWNT.<sup>98</sup> pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE GBRA ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE GBRA MNW PWN zywndk'n' swknd Y dlwg<sup>99</sup> hwlt'.

36. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y zn'y<sup>100</sup> MNW 'ngšt' PWN kpyc' ptmyt' W hwlt'.<sup>101</sup> pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE NYŠE ME wn's krt'. [KN] YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE NYŠE MNW PWN zywndk'n' 'thš PWN h'nk' LA nywk d'št.

37. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 [MNW] myh Y 'sn'yn BYN 'wzw'n bst' YKOYMWNT. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE GBRA ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE GBRA MNW PWN zywndk'n' 'twl<sup>102</sup> W dwšš'ck' W 'n'k'm bwt W AMT-š MNDOM-1 Y nywk PWN AYŠ-1 dyt' ADYN-š gl'n W dwšw'l YHWWNT AP-š k'mst AYK PWN AYŠ-c LA YHWWNT.

38. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 MNW PWN p'dy-1 OL dwšhw 'kwht YKOYMWNT. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE GBRA ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE GBRA MNW PWN zywndk'n' AB' W AM Y NPŠE byšyt'.

39. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 MNW ns'd PWN 'thš blycyt' W hwlyt'. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE GBRA ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE GBRA MNW PWN zywndk'n' NYŠE Y dšt'n' nzdyk Y 'thš d'št.

40. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 MNW k'lt-1 Y tyc' BYN zyl YHSNNyt W hm'y blynyt'. pwrwym L wyl'c' AYK ZNE GBRA ME wn's krt'. KN YMRRWNd slwš 'l'y W 'twr yzdt' AYK ZNE lwb'n Y OLE GBRA MNW PWN zywndk'n' AHTE Y NPŠE NYŠE bwt AP-š MN NYŠEyh BRA ŠBKWNT W wtbt OL štr' Y mwlk'n OZLWNT.

41. AHRN wyncym lwb'n Y GBRA-1 W NYŠE-1. ZK GBRA OL whšt' W ZK NYŠE OL dwšhw YDLWNT W ZK NYŠE YDE PWN d'mn' Y GBRA YHSNNyt W YMRRWNT AYK ME k'm'y krt'n' AMT PWN štr' Y zywndk'n' LK šwd W srd'l Y L bwt HNWYdy W 'ywk LHMA W 'ywk MYA W 'ywk wstlg bwt HNEm ME l'd YDE-1y<sup>103</sup> W p'dy-1 BRA LA blyt' HNEm AP-t ME l'd p'tpl's Y gl'n' MDM LA krt Em<sup>104</sup> AYK L-c cygwn LK kwstyk d'št HNEYdy<sup>105</sup> AP-m KON 9 hc'l s'lk BYN t'l W twm dwšhw 'p'yt bwt. BRA LPME<sup>106</sup> OD OL pyš Y lšn' Y l'st' OZLWNm AP-m'n wcył W d'twb'lyh OBYDWNyt W OL pyš Y lšn' Y l'st' OZLWNT HNEnd W krp'k Y OLE W wn's Y OLE NYŠE PWN tl'cwkw TKLWNT' l'st' OLE GBRA W l'st' OLE NYŠE W NYŠE OL whšt krt' HNEnd.

42. W MN pyš OZLWNT 'twr' yzdt' W MN AHL OZLWNm L wyl'c'. W wynym lwb'n Y krp'kl'n W wynym lwb'n Y 'lt'y zltwhšt OL whšt Y b'myk MNW hwm'n'k MN 4 BBA Y zlyn

<sup>95</sup> hlplstl (N.)

<sup>96</sup> ywdynd

<sup>97</sup> YHBWNT (N.)

<sup>98</sup> YKOYMWNT (N.)

<sup>99</sup> dlwb'

<sup>100</sup> zn-1

<sup>101</sup> hwlyt'

<sup>102</sup> 'cwl, as suggested by Asha

<sup>103</sup> YDE-1

<sup>104</sup> HNEm

<sup>105</sup> HNEm

<sup>106</sup> LPNME (N.)

W wynym lwb'n Y 'wšnnl<sup>107</sup> Y pwl hlt W wynym lwb'n Y ymšyt W wynym 'twr' yzdt' krpkgł MNW BBA Y whšt' NTLWNyt KLBA Y zlyn W L wyl'c NTLWNd 7 'mhrspnd MNW PWN p'nkyh MDM gwm'lt YKOYMWNYt KBD yčšn' Y L wyl'c' OL mgwdGBRA'n<sup>108</sup> krt' KBD krpk' Y L wyl'c' PWN štr' Y zywndk'n krt' hymwdyn<sup>109</sup> OL [L] YHMTWNYt.

43. bwlcm L wyl'c' W YDE OL yzd'n YHSNNm W 'whrmzd Y bg pyš YKOYMWNNm AYK-m AL štr'y<sup>110</sup> OL štr' Y zywndk'n OD PWN ZNE whšt' TNLWNm.<sup>111</sup> AHL 'twr' yzdt' Y krpkgł OL L wyl'c' lwb'n YMRRWNYt AYK 'lt'y wyl'c' kwnšn' Y NPŠE' nk's YHSNN' AYK-t ZNE whšt' AP-š 'c'l LA YHWWN't.

'pz't 'whrmzd LWTE 'mhrspnd'n'.  
plcpt PWN dlwt W š'tyh.

L dyn'bnndk'<sup>112</sup> hwšng s'whš npšt MN dptl Y gwtšh<sup>113</sup> lwsthm.

### 3. Transcription of the Mādayān ī Wirāzagān

*pad nām ud ayārīh ī yazadān  
jadag ī nek*

1. ēn mādayān wīrāzagān xwānēnd ud pad ān zamān nibišt ka wištāsp-šah pad šahryārīh būd ud jāmāsp ī bidaxš ērān-kundāg būd ud dēn [ī] mazdēs-nān andar ō gehān āmad.

2. pas wištāsp šah abāg ērān mazdēs-nān pad...<sup>114</sup>

3. ... war ud 'wēzag<sup>115</sup> ō wīrāz rasīd. pas āyēnd 7 xwaha ī ardā wīrāz ud dast pad kaš kunēnd, ō pēš ī šah wištāsp ēst[ēnd], gōwēnd kū: ma frēst<sup>116</sup> wīrāz ō šahr ī murdagān čē

<sup>107</sup> 'wšnl

<sup>108</sup> mgwgGBRA'n

<sup>109</sup> h'mwdyn

<sup>110</sup> ŠDRWN

<sup>111</sup> KTLWNm or NTLWNm

<sup>112</sup> dynbnndk

<sup>113</sup> gwptšh

<sup>114</sup> The sentence is incomplete.

<sup>115</sup> This word is now generally read as "nēzag", meaning "spear", as suggested by Gignoux (1983). However, I tend to disagree with this reading, as there is no substantial evidence for assuming the existence of such an ordeal by spears. None of the evidence brought in the above-mentioned paper is any good for convincing us to accept the author's conclusion. It seems much more likely that the authors of the AWN had a different word in mind. By assuming the reading "nēzag", we would imply that there was a special custom or ritual of ordeal in nature, perhaps similar to the one with molten metals, and that Wīrāz underwent such a trial. But, as far as I know, there is no description whatsoever of such a trial in Zoroastrian literature, nor do we know anyone among Zoroastrian religious figures who was tried in that way. Russell (1987: 384–6) discusses at some length the word in question, but apparently fails to reach any conclusion. H.W. Bailey, with whom Russell had personal communication (1987: 386), seems to be comfortable with the reading *vayičak* (= *vēč/zag*), which he thinks comes from the root *vēč*- "to throw". Perikhanian (1968: 9–10), on the other hand, while convinced that the Arm. *vičak* goes back to Ir. *vēčak*, thinks that the latter derives from the root *vaik*- "to separate". Coming back to Gignoux's evidence, relying on the traditions of the Thracian tribes in the fifth century BC and some local Chinese legends do not seem much justified in our case. Meanwhile, there is a fair possibility that this word, together with the verb "abganēd" (Haug et al. 1872: 8), is related to the Old Arm. expression "vicak arkanel", that is "to cast or draw lots". This interpretation was first suggested by H. Acharian in the late 1890s (Ačařean 1979: 340) and independently also by Müller (1896: 175). Thus, it seems more plausible to assume that the author of this text did not have any specific ordeal in mind, but rather the general custom of casting lots. Moreover, it does not seem reasonable to assume that all forms and methods of "random selection" were so extremely violent and likely to end up being fatal, as the chances of survival after molten metal being poured on the chest are quite low. Those undergone by Ādurbad and Zoroaster were of course of legendary character.

<sup>116</sup> Ms. štr'.





12. ... az pas kirbag<sup>125</sup> [ud] wināh... az peš srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad, az pas šawam [man] ardā wirāz<sup>126</sup> ud wēnēm ruwān ī mard-ē kē pad uzwān az dār āguxt ēstād. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn mard čē wināh kard kū ōwōn garān pādīfrāh barēd. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy mard ast kē pad zindagān dādwar ī drōzan būd u-š dādwarīh nē rāst kard.

13. anī wēnēm ruwān ī mard-ē kē-š zanjīr ī rōyēn andar uzwān bast ēstēd ud andar dušox āguxt ēstēd. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn mard čē wināh kard ēstēd. [ōh gōwēnd] srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy mard kē pad zindagān pad hanjāman ud gyāg kū nišast, saxwan mayānjīgihā nē guft ud xwāstag ī nē xwēš ō xwēš kard u-š mēnīd kū dānāg bawam.

14. anī wēnēm ruwān ī mard-ē kē pad dast ud pāy bast ēstēd u-š gāw [ī] warzāg pad srū zanēd ud pad sumb wisparēd. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn mard čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: [ēn] ruwān ī ōy mard ast kē pad zindagān gāw pad kār dāšt u-š pad hangām ī xwēš āb nē dād u-š pad ēwān dahān frāz bast.

15. anī wēnēm ruwān ī mard-ē kē tā grīw andar daštān nišast ēstēd. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn mard čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy mard ast kē pad zindagān abāg zan ī daštān xuft.

16. anī wēnēm ruwān ī mard-ē kē nān pad dast dārēd, ō sag hamē abganēd. sag nān nē xwarēd bē nasā ī ān mard hamē xwarēd. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn mard čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy mard kē pad zindagān šabān būd u-š rōzīg ī sagān nē dād.

17. anī wēnēm ruwān ī zan-ē kē nasā ī xwēš pad kārđ brīnēd hamē xwarēd. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn zan čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy zan kē pad zindagān pid ud mād ī xwēš ō šōy hamē dād u-š guft kū: man zan ī ēn mard nē bawam, ud dōšīzag ō murdagān āmad.

18. anī wēn-iz-ēm<sup>127</sup> ruwān ī zan-ē kē kārđ-ēw andar dil dārēd ud brīnēd. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn zan čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ān zan ast kē pad zindagān brādar ī xwēš pad zan[ih] xwāst u-š nē būd.

19. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī zan-ē kē šarmgāh ī xwēš pad angīšt brēzēd ud xwarēd. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn zan čē wināh kard. ōh<sup>128</sup> gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: [ēn] ruwān ī ōy zan kē pad zindagān nān kārāwānīgān nē dād, u-š mīzd xwāst.

20. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī zan-ē kē pad pāy-ēw ō dušox āguxt ēstād. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn zan čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy zan ast kē pad zindagān brādar ī xwēš [pad zan]ih<sup>129</sup> xwāst, u-š nē būd. ud bēgānag mard zan būd.

21. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī zan-ē kē mēx pad uzwān bast ud ō dušox āguxt ēstād. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn zan čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ān zan ast kē pad zindagān stambag būd u-š bāstān šōy dust ō xānag nīd, ān zan xešmēn ō peš šud [ud] šōy āzārēnīd u-š tis ō šōy dust nē dād ud šōy az šarm ī ōy nangīd [kū] marg abāyēd xwāst.

<sup>125</sup> Ms. kwp', maybe we should read kōf? The whole would be: az pas kōf [ī] wināh.

<sup>126</sup> cf. AWN LIII, 10–11: ...ud az peš šud srōšahlaw ud ādur yazad ud az pas abēbīmīhā man ardā Wīrāz frāz ō ān ī tomīg dušox andarōntar šud hēm.

<sup>127</sup> It is rare for the emphatic particle *-iz-* to be inserted between the verb-stem and the personal ending. However, cf. Bd. XIV (1): *guft-iš Ohrmazd ka-š zan brēhēnīd kū dād-iz-am* (YHBWNt'cm) *hē tō kē-t jehān sardag petyārag*. There can be no doubt about the correctness of this form (dād-iz-am) in Bundahišn, because all available manuscripts present us with this same reading (Pakzad 2005: 194). The insertion of the emphatic particle before the enclitic pronoun is also observed in other instances, such as in after *ēg* "after", e.g. *ēg-iz-iš* in NPI 33 (Gignoux 1972: 15)

<sup>128</sup> Ms. OLE.

<sup>129</sup> Ms. yh.

22. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī zan-ē kē ō dušox āguxt ēstēd. pursēm man wirāz kū: ēn zan čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ān zan ast kē pad zindagān harw driyōš ud midzwar<sup>130</sup> ud kārdağ kē ōy šōy ud sālār xwarišn ud dārišn framud dād ōy az-iš abāz<sup>131</sup> grift.

23. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī zan-ē kē nigūnsār ō dušox āguxt ēstēd. pursēm man wirāz kū: ēn zan čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy zan kē pad zindagān zan ī mowmard-ē<sup>132</sup> būd u-š xwēštan ō dēn [nē] dād (or ō sōg dād).<sup>133</sup>

24. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī zan-ē kē andar dušox pad zanjīr ī rōyēn bast ēstēd. pursēm man wirāz kū: ēn zan čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy ast kē pad zindagān wēhdēn būd [ud] a-kustīg frāz dwārist.<sup>134</sup>

25. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī zan-ē<sup>135</sup> kē nigūnsār ō dušox āguxt ēstēd. pursēm man wirāz kū: ēn zan čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy zan kē pad zindagān daštān pad āb šust ud tā gāh ī xwēš pad gyāg nē nišast.

26. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī zan-ē kē dast ud pāy bast ēstād u-š gāw ī warzāg pad srū be zanēd, pad sumb wisparēd. pursēm man wirāz kū: ēn zan čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy zan kē pad zindagān pad jūd az šōy [ī] xwēš mard frāz xwēš hišt.

27. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī mard-ē kē ādurestar pad kabīz paymāyēd ud xwarēd. pursēm man wirāz kū: ēn mard čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy mard kē pad zindagān gāw ud gōspand ī gušn was ōzad.

28. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī mard-ē kē nigūn ō dušox āguxt ēstēd u-š mēx ī rōyēn andar kamarband kōst ēstēd ud xūn ud rēm az dahān hamē āyēd. pursēm man wirāz kū: ēn mard čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy mard kē pad [zindagān] zūrgugāyih dād ud ān saxwan guft kū nē did ud nē ašnūd.

29. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī mard-ē kē nigūn bast āguxt ēstēd u-š pad mār ī syā hamē zanēnd u-š hamē gazed. hamē brāmēd ud gōwēd kū: m hilēd ō ān šahr ī zindagān tā ān, ī-mān az driyōšān appurd, harw ēk 4 abāz<sup>136</sup> daham. pursēm man wirāz kū: ēn mard čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy mard kē pad zindagān tis az kasān appurd u-š xwāstag ī kasān pad xwēš frāz grift ud pad gētīy wiyābān būd.

30. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī zan-ē kē pad d'[s]<sup>137</sup> ī āhanēn pestān ī xwēš dazēd u-š pad dyg<sup>138</sup> ud ādurān brēzēnd. pursēm man wirāz kū: ēn zan čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy zan kē pad zindagān abāg šōy ud sālār dušsāzag būd u-š az ōy ī šōy duzīh kard u-š abāg mard ī kasān be xward.

31. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī zan-ē kē nasā ud pestān ī xwēš pad kārđ brīnēd xwarēd. u-š kōdag-ēw azabar hamē griyēd ud harw ars-ē [ī] az čašm ī ān kōdag bē āyēd be wēm-ē bawēd pad sar ud grīw ī ān zan pahikōbēd. pursēm man wirāz kū: ēn zan čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy zan kē pad zindagān šīr az kōdag ī xwēš abāz<sup>139</sup> grift ud ō kōdag ī kasān dād.

<sup>130</sup> Ms. mzdwbwl.

<sup>131</sup> Ms. LWTE.

<sup>132</sup> Ms. mgwwg-GBRA.

<sup>133</sup> See the translation.

<sup>134</sup> Ms. db'lyst'.

<sup>135</sup> Ms. zn'Y-1

<sup>136</sup> Ms. LWTE.

<sup>137</sup> The text has  $\text{𐭠𐭣}$ , probably a corrupt form of \*šānag, "comb"? (cf. AWN LXII: u-m did ruwān ī zan-ēw kē pad šānag ī āhanēn war ud pestān ī xwēš hamē brīd) or \*dās, 'sickle' (cf. AWN, Ch. LXVII). It is not impossible to read the word as dāy "branding mark", which may have been used in the sense of the instrument for branding.

<sup>138</sup> Maybe \*dāg "a cauldron"? Likewise, this is the reading accepted by Asha 2017: 29.

<sup>139</sup> Ms. LWTE.

32. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī zan-ē kē pad mōy ō dušox āguxt ēstād. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn zan čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy zan kē pad zindagān abāg wināhkārān raft.

33. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī mard-ē kē mār ud abārīg \*xrafstar<sup>140</sup> tan hamē jōyēnd.<sup>141</sup> pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn mard čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy kē pad zindagān tuwānīg būd u-š nē xwad xward ud nē dād u-š bāstān mardōm ī driyōš pad garzišn ud must az-iš būd hēnd.

34. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī mard-ē kē zahr ī mār pad kabīz paymāyēd ud xwarēd. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn mard čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy mard kē pad zindagān kabīz ud tarāzūg ī keh dāšt.

35. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī mard-ē kē pad rasan ō dušox āguxt ēstād. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn mard čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy mard kē pad zindagān sōgand ī drō<sup>142</sup> xward.

36. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī zan-ē<sup>143</sup> kē angišt pad kabīz paymāyēd ud xwarēd.<sup>144</sup> pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn zan čē wināh kard. [ōh] gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy zan kē pad zindagān ātaxš pad xānag nē nēk dāšt.

37. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī mard-ē [kē] mēx ī āhanēn andar uzwān bast ēstēd. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn mard čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy mard kē pad zindagān \*āzwar<sup>145</sup> ud dušsāzag ud anāg-kām būd ud ka-š tis-ēw ī nēk pad kas-ē did ēg-iš garān ud dušwār būd u-š kāmīst kū-š pad kas-iz ma bawād.

38. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī mard-ē kē pad pāy-ēw ō dušox āguxt ēstēd. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn mard čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy mard kē pad zindagān pid ud mād ī xwēš bēšīd.

39. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī mard-ē kē nasā pad ātaxš brēzēd ud xwarēd. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn mard čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy mard kē pad zindagān zan ī daštān nazdik ī ātaxš dāšt.

40. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī mard-ē kē kārd-ēw ī tēz andar dil dārēd ud hamē brēnēd. pursēm man wīrāz kū: ēn mard čē wināh kard. ōh gōwēnd srōš ahlā ud ādur yazad kū: ēn ruwān ī ōy mard kē pad zindagān xwah ī xwēš zan būd u-š az zanih be hišt ud wadbaxt ō šahr ī murdagān šud.

41. anī wēn-iz-ēm ruwān ī mard-ēw ud zan-ēw. ān mard ō wahišt ud ān zan ō dušox nayēnd ud ān zan dast pad dāman ī mard dārēd ud gōwēd kū: čē kāmē kardan, ka pad šahr ī zindagān tō šōy ud sālār ī man būd hē ud ēk nān ud ēk āb ud ēk wistarag būd hēm, čē rāy dast-ēw<sup>146</sup> ud pāy-ē bē nē brīd ham u-t čē rāy pādīfrāh ī garān abar nē kard ham<sup>147</sup> kū man-iz čiyōn tō kustīg dāšt hē, u-m nūn 9 hazār sālag andar tār ud tom dušox abāyēd būdan. bē awar tā ō pēš ī rašn ī rāst šawēm u-mān wizīr ud dādwarīh kunēd. ud ō pēš ī rašn ī rāst šud hēnd ud kirbag ī ōy [mard] ud wināh ī ōy zan pad tarāzūg sanjīd. rāst ōy [ī] mard ud rāst ōy [ī] zan. ud zan ō wahišt kard hēnd.

42. ud az pēš šawēd ādur yazad ud az pas šawam man wīrāz ud wēnēm ruwān ī kirbakkarān ud wēnēm ruwān ī ardā zarduxšt ō wahišt ī bāmīg kē homānāg az 4 dar ī zarrēn. ud wēnēm ruwān ī ošnar<sup>148</sup> ī purr-xrad ud wēnēm ruwān ī jamšēd ud wēnēm

<sup>140</sup> Ms. plstl.

<sup>141</sup> Ms. ywwdynd.

<sup>142</sup> Ms. dlwy.

<sup>143</sup> Ms. zn'y.

<sup>144</sup> Ms. hwlt'.

<sup>145</sup> Ms. 'twl.

<sup>146</sup> Ms. YDE-1y.

<sup>147</sup> Ms. E-m.

<sup>148</sup> Ms. 'wšnnl.

ādur<sup>149</sup> yazad ī kirbakkar kē dar ī wahišt pāyēd [abāgʔ] sag ī zarrēn[-gōš].<sup>150</sup> ud man wīrāz pāyēnd 7 amahrspand kē pad pānāgīh abar gumārd ēstē[n]d. was yazišn ī man wīrāz ō mowmardān<sup>151</sup> kard, was kirbag ī man wīrāz pad šahr ī zindagān kard, hammōyēn ō [man] rasēd.

43. burzam man wīrāz ud dast ō yazadān dāram ud ohmazd ī bay pēš ēstam kū:m ma frēst<sup>152</sup> ō šahr ī zindagān tā pad ēn wahišt mānam.<sup>153</sup> pas ādur yazad ī kirbakkar ō man wīrāz ruwān gōwēd kū: ardā wīrāz, kunišn ī xwēš nigāh dār kū-t ēn wahišt u-š āppār nē bawād.

abzād ohrmazd abāg amahrspandān.

frazaft pad drōd ud šādīh.

man dēn-bandag<sup>154</sup> hōšang syāwaxš nibišt az daftar ī gōbad-šāh<sup>155</sup> rōstam.

#### 4. Translation of the Mādayān ī Wīrāzagān

*In the name and by the aid of the Yazads  
[Let there be] a good omen.*

1. This book is called Wīrāzagān, and it was written in the time when Wištāsp-šāh was reigning, and when Jāmāsp the viceroy<sup>156</sup> was the sage-in-chief (or soothsayer-in-chief) of Ēran,<sup>157</sup> and when the Faith of Mazda-worshippers came to [this] world.

2. ... then Wištāsp-šāh, together with the noble Mazda-worshipping men ...<sup>158</sup>

<sup>149</sup> Asha reads *Mihr*.

<sup>150</sup> or ...ud wēnēm ādur yazad ī kirbakkar. kē dar ī wahišt pāyēd sag ī zarrēn[gōš]...

<sup>151</sup> Ms. mgwwdGBRA'n.

<sup>152</sup> Ms. štr'y.

<sup>153</sup> Ms. TNLWNm, probably for KTLWNm.

<sup>154</sup> Ms. dyn'bnndk'.

<sup>155</sup> Ms. gwtšh.

<sup>156</sup> MP *bidaxš* (bythš) is an Iranian high-ranking title which is widely attested in both Iranian and non-Iranian (Greek, Syriac, Georgian, Armenian) sources during the earlier half of the first millennium. In the Sassanian court of the third century AD the title was held by the highest state official, second to the king (excluding the people of the royal family). This state of affairs continued during the reigns of Ardašir I and Šābuhr I (based on ŠKZ). However, we find that sometime during or shortly before the reign of Narseh, *bidaxš* lost part of its significance, since in the list of dignitaries (in NPi) it was preceded by a new official who was known as *harg(u)bed* (for a discussion and the list see Szemerényi 1975: 358 ff). Sundermann (1989) disagrees with Szemerényi on the point of its decline in significance.

As shown by the etymology of the word, the title was most probably also used in Arsacid times, despite the lack of direct evidence. The first part of the word (bi-) comes from the Parth. ordinal *bitiya-* "second", as first argued by Nyberg (Eranos 44 (1946): 237 apud Henning 1958: 62 (fn. 2) / Szemerényi 1975: 365). Most probably, the second part comes from the word *xšaya* "ruler", as suggested by Hinz (1968: 433), and accepted by Szemerényi (1975: 365) and Sundermann (1989). Thus, the word itself (\**dviṭiya xšaya*) would give the meaning of "second ruler" or "viceroys".

<sup>157</sup> *Ērān-kundag* in the original. This title does not seem to be attested elsewhere, although it has been constructed in imitation of other Sassanian high-ranking courtly titles, e.g. *Ērān-spāhbad* (Christensen 1944: 130), *Ērān-dibīrbad* (ibid.: 134), *Ērān-āmārkār* (ibid.: 265), etc. MP *kundāg* (NP كندا) is usually translated as "magician, soothsayer" (MacKenzie 1971: 52), though here it might have the slightly general meaning of "wise man, sage". According to the *Burhān-i Qāṭi*, the word (كندا) means "sage, philisopher, wise man and astrologer" and also "brave person and pahlavan". *Sihāh-ul-furs* interprets the word as كاهن, which can be interpreted as "priest", but also as "sage" (Hassandoust 2016: 2260).

<sup>158</sup> The sentence begins abruptly and is left incomplete (probably due to faulty ms. tradition). In the AWN, after describing how the Mazdayasnian priests and men, thoughtful about the plight of the Religion, gathered around and deciding to send someone to the other world, chose 7 pious men, the narrative runs as follows (I, 33): *ud pas awēšān 7 mard be nišast hēnd ud az haft 3, ud az sē, ēk-ēw, Wīrāz nām, be wizid ... ud [Wīrāz] dast pad kaš kard ud guft ku agar-tān sahēd ēg-im akāmagōmand mang ma dahēd tā ašmāh mazdēsnañ ud man war [i] \*wēzag*

3. ... the lot was drawn by Wīrāz. Then come the seven sisters of Ardā Wīrāz,<sup>159</sup> put their hands over their chest,<sup>160</sup> and standing in front of King Wištāsp, they say: “Don’t send Wīrāz to the realm of the dead, for we are like a shining house full of light that has one window, and if one takes away the window, the house will fall into darkness”. And then Wištāsp [says]: “I am not sending Wīrāz to the realm of the dead, but he drew lots among the noble Mazda-worshipping men”. And, being thus satisfied, [the sisters] left King Wištāsp.

4. [Then the priests] bring a three-cubit long bedding of silk and spread it on the ground. Wīrāz reposes on it and they bring in the drink of Wīrāz (which he was supposed to drink). They bring a bowl made of gold and the noble Mazda-worshipping men stand forth and consecrate the sacrificial bread (or celebrate a *dron* ceremony),<sup>161</sup> while Wīrāz is saying the prayer of *wāz* (lit. “taking *wāz*”).<sup>162</sup> And he drinks the first bowl, the second bowl and the third bowl.

5. [After] he reposes on the bed the third time, his soul rises and walks by the first step in Good Thought, by the second in Good Speech, and by the third step in Good Deed, until

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*abganēd ud agar wēzag ō man rasēd kāmagoṃmaniḥā šawam ō ān gyāg ī ahlawān ud druwandān.* (And then those seven men sat down and from among those seven, three were chosen, and from those three, one was chosen, Wīrāz by name ... and [Wīrāz] put his hand over his chest and said: “If you would deem it proper, then do not give me *mang* (an intoxicating substance) against my will, until me and you will cast lots, and if it will fall to me, I will wilfully go to that place of the righteous and sinful people”).

<sup>159</sup> This episode, where the seven sister(-wives) of Wīrāz come to the court and resent the decision, is common to all the versions of the story. In both AWN (II, 1–2) and Pazand they are represented as both sisters and wives. MW and Paždu’s versions, however, deviate from this line, and call them only the “sisters” of Wīrāz. In the case of MW, it would be incorrect to assume that this is due to (anti-next-of-kin-marriage) revision, for in some of the following passages the author speaks very fervently in favour of the next-of-kin marriage. In the case of Paždu’s version, this deviation seems to be the result of the later Zoroastrian practice, which rejected the marriage between close relatives, and not, as Gheybi (2001: 7–9) tries to assert, an evidence for a very early (i.e. “pre-*xwēdōdahian*”) origin of that version. Although the case of MW is interesting, it seems possible that the author simply implied that these women were also Wīrāz’s wives.

<sup>160</sup> *dast pad kaš kardan* is a common gesture of respect in pre-Islamic Iranian tradition. The person who is of lower rank stands beside his/her master with his/her hands crossed on the chest or under the armpits. We have a number of examples of this expression in both the Middle Persian texts (cf. AWN II, 21, and Husraw ī Kawādān ud rēdag-ēw (1); on the word used in HKR, see Bailey 1933: 73), as well as in the Šāhnāma. For the word *kaš* there is only one translation (“armpit”) given by D.N. MacKenzie (1971: 50). However, in New Persian *kaš* can also mean “chest”, as we see on a number of occasions in the Šāhnāma (Wolff 1935: 652; Nušin 2013: 361). Burhān-i Qāṭi’ (Mo’in 1982: 1646) gives both meanings, “chest” and “armpit”, while also explaining the gesture in question as “putting the hands in the armpit as a sign of respect”. However, we cannot blindly trust the author of this dictionary, as I do not think there is any evidence that this gesture survived into the later Islamic period.

Returning to the MP word, it seems that *kaš* could have had the meaning “chest” also in Middle Persian. For determining the exact nature of this gesture it would be useful to refer to the art objects surviving from the Sasanian period, such as silver plates, etc. I was able to trace some interesting examples of the depiction of this gesture on some Sasanian silver vessels: a. silver-gilt plate from Qazvin, Iran Bastan Museum, Tehran, acc. no 904 (Harper and Meyers 1981: 235); b. silver-gilt plate from Strelka, State Hermitage Museum, acc. no. S250; c. gilded silver dish, British Museum, no. 1963,1210.3. Unfortunately, at the moment it is difficult to determine the exact nature of this gesture (due to the scarcity of evidence). Of the above-mentioned plates, a. and c. depict the low-ranking person with visible hands (an indication of the hands being on the chest), while in b. no hands are visible (which might indicate that the hands are under the armpits). This case needs further investigation.

<sup>161</sup> *Drōn* is a ceremonial bread which is used while performing various religious ceremonies (Yasna, Visparad, Vendidad, Baj). For more details, see Modi 1922: 296–9. For a comparatively recent study, see Boyce and Kotwal 1971a, 1971b.

<sup>162</sup> *wāz* or *baj* is a short prayer recited by Zoroastrians before and after taking a meal. For an explanation of the term *baj* and its meanings in Zoroastrianism, see Modi 1922: 354–76 (for this particular meaning, see *ibid.*, pp. 373–4). See also see Boyce and Kotwal 1971a, 1971b.



it reaches the place where the glory of the waters and the fires stands<sup>163</sup> and where Rašn the Just,<sup>164</sup> with the golden scale in his hand, stands and measures the pious acts and sins (of the human souls). Tīr the Scribe<sup>165</sup> makes records [in the Book], and that Book is being written since the beginning of Zurwan (i.e. Time) the Sovereign.

6. And the Dog with golden ears<sup>166</sup> that guards the bridge of Činwad<sup>167</sup> and has the height of a mountain, is chained with a brazen chain. Aš [it] sees Wīrāz, [it] rises up and, baring his teeth, barks and moves towards Wīrāz. The Činwad bridge becomes as narrow as the edge of a razor.

7. I,<sup>168</sup> Wīrāz, became scared, and, stretching my hands towards the gods, [I exclaim]: “Of what use are my sacrifices to the yazads and my beneficial acts that I used to perform when I was alive? Of what use is it [for me] that I ... (married?/protected?)<sup>169</sup> those seven

<sup>163</sup> This is an unusual detail about the Čagād ī Dāitīy or “the Summit of Law”, where the souls of the diseased are brought to be judged and then sent to heaven or hell.

<sup>164</sup> *Rašn ī rāst* (Av. Rašnu) is one of the main yazatas in Zoroastrianism whose duty is to look after the observation of justice among the souls of the diseased. Yašt XII is dedicated to Rašn (for a recent edition and commentary, see Goldman 2015).

<sup>165</sup> Tīr is one of the minor yazatas in classical (i.e. written or edited in the ninth–twelfth centuries AD) Zoroastrian literature. His character seems to have been assimilated with that of *Tištār*, the yazata responsible for raining and related to the star Sirius ( $\alpha$  Canis Majoris) (about this yazata and the *yašt* dedicated to it, see Panaino’s complete study in two volumes, 1990 and 1995). Direct hints about the original scribal function of Tīr has been preserved in the “Golden Age” Armenian tradition (Agathangelos). This passage in Wīrāzagān seems to be the only one in Pahlavi literature that directly indicates the scribal function of Tīr (besides an indirect hint found in the *Wizīrkard ī dēnīg*, 61.13).

<sup>166</sup> *sag ī zarrēn gōš*, another mythical figure that rarely appears in classical Zoroastrian literature. In Bd. XXX (3), it is mentioned without referring to its golden ears: ... *sag-ē mēnōyīg pad sar ī ān puhl ud dušox azēr ī ān puhl* (“... there is a dog at the beginning of the bridge and hell is under the bridge”). In Bd. XVII (8) a “white, golden-haired” dog is called the “chief of the dogs” (*fradom az saḡān sag ī arus ī zard moy brēhēnid ōy ast saḡān rad*). From a passage in Videvdād (8.16), which describes which kinds of dogs should be brought near a dead body, we can infer that this is the same dog as the “golden-eared dog”: Av. *spānam. zairitəm. caθru.cašməm. spaētəm. zairi.gaošəm*, i.e. “a four eyed yellow dog (or) yellow-eared white dog” (passage and translation from Andrés-Toledo 2013: 19). In his article, Andrés-Toledo (2013) discusses the mythical character of the afterlife dog(s), and argues in favour of interpreting the Vid. passage 13.9 as referring to two dogs (Av. *spana. paš`u.pāna*). This passage is practically the only one in the Avesta that clearly mentions dog(s) in relation to the afterlife. According to Andrés-Toledo, the noun *spana. paš`u.pāna* (“the two dogs guarding the pass”) in dual number is the genuine form in the text, while the verb *bqzaiti* (third sing.), which comes after the noun, is an adaptation to the previous passage, which is also singular (Andrés-Toledo 2013: 16–7). Thus, in the genuine Iranian eschatological myth, two dogs were present near the Činwad bridge. Despite that, this passage was later wrongly interpreted by Pahl. commentators and interpreted as referring to a single dog, thus making way for a new myth in which a single dog was present near the bridge (Andrés-Toledo 2013: 21). In spite of this convincing argument regarding this single passage, we cannot eliminate the possibility that the afterlife dog(s) was mentioned in other parts of the Avesta that are now lost, especially if we take into account the epithet *zarrēn-gōš* (Av. *zairi.gaoša-*), which we do not find in this passage (Vid. 13.9).

A more detailed description of this dog is found in later Zoroastrian sources (see the *Riv. of Šapur Bharuči* in Unvala 1922a: 256–7) where the story of how this dog was created by Hormozd in order to guard the body of Gayomart and the souls of the diseased is given (for the English translation of this passage, see Dhabhar 1932: 259–60; for the transcription and German translation of the text, see König and Nejati 2009: 315–8). For the Persian version of AWN by Nuširwān Marzbān Kirmāni, which mostly describes this *sag ī zarrēn-gōš*, see Unvala 1922a: 257–9. For the transcription and German translation of this text, see König and Nejati 2009: 318–29.

<sup>167</sup> Av. *cinuato. pəratu-*, the bridge of the otherworld, located on the Summit of Law (*Čagād ī Dāitīy*). The souls of the deceased have to cross the bridge. Those who are considered sinners will fall down straight to Hell, but those who are pious will successfully cross it and reach Heaven (MX I, 110–194; Bd. IX, 9, XXX, 1–3, 22–31). For a more detailed description of Zoroastrian personal eschatology, see Skjærvø 2013a.

<sup>168</sup> The story now takes the form of a personal narrative, related by Wīrāz.

<sup>169</sup> The words are corrupt and illegible, see Transcription.

sisters, and of what use is it [for me] that I fed the cattle and the sheep well, because none is coming to my aid”.

8. Immediately there came towards me the one who is [called] “[one who has] a good *fraward*”,<sup>170</sup> and says: “Don’t be afraid, O Wīrāz the priest, but speak the truth [about] what you have done in life”. I, the righteous Wīrāz, say: “Nothing harmful has ever been done [by me] to my soul, nor any corrupt words or lies has ever been spoken [by me]”. And Ardā yazad<sup>171</sup> stands as a witness for this. The second time I say: “Nothing harmful has ever been done [by me] to my soul”, and the *Glory of the pious ones*<sup>172</sup> stands as a witness to this. The third time I speak, and Rašn the Just stands as a witness to it.

9. The Činwad bridge becomes 4 cubits long.<sup>173</sup> When I pass<sup>174</sup> [over it], Ādur yazad comes towards me and says: “You are not welcome here, O Wīrāz of fresh-wood and fresh-incense!”. And then I say to Ādur yazad: “You are welcome here, O immutable (?) Ādur yazad! While I [was] in the [world] of the living, I offered [you] firewood and incense of seven years and now you call [me] ‘of fresh-wood and fresh-incense!’”. And then Ādur yazad says: “You, Wīrāz, did not know that it is proper to burn dry wood and incense of one year than that of seven years and wet, [as] that [pool of] three-spear-deep water comes from that [kind of] wood and incense. From now on give one-year-old but dry wood and incense, because one-year-old and dry is better than seven years old and wet”. Then he led me, Wīrāz, and showed a large bridge<sup>175</sup> which is full of that water that has come out of that wood and incense (that I have offered to him).

10. And then he leads [me] in front of the Lord Ohrmazd. I, Wīrāz, hear Ohrmazd’s voice and do not see his body. And *nwkycm*<sup>176</sup> (bow<sup>?</sup>), I am paying homage to him. Thus [says] Ohrmazd approaching me: “You are welcome, O priest Wīrāz! Why did you come to this world of the dead, for it is not yet [your] time? Then I answer: “Kay Wištāsp said [to me]: ‘Go and see that land of the dead [because from] all this teaching we accepted from Zoroaster, we do not know which is [true] and which is not’”.

11. Then Lord Ohrmazd [ordered] Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad ...<sup>177</sup>

12 ... from behind the pious and sinful acts<sup>178</sup> ... from the front Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad [move forward], and from behind, [I], Ardā Wīrāz, go [after them], and see the soul of a man who was hanging from his tongue. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this man commit that he is being punished so heavily?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur

<sup>170</sup> In the text: *hwpphlwt*, which can be read either *xōbfraward* or (by a slight emendation) *hufraward*, i.e. “that whose *frawahr/fraward* is good/beneficial”. It is difficult to guess which spiritual being is implied here. In Kirmani’s version the being that is comforting Wīrāz, is Srōš: ...*sorūš-am goft āngah šād o xandān, ma tars ay mard-e dīndār-ē nekū rāh...* (“Soruš said to me, laughing: Don’t be afraid you, O pious, righteous man!”), see König and Nejati 2009: 320.

<sup>171</sup> This *Ardā yazad* seems to represent the generalization of the souls of the deceased pious. Probably this is just another form of the *ardā fraward*, which is mentioned once in the *Bundahišn* (6b.4). Despite that, the idea of the existence of such a divinity is rejected by Boyce (1975: 122, n. 71).

<sup>172</sup> *dahmān xwarrah*: *dahm* here seems to have been used in the sense of a “virtuous or pious person”, and not in relation to the deity of the same name, i.e. Dahma Āfriti (for more on this deity, see Boyce 1993).

<sup>173</sup> MP *ārešn* (OP *arašni-* (Schmitt 2014: 134), NP *ari/aš* or *ri/aš*) is translated as “cubit” by MacKenzie (1971: 11). W. Hinz (1955: 54) gives the length of an *araš* (= MP *ārešn*) as equal to 64 cm (in the Islamic period). For the morphological and phonetic analysis of the OP form (*ārašni-* < DSf 26 a-ra-ša-na-i-ša), see Szemerényi (1991: 1861–4).

<sup>174</sup> Ms. has *𐭌𐭎𐭓𐭕* (𐭌𐭎𐭓𐭕) “*widaru/am?*” (see Asha 2017: 21: *viderum*).

<sup>175</sup> Apparently used in the sense of a “pool”. Interestingly, in Khwarezmian the word *pwrt* (< \**pṛtu-*) means “sea” (Hassandoust 2016: 712, from Humbach 1989).

<sup>176</sup> The meaning is not clear. Perhaps the first part is related to *nigūn?*

<sup>177</sup> It seems there is a gap in this part of the text. What comes next does not seem to be related to this sentence.

<sup>178</sup> It seems that the text is distorted here. Thus, it is difficult to understand this sentence.

yazad that: “This is the soul of that man, who, while alive, was a corrupt judge and did not judge justly”.

13. Then I see the soul of a man who is tied by a chain from his tongue and is hanging in hell. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this man commit?” [Thus say] Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that man, who, while alive, in the gatherings and places where he sat, did not speak justly,<sup>179</sup> and appropriated the property that was not his own and thought that ‘I am wise’”.

14.<sup>180</sup> Then I see the soul of a man who is tied by his hands and feet, and an ox is goring him and trampling him under its hoofs. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this man commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that man, who, while alive, made the ox toil and did not give water at the proper time, and tied his mouth with a bridle”.

15. Then I see the soul of a man that is sitting in menstruation blood that reaches his neck. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this man commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that man, who, while alive, slept with [his] menstruating wife”.

16.<sup>181</sup> Then I see the soul of a man that has bread in his hand and is throwing it to a dog. The dog does not eat the bread but eats the corpse of that man. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this man commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that man, who, while alive, was a shepherd and did not give the daily meal to the dogs”.

17. Then I see the soul of a woman who is cutting her corpse with a knife and eating it. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this woman commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that woman, who, while alive, [when] her father and mother tried to marry her [to another man], she said ‘I won’t become the wife of this man’, and came to the world of the dead as a virgin”.

18. Then I see the soul of a woman that has a knife struck in her heart and [she] is cutting. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this woman commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that woman, who, while alive, her brother asked her to marry him and she refused”.<sup>182</sup>

19. Then I see the soul of a woman, who is burning her pudenda with charcoal and eating [it]. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this woman commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that woman, who, while alive, did not give bread to travellers and asked for pay”.

20. Then I see the soul of a woman that is hanging by one of her feet over hell. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this woman commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that woman, who, while alive, when her brother asked [her to become his wife], and she did not, and became the wife of a stranger”.

<sup>179</sup> In the text we have *shwn mdy'ncykyh' LA gwpt* or *saxwan mayānjīgihā nē guft*, i.e. “he did not speak justly”. Shaked (1995 IV: 1–10) has convincingly shown, that the word *mayānjīg*, alongside its more popular meaning of “mediator”, also means “judge”, which in this case would require us to translate the word *mayānjīgihā* as “justly” (lit. “in the manner of the judges”). The two meanings of “mediator” and “judge” are so close and at times interchangeable that in some verses in classical Persian literature both meanings can be understood. For instance, in the following verse in the ŠN (Reign of Ohrmazd-i Šāpur, ver. 51), the meaning of “judge” seems to fit better for “miyānji”: *har ān kas ki bāšaδ xudāwand-i gāh, miyānji xiraδ kumaδ bar dō rāh* (“any person who becomes a master of a throne, he should make his reason a judge over both ways (of tyranny and weakness)”) (Khaleghi-Motlagh and Omidsalar 2005: 258).

<sup>180</sup> cf. AWN, LXXV.

<sup>181</sup> cf. AWN, XLVIII.

<sup>182</sup> For a complete summary of the sources on the custom of *xwēdōdah* or incestual marriages in Zoroastrianism consult Skjærvø (2013b).



30.<sup>184</sup> Then I see the soul of a woman, who is burning her breasts with an iron comb/sickle(?)<sup>185</sup> and [they] roast her with a cauldron(?) and flames. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this woman commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that woman, who, while alive, was inappropriate (behaved inappropriately) with her husband and master, and stole from [her] husband and ate it with another man”.

31.<sup>186</sup> Then I see the soul of a woman who is cutting her corpse and breasts with a knife and eating it. And her child is crying from above and every tear that comes from the eyes of that child is turning into stone, striking the head and neck of that woman. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this woman commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that woman, who, while alive, kept her milk away from her child and gave it to a stranger’s child”.

32. Then I see the soul of a woman, who was hanging over hell by her hair. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this woman commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that woman, who, while alive, used to be with sinful people”.

33. Then I see the soul of a man whose body is being eaten by snakes and other noxious creatures. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this man commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that, who, while alive, was rich, and he neither ate it himself (profited from it) nor gave it [to others], and poor people were always weeping and complaining of him”.

34.<sup>187</sup> Then I see the soul of a man, who is weighing snake poison with *kabīz* and eating it. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this man commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that man, who, while alive, kept a small (i.e. incorrect) *kabīz*<sup>188</sup> and scales”.

35. Then I see the soul of a man who was hanging by a rope over hell. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this man commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad that: “This is the soul of that man, who, while alive, swore a false oath”.

36. Then I see the soul of a woman who is weighing charcoal with *kabīz* and eating it. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this woman commit?” [Thus] say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that woman, who, while alive, did not keep the fire well in the house”.

37. Then I see the soul of a man on whose tongue an iron nail is tied (struck?). I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this man commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that man, who, while alive, was greedy, uncourteous, and evil-desiring. When he saw something good in another’s possession, he felt unwell and uneasy, and wished it not to be in anyone’s possession” (i.e. he destroyed it).

<sup>184</sup> cf. AWN LXII.

<sup>185</sup> See footnote 138.

<sup>186</sup> cf. AWN LIX.

<sup>187</sup> cf. AWN XXVII.

<sup>188</sup> *kabīz* (NP *qafīz*, *kavīz*, *kavīz*; Gr. *καπίθη*, (also *καπέτις*?); Arm. *kapič*; for a more extensive list, see Ačařean 1971–79: 525) is an Iranian measure of capacity. At different periods different values were ascribed to it. Xenophon (Anab. I, 5 (6)) says that a *kapithē* is equal to two *choenix* (ἡ δὲ *καπίθη* δύο *χοίνικας* ἄττικὰς ἐχώρει). *Choenix* (= 1.09 lit.) is equal to four *κοτύλαι* (= 0.273 lit.) (Kroll 2012: 3). Thus, in Greek tradition *kapithē* would be equal to 2.18 l. In Parthian administrative documents from Nisa, a *kapithē* is equal to 1/4 of the *maris*, thus being equal to 2.33 l. (Bivar 2000). In Arm. sources, *kapič* is both a dry and a wet measure, and is equal to 1/10 of *grīw* (Awetik’ean et al. 1836: 1055), although it is difficult to determine the value of the latter. In Islamic tradition, a *qafīz* has been equal to 12 *šā’* (1 *šā’* = 8 *raṭl*) (Ġiath ol-luyāt, apud Nušin 2013: 347), however this standard cannot be held for absolute, as it is well known that in the Islamic world units of measurement often differed from region to region. For a detailed enumeration of different forms and cognates, see Hassandoust 2016: 2310 (under *kavīz*).

38. Then I see the soul of a man who is hanging by one of his feet over hell. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this man commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that man, who, while alive, hurt his father and mother”.

39. Then I see the soul of a man, who is roasting his corpse over fire and eating. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this man commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that man, who, while alive, let [his] menstruating wife near a fire”.

40. Then I see the soul of a man who has a sharp knife in his heart and is cutting [constantly]. I, Wīrāz, ask: “What sin did this man commit?” Thus say Srōš the Righteous and Ādur yazad: “This is the soul of that man, who, while alive, his sister was his wife, and he left his wife and [she] the unfortunate came to the world of the dead.

41.<sup>189</sup> Then I see the souls of a man and a woman. They are leading the man to Heaven and the woman to Hell, and that woman is holding the skirt of the man and is saying: “What do you want to do, when in the world of the living you were my husband and master, and we shared the same bread, the same water, and the same bed. Why did you not cut one of my hands or feet, and why did you not punish me heavily so that I would also wear the sacred girdle (*kustīg*) as you did? And now I must stay for 9,000 years in that dark and gloomy hell. But come here! Let us go to Rašn the Just, so that he will judge us”. And they went to Rašn the Just and he weighed the good deeds of the [man] and the sins of the woman on the scales. Equal is the [pan] of the man, and that of the woman.<sup>190</sup> And they sent the woman to Heaven.

42. From the front Ādur yazad is going forward and, from behind, I, Wīrāz, follow him. And I see the souls of the pious ones and I see the soul of the righteous Zarduxšt in shining Paradise, which is like four golden doors(?) And I see the soul of the wise Ōšnar<sup>191</sup> and I see the soul of Jamšēd and I see the beneficent Ādur yazad, who is guarding the door of Paradise [together with] the golden dog,<sup>192</sup> and the seven amahraspands, who are appointed to guard, are guarding me, Wīrāz. The many sacrifices that I, Wīrāz, made for the priests, and all the pious deeds that I, Wīrāz performed while alive, will entirely be returned [to me] ...

43. I, Wīrāz, praise and lift my hands towards the gods and stand in front of the lord Ohrmazd [saying]: Do not send me to the world of the living, so that I can stay in Paradise. Then beneficent Ādur yazad says to me, the soul of Wīrāz: “O righteous Wīrāz, watch your actions and this Paradise is yours, and it will not be taken away”.<sup>193</sup>

<sup>189</sup> cf. AWN LXVIII.

<sup>190</sup> Probably the husband and the wife are viewed here as one entity or a unity, whose sins are shared. Interestingly, if this is the case, it contradicts to the spirit of the rest of the passages. In the AWN, the husband is sent to Heaven and the wife is eventually sent to Hell.

<sup>191</sup> Ōšnar (Av. *aošnara-*) is considered one of the to this sage. For the latest edition and translation of this text, see Goshtasp and Hajipour 2013, prominent ancient sages in the Zoroastrian tradition. Despite that, not much is known about his personality and background. His name is mentioned twice in the Young Avesta, once in Yašt 13:131, and also in Afrīn ī Zardušt (Goshtasp and Hajipour 2013: 10 f.). A didactic text has survived that is ascribed.

<sup>192</sup> Instead of “*sag ī zarrēn-gōš*”, i.e. “the dog with golden ears”.

<sup>193</sup> This fascinating passage, which is only found in this version of the Ardā Wīrāz stories, reminds me of the Mandaean story of Dinānūkht. The story of Dinānūkht, which is narrated in the sixth book of *Ginza Rabbā* (Right), and tells the story of the journey of this half-human, half-book character into the heavenly spheres, has a similar scene. After crossing various heavenly spheres on his way to the House of Life, and reaching the final stage of his journey, Dinānūkht, who is ordered to return to Earth, tries to argue his way out of that unpleasant requirement. He begs Dīn-Mlik-Uthra, who was accompanying and guiding him during his journey, to let him stay in the House of Life, even if he is forced “to eat dust” in there, to which the latter gives a negative answer, saying that he will get his place in the House of Light after completing his mission on Earth (Lidzbarski 1925: 211).



*Let Ohrmazd be propitious with the amahraspands  
Completed in prosperity and happiness.  
I, servant of religion, Hōšang Syāwaxš, wrote [this] from the book of Gōbadšāh Rustahm.*

### Abbreviations and symbols

Arm.	Armenian	Av.	Avestan
AVN	Ardā-Virāf-nāma	AWN	Ardā-Wirāz-Nāmag
Bd.	Bundahišn	Gr.	Greek
HKR	Husraw ī Kawādān ud rēdag-ēw	MP	Middle Persian
ms(s).	manuscript(s)	MW	Mādayān ī Wīrāzagān
MX	Mēnōg ī Xrad	NP	New Persian
NPi	Narseh's inscription at Paikuli	OP	Old Persian
Pahl.	Pahlavi	Paz.	Pazand
ŠN	Šāhnāma	ŠKZ	Šābuhr's inscription at Ka'aba of Zoroaster
Vid.	Videvdat		
[ ]	word or phrase added		
()	explanation or comment by the translator		
+	emendation or conjectural reading		
?	uncertainty in reading or interpretation		
...	preceding or following interruption in the text		
/	alternative reading		

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