Zoroastrianism in Armenia

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Zoroastrianism in Armenia

by

James R. Russell

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Richard N. Frye
Editor

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Editor's Foreword

This is the first publication in the series of a study rather than a text or translation of source material. Little has been written on the pre-Christian culture and religion of Armenia, and for the most part years ago; so a new investigation of the subject is indeed significant.

As usual, the text is the responsibility of the author, for the editor only makes suggestions which may or may not be accepted. Since the subject is of interest not only to those concerned with ancient Iran but especially to students of Armenian matters, the aid of the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research in the publication of this volume was not only most welcome but appropriate.
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This work is the revision of a thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D. in Religious Studies (Zoroastrianism) at the School of Oriental Studies of the University of London, 1982, supported by a generous grant from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, Portugal. The Committee for Cultural Relations with Armenians Abroad (SPYURK) of the Government of the Armenian S.S.R. generously supplied many books and journals, for which I am most grateful; my venerable teacher Miss Vartarpi Tarpinian of Garin (Erzurum), Armenia, provided books and oral reminiscences of great value. My teacher Mrs. Maritza Tsaggos read chapters of the thesis and offered many useful suggestions. My friend Miss Roberta Ervine typed a large portion of the draft manuscript and offered useful references.

Professor Mary Boyce supervised the thesis; I owe to her an immense debt of gratitude for her constant encouragement, profound learning, and tireless help. Many revisions suggested by her and by Professor Sir Harold Bailey are incorporated into the present volume. My parents, Joseph and Charlotte Russell, have given me unstinting material and moral support at every stage of this work. My grandfather, Mr. S. A. Russell, has through a most generous subvention made this publication possible. In the years since the defense of the thesis I have been fortunate to become closely acquainted with the practices of the living Parsi community in India, thanks mainly to the hospitality of my friend Khojesti Mistree, Director of the Zoroastrian Studies Trust, Bombay, and this added knowledge has contributed to the revision of some passages. The present manuscript was typed by Virginia Brown, and I thank her and Muriel Bennett for their meticulous labor.

This book addresses a wide and controversial topic: the practice of the religion of the great Iranian prophet Zarathushtra amongst the pre-Christian Armenians. Such an audacious undertaking must have its shortcomings, and these are mine, of course, not my teachers'. Suffice it to say here that I have hoped to enrich, not to diminish, the cultural heritage of the Armenians by describing their ancient faith in a
great and venerable prophetic revelation and their adherence to a high­ly moral, uplifting religious code. Cannot a residue of such a proud heritage have given them the courage, centuries later, to with­stand the pressures of Islam to which so many of their neighbours suc­cumbed, and to uphold the loys hawatksw? I hope the living Zoroastrian communities of Iran and India will find interest and some encouragement, too, in this record of another nation, in many of whose practices the flame of Zoroastrianism still shines brightly: in his diary entry for 19th February, 1881, the Khshnoomist Zoroastrian mystic Behramshah Shroff claimed there was a cave full of Zoroastrian scriptures in Ar­menia, 'where the ancient Parsis lived' (cited by J. R. Hinnells in his recent study, 'Social Change and Religious Transformation among Bombay Parsis in the Early Twentieth Century,' p. 685 n. 40). We have not yet found the books, but the people were there. (On the cave of Mithra at Van, of which Shroff's report may be a distant echo, see Ch. 8.)

I dedicate this book to Professor Mary Boyce, to my parents, to my grandfather, and to the memory of my beloved grandmother Bertha Russell, zikhrōnāh le-berōshān.
From the time of the conquest of Assyria and Urartu by the Medes to the fall of the Sasanian Empire to the Muslim Arabs some thirteen centuries later, Armenian culture developed under the linguistic, political, and religious influence of successive Iranian empires. For most of this period the dominant religion of the Iranians was Zoroastrianism, and there exists abundant evidence that this religion was practised also by Armenians from the time of the Achaemenians. The religion waned in Armenia after the conversion of the Arm. Arsacid court to Christianity early in the fourth century, and most information on the old religion must be culled from hostile Christian texts of the fifth century and later. Classical writers such as Xenophon, Strabo, and Tacitus stress Armenia's ties to Iran, however, including common religious beliefs and practices. There is some evidence also in pre-Islamic Iranian texts. Some features of Zoroastrian practice in Armenia can be reconstructed from archaeological remains, and the ethnographic material of recent times testifies to the survival of Zoroastrian beliefs.

Like their co-religionists in Iran, ancient Arm. Zoroastrians believed in a supreme God, Ahura Mazda (Aramazd), the Creator of all that is good, who is helped by the supernatural beings of His own creation, by righteous men, and by other good creations against the hostile, separate, uncreated Destructive Spirit, Angra Mainyu (Haramani), whose demonic hosts, destructive assaults, sins and diseases have polluted this world. Through an active, ethical life of piety, charity, truth, cultivation of the earth and veneration for the holy creations, particularly fire, whose light and warmth embody Divine righteousness, man struggles towards the great renovation of the world, Fressô.korêti (Hrasakert), when evil will be defeated and obliterated.

There was probably some local diversity in Armenian religion, though attempts by the Artaxiads to impose political unity involved religious centralisation as well. The Zoroastrian cult drew from the Armenian heritage of Indo-European, Asiantic, and Semitic religion; Arm. Zoroastrianism was, perhaps, distinctive, but it was not a mere
syncretism. The Armenians generally, though not universally, opposed the iconoclastic and other reforms of Ardashir I and his successors and the attempts by the latter, particularly Yazdagird II, to re-impose Zoroastrianism on the newly-Christianised nation. But remnants of the Good Religion survived down to recent times.
INTRODUCTION:
THE LAND OF ARMENIA

The rugged volcanic highland called the Armenian plateau occupies an area of some 300,000 square kilometres, at a median elevation of 1500-1800 metres, on the same latitude as the Balkan peninsula; in its widest extent, Greater Armenia (Arm. Mec Hayk) stretched from 37°-40°E. Long. and from 37.5°-41.5°N. Lat. The Plateau forms part of a mountain system including the Anatolian plateau to the west and the Iranian plateau to the east; both are lower than Armenia. The country's soils vary from desert and semi-desert to forest and mountain meadow. In sub-Alpine regions, the soil on the north side of a mountain may be rich chernozem, while the soil on the southern side is rocky and poor for lack of precipitation. Wind and water erosion and centuries of invasion, pillage and neglect have denuded many mountains once rich in forests. But Armenian orchards still provide the apricot, praised in Rome as the prunus Armeniacus, and the Armenian words for plum, apple and mulberry (salor, xnjor, tCut) are found in Assyrian, attesting to the cultivation and trade of Armenian agricultural produce in ancient times. Xenophon, who passed the winter in an Armenian village during the retreat of his mercenary army, described in the Anabasis the varied and abundant Armenian fare, much of it dried or pickled for the winter, as today; he and his men enjoyed Armenian beer. Armenia has a continental climate, being cut off by high mountains from large bodies of water, and winter is long and severe, with an average temperature of \(-15^\circ\text{C}\) in January; temperatures of \(-43.5^\circ\text{C}\) have been recorded in Kars. Summer is brief and hot, with temperatures of 26-28°C. (but only 20°C. on the high plateaux). Spring and autumn are the gentlest seasons of the year in Armenia.\(^1\)

Armenia may be viewed as the centre of a great cross defined by the Black Sea on the northwest,\(^2\) the Caspian on the northeast, the Mediterranean in the southwest, and the Persian Gulf in the southeast: at the strategic crossroads of the ancient world and lying athwart crucial trade routes, in proximity to important maritime centres. The
Euphrates, Tigris, Kura, Araxes, Chorokh and many lesser rivers rise in Armenia, and three great lakes form a triangle to the left of centre of the cross: Van, Sevan and Urmia, in the southwest, northeast and southeast of the country. Most of the centres of early Armenian civilization are clustered in the valleys of the great rivers, particularly the Araxes in the east and the Euphrates and its tributary the Aracani (Tk. Murat Su) in the west, and in the plains of Alasert, Manazkert and Mus in the west and Ararat in the east, or on the shores of the great lakes, particularly Van. Where these valleys were particularly fertile or were traversed by major East-West routes, they became population centres with administrative offices in the Achaemenian period. The distribution of temples of the pre-Christian divinities follows the same pattern, so major centres of cult are found at Van and on the plains of Alasert and Ararat, and along the courses of the Western and Eastern Euphrates, especially around Erzincan and Mus. Even when cities declined, sacred sites remained fixed, following Sir William Ramsay's 'law of the persistence of worship' and becoming Christian shrines.3

Armenia is traversed by numerous mountain chains, most of which run in an east-west direction. On the north are the mountains of the lesser Caucasus; on the south are the mountains of Gordyene; on the northwest are the peaks of the Pontic and Antitaurus ranges; the Ararat-Haykakan Par³-a Ayeptkunk³-Anahtakan chains stretch across the interior. The highest mountain on the plateau is Greater Ararat (Arm. Azat Masik³), 5165m. Most of the country is soft volcanic rock, mainly lava, so the valleys and mountains of Armenia are deeply cut and the topography of the land is super-human in scale and grandeur.

Armenia's fierce winters, high mountains, deep valleys and lofty elevation make it a land of isolated cantons marked by ferocious regionalism and cultural and religious conservatism. The archaism and conscientiously preserved integrity of Armenian language and custom are a boon to the student of Zoroastrianism, for forms and practices overcome and eradicated in other lands remain a living part of the Armenian heritage. Armenia was at different times a neighbour or province of one or several empires: in the west were the empires of Alexander, then the Romans, then the Byzantines; in the south, mighty Assyria once held sway; to the southeast were the Median, Achaemenian, Parthian, and
then Sasanian kingdoms of Iran. It was the Iranians whose ties to the
Armenians were closest and whose culture influenced the Armenian nation
profoundly over the entire period when Zoroastrianism was the chief re-
ligion of Iran: from the Median conquest of Assyria in 612 B.C. to the
fall of the Sasanians in A.D. 651. Throughout that entire span of
twelve centuries, whose beginning coincides with the emergence of the
Armenians as a nation in the annals of civilisation, Armenia was ruled
either directly by Iran or by kings and satraps of Iranian descent.

Yet Armenia never lost its sense of separateness; the Armenians
were always a distinct people. The character of the country tended to
foster the development of a social system based upon local dynastic
units, each virtually self-sufficient in its own easily defended terri-
tory; while the local kinglets or dynasts, called in Armenian by the
M.Ir. loan-word naxarars, could only rarely be relied upon to come to-
gether and form an effective army, throughout most of history it has
been as difficult to hold Armenia in complete subjugation as it would
be to crush a sack of pebbles with a hammer. Thus one might explain
the apparent contradiction of a country frequently subdivided by con-
queros, its borders maddeningly fluid if defined at all, yet preserv-
ing throughout a definite sense of its own identity.

Until recent times, Armenian toponyms remained remarkably consist-
ent for an area which has been subjected to waves of Arab, Byzantine,
Seljuk, Mameluke, Ottoman and Safavid invasion since the fall of the
Sasanians. Names such as Erevan (Urartean Erebuuni), Van-Tosp (Urartean
Bilain-TuSpa), Aljnik (Urartean Alzini) et al. preserve the Hurrian-
Urartean substratum; Semitic forms are attested in place-names such as
Tcil (meaning 'hill', comp. the name of the Arm. city Duin, a M.Ir. loan-
word with the same meaning); and Iranian forms are particularly abund-
ant. Although the Zoroastrian vision of the world 'made wonderful' at
the end of days with the destruction of evil specifies that the earth
will be perfectly flat, the Armenians nonetheless named mountains after
Zoroastrian divinities, and there is evidence to suggest that some
mountains were considered sacred. For although mountains impede com-
munication and agriculture, one recalls Herodotus' description of the
religion of the Persians, who, he reports, worshipped in high places;
besides, the grandeur and majesty of the brilliant white snow cap of
Ararat, seeming to float in Heaven, must have inspired religious awe in the ancient Armenians as it continues to do to this day.

Armenia has been the apple of contention of empires, but it has also been a refuge for many: the Assyrian kings complained of criminals and other riff-raff who escaped to the relative freedom of Armenia; Muski immigrants from distant Thrace found their homes there; and Greek dissidents of pagan and Christian eras alike settled in Armenian towns to write poetry or expound philosophy. A legend credits Hannibal, in flight after the defeat of Carthage, with the foundation of the Armenian capital of Roman times, Artaxata; the story is probably fiction, but it fairly reflects the Romans' irritation at a country which provided a safe haven for their enemies and which was impossible entirely to subdue. Tacitus wrote of the Armenians, 'An inconstant nation this from old; from the genius of the people, as well as from the situation of their country, which borders with a large frontier on our provinces, and stretches thence quite to Media, and lying between the two empires, was often at variance with them; with the Romans from hatred, with the Parthians from jealousy.'

As N. G. Garsoian has noted, however, Armenian disputes with Iran in various periods are of a different quality from those with other conquerors, being more in the nature of violent family feuds than confrontations between nations with different social systems and attitudes; until the late third century A.D., Armenia and Iran shared also a common religion.

That religion, Zoroastrianism, is the object of this investigation. It is worth noting that for some centuries, Armenia was entirely surrounded by countries in which Zoroastrianism was practiced: to the west was Cappadocia, with its pyraithoi and its phylon of Magi. On the north, there is considerable evidence of Iranian religion in Georgia. In the Sasanian period there were large Zoroastrian communities in northern Iraq (at Kirkuk, for example). To the east and southeast was Media-Atropatene: Media was regarded as the homeland of Zoroaster himself, and Strabo declared that the religious practices of Armenians and Medes were identical. The very considerable enmity that erupted into open war between the Christian Armenian naxarars and Zoroastrian Iran in A.D. 451 has coloured subsequent perceptions of Armenia's ties
to the outside world, leading many to view the people of the highland as embattled on all sides, resisting all foreign influence. The uniformly anti-Zoroastrian tone of the fifth-century Armenian texts, and the seeming eradication by the Christians of Mazdean remains, have perhaps discouraged scholars from attempting a systematic study of the Zoroastrian Armenian heritage, which has been, in the words of a recent writer, "traitée peut-être un peu rapidement."

Armenia’s relationship to Iran does not support such a view; rather, the Armenians seem to have been influenced at an early stage by Iran, whose social customs did not conflict with their own. Certain of these varied aspects of culture were retained long after their disappearance in Iran itself. In recognising institutions, art forms and the like as similar but of separate origin in Armenia and Iran, or as the common heritage of many different civilisations of the area, scholars such as Prof. B. N. Afakelyan have sought to minimise the impact of distinctly Iranian borrowings, as we shall see below. Armenian religion would then be seen as primarily a native development, for to admit otherwise would be to concede that Armenia was permeated by Iranian traditions which it adopted as its own. Authors of some studies have sought to isolate specifically Armenian phenomena, inspired perhaps by the legitimate wish to demonstrate that Armenian culture is neither an amalgam without a native core, nor indeed a provincial offshoot of Iran. There is the danger of seeing Iranian phenomena in Arm. where the material is more likely Asianic. Thus, next-of-kin marriage might well have come to Iran from Anatolia originally. In language, Arm. spand 'sacrifice' seems more likely to be related to the Asianic term, from which Gk. spondē 'drink offering' is a loan-word, than to derive from MLr. spand, Av. spēnta- 'incremental, bounteous, holy'. The basis of Armenian culture is a fusion of native and Iranian elements which has been retained faithfully over the ages, with comparatively slight accretions from other peoples. Armenia was neither the miraculous child of cultural parthenogenesis nor a mere stepson of the Persians.

When one examines the treasures of mediaeval Armenian painting, so profoundly influenced by the traditions of Byzantium and Syria, or reads the verses imbued with the imagery of Islamic poetry, or considers the impact of Turkish syntactical forms upon the rich modern
Armenian spoken language, the image of an embattled, martyred, insular Armenia loses its validity. As in past ages, the Armenians merely adopted whatever they found pleasing in other cultures, turning their new acquisitions to their own use; the Persian rose and nightingale represent the Virgin Mary and Gabriel in the songs of Armenian minstrels. Armenian Christianity itself preserves much Zoroastrian vocabulary, ritual and imagery, while the rugged mountains and isolated cantons of the country allowed the Zoroastrian community of the Children of the Sun to flourish down to modern times.12

Nonetheless, there is much truth in the remark of the late nineteenth-century traveller H. F. B. Lynch, that 'there is nothing needed but less perversity on the part of the human animal to convert Armenia into an almost ideal nursery of his race . . . one feels that for various reasons outside inherent qualities, this land has never enjoyed at any period of history the fullness of opportunity.'13

Certain limitations of this study testify to the grim truth of Lynch's observation, at least as far as present-day Armenia is concerned. The modern Armenian republic, the smallest and southernmost of the constituent republics of the Soviet Union, occupies approximately one-tenth of the area of historical Armenia. The other nine-tenths, where most ancient Armenian religious sites are located (Ani, Kamax, Astišät, Töil, Erız, Bagayaš, Tördan, Bagaran, Bagawan, Van, Angı, et al.), is in the Republic of Turkey, and archaeological investigation of ancient Armenian sites is generally not permitted. Access to standing monuments of the Christian period in the above-mentioned towns is limited; yet even these monuments are of interest, and M. Thierry's recent studies of the Armenian monasteries of Vaspurakan provide some insights into the culture of the ancient period. The monuments of Nemrut Dağ in Commagene, studied by Goell and Dörner, erected by an Orontid monarch kin to the rulers of Armenia, provide some indication of what one might hope to find, were older, undamaged bagink³ 'image shrines' to be excavated. Temple buildings, rather than sacred enclosures open to the sky, probably date for Zoroastrianism from the late Achaemenian period. The complex at Zela described by Strabo was of the older, open type, as was the shrine of Nemrut Dağ from the first century B.C.; it therefore seems possible that Zoroastrian foundations in
Armenia, too, might have been both temples and roof-less enclosures. Cicero wrote that the Persians abhorred enclosing the gods in temples, but this may be literary anachronism. The votive steles and xac'k'ars of Arm. Christianity perhaps preserve the ancient custom of outdoor worship, the cross replacing images like those erected by Antiochus of Commagene or sacred bas-reliefs. It was common until this century for Armenian villagers to wash and then go outside the house to recite morning prayers facing East (called ab'ot'aran 'the place of prayer').

On the territory of the Armenian republic, important finds at Va'ars'apat, F'arax'ar, Zod, Artañat, Armawir, Duin and Gañni over the last three decades have greatly enriched our knowledge of pre-Christian Armenia. Sites may not be accessible, but toponyms can still be studied. The principal bag'ink were at sites which bear Iranian names, for example, the shrine of Mhr at Bagayañat 'village of the god'. Some place names present difficulties. (Y)AStisat, for instance, was understood by Markwart as 'Joy of ASt (Astarte)'. But the texts do not mention a goddess ASt, only Astlîk. A translation 'rich in yasts' (acts of worship, Av. yasti-) seems preferable. It is also not clear what the distinction was, beyond difference of name, between Bagaran and Bagawan. The suffix -awan indicates a settlement; -aran in Arm. from MIr. means 'place where', but in MIr. bag(a)dãn appears to mean 'temple'. Was one a town, the other only a temple? The sources do not enlighten us. Archaeological discoveries in Iran during this century have expanded immeasurably our knowledge of Ancient and Middle Iranian language, culture and religion, and these findings are of considerable value to Armenian studies, casting new light on the Armenian primary sources. (Classical sources and post-Sasanian Arm. works are discussed individually, where necessary, as they appear in the following chapters.)

These sources will be discussed individually as they are encountered; preliminary general remarks on them may be of use at this stage. The two most important texts for the study of pre-Christian Armenian religion are the Histories of Armenia of Agathangelos and Mvosèes Korenac. The latter is an account of the history of the Armenians from earliest times to the mid-fifth century A.D., and the precise identity of the author is unknown, as is the date of composition;
scholars have proposed dates ranging from the fifth to the ninth centuries. Agathangelos, whose name is a Greek word meaning 'bringer of good tidings' and whose identity is likewise obscure, covers a much more limited period: the years of the conversion of the Armenians to Christianity (i.e., the late third-early fourth century). The text contains much valuable information on the shrines of various Zoroastrian divinities and acts of public worship and statements of belief by King Tiridates III, and versions exist in several languages. The text in Armenian probably belongs to the fifth century. The material on pre-Christian Armenian religion in both texts appears to be based upon both contemporary observation sources of great antiquity; Xorenac'i includes numerous fragments of orally transmitted epic which he describes having heard with his own ears, and he claims to have consulted pagan temple records. (Often, too, Xorenac'i appears to elaborate his remarks on Arm. antiquity with material borrowed from Classical literature, and it is sometimes perilous to accept his detailed assertions uncritically. At the same time, recent editors have tended to focus on scriptural and historiographical problems, understandably preferring to leave the Iranian material to Iranists.) The latter claim has been disputed, but not the former. Some of Xorenac'i's statements, such as the erection of boundary markers by Artašēs, have been verified by archaeological discoveries of recent years.

Other important primary sources are the fifth-century text Elesandoc 'The Refutation of Sects,' by Eznik Kołbac'i, which contains much valuable material on Armenian pre-Christian religion as well as a polemic against Zurvanism, which is apparently regarded by the author as a sect of the Persians which did not affect the Armenians particularly; and another text, Vans Vardanay ev Hayoc' paterazmin 'On Vardan and the Armenian War,' attributed to Elišē vardapet who was apparently an eyewitness to the Armeno-Sasanian war of A.D. 451. The text appears, however, to be a composition of the sixth century relying heavily upon the fifth-century work of Hazar P'arpec'i. The background of the war, the disposition of the Armenians toward Iran and the exchange of theological arguments between the Christians and Zurvanite Sasanians are described in useful detail. The surviving portions of the Epic History (Buzandaran) or History of Armenia of P'ezstos, a
mysterious personage who probably wrote in the fifth century, deal with events of the fourth century and contain many legendary and epic elements.21

Much of the information on ancient religion supplied by these early writers, most of whom lived within a century of the invention of the Armenian script by St. Mesrop Maštoc (360–440),22 has been supplemented or corroborated by ethnographic studies conducted in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, beginning with the works of the clergyman and scholar Fr. Garegin Sruanjteanc (1840–1892). The latter first recorded recitations of the Armenian national epic of the heroes of Sasun, one of whom, Mher, is the yazata Mihr, Av. Mithra; the deeds of the hero Mher, as sung by Armenians in some villages to this day, shed light upon our understanding of the Arm. cult of the yazata.23

Another example of the way in which recently recorded traditions can add to our knowledge of Armenian Zoroastrianism is the legendry of modern Mus concerning a supernatural creature called the ēvod or ûvaz, whose name appears to be a modern form of that of the šahapet of Agathangelos.24 Modern Armenian folk rituals on the holidays of Ascension and the Presentation of the Lord to the Temple (Hamberjum and Tearn ënä ăraj), reveal aspects of the cult of the Amēša Spēntas Haurvatät and Amečētät and of the ancient celebration of the Zoroastrian feast of Athrakāna. In the former case is encountered a frequent problem of this study: definition of the specific Iranian origin of rites or customs which are widespread amongst Indo-European peoples generally. The custom of young girls gathering spring flowers and casting them into water is known, for instance, in Russia before Whitsunday. In such cases we have tried to determine specific Iranian features in such Armenian customs, be they fire worship, reverence for trees, or, here, the springtime rite of waters and plants. Thus, an Iranian form of the rite is recorded for the Sasanian period in the eleventh-century Kitābu 'l-mahāsin wa 'l-ağdād: on each day of the vernal New Year festival of Nō Rōz, virgins stole water for the king, and he recited a short phrase, corrupt in the Arabic text, which mentions 'the two lucky ones' and 'the two blissful ones'—presumably Haurvatät and Amečētät. In Armenia, the flowers cast into a vat of water bear the name of these two divinities: hōrot-mōrot. Such
Zoroastrian terms, or telling details of cult, are to be found in many Arm. customs one might otherwise assign to a common stock of Indo-European religious inheritances. 25

The first studies of pre-Christian Armenian religion were published in the late eighteenth century. 26 Camanian devoted a chapter to Armenian idolatry in his Hayoc Patmutiwn, 'History of the Armenians.' Half a century later, in 1835, Incean in his study Haxosut'iwn Hayastanesayc, 'Armenian Antiquity', devoted separate chapters to sun worship, fire worship, pagan gods and other subjects. Gatcian in his Tiezerakan patmut'iwn, 'Universal History', included a chapter on ancient Armenian religion.

In the years preceding the first World War, numerous studies were published on Armenian ethnography and ancient religion. In 1871, M. Emin published in Constantinople his Uruagic Hayoc het'anosaken kröni 'Profile of the heathen religion of the Armenians'; in 1879, K. Kostanean published a booklet entitled Hayoc het'anosaken kröni, 'The heathen religion of the Armenians'; in Venice, 1895, Fr. L. Alisan published his Hin hawatk kam het'anosaken kronk Hayoc 'The ancient faith or heathen religion of the Armenians'; and in the same year, H. Gelzer published his Zur armenischen Götterlehre; in 1899, Manuk Abelyan published in Leipzig a work establishing important connections between modern Armenian folk belief and ancient religion, Der armenische Volksglaube (repr. in M. Abelyan, Erker, VII, Erevan, 1975); the Armenian doctor and intellectual N. Talaawaran published a pamphlet, Hayoc hin kröner 'The ancient religions of the Armenians', in Constantinople, 1909; and in 1913 the Armenian writer and public activist Avetis Aharonian presented to the University of Lausanne for the doctoral degree a thesis of remarkable brevity entitled Les anciennes croyances arméniennes (repr. Librairie Orientale H. Samuelian, Paris, 1980). 27 A work of equal brevity but greater substance is Hayoc hin kronē kam haykakan dic'sabanut'iwnē, by Eňiš Durean, Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem (Jerusalem, 1933). Articles on the subject of ancient Armenian religion and related modern folk beliefs were published in a number of Armenian and foreign journals, particularly the Azagagrakan Handēs 'Ethnographic Journal', which commenced publication in 1895 and appeared sporadically until the Russian Revolution. Research into the
ancient Armenian past was encouraged by the linguistic researches of de Lagarde and Hübschmann, and by the archaeological and ethnographic studies of the Caucasus sponsored by the Russian government and directed by N. Ya. Marr and others.

Much of this research was severely disrupted by the systematic massacre and deportation of the Christian populations of eastern Turkey by the Ottoman Government and its successors in 1895-1922. Some Armenian scholars resided in the safety of Tiflis, Moscow or St. Petersburg, but many others perished. Tadjwarean, for instance, whose work was noted above, was arrested with over two hundred fifty other Armenian intellectuals at Constantinople on the night of 24 April 1915, and was murdered by the Turkish authorities. Some Armenian scholars survived the attempted genocide or escaped from Turkey before or during it. Martiros Y. Ananikean, born at Sebastia (Th. Sivas) in 1875, typifies the peregrinations of those Armenian scholars of this period who survived the 1915 genocide. Educated at the Central College of Turkey in Aintab, an institution run by American missionaries, Ananikean was sent after the massacres of 1895 to Springfield, Connecticut, where he earned an M.A. in theology and was appointed to teach Oriental languages at Hartford Seminary. In 1923 Prof. Ananikean died in Syria during a trip to acquire rare manuscripts for the Seminary library.

Ananikean perceived clearly that the Armenians had practised Zoroastrianism before their conversion to Christianity. An early article on the subject, 'Armenia (Zoroastrian),' in the Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, New York, 1913, I, 794, was later developed into an extensive study, Armenian Mythology (J. A. MacCulloch, ed. The Mythology of All Races, Vol. 7, N.Y., 1925, repr. Cooper Square Publishers, N.Y., 1964), which was published posthumously. Despite serious deficiencies, Ananikean's work contains much of value and is the only study of its kind in English.

At the time of Ananikean's writing, it was generally considered that the only 'pure' Zoroastrianism was that of the iconoclastic Sasanians (their depiction of Ahura Mazda as a human figure on bas-reliefs is conveniently forgotten), with their cult purged of foreign influences (the worship of Anāhītā notwithstanding) and their theology true to the teachings of Zarathustra (despite evidence to the effect
that the Zurvanite heresy was professed by the higher officials of the state). On the basis of this spurious understanding, fostered partly by the Sasanians themselves (who accorded credit, however, for the first compilation of the texts of the Avesta to a Parthian predecessor, Valaxs.28) and partly also by Zoroastrians and Westerners of the nineteenth century who sought to purge the Good Religion of what they perceived as barbaric and polytheistic accretions, the religion of the Parthians was dismissed as a form of Hellenistic syncretism rather than authentic Zoroastrianism, and the religion of the Armenians, which shows close similarities to the Parthian type, was likewise denigrated.

The influence of such prevailing attitudes prevented Ananikean from considering the pre-Christian religion of Armenia as a form of Zoroastrianism whose assimilation of non-Zoroastrian aspects, both Iranian and non-Iranian, illuminate the character of the Faith as it was anciently practised, particularly by the Parthians, rather than obscure it. He is thus led to this awkward formulation: 'It [the Hellenistic period] was a time of conciliations, identifications, one might say of vandalistic syncretism that was tending to make of Armenian religion an outlandish motley. Their only excuse was that all their neighbours were following a similar course. It is, therefore, no wonder that the Sasanians during their short possession of Armenia in the middle of the third century seriously undertook to convert the land to the purer worship of the sacred fire.'29 According to this view, the Armenians practised a form of ancient Thraco-Phrygian paganism which had assimilated certain features of the religion of the Hurrian-Urartean autochthons. To this was added an admixture of Iranian beliefs over the centuries of Median, Persian and Parthian influence. These were inundated by a flood of Hellenic religious oddments as the hapless Armenians watched passively or built temples where--without system or conviction--they solemnised their 'conciliations' and 'vandalistic syncretism' until the Sasanians with their 'purer worship' arrived to save the day. Ananikean adds that the Armenians preserved a coherent group of traditions based upon a fusion of native and Iranian elements which endured through the periods of Hellenism, Sasanian proselytism and even seventeen centuries of Christianity.

Given his use of the term 'Zoroastrian Armenia' in the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, it seems that Ananikian was himself
convincing that the Armenians had incorporated various, disparate elements into their Zoroastrian cult— one can scarcely exclude the likelihood that the practice of the religion differed from place to place, or that many Armenians were never Zoroastrians at all. There were other foreigners besides Iranians—Persians and Medes, for the most part— in Armenia, such as Greeks, Syrians, and Jews, who brought their beliefs with them. The temple historian of Ani, Olympios, mentioned by Moverses Xorenac'i, was probably a magus with a Greek name, like his colleagues in Lydia, rather than a Greek. One notes, however, the apparently Greek scribal tradition in Armenia (see the discussion of the Aramaic inscription of Valars in Ch. 4). But even where distinctly non-Iranian terms are used in the cult, this does not allow us to deny the Zoroastrian essence: the Aramaic word kumra, for example, gives us the pre-Christian Arm. word for a priest, Kurn, yet the Semitic word is found also in the trilingual inscription at Xanthos (see J. Teixidor, JNES 37.2, 1978, 183), where elements of Iranian religion also are seen. The Arms. also seem to have used Iranian priestly titles (see Ch. 15), and the very term magus, one recalls, was adopted by the Good Religion from Median pagan religion. The Sasanians experimented with various sacerdotal offices, so innovation or variation in this area does not define the nature of Zoroastrian faith for the period under discussion. An example of a widespread rite, that of flowers and water in spring, has been adduced to show how one might prove Iranian origins as against Indo-European survivals. Fire worship is another case: it is important in Greek religion, but in Armenia the terms and beliefs associated with it are identifiably Iranian. Greek temenoi had to have a tree and a spring, like Zoroastrian temples, and Arm. reverence for trees probably includes both Mazdean features and survivals from the Urartean substratum.

The expression 'vandalistic syncretism' is evidently emotive and betrays a prejudice towards the ever-elusive 'cultural purity' that no complex civilization has ever possessed. The terracotta mother-and-child figurines from Artašat and Armawir may represent a modification of the scene of Isis lactans (see the monograph of that title by Tran Tam Tinh, Leiden, 1973), linked to the cults of Anahit and Nanē. Medallions of Isis were found at Artašat, and it is likely that her cult
influenced Zoroastrian thought in Anatolia. For example, an Aramaic inscription found at Arebsun in Cappadocia hails the marriage of the supreme Semitic god Bel to the 'wise' (mazdā) Religion of Mazdā-worship. A shallow relief on the stone appears to depict a cosmogonic scene, and the Irano-Semitic text perhaps derives its inspiration from the teaching of the Isis cult that Theos and Sophia cohabited to produce the Cosmos. Such a myth accords well with the Zoroastrian conviction that the architect of the world acted with supreme wisdom; it affirms also the pre-existence of Religion. This is, if anything, considerably superior to the gloomy tale of Zurvan, the hermaphroditic doubter deceived by his own spawn—the old folktale type seen in the Biblical story of Jacob and Esau. Unless Zoroastrianism be defined baldly as that which Iranians think it to be, the Mages hellenised needed no instruction in their faith from the emissaries of Ctesiphon.

Armenia is a land which is well suited geographically to conserving archaisms, and which has done so. Yet even so, it could scarcely have sustained such a consistent and tenacious tradition had there not been an underlying thread of unifying belief, namely, that of Zoroastrianism. It is likely that the religion was introduced into the country by the Medes or Achaemenians, assimilating many non-Zoroastrian aspects, and that it was practised under the Artaxiads and Arsacids. In this study, we shall seek to describe the Good Religion in Armenia in the detail that examination of the wealth of linguistic, literary, archaeological, iconographic, theological and ethnographic evidence allows; to show, further, that the forms of Armenian worship were consistent and rooted in centuries of piety, and to demonstrate that these forms are neither haphazard nor contrary to Zoroastrian practice elsewhere. Indeed Christian Armenian writers perceived the Parthian and Persian forms of the faith to differ in certain respects, and took care to distinguish the rites of their own ancestors' Aramazd from those of the Ormizd of their Zurvanite Persian opponents. Yet their traditional Zoroastrianism had evidently absorbed a number of local elements; this is seen, for instance, in the apparent survival of many beliefs concerning the Hurrian Tešub in the cult of Vahagn. The Parsis of India, too have been strongly influenced by many of the usages of that land and have assimilated many Hindu practices.
(including, for example, invocation of the goddess Lakṣmī during the marriage ceremony) which distinguish them from their co-religionists in Iran. Instances of such national diversity are a commonplace in most of the great religions; the Jews, perceived by many to be one of the most ethnically distinct of peoples, recognise considerable differences in ritual, practice and custom between the Ashkenazic and Sephardic communities (these categories themselves conceal a bewildering variety of groups), not to mention the Karaites and Samaritans.

Recognition of Zoroastrian diversity, what R. C. Zaehner, perhaps somewhat tendentiously, called a 'catholic' Zoroastrianism embracing heterogeneous elements in a single edifice of faith, is fundamental to a study of the religion in Armenia, yet prejudice against such a concept remains strong; little doubt of the orthodoxy of the Parthians can remain, in view of the evidence assembled since the beginning of this century, yet statements such as the following are still made by serious writers: 'Once established the [Parthian] Arsacids never adopted full Zoroastrianism.' \(^3\) The same author goes on to list a number of Parthian practices which are clearly an indication, when taken together, of Zoroastrian piety: respect for the Magi, worship of Ahura Mazdā, observance of the cult of the fravāşas, royal names beginning with Arta- or Mithra-, maintenance of an eternally burning sacred fire, and the compilation of the Avesta, referred to above. Much more evidence exists besides; one might mention here in brief also the transmission of the Kayanian epic, which enshrines the sacred history of Zoroaster's mission; the Iranian components of Mithraism; and the many Zoroastrian aspects in Arsacid works preserved in Zoroastrian Book Phl. and NP. One recalls that the forefathers of the Parsis came from Parthia, not Fārs. What, then, is the proof of the above writer's claim? It is threefold: the names of Greek deities are found on Parthian coins, the Arsacids were buried in tombs, and they do not seem to have persecuted other religions. To cite the same author, 'The Sasanians would not recognise them as true believers.' \(^3\) But the Sasanians also practised inhumation, as had the Achaemenians in Persis before them. They certainly continued to employ Hellenic art forms, although they did not style themselves 'philhellene' or use Greek translations of the names of their divinities. But the latter practice would prove nothing, in
any case, for peoples all over the Hellenistic Near East called their
gods by Greek names such as Zeus Keraunios or Jupiter Dolichenus with­
out abandoning their native Semitic or Asianic religions. One notes
besides that the ostraca found at Nisa, and (as we shall see below) the
religious names and vocabulary borrowed from Parthian and preserved in
Armenian, are thoroughly Zoroastrian. The sole objection we are left
with is that the Parthians did not persecute unbelievers, as the Sas­
ians did. But neither were the Parthians confronted by the powerful,
aggressive Christian Byzantine state, which used religion as an impor­
tant instrument of its foreign policy. It would seem that judgements
concerning the religion of the Parthians have tended to rest upon con­
viction rather than evidence. Since the impact of Iranian culture upon
Armenia was greatest in the Arsacid period, such prejudices have tended
further to discourage investigation of Iranian religion in Armenia.

In the years following the Armenian genocide, research on ancient
religion was resumed. In Paris, the journal Revue des Études
Arméniennes was founded in 1920, and scholars such as Dumézil, Ben­
veniste, Bailey, Bolognesi, Henning, Junker, Meillet, and others made
valuable contributions to Armenian studies from the Iranian field. In
the Soviet Armenian Republic, scholarship was pursued, under extremely
difficult conditions at first, for the fledgling state, only a few
years before a forgotten backwater of the Russian Empire, had now be­
come the refuge of hundreds of thousands of sick and starving refugees
from the terror that had engulfed nine-tenths of the Armenian land.
Before the establishment of Soviet power, Armenia had also to fight off
invasion from three sides: Georgia, Azerbaijan and Turkey. Yet in
1926 the newly-founded Erevan State University began publication of the
seven-volume Heyerēn armatakan bajaran 'Armenian Etymological Diction­
ary' of H. Ācaēan, a pupil of A. Meillet.34 This work, with ca.
11,000 root entries, represents an important advance on the etymologi­
cal researches of Heinrich Hübschmann,35 adding greatly to our knowl­
dge of Iranian in Armenian. Ācaēan's entries are often, however,
uncritical compendia of all previous opinions, of uneven value. More
recently, R. Schmitt and others have re-examined the Iranian loan-words
in Arm. The historical and mythological studies of M. Abē̄yan are also
of great importance in this area, and we shall have occasion to refer
to them often in this study. 36 Despite this increasing volume of information, certain scholars in the Armenian republic have tended to regard many Iranian phenomena as either native Armenian (they indeed came to be regarded as such in time by the Armenians of the ancient period, but were not in origin) or of common origin. 37 Other scholars, such as Anahit Perikhanyan, have tended to study ancient Armenia within the framework of Iranian culture, 38 but no major work has appeared in Armenia or abroad in recent years proposing to treat of the entire subject of Zoroastrian religion per se in Armenia.

The difficulties which attend such a study arise from both a wealth and a paucity of material. On the one hand, there exists a great mass of research on ancient Iran and the other Near Eastern civilisations under whose aegis Armenian culture grew. On the other, the inaccessibility of much of historical Armenia, the absence of archaeological material, and the destruction of the ancient Armenian communities and consequent scarcity of modern, scientifically presented ethnographic evidence creates gaps which cannot be filled. We have attempted to glean information from memorial volumes published by compatriotic unions of various towns and provinces in the Armenian Diaspora, and have received some oral testimony of value from Armenians born in the homeland; 39 some ethnographic studies of great value have appeared in Soviet Armenia.

This study consists of three parts: the first is a historical survey of the development of Armenian religious beliefs and institutions, including the priesthood, temples, et al. until the conversion of the nation to Christianity, and a consideration of Armeo-Sasanian relations with regard to Zoroastrianism; the second part consists of an investigation of the cults of Zoroastrian yazatas whose worship is attested in Armenia; the third part deals with apocalyptic concepts, heroes, demons, and monsters, general questions of cult and ritual, and, finally, the survival of the Good Religion amongst the Children of the Sun in Christian times.
Notes - Introduction


2. The Greek name of this sea, Pontos Euxeinos, 'the hospitable sea', is a euphemism for an original Axeinos, taken by popular etymology to mean 'inhospitable', but more likely the transcription of an OG form *xexa"ina,- Phl. axsen 'blue' (H. W. Bailey, Dictionary of Khotan Saka, Cambridge, 1979, 26, s.v. aggeina) or xaxen 'dark blue' (D. N. Mackenzie, A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary, London, 1971, 94), with the Armenian loan-word and proper name Asxen (Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 20; a derivation of this name from Av. xsōthni- was favoured, however, by E. Benveniste, Titres et noms propres en iranien ancien, Paris, 1966, 21). If the derivation of the name of the sea from Iranian is correct, it suggests that Iranians navigated it often, or lived on its shores.

3. On these routes, see H. Manandyan, 0 torgovle i gorodakh Armenii v sviazi s mirovoi torgovlii drevnikh vremen, Erevan, 1930 (2nd ed., Erevan, 1954; English trans. by N. G. Garsoian, The Trade and Cities of Armenia in Connexion with Ancient World Trade, Lisbon, 1965). The importance of Armenian routes in the ancient world is underscored by the careful attention paid to the geography of the country by Strabo, Ptolemy and others; see H. Manandian, 'Les anciens itineraires d'Arménie. Artaxata-Sotata et Artaxata Tigranocerta, d'après la carte de Peutinger,' REA, 10, 1930. Ramsay is cited by E. Herzfeld, Archaeological History of Iran, London, 1935, 89.

3-a. The legendary homeland of the Iranians was airyanem vaesag 'the Iranian Expanse'. Armenia seems to have two loci of legendary origin in tradition: the regions of Van and Ararat. In the former is HayocC Jor, the Valley of the Armenians. For the latter, one might suggest a translation of Haykakan Par as 'the Armenian Place', the word per being here not 'row, line' but a Mr. loan-word, cf. OIr. pada-, Zor. Phl. pādak/pāyag 'place' (see on the latter H. W. Bailey, AI 23, 44).

4. Arm. naxarar is to be derived from a Mr. form *naxwadarr attested in a Parthian inscription, probably of the mid-third century A.D., from Kāl-i Jangēl, the inscription mentions the nhrdwr 4sstrp 'naxwadar and satrap' of Gar-ArdašIr. The word is also attested as Nohodares, the name of a Persian general under Šābūhr II mentioned by Ammianus Marcellinus, and as nwhd in Syriac, translated into Arabic as 'army chief' by Bar Bahālūl (W. B. Henning, 'A new Parthian inscription,' JRAŠ, 1953, 132-6). The name of a Manichaean presbyter, Nwghdr, is attested in Sogdian, and...
various possible Greek forms of the name occur in the works of Agathias and other writers (see A. Christensen, L'Iran sous les Sassanides, 2nd ed., Copenhagen, 1944, 21 n. 3). On the use of the Iranian prefix naxa-, naha- 'first' in Armenian, see H. W. Bailey, op. cit. n. 2, 190 s.v. nūha-. The classical work on the development of the naxarar system in Armenia is N. G. Garsoian/N. Adontz, Armenia in the Period of Justinian: The Political Conditions Based on the Naxarar System, Lisbon, 1970. In the course of this study, we shall have occasion to refer to specific aspects of this social institution as it affected ancient religious practices.

5. On the historical geography of Armenia in ancient times, see R. H. Hewsen, 'Introduction to Armenian Historical Geography,' REArm, 13, 1978-79, 77-97; S. T. Bemyan, Hayastan est 'AsxarhacCoyC1-i, Erevan, 1963; and Tc. X. Hakobyan, Hayastani patmakan 'axcharagrutCyun, Erevan, 1968. The AsxarhacCoyC1 'Geography' attributed erroneously to Movsēs XorenacC1 or the seventh-century scholar Anania ŠirakacC1, is translated into Modern Armenian and annotated in G. B. Petrosyan, Anania ŠirakacC1, MatenagratCyun, Erevan, 1979; the classic study of the text remains, however, J. Marquart, Eränsahr nach der Geographie des Ps. Moses XorenacC1, Berlin, 1901.

6. On TcC1i, see our Ch. on Anahit and Nanē; on the derivation of Dvin, Gk. Dvios (Procopius II.24), see V. Minorsky, 'Sur le nom de Dvin,' in his Iranica, Tehran, 1964, 1.

7. The major work on Armenian toponyms is H. Hübschmann, Die altarmenischen Ortsnamen, Strassburg, 1904 (=Indogermanische Forschungen, Bd. XVI, 1904, 197-490; repr. Oriental Press, Amsterdam, 1969; Arm. tr. by H. B. Filēzikćan, Hin HayocC telwoy anunnere, Vienna, 1907); Garsoian/Adontz, op. cit. n. 4, provide additional valuable information, including the modern Tk. names of many ancient sites.

8. See Ch. 5, the tomb at AłcC in Ch. 9, and the discussion of Mt. Sabalēn in Ch. 6.


10. See N. G. Garsoian, 'Prolegomena to a Study of the Iranian Aspects in Arsacid Armenia,' HA, 1976, 177-8. This article, together with 'The Locus of the Death of Kings: Iranian Armenia—the Inverted Image' and 'The Iranian Substratum of the "AgatCangelos" Cycle,' which deal with the courtly hunt, the image of Verethraghna, and other Iranian themes in the legend of the conversion of the Armenians to Christianity, is now reprinted in N. G. Garsoian, Armenia between Byzantium and the Sasanians, Variorum Reprints, London, 1985. The 'Prolegomena' is an essential review of the sources for the study of ancient Armenian culture in its relations with Iran, particularly Greek and Latin writings not discussed in this Introduction though separately treated in the succeeding chapters.
10-a. See, most recently, M. Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest*, Princeton, 1984, Ch. 10, esp. pp. 282, 292. The tenth-century Arm. historian Ṣovma Arcruni claims to have met Zoroastrian sages, noblemen from Ṣabāstān, i.e., Zabulistan. He does not state where precisely he met them, but one may surmise they came to Vaspurakan from northern Iraq.


11. See Ch. 9.

12. See Ch. 16.


13-a. A number of Arm. MSS. of the mediaeval period and later contain lists of abbreviated words mixed with hieroglyphic symbols (nsanagirx) and their Arm. meaning, called nisanagirx 'of the wise', anuanoc 'of names', Hayoc 'of the Armenian nation', or araJ'noc c 'writing of the first (men)' or simply karnabatu'aim 'abbreviation'; writers on the history of Arm. writing have compiled lists of these varying from 505 to 551 symbols, though some MSS. contain only a few score. Most of the symbols do not seem to be found in use outside these lists, and although some are familiar alchemical signs, or obviously invented, others may be very old. A t'agawor 'king', for example, recalls Hittite with the same meaning, a hieroglyph used down to Roman period in Asia Minor. The symbol for het'anos 'heathen', as recorded in A. G. Abrahamyan, *NaxamstocCyan hay gir ev gr'cutCyun*, Erevan, 1982, 53, appears to depict the ground plan of a temple within a walled temenos, with two strokes added, perhaps to eradicate the structure in condemnation:

Without further evidence, however, it is impossible to tell whether that is, in fact, what the symbol represents, or whether it preserves any memory of pre-Christian shrines, for Arm. churches, too, are often built in walled yards. (For the stroke of cancellation of something evil, though, one might compare the Arm. and Greco-Roman symbol of the evil eye, which is found in these lists and in some Arm. magical MSS.)

14-a. On Aštiṣat see J. Markwart, Südarmenien und die Tigrisquellen, Vienna, 1930, 288; on Ir. bag(a)dān 'temple', see most recently S. Shaked, 'Bagdāna, King of the Demons,' AJ 25, 1985, 517.

15. For the scope and importance of these discoveries in the linguistic field, see the survey by P. Considine, 'A Semantic Approach to the Identification of Iranian Loan-words in Armenian,' in B. Broganyi, ed., Festschrift Oswald Szemerényi, Amsterdam, 1979, esp. 213-15. Some indication of the extent of the archaeological discoveries in the Iranian field is provided by T. N. Začneprovskaya, whose bibliography of recent Soviet research on the Parthians alone—the Iranian group most important to a study of Armenian Zoroastrianism, runs to nearly twenty closely-printed pages ('Bibliographie de travaux soviétiques sur les Parthes,' Studia Iranica, Vol. 4, 1975, fasc. 2, Leiden, 243-60).


19. The critical edition was edited by L. Marišs and Ch. Mercier, Eznik de Kolb 'De Deo' (Petrologia Orientalis, Tome XXVIII, fasc. 3, 4, Paris, 1959); a translation with commentary in modern Armenian was published by A. Abrahayyan, Eznik Kołbac'i Ez'c ašandoc'c (Akandneri herk'sum), Erevan, 1970. Passages in Arm. concerning Zurvanism are analysed in R. C. Zahnner, Zurvan, Oxford, 1955. The name Zrua (pron./Zervan/, with customary reduction to zero of short MIR. -u-) is used by Arm. writers as the equivalent of Gk. Kronos, without any indication, however, that Zrua played a rôle in Arm. cult. He does not figure in descriptions of pre-Christian religion, and the Zurvanite cosmogonic myth is always distinguished as Persian rather than Armenian. It certainly cannot be employed, anachronistically and in disregard of its distinctly Sasanian Persian character, to explain the significance of episodes of the Artaxiad epic, pace Prof. Mahē ('Artawazd, les K'ajk', et le temps,' REArm, N.S. 16, 1982, in other respects a fascinating study; see Ch. 13 on Artawazd). The Old Man Time, Žuk-Zamanak, of later Arm. folklore, bears no resemblance to Ir. Zurvān.

21. There is as yet no critical edition. The Venice text of 1932 is used here; St. Malxaseanc c prepared an annotated modern Armenian translation, Pawstos Buzand, Patmutcyn Hayocc, Erevan, 1968; a Russian translation by M. A. Gevorgyan, with intro. by L. S. Khachikyan, ed. by S. T. Eremyan, Istoriya Armenii Pavstosa Buzanda, was published in Erevan, 1953; a critical study and translation by N. G. Garsoian, with notes by this writer on Iranian features of the work, is to be published shortly.

22. On the etymology of Maštocc, see Ch. 5; on the origins of the Armenian script, see Ch. 9.

23. See Ch. 8.

24. See Ch. 10.

25. See Chs. 12 and 15. On the Sasanian custom at Nō Rōz, see R. Ehrlich, 'The Celebration and Gifts of the Persian New Year (Navrūz) according to an Arabic source,' Dr. J. J. Modi Memorial Volume, Bombay, 1930, 99. I am thankful to K. P. Mistree of Bombay for his spare copy of this important book.


26-a. On Tawwarean's life and scholarly studies, which embraced Arm. history, letters, and antiquities as well as the natural sciences, see Asatur Pcaayan, 'Nargetê, bžišê, banaserê ...' Sovetakan Hayastan monthly 1985.9, Erevan, 26-7.


28. On the problems of Parthian and Sasanian Zoroastrianism with respect to Armenia, see Ch. 4. On the destruction of image-shrines in Armenia by Sasanian invaders and the establishment or endowment of fire-shrines (Arm. atrusancC) alone, see Ch. 15. On the attribution to Valaxc, see M. Boyce, Zoroastrians, London, 1973, 94, citing DMM, 112.5-11.

29. M. H. Ananikean, Armenian Mythology, 16.

30. See Ch. 2.

32. Loc. cit.

33. See Ch. 10.


37. See, for example, B. N. Arakelyan, 'Erku himmakan uk'utyunneri jevavorume hin haykakan m'akuyt'i mej,' P-bH, 1979, 2, 45-53.

38. See Garsoian, op. cit. n. 10, 190 et seq. for bibliographical references to the works of Perikhanyan and others on this subject.

39. V. Tarpinian of Karin (Erzurum) has provided information on the holiday of Ascension; Mme. M. Metakcsean of Marsovan contributed useful recollections on the Arewordik; and the Very Rev. Fr. Khajag Barsamian, a native of Arapkir, described to us the celebration in his home town of Teamend Araj, the Presentation of the Lord to the Temple. An example of an Arm. memorial-book containing material of Zor. interest, recently translated from Arm. into English for the new generation of American-Armenians unfamiliar with the old mother tongue is The Village of Parchanj, by Manuk Dzeron; see this writer's review article 'The Persistence of Memory,' Ararat, Summer 1985.

40. The series Hay azgagrutc yun ev banahyusutc yun 'Armenian ethnography and folklore' is of particular interest; G. Halajyan's vast archive on Dersim (1973), for example, provides interesting data on the worship of Ana (Anahit?) amongst the Kurdish neighbours of the Armenians. The limits of this study do not permit systematic examination of Zoroastrian survivals amongst the Kurds, especially the Yezidis. Although the core of the Yezidi cult is a mediaeval Islamic sect which is neither devil-worshipping nor ancient, scholars have noted Zoroastrian features (see G. Furlani, The Religion of the Yezidis: Religious Texts of the Yezidis, Eng. tr. by J. M. Unvala, Bombay, 1940; John Guest's history of the Yezidis, with a chapter on Yezidi religion, is in publication).
CHAPTER 1

THE ARMENIAN ETHNOGENESIS

In the third millennium B.C., two racial types, the Mediterranean and the Caucasian, inhabited the lands of the Armenian plateau. The Caucasian Hurrians, whose language is said to have belonged to the same group as the speech of various modern peoples of the northeastern Caucasus, have left us cuneiform inscriptions dating from the second half of that millennium. They were in contact with the Semitic peoples to the south of the plateau, and assimilated certain Semitic art forms into their rich native culture. It is thought that the Hurrians were auth­chthonous inhabitants of the plateau, descendants of the people of the Kuro-Araxes culture, remains of which have been excavated at sites such as Šengavit, near Erevan.

Amongst the descendants of the early Hurrians are a people whose presence on the southeastern shore of Lake Van is attested from the end of the second millennium B.C. They called their land Biainili (whence Arm. Van), and their capital Tušpa (cf. Arm. Tosp, Vantošp, Gk. Thospia). Assyrian sources call the lands to the north Uruatri, Urartu or Nairi. The archives of the palace at Aššur record a war fought by Assyria against 43 'kings of Nairi'; Šalmaneser I (1266-1243 B.C.) mentions the enemy state Uruatri in his inscriptions. N. Adontz connected this name with Gk. Bretéris and Arm. Aytruank. The Assyrian Urartu, Babylonian Uraštu (on which cf. infra) and Heb. Ararat (Dead Sea scrolls 'wrrt, * Urarat) have been connected with Arm. Ayrarat and the Alarodici of Herodotus 3.94 and 7.79. It is worth noting that the 'mountains of Ararat' upon which Noah's ark rested were probably thought to be in Gordyene, to the south of the present-day Mt. Ararat (Tk. Ağrı dağ; Arm. Azat Masik, Masis), for the fifth-century Armenian historian P'awastos Buzand writes that the Syrian St. Jacob of Nisibis climbed Mt. Sararad in Gordyene to search for pieces of wood from the Ark. The tradition connecting the Biblical Mt. Ararat with Gordyene is attributed by Alexander Polyhistor (first cent. B.C.) to Berosus (third cent. B.C.), and it is likely that it was forgotten in Armenia only gradually, as
the Christian See of Valarsapat (Ejmiacin) eclipsed in importance and authority the first See of the Armenian Church, at Astisat. Mt. Ararat (i.e., Azat Masik) was believed by the Armenians to be the abode of the legendary kaiajk and the prison of King Artawazd, much as the Iranians regarded Mt. Demavand as the place where Thraetaona had bound Azi Dahaka; it is also the highest mountain in Armenia, and must have been regarded as sacred. When Valarsapat in the province of Ayrarat came to be the Mother See of the Church, the Biblical legend must have attached to the noble peak in whose shadow the great Cathedral of Ejmiacin stands, the mountain having been re-named after the province (the acc. pl. of the original name survives as Arm. Masis).

In the second millennium B.C. in the northwest and southeast of Anatolia we find two Indo-European peoples, the Hittites and the Luwians, who were probably invaders from the Balkans. Hurrian gods are found in the Hittite pantheon, along with Indo-European divinities such as Tarhunda, a weather-god whom the Armenians were to worship as Tork, two millennia later. The mining of precious metals had been a significant feature of the economy of the Armenian Plateau since the third millennium B.C. and early in the second millennium the Assyrians established trading colonies in the south and west of the plateau, mainly along the upper Euphrates, in order to obtain the copper and tin needed to make bronze weapons. In the eleventh-ninth centuries B.C. iron began to be mined as well.

The age of certain Semitic loan-words in Armenian is uncertain, and it has been proposed that Arm. kurm, '(pagan) priest', is to be derived from Assyrian kumru rather than later Aramaic kumra. A number of villages in Armenia bore the name Til until recent times; the word derives from a Semitic form meaning 'hill' (compare Duin, Middle Persian 'hill', the capital of the last Armenian Arsacids). Armenia abounds in hills, of course, and a hill is both easily defended and economical, leaving the low-lying lands free for farming. Hills are also the high places at which Zoroastrian yazatas may be worshipped, and the temple of Nané was located at one town named Til on the upper Euphrates. Certain names of trees and fruits in Armenian may be derived from Assyrian forms, however, so it is not impossible that the above terms of importance to the study of ancient Armenian religion may have entered the language at
an early stage. A striking example of possible continuity of linguistic and cultural tradition from earliest times to the recent past may be illustrated here. N. Adontz proposed that Arm. kot'oba 'obelisk' be derived from the ancient Mesopotamian kudurru, an administrative stele or boundary marker. Such boundary markers with inscriptions in Aramaic were erected by king Artashes (Artaxias) I of Armenia early in the second century B.C. and were described by Movses Xorenac' in his History of Armenia, perhaps as much as a millennium later. In the eighth century B.C., the Urartean king Argisti I erected a similar stele with a cuneiform inscription; Christian Armenian villagers carved a Cross into the stone, transforming the ancient kudurru into a mediaeval kot'oba of the kind most common in Armenia: a xac'kar, 'Cross-stone'. Only one Semitic god, Baršamin (Ba'al Samîn, 'Lord of Heaven'), seems to have been adopted in Armenia, however; this probably occurred late in the first millennium B.C.

In the thirteenth-twelfth centuries B.C., the Anatolian peninsula was invaded by warlike tribes called 'sea peoples' by contemporary Egyptian records. It has been hypothesised that they were the Achaeans and Danaeans of Homeric epic literature. Thraco-Phrygian tribes from the Balkan peninsula may have invaded Asia Minor at the same time, while the Philistines conquered coastal lands of the eastern Mediterranean. The former destroyed the great Hittite Empire in central Anatolia early in the twelfth century B.C., and records of the Egyptian pharaoh Ramses III mention the settlement in northern Syria of Anatolian tribes displaced by them. Assyrian and Hurrian records continued to refer to the Anatolian peoples west of the Euphrates as Hittites, but called the Thraco-Phrygians Muski. Early in the twelfth century, Assyrian records mention the appearance of certain Muski tribes in the valleys of the upper Euphrates and its tributary, the Aracani (Tk. Murat Su); this area was called by the Assyrians and Urartians the country of Urumi, Urme or Arme, and this may be the Homeric 'land of the Arimoi, where Typhoeus lies prostrate.' It is noteworthy that most of the temples of pre-Christian Armenia of Zoroastrian yazatas were located in the areas of the Aracani (E. Euphrates) and the W. Euphrates to the north, where Armenians might have settled in early times. The other centres of cult were in the Araxes valley—the eastern focus of Urartean power.
Markwart proposed that the ethnic name OP. **armina-** 'Armenian' (the Babylonian version of the text renders 'Armenia' as Uraṣṭu) in the inscription of Darius I at Behistun was formed of **arme-** with the Hurrian adjectival ending **-ini-**, comp. **muškini-** 'Muški, a Moschyean'; he analysed the name of Armawir (the Orontid capital of Armenia, built in the Araxes valley on the site of the Urartean city of Argistihinili) as formed from the base **arme-*/arma-** with toponymical suffix **-vir**, the latter found in the name of the Cappadocian city Gazioura 23 (attested in Greek of the fourth century B.C. and explained as 'place of the treasury' 24).

It has been noted that for most of the period under discussion, the Armenian highlands were ruled by a number of local dynasts, the kings of Nairi, and in the Introduction it was proposed that the geographical division of the country into many cantons difficult of access has precluded the establishment of a strong, centralised power over all Armenia. Regional rulers retained considerable sovereignty, both as kings of Nairi and as naxarars in later centuries. In the ninth century B.C., a number of kingdoms of Nairi united into a single state with its capital at Tušpa, on the southeastern shore of Lake Van (cf. **supra**), and in an inscription in the Assyrian language ca. 833 B.C. Sarduri I styled himself 'king of kings'. The united provinces of Urartu posed a serious threat to Šalmaneser III of Assyria (859-24), and for over a century we find Assyrian records full of the news of victories and defeats in wars with Urartu, and the gods are questioned anxiously about the future of relations between the two states.

Urartean culture was rooted in the local tradition of the Hurrian population, yet many artistic forms appear to have been borrowed from Mesopotamia to the south and the Indo-European Anatolian peoples to the west. 25 The Urartean kings Išpuini and Menua have left us the names of some eighty Hurrian gods worshipped in Urartu, but the chief triad, equated in Urartean inscriptions with Assyrian Assur, Adad and Šamaš, included Ḥaldi, the father of the gods; Teišeba, the god of storms; and Ardini, the sun god. 26 In the ninth-eighth centuries, the Urartaeans built the temple city of Ardini (Assyr. Musasir) to Ḥaldi, who as patron divinity of the royal house periodically received sacrifices of six horses, seventeen oxen, and thirty-four sheep. 27 Urartean dedicatory
inscriptions at temple sites always list the number and kind of sacrifices to be performed regularly in honour of a god. Large temple estates such as those founded in Asia Minor by the Hittites were established on the Armenian plateau; such estates were held in later centuries by Zoroastrian temples and later still by hierarchical families and monasteries of the mediaeval Armenian Church. The institution of regular sacrifices of animals in religious observances by the Urartians must have been important as occasions for social gatherings, and as a source of charity for the poor. In a country where the physical conditions of life changed little until recent times, these ancient practices may be regarded as providing a basis for Armenian observance of Zoroastrian gahambars and for the matak sacrifices offered by Armenian Christians.

Other aspects of Urartian religion seem to have survived in later Armenian culture. The Zoroastrian yazata Verethraghna, called Vahagn by the Armenians, bears many of the attributes of the weather god Teisbea. Vahagn's consort, Astlik, whose name means 'little star' and is apparently an Armenian calque of ancient Syrian Kaukabta, Astarte, may be compared to the Hurrian goddess Hebat/Hepit. The cult of Nanë, who was worshipped in Uru as Inanna, the Lady of Heaven, may have been introduced into Armenia in Urartian times, but this is by no means certain. The Urartians sacrificed before blind portals called 'gates of God', and one of these, carved on the rock-face at the fortress of Tuspa (modern Van), is called by Armenians the 'gate of Mher', i.e., Mithra.

The Urartian king Menau (810-786) built fortresses in the area of Manazkert, Karin (Tki Erzurum) and Basen, and the Urartian expansion to the northeast continued under his successor, Argišti I (786-64), who conquered the provinces of Diauxi (Arm. Tayk), Tariuni (Arm. Darovnka), Zabaxa (Arm. Jawaxk) and other areas, including the plain of Ararat. In 782, Argišti conquered the lands around Lake Sevan, and built a fortress at Giarniani (Arm. Gani) on the river Arat to guard the route from Sevan to the plain of Ararat, where he founded two cities, Erebuni (Arm. Erevan) and Argištiğinili (cf. supra). Both sites became later Armenian cities, and Gani became a fortress of the Arm. Arsacids. Argišti colonised Erebuni with settlers from the upper Euphrates
valley, and excavations have shown that the Babylonian god Marduk and the Luwian god Ivarša were worshipped there; this mixed population presumably included Muski as well.

In the eighth century B.C. the Transcaucasia was invaded by the Cimmerians, a people probably of Thracian origin who lived on the northern shores of the Black Sea. Archaeological evidence indicates that they had maintained peaceful trading contacts with Urartu before Iranian-speaking tribes, the Scythians, forced them south en masse; many settled in Cappadocia, and their name is preserved in the Armenian toponym Gamir. The Cimmerians were followed in the early decades of the seventh century B.C. by the Scythians, who settled in the district later called Sakacene (Arm. Šakašen) after them, near Ganzaca. The Scythians are referred to in the inscriptions of the early seventh century Assyrian king Esarhaddon as Ašguza, hence Biblical Heb. Ask'anaz, a name by which Armenians sometimes refer to themselves. Scythian artifacts have been found at Teisbeaini, a city founded by the Urartean king Rusas II early in the seventh century near Erubani (at Karmir Blur, on the outskirts of modern Erevan), and classical Armenian historians trace the descent of the native Armenian kings, sons of the eponymous ancestor Hayk, numbering amongst them one Paroyr, son of Skayordi. Paroyr is to be identified with the Scythian chieftain known from cuneiform sources as Partatua and by Herodotus as Protothyes. The name Skayordi has been analysed as skay-orði 'son (of) the Scythian'. The word skay alone in Armenian came to mean 'powerful, a strong man'; with the prefix h- from Iranian hu- 'good', it means 'giant'. This development may be compared to that of NP. pahlavān 'hero, strong man' from a word whose original meaning was 'Parthian'.

By the early seventh century B.C. there was already a large Iranian population in the countries to the south and east of Urartu and on the Armenian plateau itself, and from the genealogical tradition and lexical development cited above, it would seem that the contacts between the Scythians and the ancestors of the Armenians were close and friendly in many cases. Cimmerian and Scythian invasion weakened Urartu in its struggle with Assyria, and the state ultimately fell to the new power of the Medes, who despoiled Tuspa early in the sixth century.
The Muski on the Armenian plateau seem to have lived mainly in two districts: Melid-Kammanu in the upper Euphrates valley (in the region of the later cities of Comana and Melitene, Tr. Malatya) and Arme-Šupria (the mountainous region now known as Sasun). The latter province, then as now, was a refuge for fugitives of various nationalities, rebellious and difficult to conquer; Salmaneser III failed to secure it in 854 B.C., nor were the Urartean able to subdue it for long, and it fell to Assyria only in 673 B.C., in the reign of Esarhaddon. There were Muski also in Suxmu, on the upper Euphrates, and it seems that they were variously referred to in neighbouring countries, according to the names of the provinces in which they lived and upon which those states bordered. When the Urartean kingdom fell to the Medes, the Muski country appears to have become an unbroken area comprising most of Copćc and Tarawn, i.e., from the bend of the Euphrates near Melitene to the region north and northwest of Lake Van. In Tarawn was the district of Harkć, where, according to Movses Xorenacć'i, the first Armenians lived. The Georgians to the north must have called the Muski by the name of Suxmu, hence Georgian somexi 'Armenian', while nations to the south and west would have called them, after the region of Arme-Šupria (and cf. Gk. arimpo above), Armenians.

The name of the Muski survived down to the second century A.D., when Claudius Ptolemeus described in his Geography (V.12) the Moschyan range of mountains in Kotarzene, north of the Euphrates; memory of them may survive also in the curious translation of a Greek passage by a fifth-century Armenian scholar. In their own literature, the Armenians refer to themselves mainly as hay-kć, a word which has been interpreted as 'Hittite': intervocalic |t-| becomes -y- in common Armenian words of pure Indo-European origin, such as hayr, 'father' and mayr 'mother' (comp. Gk. pater, mēter). It was proposed by P. Jensen in 1898 that Arm. hay is to be derived from *hawi-yos 'Hittite'; the Muski would have thereby adopted for themselves the name of the proud empire whose lands they had crossed in their eastward migration. Some Soviet scholars, most recently G. Jahukyan, have suggested that hay comes from a toponym 'Hayasa', and links have been sought between Armenian and Luwian.

Classical Greek writers perceived a genetic connection between Armenians and Phrygians: Herodotus called the Armenians 'Phrygian
colonists'; and Stephen the Byzantine (fifth century A.D.) quoted the
claim of Eudoxus (ca. 370 B.C.) that 'the Armenians in origin are from
Phrygia and in language they Phrygianise a great deal (τεί phonēi polla
phrygizousi). Certain Armano-Phrygian affinities have been noted,
although the evidence is not plentiful. Hesychius provides a gloss of
an Athamanian word which has been read as many, the gloss being recon­
structed through emendation as Gk. mikron 'small'. The Athamanians
lived to the west of Thessaly and their language presumably belonged
to the Thraco-Phrygian group; the word many was compared to Arm. manu,
manu- 'small'. An Epirotic word, lyrtos, has been connected to Arm.
lurt, 'greenish-grey, blue' and lur, 'joyful, serious'; and an
Illyrian word, sybina 'hunting javelin', is presented as a cognate of
Arm. suin 'spear, bayonet'. Armenian forms bear certain important
resemblances to Greek, and Jahukyan's most recent studies associate
Armenian with proto-Greek.

Contacts between the various peoples of the plateau: Muški,
Hurrian, Iranian and Semitic— are attested in personal names. We find
the name of an Assyrian agent or vassal ruler on the Assyro-Urartean
border, Bag-Tešup/b, containing the Iranian element baga-'god' and the
name of the Hurrian weather god; the name of the official is attested
from the latter half of the eighth century. In the late sixth century,
we find mention in the inscription of Darius at Behistun of an Armenian
named Arxa, son of Haldita, who led a rebellion against Darius in Baby­
lon. The name clearly contains the appellation of the supreme god of
the Urartean pantheon, Haldi. The leader of such a rebellion was prob­
ably a nobleman who opposed what he considered the usurpation of power
by Darius (a feeling which was widely shared, for provinces across the
Achaemenian Empire revolted), and his father, a member of an Armenian
noble family, might well have received a name containing the name of the
god who had been the special protector of the Urartean royal house.

As seen above, Armenian preserves faithfully a number of Urartean
place-names, and many sites have been inhabited continuously since
Urartean times. We have noted also the continuity of the institution of
periodic sacrifice of animals. Traditional Armenian reverence for the
white poplar (Arm. saws-i, Urartean šurathu) may well go back to
Urartean practices: the Urartean king Rusa planted a grove of white
poplars, and there is an Urartean bas-relief of a man standing in the
attitude of a supplicant before a tree, with a vessel (probably for a
libation) on the ground at his feet. The cult of the Tree of Life
was a common feature of many of the religions of the ancient Near East,
and we find traces of it in mediaeval Armenian folk songs. In the lat­
ter, the first stanzas describe the 'incomparable' branches and fruits
of the Tree of Life (caín kenson⁵⁹), while the final section compares the
various parts of the Tree to the Holy Family, Saints and Patriarchs of
Christianity.⁶⁰ A mediaeval manuscript shows two men in festive dress
holding a stylised Tree of Life between them; the free hand of each
holds a taper. It is likely that the song and depiction of the Tree
of Life are related to wedding customs, for another song of the same
type mentions the 'king' (cagawor), i.e., the bridegroom,⁶¹ and the
festive dress of the two men in the miniature would be most appropriate
at a wedding party.⁶²

This tradition would have been easily absorbed into Zoroastrianism,
with its reverence for plants, the creations of Haurvatát, just as
many of the attributes of Tešub or Teišeba were ascribed to Vahagn and
the ancient goddess Nanē was declared the daughter of Aramazd. Such
developments may be compared to the conscription of ancient local di­
vinities of Western Europe into the ranks of the Saints of the Catholic
Church, and to the survival of ceremonies of remote antiquity in other
Christian cultures. Yet, as Prof. B. N. Arakelyan has justly observed,
the formative stages of Armenian culture coincided with periods of
Iranian rule.⁶⁴

In Xenophon's partly fictional Cyropaedia a servant named Cyrus of
the Median king Cyaxares has been sent to deal with a rebellious Armen­
ian king. The Armenians are represented as chafing under foreign rule,
yet the king's son already bears an Iranian name, Tigranes. Xenophon's
use of this name may be anachronistic, but the case may be taken to il­
lustrate the early impact of Iranian culture upon the Armenians. It
was probably under the successors of the Medes, the Persians, that
Zoroastrianism first came to Armenia.
Notes - Chapter 1


5. P.CB III.10; Gen. viii.4.


7. On Aštišat, see Ch. 6.

8. See Ch. 13.

9. On mountains and divinity, see Chs. 3, 5.


11. See Ch. 11.


13. See the discussion of Eruaz with notes in Ch. 2, and Ch. 15.


15. See our Ch. on Anahit and Nanē; Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 293, cites as a Syriac toponym Tëšla in Mesopotamia, but does not mention Tëšil. Other towns with the name include Tëšak, with diminutive suffix -ak, and Tëšil, whose name is explained as Arm. hošablu 'a hill of earth' in local tradition, in Dersim (G. Halajyan, Dersimi hayeri azagagrut'yun, Hay azagagrut'yun ev banahyusut'yun, 5, Erevan, 1973, 80-81) and the village of Til (sic), about 10 mi. due east.
of Mus (H. F. B. Lynch, M. Oswald, Map of Armenia and adjacent countries, London, 1901). On T'cil in Ekeleac, where the temple of Nane stood, see AON, 286 and 326 on T'cil near Mus. Hübschmann hesitates to assign a Syriac etymology to T'cil (Ibid., 430).


18. N. V. Harut'yunyan, 'Argišti II-i norahayt sepagirē,' P-bH, 3, 1979, 93; see also A. Manoukian, ed., Khatchkar, Documenti di Architettura Armea, 2, Milano, 1970; on the višap-steles found in many regions of Armenia, see Ch. 6.

19. See Ch. 5.


24. Median *ganza- 'treasure' appears to have been adopted by the Achaemenians as a term in administration. OP. ganza-, preserving Median metathesis from an original form in -zn- (W. B. Henning, 'Coriander,' Asia Major, 1963, 195-9, repr. in AI, 15, 583-7). It was adopted into Hellenistic Greek as gaza (W. W. Tarn, Hellenistic Civilisation, London, 1941, 146), the form we find in the toponym Gazioura; the word is found in various north Semitic languages, and in Arm. as ganj (Arm. Gr., 126). Hübschmann (Persische Studien, 232, cit. by Henning, op. cit.) noted the word in the name of Ganzaka (Arm. Ganjak) in Atropatene; it is not unlikely, therefore, that other cities in the Armenian area are to be found named after their treasuries. The latter were probably satrapal, as distinct from the royal treasury (for MFR. evidence, see H. W. Bailey, Zoroastrian Problems in the Ninth-Century Books, Oxford, 1971, 159 n. 3, 230-1). The treasury was a place of considerable importance in Iranian administration, so carefully guarded that the Sasanians issued specific statutes to protect an investigator from accusations of theft: if he entered it (A. G. Perikhanian, ed. and trans., Sasanidskii sudabnik: Matakdan i Hzar Dastan, Erevan, 1973, 388).


27. Ibid., 225; HARK, I, 290, 294; the temple at Ardini-Musasir was sacked in 714 B.C. by Sargon, and is shown on the walls of the Assyrian royal palace at Khorsabad (B. Piotrovskii et al., 'From the Lands of the Scythians,' Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin, New York, 32, 5, 1973-4, 15).


29. See Ch. 6.

30. See Ch. 7.

31. D'yakonov, op. cit., 133; Avandapatum, 39-42; see Ch. 8.

32. Melikishvili, op. cit., 150-209.

33. Ibid., 210-41.


36. Strabo, Geog. XI.7.2, locates Sakacene on the Araxes, as does Claudius Ptolemaius, Geog. v.l2. Pliny, Nat. Hist., vi.29, refers to Sacasani; see AON, 352-3. Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 214, derives the toponymical suffix -šen from OIr., cf. Av. Šayana- 'house, dwelling' (cf. Arm. tun 'house' in Angeš Tun, see our Ch. on Tork⁶); he is followed by Bartholomae, Air.Wb., 1707, and Acaean, HAB, III, 513.

37. B. Piotrovskii et al., op. cit., 16; see HAB, I, 251 for references in Arm. literature to the Armenians as the ask̄enazean nation.

38. MX 1.21; HAB, IV, 232-3; F. Justi, Iranisches Namenbuch, Marburg, 1895, 243.


40. Ibid., 77.

41. Acaean, HAB, IV, 226; on forms with h-, see Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 180 s.v. hžawr and E. Benveniste, 'Etudes Iranienes,' TPS, 1945, 73 on Arm. mənəzand.
42. See E. A. Grantovskii, Ranyaya istoriya iranskikh plemen Perednei Azii, Moscow, 1970, 102 ff.

43. D'yakonov, op. cit., 216.

44. Ibid., 154, 172.

45. MX I.10.

46. See Ch. 11, ref. to Moschos Kolophonios.


50. Herodotus, Hist., VII.73.


56. D'yakonov, op. cit., 235 n. 116. Might Arxa simply be Arm. arkay 'king', as the Arm. leader would, like the Mede 'Xsathrita' and others, have styled himself?


62. Compare the dress of a bridegroom in A. Gevorgyan, Arhestnern և kencałè haykakan manrankarnerum, Erevan, 1978, Fig. 34:1.

63. See Ch. 12.

64. B. N. Ałakılyan, 'Erku himnakan ułłut yunneri jevavorumė hin haykakan msakuytci mej,' P-bH, 2, 1979, 45-6.

65. Xenophon, Cyrop. iii.1.7; Justi, op. cit., 324.
CHAPTER 2

ARMENIA FROM THE MEDIAN CONQUEST TO THE RISE OF
THE ARTAXIADS (585-190 B.C.)

By 585 B.C., the power of the Medes extended as far as the Halys River; they were thus in possession of the entire Arm. plateau and the former territories of Urartu. Median colonists probably settled in Armenia at that time, for the districts of Mardali and Mardastan attested in the Ašxarhaciyc 'Geography' of the seventh century A.D. bear their name. As we have seen, later Arm. writers considered Paroyr son of Skayordi 'son of the Scythian' one of their ancestors, and he is said to have received a crown from Varvakes of Media in return for his services in battle. The Armenians, as we have seen, appear to have settled in the area of Van and in the northeast, in the region of Ararat. Numerous other peoples also inhabited the plateau: Herodotus mentions the Suspyrians, Alarodians and Matieni; and Xenophon met on his march the Chaldaeans, Chalybians, Mardi, Hesperites, Phasians and Taochi. The Armenians appear to have been most favoured by the Medes, and later by the Persians, however, and Xenophon mentions two sons of the Arm. king, both of whom have Iranian names.

Little is known of the religion of the Armenians in the Median period, but it seems reasonable to suppose that it absorbed elements of the cults of the dominant Medes, as well as of the other peoples of the plateau. A small architectural model found in Soviet Armenia presents many problems, yet the paucity of material evidence in this period may nonetheless justify some discussion of it here. In 1966, excavations were carried out at the cyclopean fortress of Ast-i-blur 'Hill of the Star' on the northeastern edge of the village of Enoxavan, about five km. northwest of Ijevan, a provincial town in the valley of the river Aštev (Joraget or Joroy get) northeast of Lake Sevan in the Armenian SSR. The region is mountainous and heavily wooded; the Caucasian brown bear and wild boar still roam its forests. The finds at the site have been dated to the ninth-eighth and sixth-fifth centuries B.C., and include twenty-five graves containing various objects of adornment and
everyday use, from both periods. A large number of ceramic cups with wide lips and narrow stems were found, also of both periods and showing little difference in type, and B. C. Piotrovskii suggested that these might have been intended to contain sacrificial offerings. Two small bronze statuettes of men were also discovered. Esayan dated to the sixth-fifth century B.C. an architectural model of black fired clay found at the site. The object is a round, slightly concave disk with a crenelated wall around the edge. The wall has the outline of a gate cut into it. Slightly off center and opposite the 'gate' inside the wall is a building of two stories with a pitched roof. The ground story is square (6 x 6 cm. and 4 cm. high), with two thick side walls. The front of the chamber thus formed is entirely open; the back is partly open, too, but the aperture is narrower. The second story is 3 x 6 cm., i.e., the dimensions of the chamber below, and has arched openings to the front and back. The diameter of the whole is 18 cm., there is a hole in the plate, and the outer walls overlap, as though the model were meant to fit securely over something else.

Esayan suggested that the model might have been put over a burner, whose light would have come through the hole in the disc and illuminated the building. Professor Theodore Gaster of Columbia University suggested that the object might have been carried on a pole, like the aediculum of the cult of Attis; this would explain the hole. It is noteworthy that Xorenaci connects Anusawan son of Ara with the oracular cult of the plane trees (Arm. saws) of Armawir in this period. The legend of Ara in its essence is identical to that of Attis, and the mythical creatures called aralezk which revived Ara were remembered and believed in by Christian Armenians of the fourth century; the cult of Ara/Attis was clearly of importance in Armenian belief, so there is thus a remote possibility that the model from Astâi-blur may have been an instrument of it.

The shape of the model suggests that it might have represented a temenos, or sacred enclosure, and a temple. The plan of the whole suggests that of Taxt-i Suleimân, a Zoroastrian site 160 km. southeast of Lake Urmia at which there burned continuously the sacred fire Adur Gušnasp, one of the three great fires of ancient Iran. The site is a flat, round hill with a complex of temples and palaces within, and a
The buildings of Taxt-i Suleimān date from the Sasanian period, however. Mas'ūdī wrote that idols had once stood there. The latter assertion, if it has any basis in reality, could mean either that a pagan temple once stood there, or else that there had been an image-shrine as well (probably adjacent to the sacred fire) before the iconoclastic reforms of the Sasanians. Classical writers of the Parthian period mention an eternally-burning fire in Atropatene, and refer to a city called Phraaspa or Phraat. In Armenian sources, the latter site is called Hratn or Hratn mec ('great'), where the fire of Vēnasp burned. Although these terms are attested only in texts of the seventh century and later, the forms are obviously loans from pre-Sasanian Mīr., indicating that the Armenians had been familiar with the temple before Sasanian additions or enlargements were made, and probably before the conversion of the Armenians to Christianity. The site of Taxt-i Suleimān is unique in plan and awesome in grandeur, and could have been the original of our model.

This suggestion seems unsatisfactory, however, in view of the late date of the buildings excavated at Taxt-i Suleimān, the uncertain date of the model and the location of its discovery, for it was found in an area which would have been at the extreme edge of Armenian settlement even at the period of the greatest expansion of Armenia under Tigran II in the first century B.C. A circular wall enclosing a square building could be found nearly anywhere, and one would have hoped for unmistakable details to draw a wholly convincing parallel. Although small architectural models held by princely donors are a common feature of the bas-relief decoration of mediaeval Armenian churches, we have no such models from the ancient period and can only speculate therefore about the function the mysterious object from Ast-bī-blur may have served.

In 550 B.C., the Persian vassal-king Cyrus rebelled successfully against his Median overlord, Astyages, son of Cyaxares, having married Astyages' daughter, Mandana. Despite their earlier friendly relations with the Medes, many Armenians appear subsequently to have joined Cyrus, for Xenophon notes that Armenian armies participated in the Persian attack on Babylon in 539 B.C., and Xorenac'i relates the increasing alarm of 'Azdahak' at the Armenian Tigran's friendship for Cyrus.
Aždahak is the Mlr. form of the name of the demon found in the Avesta as Aži Dahaka (Av. aži- means 'serpent', Phl. and NP. až), a three-headed, three-mouthed, six-eyed monster made by Angra Mainyu for the destruction of the material world. The evil creature sacrifices to Anahitā in the land of Bawri, later identified with Babylon. In the Bundahišn, Dahāg kē Bēwarasp xwēnēnd '(Až) Dahāg whom they call "(he who has) ten thousand horses" is imprisoned in Mt. Damāwand after being smitten by Frēdōn (Av. Thraēstaona-), but will rise again, becoming unfettered, and will be slain by Sām. The basic elements of this epic narrative recur in the Armenian legend of the imprisonment of king Artawazd.

In the Šān-nāme of Ferdousī, Aži Dahaka appears in the arabised form Zāhīk as a Babylonian tyrant who overthrows the Iranian king Jamšīd (Av. Yima-) with popular support and then is perverted by Iblis (i.e., Satan), after which snakes spring from his shoulders. He is eventually vanquished and imprisoned in Mt. Damāwand by Ferīdūn (i.e., Thraēstaona). Korenāci repeats the latter tale in its essentials, in a form apparently of local origin, for the name Thraēstaona appears in the northwestern Mlr. form Hrudēn; he attributes it to the Persians in an appendix to the first book of his History. Xorenāci adds a significant detail to the story, however. He proposes to describe the anbaru ariajnūc ... bareharutc ēan 'first bad beneficence' of Biwraspi Aždahak, the details of which are as follows: ...

... And he wished to show to all the common life, and said that no one must possess anything as his own, but it must be in common, and all things, both word and deed, be visible. And he considered nothing in secret, but brought out into the open with his tongue the secrets of the heart, and he ordained that his friends go out and come in by night even as by day. The entire tale bears scant resemblance to the narrative concerning Tigran and Aždahak which immediately precedes it at the end of Book I of the History, and indeed Stackelberg and Akinean argued that the demon-tyrant is identified in
the tale recorded by MX in his Appendix with Mazdak, the Sasanian heresiarch of the late fifth and early sixth century whose communistic teachings horrified pious Zoroastrians. 31

The suggestion can be made therefore that Aži Dahāka was regarded as the incarnation of the demonic par excellence; the tyrant or heretic of the day might be cast in the epic mold of the monster let loose on the world. In an anonymous Armenian chronicle dated to the eleventh-twelfth century, we are informed that Mahamat ew divahar ew moleger i divën awr ēst awrē ew andēmeal i diwê xzēr i ūt ēysn ew zkapans erkat's is ew varēr i diwēn i yanapats, i lerins ev i k'aranjaws 'Mohammed was one possessed and was driven crazy by the demon day by day, and, emboldened by the demon, he broke out of his chains and bonds of iron and was led by the demon into deserts, mountains and caves.' We are also told that he was born near Rayy (i k'azāk'n Ḫū'y) and that he was an idolater and magus (ew Mahmētn ēr krapast hawatov ev mog). 32 The Kartlis Cxovreba 'Life of Georgia', a collection of tales and histories first compiled and edited by Leonti Mroveli in the eleventh century, and translated into Armenian shortly thereafter, records that Abriton ... kepec saandov' zisxenn avjic yerkat's, z kok cec cæaln Biwrâsp, yanbnak lerinn Rayisay, orpēs ev greal ē i mateans Parsic (Arm. trans.) 'Abriton [i.e., Thraetaona] ... bound the prince of snakes in irons, the one called Biwrâsp, by means of spells [ažandovk', read ažandi'w'], in an uninhabited mountain of Rayis [i.e., Rayy], as is written in the books of the Persians.' 33

It would seem that Mohammed was regarded in the popular imagination of the Armenians as a latter-day incarnation of Aži Dahāka: born in the Median district of Rayy, possessed by a demon, and bound in chains from which he broke loose to bring evil to the world. Mazdak had undoubtedly been regarded in a similar manner by the Zoroastrians whose version of the epic cliche Xorenac'i recorded. 34 Aži Dahāka/Aždahak/Zahhāk is always a foreign tyrant—either a Mede or a Mesopotamian—to Persian and Armenian writers, but never a Turanian. It is likely that the form of the myth was elaborated in western Iran, for the enemy lands are not those we should find in eastern Iranian traditions. The depiction of Zahhāk with snakes springing from his shoulders is an iconographic detail whose origin should be sought in
the West, also, and we find Nergal, the lord of the underworld, shown thus in a bas-relief from Hatra. The Iranians must have appropriated this image of a chthonian deity, perhaps for the depiction of Yima, the ruler of the dead. A baleful little figurine from Sogdia, probably of post-Sasanian date, reproduces the image in detail, and it is unlikely that the object was a statue of an epic monster rather than of a supernatural figure. One would suggest therefore that the statuette was of apotropaic function. Zoroastrian tradition preserves two separate narratives concerning Yima; in one he dies and goes down to live in a happy underground abode, while in the other version, he commits sin, wanders unhappy, and dies. It is the latter version which we find in the Šāh-nāme, and the former, it has been suggested, in certain details shows the influence of Mesopotamian traditions. Perhaps Āži Dahaka in the epic is contaminated by an image of Yima appropriated from Nergal (Zahhāk succeeds Jamsīd in the Šāh-nāme).  

MX I:24–31 relates the battle of Tigran son of Eruand, king of Armenia, in alliance with Cyrus the Persian against Āzdahak (Gk. Astyages) the Mede. While Xorenac in the Appendix to Book I discussed above provides a basically unretouched version of the Iranian epic, albeit interspersed with his own sarcastic comments about its stupidity, in the body of his History he attempts to rationalise as history the Armenian folk traditions he has collected. It is possible that the superficial similarity of the names Astyages and Āzdahak may have contributed to their equation, but in view of the wide range of applications of the literary theme to historical personages from the Median to Islamic periods, as discussed above, such an explanation is unnecessary. The similarity of the names of historical tyrant and mythological monster may merely have served to strengthen a parallel already drawn. Xorenac omits any mention of Āzdahak as possessing the attributes of a dragon or monster, but notes that the Armenians of Golt's chant songs żArtaşi ew zordwóc nora, yıšelo aylabanabar ew zzarmic Āzdahakay, višapazuns znose kočelov: Z1 Āzdahakād i mer lezus ĕ višap. Ayl ew ças asen gorcel Argawanay i patiw Artaşi, ew xardawenak leal nmin i tačarin višapac 'about Artašēs and his sons, recalling in allegory also the progeny of Āzdahak, calling them descendents of the dragon, for that [word] Āzdahak is "dragon" in our
language. And they say Argawan made a feast in honour of Artašēs, and there was a plot against the latter in the palace of the dragons (MX I.30).

The Armenians probably in the course of time cast the history of their struggle in alliance with Cyrus against the Medes in the form of the old Western Iranian epic of Thraštaena and Aži Dahaka. The legend appears to have been elaborated at least five centuries after the events it describes, though, for the hero Tigran seems to have acquired the added features of the Artaxiad king Tigran II (95–56 B.C.), whose short-lived conquests included large areas of Media Atropatene. Tigran is called by Xorenac the son of Eruand sakawakeac 'the short-lived'; we shall discuss shortly the origins of the Orontid or Eruandid dynasty, the first royal house of the Armenians.

In 521–520 the Armenians revolted against Darius I (521–486) together with nearly all the other provinces of the Achaemenian empire established by Cyrus. Struve suggested that the verb used in the Behistun inscription to describe the assembling of the 'rebels' against Darius, hagmatē, refers normally to the scattered forces of a defeated army; he concludes that the fighters against Darius were Sakas. It seems more likely, however, that many Armenians would have regarded Darius as a usurper, as did the peoples of other provinces, and the revolt would not have been confined to one particular ethnic group. Armenia was divided into two satrapies, the 13th and 18th, by the Persians, and several sites mentioned in the inscriptions at Behistun have been identified in the south and west of the Armenian plateau, in the provinces of Azıniğ and Körçayk. The latter region was the 13th satrapy, inhabited by a people Herodotus calls polyprobatoi 'rich in flocks' who brought twenty thousand colts to the court of Achaemenian Great King every year for the feast of Mithrakān, saving others to sacrifice to the Sun. Horses were in Zoroastrianism associated with the Sun and Mithra. The 18th satrapy included the regions around Ararat; we shall discuss below the principal sites of the Achaemenian period from that region: Arin-berd (Urarteian Erebuni) and Armawir (Urarteian Argiştihinili).

The Armenians of the 13th satrapy traded with Babylonia, sending their wares down the Euphrates in round boats made of hides.
land was traversed by the royal Achaemenian road that linked Sardis with Susa; according to Herodotus, the road ran some 350 km. through Armenia, with fifteen stations along the way. \(^{52}\) In 480 B.C. the Armenians fought under Xerxes in Greece, armed, we are told by Herodotus, like the Phrygians, \(^{53}\) although in the bas-relief of subject peoples at Persepolis the Armenians are attired more in the style of the Medes. \(^{54}\)

In 401-400 B.C., Xenophon (430-355) and the ten thousand Greek mercenaries who had taken service with Cyrus the Younger against his brother Artaxerxes II Mnemon (404-358) retreated after their defeat at the battle of Cunaxa, north across Armenia to the Black Sea. Several itineraries have been suggested on the basis of Xenophon's description in the *Anabasis*. \(^{55}\) The Armenians spoke Persian; the Greeks conversed with village chiefs (Gk. ῥωμάρκχοι) and lowly women alike through a Persian-speaking interpreter. One village headman refused to partake of food together with the Greeks, but ate only with his own countrymen, \(^{56}\) perhaps in adherence to the Zoroastrian injunction not to dine with infidels. \(^{57}\) At the time of Xenophon's journey, Armenia was ruled by a satrap, Orontas, Arm. Eruand. \(^{58}\) According to Strabo, the Orontids traced their descent from Aroandes, whose ancestor was Hydarnês, one of the companions of Darius I and the head of one of the seven great noble clans of the Persians. \(^{59}\) This claim to Persian descent, presumably made by the Orontids themselves, is important evidence for Iranian influence in Armenia in the Achaemenian period, in a country where family and lineage are the foundation of all social relations. According to Xenophon and Plutarch, the Orontids had a blood-tie with the Achaemenids themselves through the marriage of the daughter of Artaxerxes II, Rhodogunê, to Orontês (=Orontas), the satrap of Armenia at the time of Xenophon's campaign. Xorenacōi (II.37) mentions 'a certain Eruand, son of an Arsacid woman' (Eruand omn, ordi knōj Arsakunwoy); the Arsacids by the time of his writing had supplanted the Achaemenians as the dynasty which conferred hereditary power and prestige; Arsacid descent was considered a sufficient claim to legitimacy in Armenia through Christian times, hence perhaps the anachronism. It is to be noted that the Iranian Arsacids themselves claimed Achaemenian descent, although it is apparent they did not press this claim as vigorously as did the Sasanians after them (who were Persians and could therefore justify it
It is possible that the Orontids came in fact from the Oronandes tribe east of Gaugamela, which Manandyan connects with Aruanteunik in Vaspurakan (Arvanthunik, east of Van, on the Map in AON), the claim to Achaemenian descent being then a purely fictitious one of propaganda value. A Greek inscription found near Pergamon in western Asia Minor mentions that one Orontes de Artasyras, apostas apo Artaxerxes, to genos baktrios, apostas apo Artaxerxes, person basileos ekratesen ton pergameneon... 'Orontes (son of) Artasyras, a Bactrian, having revolted against Artaxerxes king of the Persians, ruled (the city of the people) of Pergamon...'. Tiracyan proposed the following chronology of events: in 386-84, Orontes and Tiribazus, the hyparchos of western Armenia (who presumably administered other areas than Orontes but was subordinate to him in rank), fought king Euagoras of Cyprus; in 362, an Orontes became satrap of Mysia; and in 360 he became satrap of Armenia again; in 354, Demosthenes mentioned him in an oration.

The forces of the Armenians who fought Alexander under Darius III Codomannus (337-330) at Gaugamela were led, according to Arrian, by Orontes and Mithraustes, and it has been suggested that they led the armies of Greater and Lesser Armenia respectively. These areas would have corresponded to the 18th and 13th satrapies. With the collapse of the Achaemenian empire and its division amongst the generals of Alexander, Armenia seems to have remained largely free of Macedonian Greek rule, although the mediaeval Persian poet Niẓāmi, preserving a shadowy memory of Iranian religious resistance to Hellenism, wrote that Alexander abolished the worship of fire in Armenia. Alexander sent a satrap, Mithrēnēs, apparently a Persian of Asia Minor, to Armenia (probably Lesser Armenia), but in historical lists of the regions of Alexander's realm Armenia is not mentioned, and Justin in his Epitome of Pompeius Trogus cites the boast of Mithridates Eupator of Pontus that Armenia was not conquered either by Alexander or by any of his successors. A Greek general, Menon, was hanged by the local inhabitants of Syspiratis (Arm. Sper), in the northeast of Armenia, and in 317 Armenia was under the control of a 'satrap' Orontes, according to Diodorus Siculus and Polyaeus. It was this Orontes or Ardatēs who placed his forces at the disposal of king Ariarathēs of Cappadocia when that land was conquered by the Macedonian general Eumenes, and who sent Eumenes a...
letter 'written in Syrian characters' (Gk. συρικὸς γεγραμμένος γράμμασιν)—73 i.e., in the chancellory Aramaic of the Achaemenian administration. In 303-2, Seleucus pledged to respect the sovereignty of Ariarathēs II of Cappadocia, and it is likely that Armenia under Orontēs was 'soumise de plein gré', in the words of Markwart.74 The country may have been regarded by the Seleucids as a vassal state, but there is no evidence that they made any further attempts to place Greeks in positions of power, nor were Hellenistic poleis founded in Armenia on the model of other provinces of the defeated Persian Empire. Outside Armenia, Orontēs was called 'satrap', but in his own country he was Ἐβροντῆ(s) basile(us) 'Ebrontēs the king'.75 The latter appellation is found in a Greek inscription from Armawir; the contents of the seven inscriptions found there will be discussed below. It is interesting to note here, however, that the form of the king's name, Ebrontēs, is closer to the Armenian form of the name, Eruand, than any other spelling attested.

It is evident that a single Orontēs did not reign over the entire period from the retreat of Xenophon to the reign of Seleucus; such a feat of longevity would be impossible, even in a region which produced such long-lived monarchs as Mithridates Eupator of Pontus (ca. 131-63 B.C.) or the Sasanian Šābuhr II (reigned A.D. 309-79). It is probable that we are dealing with a dynastic name applied to successive rulers of the Orontid house, much as various Arsacid kings were called Arsaces, after the eponymous founder of the royal clan, in later centuries. The tradition of the Achaemenian foundations of the Orontids characterises the Iranian orientation of the dynasty. In the first century B.C., Antiochus I of Commagene (69-34) traced his Orontid descent on the paternal line to the Achaemenians, and on the maternal side to the Macedonians, claiming a double prestige and legitimacy thereby. Various Armenian noble families also claimed Orontid descent, well into the Christian period. Although historical material for the Orontid period is scanty, Toumanoff proposed a king-list for Armenia from 401-95 B.C. of Orontid rulers in Greater Armenia and Sophene in his study (The Orontids of Armenia).76

The Orontids, claiming Achaemenian descent, seem to have followed also the religion of the Persian rulers, and it may be useful here to
review some of the evidence we possess about the faith of the Persians in the fifth century B.C. It has been proposed that Zoroastrianism gradually came to the Medes from the east, where it was already an old and well-established faith among the eastern Iranian peoples. Although Zoroastrianism presumably encountered at first opposition from the Western Iranian Magi, the Persians adopted the religion and suppressed opposition to it. Darius worshipped Ahura Mazda and opposed drauga, the Lie; Xerxes (486-46) invoked Arta (Av. Aša-, 'cosmic order') and condemned the daivas (Av. daēva- 'evil god, demon'), again calling upon 'Ahuramazdā with the gods' (OP. A uramazdā ... hadā bagaibi). The ancient word baga- 'god', used instead of the word yazata- 'a being worthy of worship' preferred in the Avesta, is found often in Armenian usage; the temple of Aramazd stood at Bagawan, which Agathangelos interpreted as Parthian for Arm. Dicc-awan, 'town of the gods'. In an inscription at Susa, Darius praised 'the great god Ahura Mazda, who makes wonderful this earth' (OP. baga vazraka Auramazdā hya fraša ahyayā būniyā kunautiy); in this case, the reference is clearly to the world at present, but fraša- is used also in Zoroastrian texts in connection with the concept of renewal or of making wonderful the world, an idea central to Zoroastrian eschatology, and a derivative of fraša- is found in this sense in Armenian usage. Herodotus describes Persian rituals, which included reverence for the elements, presumably a reference to the cult of the Ames Spēntas, the supernatural Bounteous Immortals who preside over the various good creations of Ahura Mazda. For the worship of fire, the pyraithoi founded by the later Achaemenians in Asia Minor are well attested from Classical sources.

Zoroaster himself is not mentioned on Achaemenian monuments, nor indeed is his name to be found in the inscriptions of the Sasanians, who were undoubtedly Zoroastrians. The earliest reference in Western literature to Zoroaster is to be found in Plato, Alcibiades I, 122, ca. 390 B.C., and other citations of still earlier writers mention the name of the Prophet. But these attestations of his name must have come to Greece from the Achaemenian Empire. A tradition preserved by Diodorus Siculus, Eusebius and Arnobius presents Zoroaster as the king of Bactria fighting Semiramis; the accurate tradition of the eastern Iranian
origin of Zarathustra has apparently been contaminated by an epic of Iranian struggle against Assyria, to which we may compare the Armenian legend of Ara and Šamiram (Semiramis) preserved by Xorenacci, or the tale of Vahagn and Barsam preserved by Anania of Širak. Xorenacci, quoting various sources, speaks of Zaradast mog arxcay Baktriac'woc or e Makac' 'Zradast [i.e., Zarathustra] the magus, king of the Bactrians, that is, of the Makc (MX I.6).

There exists also a tradition according to which Er, the Armenian in Plato, Republic, X, is to be identified with Zoroaster; this claim can be traced back to the third century B.C. and would indicate that Armenia was considered a Zoroastrian land, even as Media had come—mistakenly—to be regarded as the birthplace of the Prophet as the Zoroastrian religion took root there. According to Arnobius, this Armenian Zoroaster was the grandson of Hosthanes or Zostrianos, a Median magus. It is this Ostanes to whom Hellenistic and Roman writers attribute the spread of Persian 'magic' to the West. The equation could have been made because of the prophetic role of Er (or Ara, in MX) as a mortal who visits the next world and returns to tell of it; such a feat would be worthy indeed of a great spiritual leader. Both Ara and Zoroaster king of the Bactrians are represented as foes of Semiramis, and this coincidence may have led to the equation of the two. It is a coincidence because the conflict of Ara and Šamiram is not merely the tale of a war between two nations, as seems to be the case with Zoroaster and Semiramis; it seems rather to present beneath Xorenacci's historical colouration the myth of the passion of Cybele and Attis.

Certain Armenian terms of religious significance aside from elements such as arta- and baga-, discussed above, may derive from Old Iranian, probably Old Persian, rather than from northwestern Middle Iranian (Parthian and Atropatenian), the source of most Armenian loanwords from Iranian. The name of the first month of the Armenian calendar, Nawasard, may be traced to OP. Navasard; less likely is Acaean's derivation of the name of the eleventh month, Margac, from OP. *Markazana. His etymology of Mareri, the name of the tenth month, from a Mir. form of YAv. Maidhāiyra, the fifth gahāmbār of the Zoroastrian calendar of feasts, is more convincing, for that obligatory feast was celebrated in the tenth month of the Zoroastrian calendar,
Dadvah (Phl. Dai), which would coincide thus with Mareri. 99 The seasonal festivals are held in Eastern Iran to have predated Zoroastrianism, 100 but the naming of a month after one of them would in Armenia be Zoroastrian. As we shall see below, the Armenians, like the Iranians, 101 also used the Seleucid calendar. The name of the yazata Spénta Ardaiti is attested in Armenian in two forms, Spandaramet, probably from NW Mir., and the common noun sandaramet 'the underworld', which appears to derive from a SW (possibly Old) Iranian form with initial sw-. 102

Other archaeological and literary evidence suggests the presence of Zoroastrians in Armenia in the Orontid period. A chalcedony or crystal gem found at the village of Vardak'ar in the Art'ik region of Soviet Armenia depicts a crowned man with a knife fighting a lion which stands on its hind legs facing him, the same height as he. The scene recalls the Achaemenian bas-relief at the 'hall of a hundred columns' of Persepolis and the later carvings of the Parthian king fighting a lion in hand-to-hand combat at Tang-i Sarvak. 103 Achaemenian reliefs and seals show lions or leonine monsters, and it has been proposed that the scene is of mythic or religious significance; 104 it may represent the king as a powerful hero, or as a champion against the forces of evil. An everpresent symbol on the seals and bas-reliefs of the Achaemenian kings is the figure of a man enircled at the waist by a winged circle. The precise meaning of the sign is still disputed, 105 but we find a version of it on a silver coin of Tiribazus (see above). The man whose torso is seen thus rising from a winged disk is not a stiff, clothed Oriental monarch, though, but a naked, muscular Hellene, perhaps Tiribazus himself—an Iranian ruler in Greek Asia Minor whose image would be recognisable as regal and heroic to Greek and Iranian alike.

Silver rhytons and shallow silver lotus-pattern bowls of Achaemenian style have been found at Erznka (Erzincan) and Arin-berd (Urarteian Erebuni), 106 and an 'apadana' seems to have been added to an Urarteian structure at the latter site, indicating the adoption of Persian architectural conventions. An Urarteian temple there has traces of ashes dated to the Achaemenian period, leading some archaeologists to suggest that it had been converted to a fire-temple, 107 presumably in the late Achaemenian period.
Throughout most of the reign of the Orontids, the capital of Armenia was Armawir, a city lying on the road from Ganzaca through Naxijewan (Gk. Naxouana) to Colchis, on the river Araxes. The foundation of the city was attributed by Xorenaci to Aramayis, one of the descendants of the eponymous ancestor of the Armenians, Hayk; it may be inferred from this legend that the Armenians traditionally regarded the city as very ancient. There was a grove of plane or poplar trees at Armawir (Arm. saws(i)) named after Armenak, the father of Aramayis. Ara, who died fighting Semiramis, had a son, Anusawan, surnamed Saws or Sawsanuer ('dedicated to the saws') ka anzi jamneal ēr ēst paštemanc i sawsisn Aramanekay, or yArmawir: zoroc zsalart ucn sawsawiw, ēst hendart ew kam sastik śnōeloy odoyn evet ostoc śarūn, sovorec an i hmaya ašxarhis haykezanc: ew ęys bazum żananks 'for he was dedicated to the (religious) services at the plane trees of Aramanek at Armawir; they studied the sough of the foliage according to the gentle or powerful blowing of the wind, and the movement of the branches, for divination for this country of the Armenians, and for a long time yet' (MX I.20).

Such divination was practised by the Urartians, and various cults connected with trees and plants have survived in Armenia down to recent times. Xerxes made offerings to a plane tree in Lydia. The Eastern Plane tree, according to an Armenian writer, can live up to 2000-3000 years, and a few of the trees in the village of Meki, Arm. SSR, are 700-800 years old. The only grove of them in the country is in a nature preserve near Cav in the district of Sap'an. The tree was planted in churchyards, but the custom died out in the tenth-thirteenth centuries, at about the same time as Mxit'ar Goš composed a fable against the plane tree (sösi) in which its opponent, the useful but humble cotton plant (bambakeni) argues: 'You have no fruit, your wood is bad for building and even for burning, nor is your shade comfortable for men to rest in.' There exists an Armenian tradition according to which the sösi is sacred because it sheltered Jesus when his enemies were pursuing him; this legend justifies the pre-Christian tradition of the sanctity of the tree.

Xorenaci provides a great deal of information about the temples founded at Armawir, although his chronology is faulty; he attributes
these to Vałarsak (Pth. Valaxš; Latin Vologaesus), the Parthian Arsacid king of the first century A.D. whose brother was crowned Tiridates I of Armenia. Vałarsak mehean șineal yArmawir, endris hastatē aregakan ew lusni ew iwroc nasneac 'built a temple' at Armawir to the sun and moon and his ancestors' (MX II.8). The deification of kings was common in the Hellenistic age throughout the Near East; the Parthian kings called themselves theopatōr 'whose father is (a) god', and through the Sasanian period the King of Kings was regarded as čhhr i yazdēn 'of the seed of the yazatas'. The cult of the royal ancestors (Av. fravaši, Arm. āuro(r)t) is well attested in both Iran and Armenia. Xorenac'i attributes to Artasēs (Artaxias I, early second century B.C.) the establishment in Armenia of images brought from the Greek cities of Asia Minor, of the gods Artemis, Heraklēs and Apollōn, which were used in the shrines of yazatas with whom the foreign divinities were equated. The use of images in Zoroastrian worship seems to have been established by Artaxerxes II Mnemon, and was suppressed by the Sasanians, both for theological reasons and perhaps in an effort to centralise the religious hierarchy. According to Xorenac'i, Eruand (probably Eruand IV, ca. 212-200 B.C.) moved the royal capital from Armawir to his newly-founded city of Eruandasat, 'Joy of Eruand', which had better access to water supplies and was more easily defended than the hill and fortress of Armawir. The sacred images were removed from Armawir and taken to a site forty stadia to the north above the river Azurean, which was named Bagaran. Xorenac'i explains that Eruand feared that Eruandasat could not be securely guarded, were the images to be transferred there, what with i gən cw i zohel and ašxarhi 'the whole country coming to sacrifice there' (MX II.40). Eruand appointed his brother Eruaz k<rmapet 'high priest' of the temples at Bagaran. [The word k<rmapet is formed of the Aramaic or Akkadian loan-word k<urm 'priest' (by metathesis from kūmrā or kumru), with MIR. suffix -pet (cf. OIr. -pati) 'lord, ruler'. The Semitic word may be derived from the triliteral root KMR 'to be sombre, to be prostrated in adoration'. In Hebrew, kōmēr means 'pagan priest', in opposition to the Jewish kōhēn 'member of the Levite tribe, priest' (cf. Christian Arm. k<ahay 'priest').] The priests of the pagan Semites north of Israel—and south of Armenia—were called kūmrā: the Christian Acts of
Sharbil and Barsamiya mention the kmr' rb' 'great priest' of Hatra; and
Sharbil is called the rš' w pqwd' dklhn kwrm' 'chief and leader of all
the priests' of Edessa. When Artases took power, the images at
Eruandasat and Bagaran were moved yet again, to the new city of Artašat
(Artaxata), but the statue of 'Apollo' was set up on the road outside
the city.132 Eruaz was murdered, and a new high-priest, a friend of
Artašes named Mogpastačē, was appointed; it was thought, perhaps, that
Eruaz would have harmed the new dynasty that had just overthrown and
killed his brother.133

It appears that entombment of corpses was practised by the Oron­
tids, even as it was by the Achaemenians and their successors, for ref­
ERENCE IS MADE BY XORENAC'I TO A ROYAL NECROPOLIS AT ANGL,134 AND
ARTASES IS SAID TO HAVE BURIED THE MURDERED EURAND WITH FUNERARY MONU­
MENTS (maharjanawk), SHOWING THE PROPER HONOUR DUE ONE OF 'ARSACID'
BLOOD (xminuac aršakunwoy, lit. 'Mixture of the Arsacid', cf. Arm.
diwc' axmān 'Mixed with the gods', i.e., of their nature, divine).135

The name 'Arsacid' is obviously an anachronism; in the following chap­
ter we shall see that Artašes was to refer to himself in his inscrip­
tions as an Orontiād, and we shall see elsewhere that under successive
Armenian dynasties the king, even if opposed, received the respect due
his hereditary position, which was defined by the sacrosanct dynastic
structure of Armenian society.

Although Armawir's statues were removed, one assumes the grove of
plane trees there was left in place. Oracles would still have been
sought and recorded there even after the foundation of Eruandašat and
Bagaran. Seven Greek inscriptions were found at Armawir, whose con­
tents and purpose remain uncertain, although attempts have been made
somehow to link them with the oracular temple which presumably was
located at the site. On the basis of palaeographic evidence, the inscrip­
tions have been dated to the early second century B.C. or later.
Three were found on one stone 1.5 x 2.9 m. in size, in 1911. The top
of the stone has numerous cup-shaped depressions and little staircases
Cut into the rock; the contours suggest that the whole may have been a
model of Armawir itself. The second stone, with four inscriptions, was
found nearby in 1927.136

The first inscription, possibly a quotation from Hesiod or an
ORACULAR PREDICTION BASED ON AN EVENT OF THE GREEK POET'S LIFE, HAS
been interpreted to read as follows: 'Hesiod, famed once, after he lost his land and paternal inheritance, himself encouraged Persês as befits younger brothers.' The Greeks regarded the original Persês, son of Perseus and Medea (after whom Hesiod's brother was named very much later), as the eponymous ancestor of the Persians, just as Medea was the mother of the Medes. But this is probably coincidence. Hesiod's writings might be engraved, as here; Pausanias saw Works and Days inscribed in lead, on Mt. Helicon.137 The second inscription appears to contain verses of Euripides, and has been compared to the inscriptions in Greek metric verse found at Susa from the first half of the first century B.C.138 The text refers to a warlike goddess, it seems, who threatens evil to unjust men. Boltunova identified the goddess as Anāhitā, while Manandyan professed to see in the lines the goddess Artemis ruling that land be divided fairly. A number of identical gold pendants found at Armavir and elsewhere in Armenia may have been considered to depict Anāhitā (Arm. Anaht) by the Arms., but they are images of Isis, brought from abroad or made on foreign models. At the end of the inscription Trever reads the words phora theēlaton, which she interprets to mean '(an oracle) sent by the god through the blowing of the wind.'139 The third inscription, which, according to the excavators in 1911 had the words phora theēlaton near it, is five lines in length and seems to read: 'The four horses, the yoke of Euthycharmiōs, one (?) pinakion of Pēlamys.' A bronze plaque (Gk. pinakion) was found at Dodona which shows a chariot and four horses, and a slot-like niche was cut into the stone just below Armavir inscription 3 which is the right size for such a plaque. The Greeks believed that Apollo rode in a four-horsed chariot; he also dispensed oracles.140 Tir, with whom the Armenians identified Apollo, was a solar divinity, and the Armenians, according to Xenophon (see above), sacrificed horses to the Sun, yet the names in the inscription leave no doubt that it was made by a Greek. Armenians, unlike some Egyptians, Syrians, and Jews, do not seem to have used Greek names in pre-Christian times.

What is notable about the first three inscriptions is their belonging to an exclusively Hellenic cultural sphere: the first mentions Hesiod; the second seems to be a fragment of Greek verse, probably Euripides; and the third has two Greek names. Inscriptions 4-7, from
the stone found in 1927, differ significantly, in that nearly every one
(with the possible exception of 6) has some obviously Oriental aspect:
4 contains the names Mithras and Ebrontēs; 5 contains the name
Pharnake; and 7 mentions Armenia twice (a certain Noumēnios mentioned
in 7 appears also in 6). If the first three inscriptions may be inter-
preted as having some oracular significance, then the last four appear
more like copies of documents: 5 is a list of the months of the
Seleucid calendar; 4 and 6 are in the style of the Greek formula
valetudinis; and 7 seems to be a report on the violent death of a king
of Armenia, although it is in verse and may therefore just as likely be
a funerary inscription. There does not appear to be any necessary con-
nection between inscriptions 1-3 and 4-7, unless one considers that the
temple of Tir as described by Agathangelos was a place both of inter-
pretation of dreams and of priestly instruction. One notes that
Xorenac makes reference to οὐράνιον (h)Ρωμαίος, γραψόν mehenaken
patmut 'Olympius, priest of Ani, writer of temple histories', perhaps invented by Xorenac to
explain the presence of such inscriptions as those found at Armawir.
The inscriptions of Armawir could be oracles (1-3) and significant docu-
ments of an archive (4-7) copied in stone to ensure their preservation.
Trever noted that the style of the writing has the appearance of rapid
handwriting rather than of the formal epigraphic type of the time.
If her supposition is correct, it would reinforce the suggestion that
inscriptions 4-7 are select copies from a larger original store of
documents.

Inscription 4 reads: 

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ORASILEUS AR/ MADOEIRON/ MITHRAEBRONTE/
BASILEI KHAIKEIN/ IERROESUANEKHOI/HYGIAINEIN DEKA ITA EG/
CONAUTOHYGIAI/ NON TEN BASILEI/AN DEATELESEIS/ TE SIBIOU/
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which Boltunova interprets as follows: 'King Ar(taxias) Madoeiron Mithras to
King Ebrontēs sends greetings. If you are well it would be good, that
his descendants might be well. Being healthy you will complete the
reign.' Trever suggested that AR in the first line might be connected
directly to the second line, producing ARMADOIRON 'of the people of
Armawir(?). Ebrontēs is probably Eruand, but it is not known
whether Mithras is an epithet of the king (cf. HELIOS TIRIDATES in the
Greek inscription of the mid-first century A.D. from Garni) or
another king, but the use of the word BASILEUS 'king' twice, once in
the nominative and once in the dative, indicates that there are two
kings, and since Mithras is in the nominative, it probably refers to
the king who is MADOERION rather than to Eruand. The meaning of
MADOERION is not clear. One might suggest tentatively that the word
comes from *Mados 'Mede' and haireō 'I seize' and means 'conqueror
of the Medes'; the use of such a title could be justified by the Armenian
epic tradition of the battle of Tigran and Azdahak, as we have seen
above, the heroic deeds of one member of a dynasty were the inheritance
of his descendants.

Inscription 5 is a list of the Macedonian months used by the
Seleucids and by native dynasties of the Near East in the Hellenistic
period: DIOS I LA I APELOS AYA I PERITIOS DNI I DISSTROS OS I XANDIKOS/
ARTEMESIOS I DAISIOS I PANEMOS I LOIOS I CORTIAS I HYPERBERETAIOS I
PHARMAKÊ HYGIENEUANEKHOU. It is interesting to note that the name of
the month of Xanthikos is written with a delta, as though at the time
the list was compiled that letter had already come to be pronounced as
a fricative, dh, as in Modern Greek.147 Trever, objecting to the sug­
gestion that PHARMAKÊ in the last line referred to King Pharnaces of
Pontus (190-69 B.C.), pointed out sensibly that the formula '(to)
Pharnakes, might he be healthy!' seems somehow inappropriate at the end
of a list of months unless the name is to be read as Pharmakês, the
Moon-god of Cappadocia and Mysia148 referred to by Strabo (hieron Ménos
Pharnakou 'temple of Mên Pharmakês',149), who might be considered the
guardian of the lunar months. Xorenac1 mentions the name P'Arnak once,
as a descendant of Ara (I.19). The 24th day of the month in the Armen­
ian calendar is called lusn-ak ('little moon'),150 and the Zoroastrian
religion enjoins its adherents to recite at least thrice a month during
their night prayers the Mâh niyâyes in honour of the moon.151 One re­
calls that statues of the sun and moon (i.e., Helios or Mithra, and Mên,
whose Asiatic image was widely known in the Hellenistic world, as Mâh,
the Moon-god) were placed in the temples of Armawir (MX II.8). In medi­
aeval Armenian calendrical texts, the first phase of the moon is called
mahik or naxa-mahik, from Mîr. mâh, 'moon', with Arm. diminutive -îk
(see above);152 we have noted above the influence of Iranian upon Ar­
menian astrological terminology.
The sixth inscription from Armawir is a short formula of greeting addressed to one 'Noumenios the Greek' (ΝΟΥΜΕΝΙΟΣ ΗΛΕΝΙ), and the same Noumenios addresses to Philadelphō (inscription 7) what appears to be an epitaph on the violent death of the king of Armenia—Eruand IV, according to Trever. The inscription mentions [ΚΑΛΩΝ ΑΡΜΕΝΙ[Ν] ΚΗΡΩΝ] 'the beautiful land of Armenia' and a city there called Kainapōlī(s), i.e., the 'new city', which Trever explains as Artaxata, the capital built by Artaxias. If these suppositions are correct, the inscriptions may be dated to ca 190 B.C. or later. The presence of Greeks at Armawir during this period may be explained by the military successes of the Seleucid king Antiochus III against the Armenian Orontid Xerxes (after 228-ca. 212). Orontes IV (ca. 212-ca. 200) apparently regained control of the kingdom, but a Greek presence seems to have remained, for the two local dynasts who rebelled against him ca. 200 B.C., Artaxias (Arm. Artašēs) in north-eastern or Greater Armenia, and Zariadrēs (Arm. Zareh) in the south-western regions of Sophene and Acilisene, are described by Strabo as stratēgoi 'generals' of Antiochus III. Greeks might well have remained in Armenia following the conquests of Antiochus III, and they would have been present also to report the murder of Eruand IV. Sophene, it is remembered, had under Achaemenian administration been part of a separate satrapy of Armenia, and in the mid-third century B.C. Sophene and Commagene had taken their independence of Greater Armenia. Following the reign of Arsames (after 228) Sophene separated from Commagene; the latter province continued to be ruled by its mixed Macedonian-Orontid dynasty, and in the mid-first century B.C. Antiochus I of Commagene erected the great temple complex of Nemrut Dağ in honour of his ancestors and the Persian gods he worshipped. One supposes that the two stratēgoi administered areas corresponding to the Achaemenian satrapies, owing allegiance to the Armenian king (who would have re-established his sovereignty over both regions of the country), who was himself a vassal of the Seleucids.

After the defeat of the Seleucid power by Rome at Magnesia in 190 B.C., Artaxias and Zariadrēs assumed full powers over their respective regions. The Roman Senate acknowledged the independent status of the two at the Peace of Apamea in 188; but, as we shall see, Artaxias was to reinforce his claim to legitimacy within Armenia by boasting of his Orontid forbears.
Notes - Chapter 2


2. R. H. Hewsen, 'Introduction to Armenian Historical Geography,' REArm., N.S. 13, 1978-79, 82; on the form in -a±i, see N. Adontz. N. G. Garsoian, Armenia in the Period of Justinian, Louvain, 1970, 45-6. Mard灵活 lay due south of Karin (Erzurum); Mardastan was immediately east of Lake Arcag, near Van, see AON, Map.

3. MX I.21: Իսկ մեր արաջին է Վարբակայ Մարի պսակեալ Պարոյր օրդի Skyordəvoy 'And our first [king], Paroyr son of Skyordi, was crowned by Varbak the Mede (mar)!' See R. W. Thomson, Moses Khorenats'i, History of the Armenians, Cambridge, Mass., 1978, 108 n. 1 and Diodorus Siculus II.24.27. Arm. mar 'Mede' displays the change of intervocalic -d- to -r- common in Arm. loan-words from Mir. (Arm. Gr., 52, s.v. Mar-kÇ); the form Mard- cited above is probably older, and would be equivalent to Gk. Μάρδ-οι (AON, 451). On Varbakës see Ir. Nam., 20, s.v. Arbakës. According to the seventh-century Arm. scholar Anania Shirakacci the constellation of the Ram (Latin Aries, Arm. Xoy) was called in Persian Varbak. The other names of the zodiacal signs cited by Shirakacci are clearly Mir., e.g.: Mahik 'Pisces'; Tarazuk 'Libra'; and DupatkÇar 'Gemini'—as one would expect, considering the century in which he lived (see G. B. Petrosyan, A. G. Abrahanyan, trans. & ed., Anania Shirakacci, Matenagrut'tyun, Erevan, 1979, 114).

4. Herodotus, III. 94; Xenophon, Anabasis, IV. 3-5, 18.

5. Xenophon, Cyropædia, III.1: Tigranës (Arm. Gr., 87; Herodotus, VII. 62; Ir. Nam., 324) and Sabaris (Arm. Sawarš, from Av. Sywarsan, NP. Sylævax according to Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 61 and Justi, Ir. Nam., 299-300; Markwart, Brunfahr, 177 n. 3, derives the name from OP. Xsayārsa, Gk. Xerxes—an Arm. Orontid king of the third century was called Xerxes in Gk. sources, see below). This Tigran is identified by H. Manendyan (Ymdaban dprovë ev nra zaracKman šyr'annere, Vienna, 1928, 9, 221-2) and N. Adontz (Dionisii Frakiiskii i armianskie tol'kovateli, Petrograd, 1915, 129) with the Tigran of the historical legend recorded by MX.

6. AON, 447.


9. Ibid., table 8, figs. 15, 16.

10. Ibid., table 9; the object is reproduced also in Ellaryan, op. cit., fig. 52, and in HŽP, I, 471.

12. Oral suggestion made at the Ancient Civilisations Group, City University of New York, 13 May 1981. Other scholars present suggested that the object is a model of a Roman basilica and is therefore of considerably later date, but the antiquity of the objects found by Esayan in the same stratum would rule out this possibility, if indeed Esayan's dating is accurate. Professor Trell of New York University kindly sent us a photograph of a coin of ca. A.D. 141 of Nicopolis in Epirus, Greece, on which is shown a two-storied 'Heroon' whose frontal outline resembles that of our structure closely, although the Greek building was round, not square as ours is.

13. See our Ch. on Anahit and Nanē.

14. See our Chs. on Captive Powers and on Armenia under the Parthians and Sasanians.

15. See K. Schippmann, *Die iranischen Feuerheiligtümer*, Berlin, 1971, 309-57 and fig. 41 opp. p. 331 for the plan of the complex. On the name Gusnasp see *Ir. Nam.*, 354-5; see our Ch. on the Fire-cult for a discussion of fire temples in Armenia.


18. Sebeos, seventh century, wrote that Heraclius afar ew Hratn, zor end inkćean srjeccucanër tcagaworn hanaperzord yamwnkenctćiu īwr, or mecagoy hamareal īr kćan zamayn krak, or kočćer i nocSuncć atćas: heljaw i gen handerj movpetan movpetaw ew ayl bazmutćiu mecemvacć. He also took Hratn, which the king caused to be carried round himself daily for his help, and which was considered greater than all fires, which was called by them atćas *Ir. ētāx-, NP. ētās 'fire'; it was smothered in the river together with the movbedān movbed and a crowd of other nobles [lit. 'great ones']1, cit. by N. Emin, trans. & ed., *Vseobshchaya istoriya Step'anosa Taronskago Asokh'ika po prozyaniyu*, Moscow, 1864, II.iii (85) as the source of the statement of Step'anos (late tenth century) that Heraclius korenē zabgius Hratn meci, orum Vnasp koććin 'de-stroy(ed) the altars of Great Hratn, which they call Vnasp'. The form Vnasp also is attested in Arm. sources (Arm. Gr., 85). Hübschmann, *Arm. Gr.*, 92, takes hrat as a native Arm. word from hur 'fire' (cognate with Gk. pyr, see *Arm. Gr.*, 469; on Arm. initial h- from IE., see R. Godel, *An Introduction to the Study of Classical Armenian*, Wiesbaden, 1975, 4.3); Benveniste agrees with the latter suggestion and disputes Justi's etymology from Ir. *frēta- (Ir. *Nam.*, 105). An Arm. name of the planet Mars, Hratn, is probably to be interpreted as an adjective meaning 'fiery', cf. Gk. ho pyroēl 'the fiery one', while the other common name of the planet, Arm. Vām, is a borrowing from the MP. name Wahrām, i.e., Verethraghna, the Zoroastrian yazata of victory, cf. Gk. Arēs, Latin Mars (on the forms, see W. Eilers, *Sinn und Herkunft der Planetennamen*, München,
1976, 68, 74, 77, 101). Hratn is to be taken, however, as a toponym derived from a MiR. name, the Greek form of which is Phraata. The change of initial fr- to hr- in Arm. loans from northwestern MiR. is well attested in numerous examples (Arm. hraman, hras-k', hrestak etc., Arm. Gr., 182 et seq.) and in the name of the river Hrazdan, which flows through modern Erevan and which may have received its name from Zoroastrians, for the body of water called Frazdan is referred to in the PhI. Šahrîstânîhā f Eran as a place where Vistāspa received instruction in the Good Religion (see E. Herzfeld, 'Vistāspa,' Dr. Modi Memorial Volume, Bombay, 1930, 196 and A. V. W. Jackson, Zoroaster, the Prophet of Ancient Iran, New York, 1899, 220), and it is mentioned in Yt. V.108 (see AirWB., 1005 and Arm. Gr., 48).

19. An example is the bas-relief on the drum of the church of the Holy Saviour (Arm. Surb Amenap'rkicC) at Sanahin, A.D. 961-2, which shows the Bagratid queen Xosrovanua and her consort Abot III Bagratuni holding a model of the church between them. (O. X. Balpaxcean, Sanahin [Documenti di Architettura Armena, 31], Milano, 1970, 5 and pl. 13).

20. Astyaq̲Es, Babyl. Īstumēgu, is the Gr. form of *Rštivaiga- 'Spear-caster' which might have sounded to Arm. ears like *Azidahak (on the name, a parallel Av. form, and possible transcription in Elamite, see M. Mayrhofer, Onomastica Persepolitana, Vienna, 1973, 108, 171).

21. Herodotus, I.96 et seq., see G. Tiracıyan, 'Ervanduminere Hayastanum,' Telekagir, 1958, 6, 56-7. The Classical account of the accession of Cyrus to the throne resembles the Sasanian romance of Ardašir İ Pēpakān, in which the future king, now a lowly servant, escapes from the royal court and marries the king's daughter. This is pure folklore; on the probable course of events, see I. M. Diakonoff (D'yakonov) in CHIrank 2, 142-8.


23. See MX I.24-31 and below.

24. Yt. 9.8, Yt. 15.19 etc.; see AirWB., 266.

25. (Indian or Lesser) Būh., 29.9, trans. by West, SBE, Vol. 5, 119. On the motif of an epic figure who is imprisoned in a mountain until he rises anew at the end of time, see our discussion of Artawazd in the Ch. Captive Powers.

26. See Ch. 13.

27. B. Ç'cugañzıyan, 'Biwraspi Azdahaki afaspelē ʾest Movses Xorenacçu,' Telekagir, 1958, 1, 70.

28. See Thomson, MX, 126-3, for a translation of the text.
29. MX I, I Parsic "araspelac 'From the fables of the Persians'. In his translation, Thomson leaves out anbari 'bad' without explanation.

30. Loc. cit.


33. Cited by Cugaszyan, op. cit., 75.

34. This would contradict the fifth-century date of MX generally accepted by Soviet scholars. See also the Introduction to Thomson, MX, and C. Toumanoff, 'On the date of Pseudo-Moses of Chorene,' HA, 1961, 467.

35. Cugaszyan, op. cit., 71, suggested that the name of the father of Zahhâk in the Šah-nâmê, Mardas, preserves a recollection of the tyrant's Median origin (cf. Gk. Mard-oi), although he is born in Arabistan (i.e., Mesopotamia). It seems the Parthians equated Seleucus Nicator, rather than Astyages, with Âzî Dahâka as the great foreign tyrant. For the Macedonian may have enlarged the Parthian city of Hecatompylos (Kômis), and the Šahristânîhâ i Erân, 18 (tr. J. Markwart, ed. G. Messina, Analecta Orientalia 3, Rome, 1931, 55, with ref. to ZDMG 49, 644 n. 1) attributes to Âzî Dahâk the building of Kômis. The image of Zahhâk as a man with serpents springing from his shoulders was, as seen, widespread in Eastern Iran, though it probably came from the West originally (see, e.g., the fresco at Panjikand showing the tyrant, A. M. Belenitzki, Kunst der Sogden, Leipzig, 1980, 203).

36. See our Ch. on Tork' Angeleyay. The curious depiction of the Arm. king Pap by the fifth-century historian P'awstos Buzand as having snakes spring from his breast is probably an adaptation of the image, for Pap was accused of demonolatry and may have been a Christian heretic—a follower of the Arian teaching (see ibid. and our Ch. 4). He would thus share the stigma of the later Mazdak and of the still later Mohammed. Of the latter, one recalls that Christians of the mediaeval period frequently regarded Islam as a heresy of Christianity rather than a separate religion.

37. See our Ch. on Evil Spirits and Creatures.

38. See Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 95 and n. 69.

39. It is interesting to note that the Šah-nâmê contains the NP. generic form azdahâ 'serpent, dragon' from MP. Azdahâg, with
various compounds (azdahā-faš 'dragon-formed', etc.), as well as the arabicised name Zāḥāḵ (see Š. Šugaszyan, op. cit., 70). NP. azdahā is the name given by the Kurds to the višap ('dragon')-steles in Armenia (see our Ch. on Vahagn). Curiously, the proper name Zohag is found in thirteenth-century Arm. (but Zāḥāḵ is a well-known name in Arabic), see G. M. Nalbandyan, 'Etimologiya armianskikh lichnykh imen,' Voprosy yazykovedeniya 1-2, Erevan, 1983, 161). For a theological reconciliation of the two contradictory legends of Yima, see this writer's Government Fellowship Lectures of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, Bombay, 1983-4, JCOI (in publication).

40. MX was familiar with the Chronicle of Eusebius, a Gk. text which was translated into Arm. in the fifth century. The history of Cyrus and Astyagēs, and a Median king-list containing the name of Astyagēs are found there (see Thomson, MX, 110 n. 4 and 114 n. 11; Tirac'Cyan, op. cit., 55-7).

41. Arm. Ղվելեակ երկը, 'rhythmic' or 'counting' songs; these could have been parts of an epic, with the sense of 'chronological' (see Thomson, MX, 120 n. 11).

42. The spellings Ašdahak and Ašdahak are used interchangeably. The former could be a scribal error or a rendering of the unvoiced -st- of the name Astyagēs.

43. On Arm. višap 'dragon' see n. 39 above and our Ch. on Vahagn. For the suggestion that the Arms. may have linked the Medes (Arm. մար-ք, see above) with dragons through a popular etymology from MIr. մար 'snake', see MA I, 132-3.

44. See MX II-51.

45. Arm. təcačar in this case must mean 'palace' (as OP. təcačara-) or '{banqueting) hall' (cf. P'B III-9 təcačar արքուն 'royal hall, palace') and not 'temple', as Thomson renders it (MX, 121). The latter meaning probably developed from the former (cf. the Christian terms basilica and ecclésia, both of which had original secular meanings); see Arm. Gr., 251. For the use of təcača as a non-Christian temple, see Ch. 4. Originally, təcačara- may have meant any enclosure the size of a ring in which a horse ran (OIr. base tak-), which was then roofed over. Cf. mediaeval Pers. compound meidən asfres, Phl. asprēs 'horse-track', Arm. 1-w. asparəz 'idem, area, field'. One recalls that ancient Iranian kings encamped more often than they resided; and even their palaces always had a paradeisos (Arm. 1-w. parədž 'garden') for hunting (see most recently M. Dandamayev for the Achaemenian period, in Acta Iranica 23, Leiden, 1984, 113-7).

46. The description of Tigran in MX I.24 can apply only to Tigran II the Artaxiad (95-56 B.C.); see G. M. Sargsyan, Hellenistakan darasrjani Hayastane ev Movses Xorenac'in, Erevan, 1966, 53. On Tigran II, see the following Ch.

48. On the two satrapies, see Tirac'yan, op. cit., 62. Zūza, mentioned in DB II.33, has been identified by Justi with the Kurdish village of Zozan, near Jezire; Tigra (DB II.39) is connected with Till, on the Tigris (this equation seems doubtful, in view of the large number of toponyms in Arm. with the Semitic element tel or til 'hill'; see the preceding Ch. and our Ch. on Anahit and Nane); F. Justi, Grundris der Iranischen Philologie, II, 5, 429, placed Autiyāra (DB II.58-9) in the Tiyari region of Kurdistan, in the valley of the Great Zab, although H. Manandyan, op. cit. n. 1, 52-53, cites the suggestion of J. Sandaljian (Histoire documentaire d'Arménie, II, Rome, 1917) that Autiyāra was the Aytruank of MX, in Korcayk.

49. Herodotus, III.93, V. 49; Strabo, XI.14.9.

50. Xenophon, Anab., IV.5.35. See also our discussion of the Gk. inscriptions of Armawir below, and the discussion in Ch. 3 of the connection of horses to the cult of the Sun and Mithra.

51. Herodotus, I.194.

52. Ibid., V.52. The Arm. word for a roadside inn, aspēn, is a loan-word from MDr. (cf. Sgd. 'spēn, Phl. aspēn), see W. B. Henning, 'A Sogdian Fragment of the Manichaean Cosmogony,' BSOAS, 1948, 307 line 37), Syr. 'spyzkn' (Arm. Gr., 109 s.v. aspēn, yakan). Arm. Aramazd (= Ahura Mazda) was regarded as the 'hospitable one' (vanatur); see Ch. 5.

53. Herodotus, VII.73.


56. Xenophon, Anab., IV.5.30-34.

57. In a mediaeval Zoroastrian responsum in B. N. Dhabhar, The Persian Rivayats of Hormazyr Franarz and Others, Bombay, 1932, 267, Nariman Hoshang asks, 'Can one sit with the juddins [non-Zoroastrians] and the unworthy and eat with them, or not?' The answer is: 'Sitting with them and eating food in any way and of any kind is not proper; it is a sin.'

58. Justi, Ir. Nam., 235 and Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 39, derive Arm. Eruan from Av. aurvant- 'mighty'; an etymology was proposed also from Olr. *rayavanta- 'possessing riches' (HZP, I, 437) on the basis of the form Aroandes.

60. See Toumanoff, op. cit., 279; Sargsyan, op. cit., 30; HÉP, I, 504; Xenophon, Anab., III.14.13; Plutarch, Vita Artax., 33; on the legendary prestige of the Arsacids, see Ch. 4.

61. HÉP, I, 439; Pliny, Nat. Hist., VI.1.18.


63. Xenophon, Anab., IV.4.4

64. Tiracryan, op. cit., 62.

65. Arrian, III.8. On Mithraustēs and the Arm. Vahē, see our Ch. on Vahagn.


68. Manandyan, op. cit. n. 66, 96.

69. Ibid., 97; Justin, 38.7.

70. Strabo, XI.14.9.

71. Manandyan, op. cit. n. 66, 100.

72. Ibid., 101.


74. J. Markwart, 'Le berceau des Armeniens,' RDEA, 8, 1928, 229.

75. Trever, op. cit., 135.

76. See Toumanoff, op. cit., 277-354, esp. 293-4, and 108-9 n. 168; L. Jalabert, R. Mouterde, Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie, I; Commagène et Cyrhhestique, Paris, 1929, 15-16; see also Ch. 9.

77. See Boyce, Zoroastrians, 48-77 on the adoption of Zoroastrianism in Media and Persia in the Achaemenian period, and now Hist. Zor., II, Leiden, 1982. The latter is now the most thorough treatment of Achaemenian religion, which Boyce identifies as Zoroastrianism, despite problems and inconsistencies. Despite the weight of the
evidence adduced for Iran, her conclusions are debated (and recon-
structions of the Jewish response to Iranian religion, resting
largely on the work of M. Smith, have even been termed 'highly
adventurous' by J. Barr, Journal of the American Academy of Re-
ligion 53.2, June 1985, 228 n. 47). Armenia in the Achaemenian
period is far less well documented than Persia or Israel, yet the
network of cultural contacts there was almost as complex, so the
interpretation of much of the evidence (such as the temple-model
(?) above) must be tentative.

78. Cf. the Arm. loan-words drehmen 'I betray' and drehman (with Ir. pre-
sent participial ending -an), from Mir. (Arm. Gr., 146).

79. Arm. names in Arta- such as Artawazd (see Ch. 13), Artasēs (Gk.
Artaxias, see Ch. 3), Artavan (see Ch. 4) et al. are loans from
Western Old and Middle Iranian, see Arm. Gr., 28-30 and Ir. Nam.,
31-40; on OP. arta- (=Av. āša, Skt. rta-), see Boyce, Zoroastrians,
55.

80. On the Arm. loan-word dew 'demon' from Mir., see Arm. Gr., 140; on
Arm. demonology, witchcraft, daēvic terminology and xraṣṭarān
'evil creatures', see Ch. 14.

81. See inscription XPb in Kent, op. cit.

82. Agath. 817; dicē gen. pl. of dikē 'gods'. On Bagawan, see our Ch.
on Aramazd. The etymology from Pth. may be anachronistic, as re-
ferences in Classical Arm. literature to the Arsacids frequently
are. On Bagyārīdī, see our Ch. on Mihr. On Bagan (AON, 345) see
Ch. 15. Baga-, Vedic Skt. Bhaga-, means 'god' (Boyce suggests it
may have stood for OIr. *Wouruna). In the Sogdian documents from
Mugh we find the priestly titles māghpt and vghīpt, to be compared
with Arm. mogpet and bagnapat, the latter from Arm. bagin 'altar',
apparently a Pth. loan-word with the element bag- 'god' (see M.
Boyce, 'Iconoclasm amongst the Zoroastrians,' Studies for Morton
Smith at Sixty, IV, Leiden, 1975, 99). On the Arm. priesthood,
temples and image-cult, see our Chs. 3, 4 and 15. It is noted here
that the foundation of Bagaran is attributed to an Orontid by MX,
implying that baga- came into Arm. before Pth. times. One recalls
also the proper name Bag-Tesub cited in Ch. 1, which testifies to
contacts between ancient western Iranians and the Hurrians of the
Arm. area. In Sogdia, baga- was a general word meaning 'god'
amongst Christian missionaries (see W. B. Henning, 'A Sogdian God,'
BSOAS, 1965, 623-5). In Manichaean MIr. texts are to be found
the names Ohrmizd bag and Ohrmizdai (the latter a variant of the for-
mer) (W. B. Henning, 'The Murder of the Magi,' JRAS, 1944, 133-44).

83. Bailey notes the essential characteristic of frasa- as a quality
which is physically visible, in keeping with the non-mystical at-
The Arm. loan-word from Mir., ḥrasā-kē 'wonder', reflects this sense
(see also Arm. Gr., 183). Arm. hrāṣakert is a direct borrowing
from the Zoroastrian theological term frāṣa-kereti-., which de-
scribes the final, purifying event in the life of the world,
ending its present state of mixture of the forces of good and evil (loc. cit.; Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 232 & n. 17). Gershevitch renders frašên in Y. 55.6 as 'extraordinary' (AHM, 224 & n.).

84. Herodotus, I.131.

85. See Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 202 et seq.

86. See A. Perikhanyan, Khramovye ob'edineniya Maloi Azii i Armenii, Moscow, 1959.


89. On the latter, see our Ch. on Vahagn; on Ara and Šamiram, see the Chs. on Anahit and Nanē and Captive Powers.

90. See Thomson, MX, 78 & n. 4-6.

91. Another Arm. form of the name, Zraješt, is found in the fifth-century Arm. translation of Eusebius, see Jackson, op. cit., 12 n. 5 and Ir. Nam., 380. See also this writer's 'The Name of Zoroaster in Armenian,' JSAS (in publication).

92. The index to the Venice, 1955 text of MX; S. Malxasyanc (mod. Arm. trans., MX, Erevan, 1961, 92); and Thomson (MX, 78) explain Makk as the Medes. In MX I.17 Zoroaster is called Zradast nag ew nahapet Marac 'Zradast, the magus and patriarch of the Medes'. H. W. Bailey, Dictionary of Khotan Saka, Cambridge, 1979, 181 s.v. *nāha-* proposes an etymology of Arm. nahapet from Mir. naf 'relatives' with suffix -pet 'ruler', see also HAB, III, 423; but it may also be analysed with Arm. nax- 'before' (see ibid., 419).

93. On Er as Zoroaster, see Clement of Alexandria, Stromateis, v.14.103 and Proclus (citing Coloes, 3rd cent. B.C.), cited by E. Durean, Hayoc' hin krōnē, Jerusalem, 1933, 28 and n.

94. Arnobius, Adv. ad Gentes, VII.2; on Hosthanēs, see Ir. Nam., 52, s.n. Austanes and MX I.30, where the region Ostan is mentioned, see AON, 460-1. Arm. ostan means 'capital', and is a loan-word from Mir. (Arm. Gr., 215). Yovhannes Erznakć, writing in A.D. 1293, cited the division by the eighth-century writer Stepćanos Siwacći of the Arm. language into eight dialects: ostanik 'court' or 'capital' Armenian (also called mijerkresy 'mesogolian', for it was spoken in the 'central' province of Ayrarat) and seven ezerakan 'peripheral' dialects (Meknutćwn kerakanutc encontrisc known, cited by E. B. Ahayan, Hay lezvanbacutćyan patmutćym, I, Erevan, 1958, 291).

95. See Ch. 13, and this writer's 'Er, Ara, and Ardēy Wirāz,' REArm N.S. 18, 1984, 477-85.
96. See Ch. 7.

97. HAB, III, 435-6; Arm. Gr., 202. Navasarda was probably originally an autumn feast (Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 174) and in the Armenian calendar of the Christian era of the mid-sixth century the month of Navasard was fixed in August-September, perhaps preserving thereby traditional custom.

98. HAB, III, 278. It is more likely that the word is the gen. pl. of Arm. marg, 'meadow', and refers to agriculture; compare K¢al-ocë, from K¢al-em 'I reap' (cf. Vahagn vi§apa-k¢a± 'dragon-reaper'), i.e., 'the month of reaping'. For the use of the genitive, cf. Ar-acë, Hrot-icë (the month of the fravasis; see our Ch. on Spandaramet-sandaramet) and Areg (the gen. of arew 'sun'; see our discussion of arew-ordikë 'Children of the Sun' in Ch. 16). The names of the months and of the thirty days of the month are found in the works of Anania Sirakac'i, op. cit., 256-7.


102. See Ch. 10.


105. See Ch. 9. The coin is shown in X. A. Musel'yan, 'Hin Hayastani dramayin srjanaafutçyan patmutçyançunicç,' P-bh, 1970, 3, 68. The figure holds what appears to be an arrow in his right hand and a dove in his left; he looks to the left. This detail, which is found elsewhere in Near Eastern art but not on depictions of the winged figure, may represent a preference for peace over war (cf. the American eagle, which holds a bunch of arrows and an olive branch, and faces the latter).

106. Artak'elyan, op. cit., pls. 53-60, 64.


108. Toumanoff, op. cit., 75 n. 83. On the etymology of the name of the city, see the preceding chapter.

110. MX I.12.

111. Bailey suggests that the word saws(i) means 'stately', citing sēs eriver 'high-mettled, prancing horse', and is a loan-word from Iranian (Dictionary of Khotan Saka, op. cit., 428, s.v. sāsta).

112. The name Anusawan contains the Iranian loan-word amoyā 'immortal' (Arm. Gr., 19, 99-100); the ending -a-wan could be the Iranian suffix -van 'possessing', or the name could be a form of *Anusarwan, a common Mir. name and epithet meaning 'of immortal soul'. Since Ara, the father of Anusawan, was believed to have gained immortality, the name of his son may be related to the myth. See J. R. Russell, art. 'Anusavan,' Encyclopaedia Iranica.

113. MX I.20, or Saws anusanivr 'who was named Saws'; Thomson has Sawsanuër, 'dedicated to the saws (tree)' (MX, 107 & n. 1).

114. On Arm. hmay-k 'charms, divination' see Ch. 14.

115. See the preceding Ch. and F. Hancar, 'Der heilige Baum der Urartäer in vorarmenischer Zeit,' Festschrift Handes Amsorya, Vienna, 1961, Heft 10-12.

116. See Ch. 12 and Herodotus 7.31, cit. by Boyce, Hist. Zor., II, 165.

117. See Levon Harut'yunyan, 'Arevelyan sosi,' HayrenikC jayn, Erevan, 28 June 1978, 8. One ancient plane tree from Ordubad (in the Naxijevan ASSR, Azeri SSR, east of Julfa on the Iranian frontier, in the ancient Armenian province of Gc'ton) with a diameter of 15-20 feet is shown in a pre-Revolutionary drawing reproduced in S. Lisitsyan, Starinnye plyaski i teatr'al'nye predstawleniya armeniskogo naroda, II, Erevan, 1972, pl. 55. The shade of the Czinar is very pleasant, as this writer discovered recently during a stay at Srinagar. It is probably because of its shade that the village plane tree in Armenia was allowed to live so long without being cut down for the use of its wood.

118. Avandapatum, Iv and 321.

119. On Arm. mehean 'temple' see Ch. 8.

120. See Sargsyan, op. cit., 23-6. Korenak'Ci insists that oc'C, orpēs k'ert'Cok'Cn asen, merjazawakk'C ew martasercC gol ew noynasermank'C astuacocC isxankC 'The princes are not the children or close relatives or of the same seed as the gods, as the poets say they are' (MX III.65).

121. See Ch. 10.

122. MX II.I2. The various gods are discussed below in our Chs. on the yazatas. Enlarging, perhaps, upon the observation of Greeks who
saw their gods' images in Eastern temples, Plutarch wrote in his *On the Fortune of Alexander*, 328, 'through Alexander, Bactria and the Caucasus learned to revere the gods of the Greeks.' But this is a youthful, enthusiastic essay which goes on to claim that without Alexander the barbarians should not have had their great cities, either.

123. See Ch. 15.

124. See the Intro. and Ch. 4.

125. Toumanoff, *op. cit.*, 293.

126. See MX II.39 and Thomson, *MX*, 182 n. 1. On the name of Eruandašat, compare Artašat (in the following Ch.).

127. On Arm. *zoh* 'sacrifice', a loan-word from Mir: *zōhr*, Av. *zaḥra-*; see Ch. 15.

128. MX II.40. For a proposed Iranian etymology of Eruaz, see Ir. Nam., 89.


130. Arm. Gr., 318. The use of a foreign word for the priesthood is not in itself an argument against the Zoroastrianism of the Arms.; cf. the use of the originally non-Zor. Median term *magu* in Iran.


132. MX II.49; on the shrine of Apollo (i.e., Tir), see Ch. 9.

133. On Mogpastē (MX II.48), see ibid.

134. See Ch. 11.

135. MX II.46. On the word *arjan* as the proper name of a kʰrmapet, see Ch. 6.

136. See K. V. Trever, *op. cit.* n. 73, 104-9, 113-19. Readings and interpretations of the Armawir inscriptions were proposed earlier by A. I. Bol'tunova, 'Grecheskie nadpisi Armavira,' *Izvestiya Armfan-a SSSR*, 1942, 1-2 and H. Manandyan; *Armaviri hunaren arjanagrut yumere nor lusabanucyamb*, Erevan, 1946. Photographs and drawings of the inscriptions, together with the various reconstructions of the Greek texts and their interpretation, are provided by Trever.


139. Trever, 112-13, 123, fig. 26, pls. 70, 71. On the gold pendants, see B. N. Arak'elyan, op. cit. n. 103, pls. 17, 22 and Ch. 7.

140. Trever, 107.

141. See Ch. 9.

142. MX II.48; on Ani (Kamak), see Ch. 5.

143. See Thomson, MX, 189, 212.

144. Trever, op. cit., 119.

145. Ibid., 134-5, fig. 28, pl. 74.

146. See Ch. 8.

147. On the equation of Xanthikos with the Arm. month of Ahekan (= OP. *Athrakāna-), see Ch. 15. It is noteworthy that the Arm. month-name, although probably a MTr. loan-word, appears to preserve the name of the ancient Persian festival (the corresponding Av. month-name is simply Atar- 'fire').


150. Anania Širakac'i, op. cit., 257. On the application of diminutives to objects of reverence, see our discussion of arewik, lusik 'little sun, little light' in Ch. 16.


152. AHH, 106, 113.

153. Trever, op. cit., 141, fig. 30.

154. Ibid., 142.

155. Ibid., 147.

156. Toumanoff, op. cit., 73, 293.

157. The name is found in the Aramaic inscriptions from Lake Sevan; see the following Ch.

158. Toumanoff, 73; Strabo XI.14.5; Polybius XX.2.12.
In 190 B.C., Armenia was a patchwork of 120 dynastic states, referred to by Pliny as regna 'kingdoms'. These were the domains of the naxarars, and their 'barbaric names' are presumably the Arm. forms of toponyms dating back to Urartean times, and preserving the names of the ancient peoples of the plateau. Many of these peoples still spoke their various native tongues, such as Urartean, for it was only after the conquests of Artaxias, according to Strabo, that the Armenians (probably only gradually) became 'of one language'.

 Certain of the regna may have had very large temple estates, for Pliny equates with Acilisene (Arm. Eke≤eac), an entire province in its own right, the Anaïtica regio. Cassius Dio includes among the conquests of Pompey 'the country of Anaïtis, belonging to Armenia and dedicated to a goddess of the same name.' Such temple estates existed throughout Asia Minor, and most of them were dedicated to the worship of the ancient Anatolian Great Mother goddess, in one or another guise. In certain areas the cult underwent Hellenisation, and the deity was equated with Artemis, but in other areas it would appear that temple estates became Zoroastrian foundations during the Achaemenian period, the goddess being equated with the yazawa Anaïhită whilst retaining the loyalty of the indigenous population: the Attalid kings of Pergamon made grants to the sanctuary of the 'Persian Goddess' at Hiera Komă (lit. 'Sacred Village') in Lydia, and a great temple estate at Zela in Pontus was dedicated to Anaïtis and 'the Persian deities'. The temple of the Great Mother at Pessinus, on the border of Phrygia and Galatia, was regarded throughout the Hellenistic and Roman periods as an independent, theocratic principality, and in eastern Asia Minor, where hellenisation was slight, such ancient forms of administration must have survived to an equal or greater degree.

 Zela, in the province of Zelitis, is a short distance to the west of Gaziura. We noted above in our discussion of the derivation of the toponym Armawir (Gk. Armaouira) that the ending -wir may be an old
toponymical suffix; the name of the Pontic city would therefore contain the OIr. element *ga(n)z- 'treasure'. The site may have been a satrapal treasury of the Achaemenians, situated close to an important temple estate. The administrative divisions of Armenia at the close of the Orontid period would appear to be archaic: a loose-knit patchwork of small principalities with temple estates, following the ancient social patterns of Anatolia, yet bearing the cultural and religious stamp of Iran.

The influence of Greek culture and Seleucid power was also evident in Armenia, as seen in the preceding chapter, and Antiochus the Great (223–187) sought to expand his power in Armenia by instigating a revolt amongst the naxarars against the ruling Orontes (Arm. Eruand). Such a tactic probably could not have succeeded without the active connivance of some naxarars, who to the very last days of the sovereignty of Greater Armenia were to seek alliances with foreign powers against their own king: the dethroning of the last Armenian Arsacid, Artaxias IV, by Bahram V of Iran in 428 was urged upon the Sasanians by Armenian naxarars, who received privileges afterwards, and in neighboring Georgia the Iberian princes in 580 similarly urged upon Hormizd IV the overthrow of their royal Mihranid dynasty.6

In Greater Armenia, a dynast named Artaxias (Arm. Artāšēs) was installed as stratēgos; the Armenian king of Sophene, Xerxes, was besieged in his capital, Arsamisata, and subsequently assassinated. An Armenian Orontid, Zariadres, was named stratēgos of Sophene. In 191 B.C., Antiochus was defeated in battle by the Romans, who shattered his power at Magnesia and confirmed their control over Asia Minor by the peace treaty of Apamea, three years later. The two Armenian stratēgoi, rebelling in their turn against Antiochus, joined the Romans and were ranked as autonomous, with the title of king.7 The Artaxiad dynasty of Greater Armenia was to last until the first decade of the Christian era; in 95 B.C., at the beginning of the brief period of the imperial expansion of Greater Armenia under Tigran II, Sophene was annexed and ceased to be a kingdom, the Orontid royal family continuing as a naxarardom, however, into the Christian era.8

Movses Xorenac6 describes in accurate detail the stone boundary-stelae that Artaxias caused to be erected on the lands belonging to
tours and estates (Arm. agarak-k). It has been suggested that the Hellenistic period was marked by perpetual boundary litigation motivated by an everpresent fear of crop failure and starvation, and that such litigation and arbitration in many cases replaced actual fighting. Boundary markers (Phl. sēmān i wīmand, cf. Arm. 1-w. Sahman) were, as it seems, equally important in Iran, for Ch. 50 of the Ardžy Wīrāz Nāmag describes the hideous punishment in hell of a man who in his life removed one with malice. A number of these steles have been found from the reign of Artaxias I (189-160 B.C.), and since to date none has been unearthed of earlier date, it is assumed that he instituted the practice of erecting such markers. The later Arsacid king Tiridates I erected an inscription at Aparan, apparently recording the grant of the town of Nig to the Gntcuni naxarar house. The inscription is in Greek, and the stone does not have the serrated top characteristic of the steles of Artaxias--as described by Xorenac--which are inscribed in Aramaic. But the legal intent of the later monument is similar: to establish a property claim in the name of the king.

On the various steles of Artaxias, the name of the king is found in the forms 'RTHŚS, 'JRTISH[S]Y] and 'RTHŚSY, corresponding to the Aramaic form of the name of the Achaemenian king Artaxerxes, 'RTHŚSY, in an inscription of the first half of the third century B.C. from Naqī-i Rustam. The Arm. king describes himself as an 'apportioner of land' (Aram. MHIQ 'RQ, in Spitak 4-5), an Orontid king (MLK 'RWNDKN, MLK 'RWNDKN) in Spitak 2 and Zangezur 4; MLK 'king' appears alone in Sevan B, 2), and son of Zariadres (Arm. Zareh, presumably not the same as the stratēgos and king of Sophene: BR ZRTYR, BR ZY [ZRTYTR, BR ZRTYR, in Spitak 3-4, Sevan B 2-3, and Zangezur 5-6). Although Artaxias had overthrown Orontes, his claim to legitimacy was based on his presumed Orontid lineage; such an attitude would accord at once with Iranian and Armenian conceptions, as we have seen above. The same patronymical formula was followed later by the Armenian Arsacids; an Aramaic inscription from Gaši, probably of the second century A.D., reads: (1) ... (2) MLK RB ZY 'RMYN (3) BRH ZY WLGS (4) MLK: '(1) ... (2) Great King of Armenia (3) Son of Vologases (4) the King'.

In the inscriptions from Zangezur and Spitak, the king bears the epithet TE, TB'. The same Aramaic word was as an ideogram rendered by
Mr. nēv 'brave', a common royal attribute of Iranian kings. In Arm., the word for brave is kəj, which may be of Iranian origin, and is also the name of a race of supernatural creatures who are said to dwell within Mt. Ararat. In the Arm. epic fragments preserved by Movses Xorenatsi, Artaxias curses his son Artawazd, who is taken captive by the kəj-kር. Fcawstos Buzand refers to p càk t càgawor càn ew baxtk'ın ew kəjut Cajwn 'the glory of kings and their fortune and bravery' (IV. 24). Glory and fortune (p càk-kር and baxt, both Ir. loan-words) are constantly paired in Iranian and Armenian usage and are probably represented on the Armenian tiara depicted on the coins of the Artaxiad kings as eagle(s) and star. Kəjut Cajwn in the passage cited is likely to correspond to Mr. nēv-agih 'bravery', as a Zoroastrian attribute of the king, who is blessed with xᵛarenah- so that he may be a brave fighter for the Good Religion against evil in its various manifestations. In an Aramaic boundary inscription from T'ezut in Soviet Armenia, Artaxias, who is called 'RTRKSS--an apparently Hellenised form not found in the other inscriptions--bears two additional epithets: QTRBR and HSHRSNT, which are found in the inscription from Zangezur. The first word is read by Perikhanyan as an Aramaic heterogram of Mr. tāga-bar 'crown-bearer' lit. 'king', QTRBR; the second is interpreted as 'Allied with Xšathra', i.e., with the Zoroastrian Amēsa Spenta Xšathra Vairya, 'the Desirable Kingdom', who represents the spiritual archetype of righteous government. In the word WNQPR Perikhanyan proposes to see Mr. *vanakapār, from OIr. *vanat.akapāra- 'who vanquishes all which Evil engenders/encourages'. The erection of boundary steles was apparently a Hellenistic administrative practice, as were certain other reforms introduced by the Artaxiads which we shall have occasion shortly to consider. But the various attributes of the king in these inscriptions accord admirably with Iranian religious beliefs. Perikhanyan's suggested etymologies for HSHRSNT and WNQPR are necessarily hypothetical, but even without them the epithet Tberapa is of great significance, and there seems little doubt that QTRBR is an Aramaic heterogram of the Iranian word which we find as Arm. t càgawor. The ending -KN in 'RNKDKN 'Crontid') is also an Iranian adjectival ending -akān which is attested as a loaned form in Arm. -akan. The inscriptions are not long enough for us to tell whether the language of the inscriptions is in fact
Aramaic or a form of Middle Iranian or Armenian written with Aramaic ideograms.

It is beyond dispute, however, that several Iranian terms—or Armenian terms of Iranian derivation—are found in the boundary inscriptions. We have noted also a probable heterogram: TB for Arm. \( \text{کاچ} \). It is likely that the \( \text{کاچ} \) of Mt. Ararat represented in fact the royal ancestral spirits, who received reverence from Artaxias, as we shall see, as the travasis of Zoroastrianism.22 A number of mediaeval and modern Arm. tales exist about the \( \text{کاچ} \) tun 'House of the Brave', and the family of the epic heroes of Sasun is also called by the latter name or else \( \text{کاچ} \) tun 'House of the Giants'. S. Kanayean constructed family trees of the \( \text{کاچ} \) tun of Arm. legend, and sought to link the various characters with the Arsacid kings, queens and noblemen of Armenia in the fourth century A.D., starting with Xosrov II Kotak. In the legends, polygamy, next-of-kin marriage and marriage of first cousins is frequent; such customs were praised by the Zoroastrians and condemned by the Christians, as we shall see. In addition to \( \text{کاچ} \), the Arms., as it appears, used also a term common amongst Zoroastrians for a similar complex of meanings, *kaw (NW Mir., cf. Phl. kay, OIr. kavi), in the toponym Kaw-a-kert 'built by the hero'; Mir. Kāwūs, Av. Kavi Usan, is found in Arm. as the Kawos-akan line (Arm. tohm) mentioned by P‘awstos.23

The reign of Artaxias appears to have been a period in which energetic measures were taken to regulate Armenia's economy and administration. Artaxias secured control over Caspiane, Phaunitis and Basoropeda towards Media; he conquered Chorzene, Cogarene and the Paryadres foothills, which had been in the hands of the Iberians; Carenites and Derxene, with their populations of Chalybians and Mossynoei, were placed firmly under the control of the king of Greater Armenia; Acilisene was wrested from the Cataonians; and in the southwest Taronitis was taken from the Syrians.24 The expansion of the Arm. state means that cities were to be built and coins were to be struck; Armenia became a power to be reckoned with in international politics, and we find frequent mention of various noblemen and warriors in the works of Roman writers. The artefacts found in cities, the symbols on coins, and onomastic and other evidence from literary sources provide
important information about the religious beliefs of the Armenians in the period.

Artaxata, Arm. Artaśat, a city whose Iranian name means 'Joy of Artašēs', was probably founded only a few years after Artaxias came to the throne, although according to some sources it was built only six years before the death of the king in 160 B.C. According to several Classical sources, the defeated Carthaginian general Hannibal had taken refuge with Antiochus III. After the battle of Magnesia, Hannibal apparently fled to Armenia and helped to build Artaxata, but one of the conditions of the peace of Apamea was that he be handed over to the Romans. Artaxias was pro-Roman, for the Romans, as we have seen, recognised his legitimacy, so Hannibal would have fled Armenia soon after the treaty which broke the Seleucid power in Asia Minor; according to Cornelius Nepos, he was at Corteż in the island of Crete after the peace of Apamea. It is not impossible that Hannibal assisted Artaxias in the planning of Artaxata, but it would have to have been done ca. 189-188 B.C. Whatever the truth of events may have been, the story occupies a prominent place in Classical descriptions of Artaxata, all of which were written long after the days when Rome and Armenia were friendly. Plutarch called Artaxata 'the Armenian Carthage'; the capital of a powerful enemy whose way of life was neither Roman nor Greek.

Artaxata was built on nine hills along the river Araxes near the modern Soviet Armenian village of Pšokč Yedi. The northeasternmost hill appears to have been the oldest quarter. Water was drawn from the Araxes, and channelled down from the Gešam mountains towards Lake Sevan; the approaches to Artaxata from the Sevan area were guarded by the ancient fortress of Gafni, which had been founded by the Urartians (the Arm. name derives from Urartean Giarniani). Armawir, the Orontid capital, stood but a short distance away from Artaxata, the former itself a city built on Urartian foundations, and it is likely that Artaxias chose the site for his capital in the area because it was populous and its defences were already well developed; such conditions would have facilitated the rapid growth of the city. Artaxata was heavily fortified; its walls, which narrowed into passages between hills, had towers and armories. More than 3000 arrowheads of iron of the second-first century B.C. have been found at the site.
Buildings were made of local limestone, grey marble or pink tufa, and colonnades and bath-houses were constructed in Hellenistic style. Of the 12 colours of paint found, a brownish-red pigment is most common. This paint, called sandix, was exported to Rome, where it was used extensively at Pompeii and other cities, and the raised frame of the Aramaic inscription from Gairi mentioned above also bears traces of the pigment. The buildings of the city were built very close together; every precious inch of space within the strong walls was utilised, and no remains of gardens have been found. The craftsmen of Artaxata produced fine glazed ceramic and glass wares, and it is likely therefore that the objects of cultic importance to be discussed presently were of local manufacture. Fine jewellery from Artaxata seems also to have been made in Armenia, for the gold mined at Zod, an area near the southeastern shores of Lake Van where pre-Christian cultic bas-reliefs have been found, contains tell-tale amounts of bismuth and tellurium. Life at Artaxata was rich: flagons, oinochoes and fish dishes have been excavated, and a gilded hippocampus of silver which once served as a vase handle has been unearthed. Another handle of silver was modelled in the form of a young Eros.

All of these objects display Hellenistic workmanship of exquisite quality, and may have been made locally or imported. They testify to a sophisticated and luxurious way of life, and indeed the 'Armenian Carthage' was a city whose loose morals are referred to by Juvenal as a matter of common knowledge: Sic praetextatos referunt Artaxata mores (Satires, II, 170). It was a centre of Hellenistic culture with many foreign inhabitants; the poet Isamblichus, who composed his romance in 35 books, the Babylonica (now lost), is reputed to have lived there.

Artaxata was a centre also of industry and commerce, and according to Xorenac'i, Artaxias caused to settle there numerous Jews who had resided at nearby Armawir. Some of them may have formed the nucleus of the early Christian Church in Armenia—as Jews did in other countries—before it became a national institution closely linked to the ancient dynastic order, as we shall see in the following chapter. No material evidence of the Jewish presence at Artaxata has been uncovered, but much of the Armenian vocabulary for business activities is Semitic in origin, e.g., Arm. ʃukey 'market', xanut ʃ 'shop', hašiw 'account' (cf. ʃuqā, ḫanūṭā, ḫēšīw).
From the foregoing it would seem that the Armenians, like the Iranians of the same period, maintained control over cities as centres of trade, but did not live in them as a rule, preferring to leave the arts of commerce and fine craftsmanship to foreign residents. Most Armenians lived and worked in their widely scattered rural districts. Yet the royal household and members of the priesthood at the very least must also have resided at Artaxata, for Xorenac relates that Artaxias \( \text{κανγκη i ημα κηθαναι, ἑκ θεοκτονι θηταραναι θηθοιδαι εν ελαστην} \) and transferred from Bagaran the image of Artemis and all the statues of his fathers. But the image of Apollo he set up outside the city, by the roadside' (MX II.49). Many of these statues were captured from 'Greeks by Artaxias; one may compare to this the Achaemenian practice of removing to Persepolis temple images and other objects from Egypt, Babylonia, and Greece. Presumably Arm. Zoroastrians, like their Iranian co-religionists, had no indigenous iconographic tradition. No temple has been discovered to date at Artaxata; presumably, it was one of the first buildings to be converted to a church in the fourth century after the conversion of Tiridates. Reference is made by Agathangelos to the 'Sun-gate' of the city (Arm. \( \text{Αρεγ dυμ} \); this probably faced south, for where the Arm. text of para. 206 reads \( \text{μεθ dυμ hαρα waking} \) 'by the south gate', the Gk. version has \( \text{της ἡλιακης πυλης} \) '(by) the Sun-gate'. The Sun is an important object of veneration for Zoroastrians as the greatest of the luminaries of heaven, and Armenian Zoroastrians of later centuries were to be identified as 'Children of the Sun,' perhaps because of their conspicuous worship of it, so it is likely that the name of the gate was intended to reflect the Zoroastrian piety of the king, as well as the radiance of his glory. The South (Ph. \( \text{Νημ} \) \( \text{ρως} \) is in Zoroastrianism the 'place of midday', where the Sun should, ideally, always stand.

Although no temples have been found, a number of artefacts of religious significance have come to light. Bronze figurines of eagles may represent \( \text{Xαρανα} \), and similar statuettes have been discovered in neighboring Cappadocia and in other regions of Armenia. A number of terra-cotta figurines depict a woman with a draped headdress who is
seated on a throne nursing at her breast a young, naked boy who stands with his back to the viewer. This scene, which is attested also in stone to the west in Armenia, near Հաղձուս, is undoubtedly the ancient Asianic Great Mother, Cybele, with the infant Attis, probably equated by the Armenians with Nanē or Anahit and Ara. A small bas-relief depicts a young woman resembling Aphrodite undressing beneath a rounded arch supported on either side by pillars. The manner of portrayal of the woman is Greek, although the architectural details are Oriental, and the Armenians tended to identify in texts their own goddess Astzik with Aphrodite. The composition of the scene and the style of the pillars, arch, and drapery—though to be certain, not the activity of the lady—are strikingly similar in a stone bas-relief of the Virgin Mary as Intercessor, a fragment of a fourteenth-century Deiosis from the Church of the Mother of God of the Monastery of Spitakawor.

Twenty-eight terra-cotta bas-reliefs have been found in Artaxata which depict a rider in Parthian dress on horseback, in side or three-quarter view. Nearly identical figurines have been found in large numbers in Iran from the Parthian period, and in parts of Syria and Mesopotamia which became part of the Arsacid empire late in the second century B.C. Staviskii, Xac'atryan and others have suggested that these objects were of religious significance. The figure may represent the yazata Mithra, it is suggested, for this most prominent god represented the Sun, and there is abundant evidence to link horses to the cult of the Sun, either as sacrifices or as symbols, in both Iran and Armenia from Achaemenian times. Such an explanation would be supported also by the Armenian epic of Sasun, in which Mher sits on horseback in his cave at Van. The image of a rider god is not unusual for the period or area. A number of iconographic concepts, such as the eagles and star mentioned above, or the demonic figure with snakes at his shoulders discussed in the preceding chapter, seem to have come to Armenia and western Iran from Syria and northern Mesopotamia. In Palmyrene bas-reliefs, a number of gods are shown mounted on horses or camels, frequently carrying the paraphernalia of battle. Mithra (Clas. Arm. Mihr, Mediaeval Arm. Mher) was identified by Arm. writers with the Greek god of fire, Hephaistos, and had been associated since earliest times secondarily with the Sun, the greatest visible fire of all. The importance
of his cult in Armenia is eloquently attested in the very fact that the
generic Armenian word for a non-Christian place of worship, mehean, con-
tains his name. The cult of Mihr was apparently eclipsed in the
Arsacid period by that of Vahagn, as we shall see subsequently,52 but
it is plausible that the figure on horseback may represent him. One
example from the period in which horses most likely represent the Sun
may be cited here. The reverse of a silver tetradrachm of the Artaxiad
king Artawazd II (56-34 B.C.) depicts a crowned charioteer driving a
four-horse chariot left, and holding the reins with his left hand.53
One recalls the dedicatory inscription in Greek at Armawir discussed in
the preceding chapter, which refers to a four-horse chariot and near
which there was cut a slot in which a bronze pinakion was to be in-
serted. It was also noted that a plaque with such a chariot was found at Dodona. Although Mithra may not be the driver,54 the Sun in the
Avesta is described as aurovita. 'having swift horses', and Yt. 10
describes Mithra's own chariot.55

Having mentioned above one coin of Artawazd, we may continue with
a discussion of the coinage of the Artaxiad dynasty. The Orontid kings
of Armenia minted very few coins, and the Armenian Arsacids appear not
to have struck any issues at all; the latter used Roman and Parthian
coins, and no convincing explanation has yet been presented for their
failure to mint their own, for there were long periods during their
nearly 400-year reign when Armenia enjoyed such sovereignty as would
have justified their doing so. The issue of coins is attested, however,
for the entire period of the Artaxiad dynasty, and attests to the
wealth, commercial development, and administrative organisation of the
Armenian state. The coins of the Artaxiad kings are important for our
purpose as a source of information on religion, for they depict various
mountains, trees, animals, symbols and human figures (the latter pre-
sumably representations of gods) which are probably of religious sig-
nificance. Unlike the later Kušans in Bactria, the Armenians unfor-
tunately did not provide on their coins the names of the gods shown, so
explanations of the significance of a scene, or identifications of fig-
ures, cannot be offered with complete certainty.

Arakelyan published and dated to 183 B.C. a coin or medal with
the inscription ARTAXIS(A)TÔN M(È)TR(Ö)P(O)L(È)OS) 'of the capital of
(the people of) Artaxata. There is shown a winged Nike who holds a wreath in her upraised right hand. The figure appears on Armenian coins throughout the period. The depiction is Hellenistic in style; if it represents a female yazata, it is impossible to tell which is intended. A copper coin with a head of Zariadres (labelled in Gr. ΖΑΔΡΙΑΙΩΝ) has a thunderbolt on the reverse and the inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΟΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ '(of the) king of kings'. Neither Zariadres the father of Artaxias nor Zariadres the strategos of Sophene would have been likely to use such a title, so Bedoukian dismisses the coin as a forgery. The title was used only by Tigran II and his successors, a century later, so the forgery may have been done then. The symbol of the thunderbolt may be associated with Aramazd, who is referred to by Xorenac'i with the epithet ampropayin 'of the thunder'; elsewhere in Asia Minor we find the cult of Zeus keraunios 'Zeus of the thunder'.

A copper coin of Artaxias I (189-63 B.C.) shows an eagle on the reverse turned left and perched on the summit of a mountain. A similar coin struck late in the first century B.C. has been found from Cappadocia; the mountain on the latter is undoubtedly Argaeus, near Mazaca, which was worshipped as sacred. The eagle recalls the figurines from Artasat and elsewhere, which show an eagle atop a cone or stepped pyramid. In this case, the mountain shown is probably Ararat, which towers magnificently over Artaxata. The eagle, which must represent either a divinity or the glory of the king, is also found alone on later coins; a small copper coin, attributed by Bedoukian to Tigran II although possibly a jugate issue (two profiles are clearly visible on the obverse), shows on the reverse two mountain peaks, this time without an eagle, the mountain on the left the lower of the two. Above the peaks is the trace of a legend with the letters ΆΣΑΡ visible. Bedoukian identified the mountain peaks as those of Argaeus, but it is more likely that they are Great and Little Ararat. The fragmentary legend may contain the Armenian word sar 'head, mountain', probably a Mir. loan-word, often suffixed to the name of a mountain.

A copper coin of Tigran I (123-96 B.C.) shows a male figure on the reverse seated to left on a throne and resting his left hand on a sceptre. The figure in Hellenistic issues represents Zeus Nikephoros, and may have been identified by the Armenians with Aramazd. Modern
Armenian scholars have suggested that the Hellenistic figure of Tyche—the personification of Fortune—on the reverse of the coins of Tigran II (95-56 B.C.) represents the yazata Anahit, here depicted as the goddess of the river Araxes. But this identification, too, is pure conjecture, for the Tyche is found in Hellenistic iconography elsewhere.

On copper coins of Tigran II and Tigran IV (8-5 B.C.) the figure of the Greek god Herakles is clearly shown. The muscular, naked divinity leans on a club or spear, and holds a lion skin. There seems little reason to doubt that this is meant to represent Vahagn, the yazata of strength and victory, for the depiction of the god is the same in Commagene of the first century B.C., to the west, for Artagnes, and in Sasanian Iran, for Bahram, in the east, in the third century, and the cult of the yazata was of enormous importance to the Armenian royal family.

The cypress tree was and remains sacred to Zoroastrians, and such a tree appears to be depicted on a coin of Tigran IV. Tigran II and his successors issued coins with a picture of an elephant on the reverse; Hannibal had used these in fighting Rome, with well-known and disastrous results, and the Sasanians were to employ elephants at the battle of Avarayr against the Christian Armenian forces of Vardan Mamikonean in A.D. 451. It is probably from the east rather than the Carthaginian west that the Armenians learned of the creatures, for Arm. p'ch 'elephant' is a loan-word from Mtr.

Although Artaxias himself erected boundary steles with inscriptions in the Aramaic alphabet, all the coins of the dynasty are in Greek only. The coins of the predecessors of Tigran II have the title BASILEOS MEGALOU 'of the great king', a title we shall see in Sasanian epigraphy as wuzurg šāh, an office lesser than that of the šāhan šāh 'king of kings', Gk. basileus basileōn, which title Tigran II and his successor Artawazd II (56-34 B.C.) used on their coins. Following a custom widespread in both the Hellenistic and Iranian worlds, the Artaxiad kings deified themselves: Artawazd II and Tigran III (56-34 B.C.) bear the epithets THEIOU 'of the divine' or THEOU 'of the god'. A more modest, but equally widespread appellation, PHILHELLENOS, is found on the coins of Tigran I (123-96 B.C.) and his successors.

The need felt by an independent monarch of the east to declare himself a lover of Greek culture is an indication of the profound
influence of Hellenism upon a country which, as we have seen, generally escaped conquest and colonisation by the successors of Alexander. The advance of commerce, the centralisation of government, and the evidence of Greek style in coinage all are part of the cosmopolitanism of the Hellenistic world. As the word implies, a man's polis was now the cosmos, the whole world. The direct democracy that had sufficed to govern the relatively intimate, compact community of the old Greek polis was replaced by vast bureaucracies; the local agora became a web of international trade routes, and the koine, the common language of this new world was Greek. It was only natural that the Artaxiad monarchs should declare themselves philhellenes, yet it must not be thought that their religious beliefs ceased to be what they had been of old: staunchly Zoroastrian. For religion was perhaps the most unsatisfactory facet of the otherwise shining jewel of Hellenic culture. We have seen how Plato had looked towards Armenia and Iran in his metaphysical quest, and Alexander himself had paid homage to the gods of the various ancient Oriental nations he conquered. The patrician Greek religion, if not the Orphism brought from abroad, offered no cosmological, eschatological or theological vision comparable to the faith of the Iranians. Its gods were petty, capricious and often local; the souls of good and bad men alike went down to a dreary world of shades; and no redemption or perfection might be hoped for. It is unlikely indeed that the Armenians, so zealous in other respects in defence of their national traditions, should have succumbed to such a dispiriting and primitive religion, even if they had been asked to. There is no evidence of Greek proselytism, and if anything the direction of religious influence was from east to west, culminating in the victory of an Oriental mystery cult, Christianity.

Thus, the presence of various aspects of Hellenistic culture in Armenia neither contradict nor challenge the assertion of Strabo, who lived in the last years of the Artaxiad dynasty, that the Armenians and Medes performed all the religious rituals of the Persians. And the political ties between Armenia and Iran that had been shattered at Gaugamela were soon to be restored.

Since the mid-third century B.C., the Arsacid dynasty of Parthia had been gradually advancing westwards across Iran, reconquering the
provinces which had been ruled since the time of Alexander by the descendants of Seleucus. Mithradates I (171-138 B.C.) extended his domains to Media, and Mithradates II (123-87) advanced to the Euphrates, taking hostage the young prince Tigran, who was to become king of Armenia in 96 B.C. 75

To the northwest of Armenia was the kingdom of Pontus, a fertile strip of land between the Black Sea on the north and the rugged chain of the Paryadres on the south. This land early in the third century B.C. had become independent of Seleucid rule, and its kings, all of whom bore Iranian names, had embarked upon a policy of conquest: Pharmaces I ca. 185 invaded Cappadocia, and Mithradates VI of Pontus ca. 120 B.C. seized Lesser Armenia, a region to the west and north of the upper Euphrates. 76 In 96 B.C., the Parthian Arsacids installed Tigran on the throne of his ancestors.

In the administration of Tigran II, there appear to have been four executive officials or sub-kings called bdeasx-k. The institution, it is suggested, was probably Seleucid, 77 but the word is a loan from Mir., 78 and it is recalled that Mithradates II of Parthia (d. 87 B.C.) is shown in a bas-relief at Behistun with his four principal officials, of whom the chief was called satrap of satraps, and the other three simply satraps. 79 This aspect of government may have been introduced by Tigran from Parthia. He inherited a rich, well-organised state, which, through astute political manoeuvres and audacious military campaigns he proceeded to transform into an empire. 80

Tigran's first acts as king were to annex Sophene, bringing to an end the Zariadrid dynasty. At the same time, presumably to avoid hostility from Pontus, he concluded an alliance with Mithradates VI (111-63) and married the latter's daughter, Cleopatra. Tigran went on to conquer north Syria and Cilicia; in 91, the Armenian generals Mithraas and Bagoas attacked Cappadocia; 81 by 83, Tigran had conquered the great Syrian city of Antioch; and in the 70's his forces advanced as far as Ptolemais in Phoenicia. 82 Ca. 82-61 B.C. Tigran founded a new capital, Tigranocerta (Arm. Tigranakert), perhaps on the river Nikēphorion (Tk. Farkin Su). 83 The king deported people of the various conquered territories to the new city, and Plutarch in his Life of Lucullus notes that when the Romans conquered the city scarcely ten years after its foundation, the Greeks there revolted against the 'barbarians' who remained.
Not all the inhabitants of Tigranocerta were so hostile; one Metrodoros, surnamed misôrômaios 'the Roman-hater', wrote a history of Tigran's reign. 84

The Armenian empire was short-lived. Tigran's rapid military advances alarmed the Romans, and Pompey in 66 B.C. forced Tigran to cede most of the territories he had seized, but left him king of Armenia. 85 Although three of Tigran's six children had been wedded to members of the Parthian royal family, Tigran had not hesitated to seize a large area of disputed territory in Atropatene and to assume the title 'king of kings' (which he was forced to relinquish by Pompey). His son, also named Tigran, who had married the daughter of the Parthian Arsacid king Phraates III, was persuaded by the Parthians to attempt to seize power from his father, and mounted an unsuccessful attack on Artaxata. Although Tigran's successor, Artawazd II (56-34 B.C.), was to mend and strengthen relations with Parthia, Rome had realised the strategic importance of Armenia and was to play an active role in the affairs of the country for centuries to come.

With the advent of Tigran, Armenia became a major bone of contention in international politics, and the names of a number of Armenian noblemen and generals were recorded by Classical historians and other writers. Certain of these names deserve our attention, as they bear testimony to aspects of Armenian religion in the period. The name Tigran itself is Iranian, and the epic exploits of an ancient Tigran were blended with the deeds of the Artaxiad king, as we have seen in the last chapter. The memory of Tigran as an epic hero survived long into the Christian period. An Armenian Christian philosopher, called David the Invincible or Thrice-Great (Gk. enikêtos, trismegistos; Arm. anyât ս, efemoc), who was born in the late fifth century and belonged to the School of Alexandria, wrote a work in Greek called 'Definitions of Philosophy' which was translated into Clas. Arm. probably not long afterwards. In the Arm. text, there are explanatory interpolations, as well as substitutions for certain Greek proper names of Arm. ones more likely to be familiar to the reader. At one point, for instance, the translation mentions zAtCenaye, tC i glxoxn Arameszday cnaw 'Athena, who was born from the head of Arameszd'; Arameszd has been substituted for Zeus. 86 At another point the text reads: Isk Žarunak kCanaku òc
The continuous quantity cannot receive without confusion various shapes, for if one makes a wax candle, which is a continuous quantity, in the form of Tigran, it cannot take on another form unless the previous one is effaced. If it is not, confusion results.

In the Greek original is found not Tigran, but the Homeric hero Hector, the doomed defender of Troy against the Achaeans. The learned Armenian translator would certainly have known at least that Hector was a great hero whose country went to its doom with his defeat; perhaps he had this in mind when he substituted Tigran, or else he merely replaced the Trojan warrior with a figure of comparable fame in the epic traditions of his own nation.

We find mentioned by Lucullus the name of Tigran's brother, Guras. An Armenian prince of the Marzpetuni naxaran family named Gôr lived during the reign of the Bagratid king Ashot III the Merciful in the tenth century, and both Justi and Achaean connect the two names with Arm. goř, gořoz 'proud'. It is possible, however, that the name is Iranian, and to be connected with Mîr. gôr 'onager, wild ass', cf. Bahram V, called Gôr, a Sasanian king of the fifth century. The hunt was central to the lives of Iranian and Armenian kings, and the wild boar (Arm. kinč or Mîr. loan-word varaz, symbol of the yazata Vahagn and of the Armenian Arsacid house) and onager (Arm. isavayri, lit. 'wild ass') are the two animals mentioned in a pre-Christian Armenian legend cited by Xorenac on Artawazd, who meets his perdition while hunting.

In 1913, the British Museum acquired three parchment documents found at Avroman, in Persian Kurdistan. The first two are in Greek and the third is in Parthian; all three relate to a deed of sale of a plot of land with a vineyard, and apparently were written in the first century B.C. According to the first document, in Greek, Tigran had a daughter named Aryazate, who married Arsakes Epiphanes, i.e., probably the Parthian Mithradates II here called by the name of the eponymous founder of the dynasty with an epithet meaning 'manifest (divinity)', ca 88 B.C. The deification of kings is familiar from the inscriptions
on Artaxiad coins, discussed above; we shall have occasion shortly to
discuss the institution of next-of-kin marriage attested here. The
name Ariazate is clearly composed of two Iranian elements, OIr. aarya-
'Iranian' and the suffix -zat 'born, i.e., son or daughter of': aarya-
here, and Arm. ari-k 'Iranians', are both Arsacid rather than SWIr.
forms, cf. Pth. 'aryn'. A proper name of similar form from the same
period is found in an inscription on a silver bowl found at a burial
site in Sisian (in the southeastern Arm. SSR; called Siwik or Sisakan
in the period under discussion). The site is an enclosure made of
blocks of stone, containing a sarcophagus of clay; the construction is
of a type that would have prevented corpse matter from polluting the
earth of Spenta Armaiti, and it is possible therefore that it is a Zoro-
astrian site. Coins of the second-first century B.C. were found, the
latest of the Parthian king Orodes II (57-37 B.C.); this provides a
terminus ante quem for the date of the inhumation. The inscription on
the bowl, which is 6.3 cm. high, with an upper diameter of 16 cm.,
reads; rmkk znh 'rgazt mql ksp ml'hjl z[wyzn] 'This *bowl belongs to
Arakhsat, silver weight 100 drachmas.' Inscriptions in Aramaic on
other luxurious objects such as a glass, spoon, and lazurite tray have
been found from the first century B.C. at Artaxata, so the practice
of incising such inscriptions must have been fairly common in Armenia
at the time. It is likely also that the owner of the bowl was an Ar-
menian, for the first part of the name, 'rhs *Arakha, appears, in this
writer's opinion, to be a form of the name of the river Araxes, at-
tested with metathesis of the last consonants in fifth-century Arm. as
Erax. The name would mean 'Born of the Araxes'.

The name Ariazate would mean, similarly, 'Daughter of an Iranian'.
Iranians—and Zoroastrians particularly—divided the world into seven
kesvars or 'climes'. In the central kesvar of Xwanirah, the one inhabi-
ted by men, people could be either aarya- or an-aarya- 'Iranian' or 'non-
Iranian'. In the Sasanian period, the king of kings ruled subjects of
both groups, and in the works of Xorenac'i, Eišē and other Classical
Armenian historians, his was the court Areac ev Anareac ('of the
Iranians and non-Iranians', nom. Artik ev Amarik). The Armenian Chris-
tians clearly regarded themselves as non-Iranians, for to Paštwos
Busand the gund Areac 'army of the Iranians' was a troop of foreign
invaders, and for Eznik the *azgn ariakan* 'Iranian nation' was an alien people.100

But the distinction between *Erān* and *Anerān* is a complex matter. Akopov and Grantovskii have argued that in the works of Strabo and Pliny certain tribes of speakers of Iranian languages are called non-Iranian, whilst other peoples who were not speakers of Iranian languages are included as Iranians. D'yakonov suggested that the term may have means 'Zoroastrian', having a religious rather than an ethnic sense.101 The Parthian Arsacid king Gotarzes II (ca. A.D. 40-51), who ruled an empire inhabited by the multifarious peoples who were later to be subjects of the Sasanians, refers to himself in a Greek inscription simply as *Gōterzēs basileus basileōn Areanōn hyos Geo (ke)kaloumenos Artabanou* 'Gotarzes king of kings of the Oranians, son of Gew called Artabanos'.102 It seems doubtful that all the subjects of the Arsacid king were considered *Areanoi*, though, end it is not known who was, and who was not.

The Sasanians divided the known world into four parts: the land of the Turks; the area between Rome and the Copts and Berbers; the lands of the blacks, from the Berbers to India; and Persia—according to the Letter of Tansar, a document attributed to the chief herbad of Ardešīr I (A.D. 226-41) which has come down to us, however, in a late translation in which many additions or changes were probably made. In the Letter, Persia is defined as stretching 'from the river of Balkh up to the furthest borders of the land of Adharbāyān and of Persarmenia, and from the Euphrates and the land of the Arabs up to Oman and Makrān and thence to Kābul and Tozarīstān'.103 Although Persian Armenia here is included in Iran,104 the reference does not necessarily indicate that the Armenians were considered Iranian, for Arab territories, also, are part of the kingdom as described above.

Sasanian epigraphic material offers little help. The inscription of Šābuhr I on the Ka'aba-yi Zardūst records his conquest of Armenia, which became part of Erānshāh; his sons Hormizād-Ardāsīr and Narseh both ruled Armenia subsequently with the title of 'great king' (familiar to us from the BASILEOS MEgalou of Artaxiad coinage, see above), each before his accession to the throne of the king of kings itself.105 In his contemporary inscription at the same site, the high priest Kartīr
declared that he had set in order the fire temples of Armenia, Georgia, Caucasian Albania and Balassagan. We shall see that Arsacid Armenia was to be regarded as the second domain of the Arsacid house after Iran itself, a position of privilege which may indicate that Armenia was indeed regarded as an Iranian land. Kartir's testimony shows that in the third century there were also Zoroastrians there. Yet in the inscription of Narseh at Paikuli, A.D. 293, reference is made twice to departing from Armenia to EranSahr; the obvious inference is that Armenia was considered a separate country.

The Christian Armenians naturally wished to be considered amarik for it seems that the Sasanian authorities treated non-Iranians who were not Zoroastrians, such as the Jews of Mesopotamia, with considerably more tolerance than they did Iranians who converted to Christianity. In the Syriac martyrologies of the Sasanian period, most cases involve converts to Christianity with Persian names. As Gray noted, 'Christianity has always been a proselytising religion, Zoroastrianism, in the Sasanian period and subsequently, has not been; and although the Mazdeans were, on the whole, rather indifferent to other religions so long as these did not interfere with their own, they could scarcely remain unconcerned by proselytising directed against themselves.' In the Armenian martyrologies of the naxarars Atom Gnuni and Manacîhr Astuni, who were executed during the reign of Yazdagird II (438-57), the two are not accused by reason of their own beliefs, but because they came from Armenia to Ctesiphon to convert others. According to the Chronicle of Arbela (a work whose authenticity, however, is seriously disputed), the Jews and Manichaean stirred up agitation against the Christians by informing king Šābuhr II (309-79) that Catholicos Simon had converted prominent Magians to his faith, undoubtedly well aware that this was a charge to which the Zoroastrians would react with particular sensitivity.

Although the Sasanians made repeated attempts to convert the Armenian Christians to Zoroastrianism, most notably in the proselytising campaign which culminated in the war of 451 chronicled by Ehiṣē, adherents of other faiths were also persecuted. Kartir recorded with satisfaction that he had suppressed a number of different faiths, including Christianity and Buddhism, in Iran, and the Jews received with
trepidation the news of the overthrow of the Arsacids in 226. The fears of the latter were justified: Yazdagird II forbade observance of the Sabbath, and his successor Peroz, according to Hamza Ispahâni, massacred half the Jews of Spâhân on the pretext of a rumour that they had flayed two herbads; their children were impressed into the service of the fire temple of Sroš Adûrân in the nearby village of Harvân.

It is probably no coincidence that the above instances of persecution coincided with the period of the most virulent campaign in Armenia. In Eshâe's account, the stated purpose of the Sasanians is not so much to return Armenian backsliders to their old religion as to convert all the peoples of the Empire to the Mazdean faith; the Magi address Yazdagird II in the following speech:

Arkây kâj, astuack'n etun k'ez ztërut'iw inw yzal't'iw inw: ev c'c inc'k karavt en marmawor mecüt'c en, bayc'c et'c i mi awrëns darjuc'c en zamenayn szgs ev azins, or en i tërüt'c en k'c um: yawn'zam ev as'xarin Yumac'c kmanzandel mek'c en awrlnaw k ovk. 'Brave king, the gods gave you your dominion and victory, nor have they any want of corporeal greatness, except that you turn to one law all the nations and races that are in your dominion; then the country of the Greeks also will submit to your law.' By 'law' (Arm. awrën-k) is meant here the Zoroastrian religion; Pawstos uses the word to mean Christianity in another context. Although the campaign of the Sasanians against the Armenians is the most important and vigorously prosecuted episode of their policy, this is so most probably because Armenia was the most influential of the various countries in the Sasanian orbit, and because Christianity was the only minority religion of the Empire which was also the official cult of a militant and hostile power. It cannot be suggested with certainty, therefore, that the Sasanians perceived the Armenians as part of Éran, or that they were particularly anxious to reconvert the Armenians because of this.

Let us return to the name Aryazatê. It is unlikely that Tigran was ignorant of the meaning of the name he bestowed upon his daughter. In neighboring Cappadocia, a country where Zoroastrianism survived at least down to the fourth century A.D., and whose language bears the influence of Zoroastrian vocabulary, the Iranised kings bore names such as Ariaratha, Ari(ar)amnes, and Ariobarzanes, which contain the
element arya-; Diodorus Siculus mentions two Armenian kings named Ariamnes. It is reasonable to suppose that the similarly Iranised Tigran, who was, one recalls, raised in Parthia, considered himself an arya- by faith and heritage, for his ancestor Artaxias, as we have seen, claimed to be an Orontid, and the Orontids of Commagene in the time of Tigran still boasted of their Achaemenian forbears. If this supposition is correct, then the name he gave to his daughter is the only evidence we have that the Armenians once regarded themselves as ar-ri:. Again, one must admit that this is not unimpeachable evidence, when Sasanian Jews could bear names like Spandarmed and Ormizădăd.

Outside the immediate family of Tigran, the names of several of his commanders are noteworthy. An Armenian cavalry commander named Naimanēs or Nemanēs fought under Mithradates VI of Pontus; the same man is also referred to as Mēnophanēs. Justi explained the name as Iranian, containing the elements nārē 'brave' and nāy 'mind, spirit'. It is also possible that the name is a form of the Iranian name Narman, with the element nāyra- 'manly'. The names of Mithraas and Bagoas have already been mentioned; the name of the latter is found also in the form Magaas, and the name of the Armenian governor of Cilicia and northern Syria is variously attested as Magadēs and Bagadēs. The latter form is interesting in that it appears to predate the introduction into Armenian of the northwestern Mir. form Bagarat with the change of original intervocalic -d- to -r- that is so abundantly common in Arm. loan-words from Mir. It may be that this form of the name is a survival of OP.; other possible such survivals were noted in the preceding chapter.

In 56 B.C., Tigran died and was succeeded by his son, Artawazd II. Like his father, the new king was a philhellene, an accomplished Greek poet whose works were still read at the time of Plutarch, in the second century A.D. His Hellenistic culture notwithstanding, Artawazd's policies were generally pro-Parthian and anti-Roman; we shall discuss in a later chapter the famous episode in which the head of the defeated Crassus was brought in to the marriage feast of Artawazd's daughter and the Parthian crown prince Pacorus during a recitation of the Bacchae of Euripides. Parthian-Armenian relations suffered with the death of Pacorus I in 38 B.C. and the coronation of the other son of Orodes II,
Phraates IV (ca. 38-2 B.C.). The Armenians, alarmed by the murderous policies of the latter towards his own family and the Parthian nobility, were reluctantly forced to side with Rome, for the exiled Parthian leader of the nobles, Monaeses, hoped to rid the kingdom of Phraates with the help of Mark Antony. When the Roman campaign met with failure, Artawazd renounced the alliance; he was subsequently seized by Mark Antony and taken to Alexandria in 34 B.C. There he was paraded in the Roman general's triumph, imprisoned, and finally murdered three years later. The Romans ravaged Armenia, sacking the temple of Anahit in Acilisene. Artawazd's son, Artaxias, who had fled to Parthia, was enabled to return to Armenia in 30 B.C.; he was murdered ten years later by his brother Tigran III, who had been raised in Rome and was supported by a pro-Roman faction in Armenia. In 8 B.C., the latter died and his son Tigran IV assumed the throne. 

From 2 B.C. to A.D. 1, Tigran IV reigned jointly with his sister and queen, Erato, and jugate coins depicting the regnal couple were struck. One coin in the Hermitage at Leningrad bears the legend **BASILEUS BASILEON TIGRANES** on one side, with a portrait of the king; and **ERATO BASILEOS TIGRANOU ADELPHĒ**, with the likeness of his queen, on the other. The practice of next-of-kin marriage, called in Avestan **vāstvadatha**, was important in the Zoroastrian faith in historical times, and is mentioned in the last section of the doxology, *Yasna* 12.9. This practice, which is first attested in Iran with the marriage of Cambyses in the sixth century B.C. to two of his full sisters, is mentioned as characteristically Zoroastrian by a Greek writer, Xanthos of Lydia, who was a contemporary of Herodotus. The practice therefore goes back at least to the early Achaemenian period, and would have featured in Zoroastrianism by the time the teachings of the faith reached Armenia. Perhaps the western Iranians adopted next-of-kin marriage from Elam or Anatolia; the practice of consanguineous marriages is well known in both places. But it seems possible also that the custom may have developed amongst eastern Iranians far removed from these foreign cultures, for, as we have seen, it has an Avestan name. The possibility exists, therefore, that the Armenians adopted the practice from their neighbours in Asia Minor, and not as part of Zoroastrianism, but by the time of Tigran IV the Armenians were so steeped in
Iranian cultural and religious tradition that his marriage must have been regarded as a fulfillment of the pious obligation of $x^\text{Vaetvadatha-}$, and wholly Zoroastrian in character, regardless of its origin for the Armenians. The marriage is recorded in A.D. 2 of the Parthian king Phraataces to his mother Musa, and Tacitus wrote that neither Tigran nor his children reigned long, though, according to the custom of foreign nations, they took partners of the throne and marriage bed from among themselves. The historian does not tell us which foreign nations are meant, but there was before him the example of the Parthians at nearly the same time.

The practice of $x^\text{Vaetvadatha-}$ must have survived for a long time to come amongst the Armenians, if one is to judge from the frequency and vehemence of the condemnations of it that issue from the pens of historians and clerics. St. Nersès I the Great in A.D. 365 at the ecclesiastical council of Astisat established for the Armenians canons governing marriage which forbade the practice of $x^\text{Vaetvadatha-}$. These canons are allotted detailed treatment by both Pæwstos and Xorenac, and Garsoian has suggested that such attention indicates how seriously the issue was regarded. Although the council of Astisat did not prescribe any penalty for those who persisted in the practice of $x^\text{Vaetvadatha-}$, perhaps because it was in no position to dictate to the powerful naxarars it implicated (they maintained the practice, it is explained, to preserve property within the family), later canons are more severe. One recommends, or kin aina zmayar kam zdustr, i hur ayrec $x^\text{ex}$ znosa 'He who takes to wife his mother or daughter—burn ye them in a fire.' We shall have occasion to note that the very St Basil who consecrated St Nersès as bishop shortly before the council of Astisat attacked the 'nation of the Magousaioi' in Cappadocia for their 'illegal marriages'. It appears that the Church failed to eradicate consanguineous marriage in Armenia, for we find the practice condemned in the Datastanagirk 'Law Book' of Mxitar Gós (d. A.D. 1213). Remarkably, $x^\text{Vaetvadatha-}$ persisted down to the eve of the Russian Revolution amongst the Armenian meliks of the Caucasus, dynasts who preserved something of the ancient naxarar system in their remote mountain domains. In the village of Alighamar of the district of Surmalu, the melik Vrtcænæs married two women. By the first
he had a daughter, Arpēnik; by the second he had a son, Garegin. The boy and girl were later married. Marriages between first cousins were common in Surmalu, and even in cosmopolitan Tiflis a case was recorded in which two brothers married their two sisters.

With the death of Tigran IV, the royal line of the Artaxiads ended. Eratō was apparently allowed by Rome to remain on the throne for a time, perhaps to placate the Armenians, who rebelled against the various candidates the Romans placed on the throne, even though all were of local origin, coming from the royal stock of neighboring countries. From ca. A.D. 11-16 the Parthian prince Vonones held the Armenian throne. Although he was regarded by the Parthians as a Roman puppet, his Arsacid lineage seems to have induced the Armenians to accept him, for a time. In A.D. 16, they rebelled, and he was forced to flee.

In A.D. 18, Rome installed Zeno, son of Polemon, king of Pontus. It is recorded of the young man that he had 'imitated the manners and customs of the Armenians, and by hunting and banquets and all else in which barbarians indulge had won the attachment of nobles and commoners alike.' Zeno assumed the dynastic name Artaxias, and gained acceptance. At his death, the Parthian king Artabanus III declared his intention to expand the borders of the Arsacid Empire to rival the ancient states of Cyrus and Alexander. He was forestalled by the Romans, however, from making Armenia an appanage of the Iranian crown; the Romans had formed an alliance with the Iberians, the neighbours of Armenia to the north, and their king, Pharasmanes, sent his brother Mithradates to become king of Armenia. The Armenians rebelled against Mithradates; the uprising was led by one Demonax.

Although Rome was to pursue for centuries to come its policy of interference in Armenian affairs, the sympathies of the Armenians lay with Iran, a country whose religion and way of life were familiar to them. In A.D. 51, Vologases assumed the throne of the Arsacids. The younger of his two brothers, Tiridates, was made king of Armenia, although it was Nero, the Roman emperor, who was to give him the crown. The Arsacid house in Armenia, indeed, would outlast the dynasty in Iran itself by two centuries, but it was to face a challenge ultimately far more serious than the glittering cohorts of the Roman legions: the apostles of Jesus Christ.
1. Pliny, Nat. Hist., VI. 9. Strabo calls the various Arm. provinces with the ending -Snê eparkhiai, and W. W. Tarn suggested that this was a translation of an Arm. term rather than a relic of Seleucid administration (Seleucid-Parthian Studies, Proceedings of the British Academy, Vol. 16, London, 1930, 30); the same may probably be said of the Latin term regna. Both words may translate Arm. asxarh, a Mlr. loan-word, cf. OIr. xsathra-. The meaning of MP. sahr has the range of world, empire, kingdom, country and province (W. B. Henning, 'The Great Inscription of Sapûr I,' BSOS, 1939, 606). The word comes from the OIr. base xsay- 'rule', and can apply thus to the whole and the parts of a domain.

2. Examples include Pa±natun and Balahovit, containing the ethnic name of the Pala (on tun 'house', see Angel Tun, Ch. II; hovit means 'valley', see AON, 364-5); Mananaï, containing Mana (the meaning of -aï here is uncertain; see AON, 379); Mok-kc and Muk-ank c, with the name of the Muski, or Mycians (see Ch. I); and Tay-kc, with the name of the Taochi, see R. H. Hewsen, 'Introduction to Armenian Historical Geography,' REArm, N.S. 13, 1978-79, 82.

3. Strabo, Geog., XI.14.5. To such apparent survivals of ancient languages, one may compare the tenacity of Phrygian as a local speech down to the fifth century A.D. in the aggressively Hellenising Byzantine Empire, or the presence of Elamite in Khuzestan as a spoken language still at the time of the Muslim conquest (on the latter, see G. Lazard, 'Pahlavi, Parsi, Dari,' in C. Bosworth, ed., Iran and Islam (Minorsky Memorial Volume), Edinburgh, 1970).


5. Magie, op. cit., I, 139-40, 182.


8. See Toumanoff, op. cit., 292-4, who sees in the name of Artanês, the last Zariadrid king of Sophene (Strabo, Geog., XI.14.15), a contraction of the name Eruan/Orontês. More likely it is to be compared to Commagenian Gk. Artagnês, the name of an Iranian yazata equated with Heraklês, from a Mlr. form of the name Verethraghna- (see Ch. 6). According to Markwart and Andreas, the Arm. proper name Vahan is to be derived from Vahagn, the name of the yazata, with loss of -g- (HAnjB, V, 9; Hübschmann suggests
also a possible derivation of the name from Arm. vahan 'shield', Arm. Gr., 509, but the common noun may have the same root as the name of the god, for Av. verethra-gan- means literally 'to smite an attack/resistance', which corresponds to the function of a shield; see HAB, IV, 296); the form Artanēs would attest to such elision in another variant of the same name. For a complete kinglist of the Artaxiad dynasty, see Bedoukian, op. cit., 2, and H. Manandyan, Erker, I, Erevan, 1977, 298; for a chronology of the major political events of the period in Armenia, see HŽP, I, 922-4. It is obvious that the dynasty of Sophene claimed Achaemenian descent: Arsames was the grandfather of Darius; the name Xerxes needs no comment.

9. MX II.56; for photographs of these, see HŽP, I, pl. opp. 532, and the separate articles by Perikhanyan et al. cited below.


11. The Arm. word for a stele, kotcōt, was derived by Adontz from Akkadian kudurrū 'stele, boundary marker' (see G. B. Dzhaukyan, 'Ob akkadskikh zaimstvovaniyakh v armianskom yazyke,' F-bH, 1980, 3, 119); this etymology is accepted by A. M. Danielyan, 'Artases I-i hastatvac sahanak'areri iravakan nemanak'tyun,' F-bH, 1977, 3. Should the derivation be accurate, it would indicate that the institution of boundary markers in Armenia predated Artaxias by a millennium. There is no material evidence for this, and the steles, taken together with other institutions and administrative measures attested as innovations of Artaxias, must be regarded as Hellenistic. The etymology is poor; in Arm., -rr- or -rn- in loan-words is represented as -r-, not as a dark l, whether the original language from which the words are adopted be Iranian or Semitic. For instance, the name of the north Syrian city of Harran, LXX Gen. XI.32 Kharran, is found in the fifth-century translation of the Bible in Arm. as Xaran (see G. Bolognesi, Le fonti dialettali degli imprestiti iranici in Armeno, Milan, 1960, 28). The word may be related to Arm. kotcō 'handle, stem' in the sense of something elongated and upraised, cf. Georgian loan-word godol-i 'tower', godl-oča 'to rise' (see HAB, II, 614-5). If a Semitic root is to be sought, a form of GDL, cf. Heb. migdal 'tower', is more likely than Akkadian kudurrū.

12. See M. Rostovtsev, 'Aparanskaya grecheskaya nadpis' tsarya Tiridata,' Aniiskaya seriya No. 6, St. Petersburg, 1911. Nig was a populous region on the river K'asā, and it has been suggested that the early Arm. Christian basilica there was built on the site of a former heathen temple (A. Sahinyan, K'asā bazilikayi cartarapetut'yun, Erevan, 1955). The later name of the place,
Aparan (cf. OP. apadāna-) 'palace' indicates that it must have been an administrative centre as well, warranting a royal inscription in view of its importance.


14. Perikhanyan, op. cit., 19, derives the name Zariadres from Ir. *zari.āthra- 'golden fire'. Strabo refers to an Armenian named Adōr who commanded the fortress of Artagera and was killed by Gaius Caesar (the Arsacid queen P'aranjem would hold the same fortress against the Sasanians after the imprisonment of her husband, Aršak II, in the fourth century); these events would have taken place at the end of the Artaxiad period, ca. A.D. 2-3. The name of the Armenian may be a form of Mr. ŧdur 'fire', attested also in Arm. atrusan 'fire altar', a loan-word from Pth. (see Ir. Nam., 5; Magie, op. cit., I, 485; and Ch. 15). The name Zariadres is of Iranian origin, for Athenaeus, citing Chares of Mytilene, refers to Zariadres, the brother of Hystaspes of Media, in recounting the epic romance of Zariadres and Odatis, apparently a Median legend. The tale reappears in a somewhat altered form in the Šāh-nāme, where the hero is called Zarēr (see M. Boyce, 'Zariadres and Zarēr,' BSOAS, 17, 1955, 463-70). Both forms of the name are attested in the inscriptions of Artāses, and the latter, with loss of final -t, is found as Arm. Zareh (cf. the toponym Zareh-awan; an earlier form survives in Zareh-kert, Zarēr-kert. The place-name Zari-sat 'Joy of Zareh (?)' is parallel in form to Art-sat 'Joy of Artāses' to be discussed below, see AON 427-8). A satisfactory derivation of the name in Ir. has not been found (cf. Boyce, above; Arm. Gr., 40, 506; Ir. Nam., 381-3; and Toumanoff, op. cit., 293 n. 69).


16. W. B. Henning, 'Mani's Last Journey,' BSOAS, 1942, 911 n. 2 and BSOAS, 9, 848 n. 3.

17. See Chs. 13 and 14 for discussions of Artawazd and the kājānč.

18. See Ch. 9. This iconographical problem was discussed by us in a paper entitled 'The Eagle of Tigran the Great,' delivered at a Symposium on Arm. Art and Architecture held at Columbia University, 27 April 1981. Three points of interest to our discussion were made which are worth mention here. The concept of x'arēnāb- as represented by two eagles protectively flanking the king may be reflected in the design of a Sasanian throne with an eagle supporting either side (see A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, 'Studies in Sassanian Metalwork, V: A Sasanian Eagle in the Round,' JRAS, 1969, 1, 2-9). Newagīn is presumably seen to inhere in the king
himself; one notes the decoration on a Roman helmet found at Nawa, Syria, which shows a soldier confronted by two eagles, their bodies turned away from him, their heads facing him (as on Artaxiad tiaras in Armenia), above and behind him a winged youth, and above the latter a vastly larger youthful bust with rays about the head. The winged youth is probably the personification of Victory; the nimbus-crowned figure is Hēlios (corresponding to the Arm. star, representing bakt 'fortune' and the yezata Tīr; on the pairing of Hermes, the messenger-god like Tīr, with Hēlios in Commagene, see our note on Naity's sanha below). The soldier is thus being awarded glory and fortune for his valour (in Arm., k'ajut'ivan; in Mīr., nēvāgīth). Such an interpretation would be reasonable for a helmet dedicated to a deceased officer whom his comrades wished to honour, and the iconography is attested elsewhere in Syria, at Palmyra and Hatra (see Ch. 9). The helmet was published by S. Abdul-Hak, 'Les objets découverts à Nawa,' Les annales archéologiques de Syrie, 4–5, 1954–55, 168–74 & pl. 4, cited by E. R. Goodenough, Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period, XI (= Bollingen Series, Vol. 37), New York, 1964, fig. 141. The symbol of the bird and star is still used by the Armenians. An embroidered fillet trimmed with a row of coins (worn by a woman on her forehead), from Zangezur, nineteenth-twentieth century, shows two birds in side view, to either side of a star, which they face (reproduced in S. Lisitsyan, Starinnye plyaski i teatral'nye predstavleniya armianskogo naroda, T, Erevan, 1958, pl. 93). The symbol of birds confronting a sacred image is widespread; see G. d'Alviella, The Migration of Symbols, London, 1894, repr. New York, 1956, 91–93. In the seventh book of the Denkard, two birds hold (and, apparently, protect) the hōm of the trvāsā of Zarathustra on either side, before his birth.

19. This parallel is suggested by Bailey, Zor. Probs., 1971 ed., xvii.


21. Ibid., 173.

22. On the trvāsā-cult, see Ch. 10.


26. AON, 408.


28. Plutarch, Lucullus, 32.

29. On the Arsacid temple and Greek inscription at Garni, see Ch. 8.

30. See Ch. 6.


32. B. N. Arakelyan, Aknarkner hin Hayastani arvesti patmut'yan, Erevan, 1976, pl. 97 (Eros-handle), 98 (hippocampus).


34. MX II, 49.


36. On this word, which probably meant originally 'a place of Mithra', see Ch. 8.

37. Lit. 'place of the gods', a sacred city founded by the Orontids; see the preceding Ch.

38. Arm. ptkr' 'image' (from Mlr. patkar; the Arm. is used to translate LXX Gr. eikon in Gen. XXVI.27: Arm. Gr., 224), cf. Sgd. ptkr'y 'image', as in 'bt' 'wr'n mwck' pyt ptkr'y wn'y 'He should make seven images of the Bhaiṣajyaguru Buddha' (E. Benveniste, Textes Sogdiens, 69, P. 6.135-7, cited by H. W. Bailey, 'The word Ewt in Iranian,' ESOS, 5, 2, 1931, 279). G. X. Sargsyan, Hellenistakan darasrjani Hayastane ev Mvosx Xorenac'cin, Erevan, 1966, 44, in discussing the passage from MX, suggests that ptkr meant a statue in the round, while kuf-k' meant bas-relief, and cites the example of the hierothesion at Nemrut Dağ in Commagene, where there are both statues and bas-reliefs, the latter depicting the royal ancestors, according to Sargsyan, and the former the images of the gods. But in fact one of the statues represents Antiochus himself, who was considered neither more nor less a deity than his ancestors (on the deification of kings in this period, the first century B.C., see below). Furthermore, the bas-reliefs at Arsameia on the Rymphaios nearby clearly depict the yazata Mithra, so the distinction Sargsyan proposes to see is of no validity as an iconographic convention. From Sasanian Iran,
indeed, we have bas-reliefs of both gods and kings, but only one statue in the round of monumental size has come to light: a great stone image of Sabuhr II found in a cave above Bishapur (see T. Talbot Rice, *Ancient Arts of Central Asia*, New York, 1965, 85 & pl. 70). From the kingdom of the Kusans to the east in the same period comes the well-known statue of the monarch Kaniška, found in a temple (B. Staviškii, *Kushanskaya Baktriya*, Moscow, 1977, 20 pl. 2). The latter, but probably not the former, may have received reverence as part of the cult of the royal ancestors. As we shall see, the Sasanians were to destroy such images in Armenia. In the Parthian period, images in the round, both monumental, such as the statue of Sanatruč from Hatra or the great representation of a Parthian prince unearthed at Shami, or in miniature, such as the crude figures from Susa, were probably used in the fravashi-cult (see Talbot Rice, op. cit., pl. 71 for the statue from Shami; see V. G. Lukonin, *Persia II*, New York, 1967, pl. 6, 9 for Sanatruč; and R. Ghirshman, *Iran*, Penguin Books, 1976, pl. 39 b for the figurines from Susa). In Armenia, a number of crudely executed heads of stone have been found at Artaxata and elsewhere which may likewise have represented ancestors whose spirits received honour and offerings (see Arakcelyan, op. cit. n. 32, pls. 1-20, 31, 32). The Arm. word *kūr-k* 'idol, image, statue' comes from the verb *kūr-* 'I carve, sculpt' and is found in a fragment of epic preserved by Korenacci on Varagēs (for names with the Ir. loan-word *yard-* 'rose', see Ch. 12; the name seems to mean 'rosy-haired', and the Ir. loan-word *gēs* is found also in the name Gisanē, an epithet or cult name of the fiery red-haired Vahagn, see Ch. 6), who settled on the Kasa river (on this region, see the discussion of Nig/Aparan above): *kīel kop'el zdurūn Eruanday ar'kayi* 'to cut and hew the bate of Eruand the king' (MK II.65). The basic meaning of the verb seems to be 'to make hard by striking' (HAB, II, 662), so the original meaning of *kuirk* may have been an image of beaten metal. The word translates LXX Gk. *eīdōlion*, Gen. XXXI.19, and in Arm. Christian literature *kra-pastutcivn* is a calque upon Gk. *eīdōlo-latreia* 'idolatry'. *Kūr* meant 'idol', while *patker* retained the meaning 'image' as a neutral word free of necessarily religious connotation. The variation in usage of the words by Korenacci thus would seem to be a matter of differentiation for the sake of style rather than an intentional distinction between two kinds of images; if anything, the word *kuirk* by the time of his writing would have meant a statue in the round, while *patker* would be more appropriate for 'bas-relief', meaning basically any kind of picture.

39. Presumably Anahit is meant here; see below and Ch. 7.

40. This is a reference to the fravashi-cult; see n. 38 above and Ch. 10.

41. This was the temple of Tir, referred to also by Agathangelos as an archive or academy of priestly learning; see below and Ch. 9. On statues, see M. A. Dandamayev, *Iran pri pervykh Akhemenidakh*, Moscow, 1963, 245 and n. 49.
42. Agath. 192.


44. See Ch. 16.

45. See Afrak'elyan, op. cit. n. 32, pls. 93-95; and Ch. 9.

46. Ibid., pls. 84-86; see also Ch. 7. It is recalled that a medallion of earlier date from Armacir depicts the same scene, testifying to the continuity of religious observances. Xorenac'i alludes to such preservation of tradition in describing how the images of the yazatas and royal ancestors were transferred from Bagaran to Artaxata by Artaxias.

47. The plaque from Artaxata is unpublished and was described orally by Afrak'elyan, with a slide (see Russell, op. cit.); the Christian relief is published in N. Stepanyan, ed., Dekorativnoe iskusstvo srednevekovoi Armenii, Leningrad, 1971, pl. 139.

48. See Z. Xa'catryan, 'Irana-haykakan dic'abanakan alersner ci harc'i surj,' Lraber, 1981, 2, 54-72, pls. 1, 2. For Pth. examples, see M. Colledge, The Parthians, New York, 1967, pl. 2? a, b. The most recent example unearthed at Artaxata was published by B. N. Afrak'elyan, 'Pe'cummer Artasatum,' Hayrenik'i jayn, Erevan, 28 Nov. 1979, 4. See also n. 64 to Ch. 8.

49. See, e.g., Xenophon, cited in the preceding Ch.

50. This detail is not mentioned by the above writers; see Ch. 8. The remote Thracian kin of the Arm. worshipped a rider-god strikingly similar in bas-reliefs of the Roman period to Mithra in Parthia (perhaps influenced by the developing iconography of Mithraism in the Pontic region): see Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Summer, 1977.


52. See Chs. 6 and 8.

53. Bedoukian, op. cit., 69 and pl. 129; see also Xa'catryan, op. cit. n. 48, 56.

54. See AHM, 38-40, where Gershevitch argues against the identification of Mithra as driver of the chariot of the Sun in Avestan texts.

55. Yt. 10.13. In the Xvars'ad nanva'n, the Litany to the Sun, which is recited daily together with the Litany to Mithra, the Sun is
continually addressed as 'swift-horsed' (in the NP. translation, tēz asp); see M. N. Dhalla, The Nyaishes or Zoroastrian Litanies, New York, 1908, repr. 1965, 2-65, and Boyce, op. cit. n. 31, 45.

56. See Arak'elyan, op. cit. n. 32, pl. 107 and op. cit. n. 31, 45.


58. See Ch. 5.

59. Bedoukian, 7-8.

60. See Ch. 5 on Argaeus and the religious importance of mountains in Armenia. Zoroastrians have traditionally regarded mountains as sacred. In Y. 42.2 are worshipped gairīṣca aṣtacinom 'mountains flowing with water' (the waters flow down from high Hārā, and from Cappadocia is found a dedication to Amūhī with the Av. cult epithet rendered in Gk. letters barzokhara 'of high Hārā'). In Sirōṣag 2.28 reverence is offered to vispā garāyō 'all the mountains'. In Y. 1.14, 2.14 f. specific mountains are named for worship (pace Boyce, Hist. Zor., II, 141). A book of prayers and nīrangs, Nawari MS T3, p. 67, contains a namaskār 'salute) based upon the Sirōṣag passage, to be recited upon nudišan koho maś [sic] 'seeing a great (?) mountain for the first time'. E. Herzfeld, Archaeological History of Iran, London, 1935, 55, compares the NP. name Kēhrād 'Born of the Mountain' to Pth.-in-Gk. Kophasatēs at Behistun; the element kōf 'mountain' at least seems clear. According to the Mēnōg I Krad, Ch. 56, the mountains were made to check the force of the winds (an idea shared with, if not derived from, Aristotle). According to Bundahisn, the mountains sprang up to stabilize the dish of the earth when it was shaken by the ūbgad 'onslaught' of Ahriman; Qur'ān 21.31 appears to echo this; suggesting that mountains were created to prevent earthquakes.

61. On coins of Tigran III (20-8 B.C.), an eagle or dove is shown with an olive branch in its beak; on coins of Tigran IV (8-5 B.C.), an eagle is shown facing a serpent; see Bedoukian, 71, 74.

62. Bedoukian, 24, 68.

63. Arm. Gr., 236, 489; for -sar as a suffix in toponyms, see AON, 387. Both Hībschmann and A. de, HAB, IV, 182-3, trace sar 'mountain' to *IE and sar 'head, leader' to Phl., but such a semantic division seems unnecessary.

64. Bedoukian, 46.

65. Ibid., 14.

66. Ibid., 19, 35, 63, 74.

67. On Vahagn, see Ch. 6.
68. Bedoukian, 75; see Ch. 12 for a discussion of the cypress and other plants of religious significance.

69. Bedoukian, 67, 72, 73.

70. There were 3000 hoplites for every elephant in the Sasanian army at Avarayr according to Eišē, Vasn Vardanay ow HayocC paterazmin (fifth century), ed. by E. Tër-Minasean, Erevan, 1957, 114-5. The Arms. in later centuries whenever the battle was depicted in MS. paintings showed the Persians as seated upon elephants, e.g., in a SaraknocC 'Hymnal' of A.D. 1482, Erevan Matenadaran MS. 1620, in L. A. Durnovo and R. G. Drambyan, ed., Haykakan manrankarcCüt'yun, Erevan, 1969, pl. 71. The Sasanians also hunted with elephants; such a scene is shown in bas-relief at Taq-i Bostān from the sixth century A.D. (see Lukonin, op. cit., pl. 130).

71. See Arm. Gr., 255. In a Phil. work on the game of chess, Wizarisn i catrang, we learn that pîl 5 pustibânan sâlîr homânîg 'the (piece called the) elephant is like the chief of the bodyguards' (cf. Arm. pûstutan and an earlier loan, paštjan, Arm. Gr., 221, 255; the latter form, from Pth., with the generalised meaning 'defender', is the only one of the two which came into general use in Arm.), J. M. Jamasp-Asana, Pahlavi Texts, Bombay, 1913, 116.10. Both animal and game came to Iran from India. On the name of the animal, see P. Kretschmer, 'Der Name des Elefanten,' Anzeiger der Phil.-Hist. Klasse der Österreich Ak.d. Wiss., Jahrgang 1951, Nr. 21, Wien, 1952, 307 ff. The Armenians might have kept a few elephants as an exotic curiosity or symbol of royal power under the Artaxiads, but the climate cannot support elephants; Armenia is horse country. The elephant was regarded by Iranians as a daēvic creature (see G. Scarici, 'Zunbil or Zanbil?' in Yadmâme-ye Jan Rypka, Prague, 1967, 44 on the monstrous Kûs-i pîl-dangân, based perhaps on an elephant god; also A. Tafazzoli, 'Elephant: A Demonic Creature and a Symbol of Sovereignty,' Monumentum H. S. Nyberg, II, Acta Iranica 5, Leiden, 1975, 395-8).

72. Bedoukian, 46 et seq.


75. HEP, I, 552; N. C. Debevoise, A Political History of Parthia, Chicago, 1938, 41-2; see also J. Wolski, 'L'Arménie dans la politique du Haut-Empire Parthe (env. 175-87 av. n.ē.),' In Memoriam Roman Ghirshman, I, Iranica Antiqua 15, Leiden, 1980.

76. Magie, op. cit. n. 4, I, 189-92.

77. Toumanoff, op. cit., 124, 156.
78. Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 120, suggested that the word bdeasx was Iranian, but did not offer an etymology. H. W. Bailey derived it from an Ir. base axē- 'observe/watch over', cf. Av. aiviśāyā, Old Indian adhyākṣa- 'superintendent' ('Akhroštri inscription of Senavarma, King of Odi,' JRAS, 1980, 1, 27, n. 2 to line 9).

79. Debevoise; op. cit., xxxix.

80. The political history of Tigran's reign has been amply studied on the basis of Gk. and Latin documents, which naturally reflect a Roman viewpoint. Y. Manandean's study, Tigran II et Rome, novaeus éclaircissements à la lumière des sources originales, Lisbon, 1963), is a revisionist treatment of the sources from the Armenian point of view. In his study, the author seeks to demonstrate, among other things, that hostile attitudes towards Tigran II and Mithridates VI in the works of classical historians were accepted uncritically by later scholars as objective evidence.

81. Both these names are Iranian: on the first, a theophoric form with the name of Mithra, see Ch. 8; on the second, with Mir. bag- 'god', see our discussion of Bagaran, Bagawan et al. in the preceding Ch.

82. See Appian, Syr. War, VIII, 48-9.

83. On the form with Mir. suffix -kert 'made', see AON, 384, 474-5. It is now generally accepted that Tigranakert is to be identified with Gk. Martyropolis, Arabic maiyafarīqin, Arm. Npčert in the region of Aṣjnik (see J. Markwart, Südarmenien und die Tigrisquellen, Vienna, 1930, 86 et seq. and N. Adontz/N. G. Garsoian, Armenia in the Period of Justinian, Louvain, 1970, 376 n. 10; a study of the history of the city was written by G. X. Sargsyan, Tigranakert, Moscow, 1960). R. H. Hewsen, 'Ptolemy's Chapter on Armenia,' REArm, N.S. 16, 1982, 135, identifies Tigranakert with modern Silvan; T. Sinclair has proposed instead Arzen, about 35 km. distant. A bas-relief of a horseman in Parthian style, of monumental size has been discovered at Bosat, a few miles north of Silvan (see M. Nogaret in REArm, N.S. 18, esp. pls. 44, 45); presumably, it depicts either the god Mithra or else, more likely, an Arm. Artaxiad king.


87. *Ibid.*, 130.32-132. "Irevšatyan translates Arm. et\textsuperscript{c}e\textsuperscript{ oc} yarajagoy\textsuperscript{i} bae\textsuperscript{c} e\textsuperscript{c}ani as Rus. esli emu zavedomobyla pridana drugaya forma 'if another form was given it (the candle) deliberately', which does not correspond to the Arm., even if one accepts the MS. variant e\textsuperscript{c}ani 'becomes' for e\textsuperscript{c}ani 'is refused, effaced', which Irevšatyan does not.

88. See S. S. Irevšatyan, ed. and trans. into Modern Arm. Davit\textsuperscript{c} Anha\textsuperscript{c}t, Erker, Erevan, 1980, 310 n. 77.

89. Plutarch, *Lucullus*, 32-4; see also *Ir. Nam.*, 121.

90. *HanJB*, I, 488.

91. *Ir. Nam.*, 362.

92. See Ch. 6 for names with yaraz; as K. Maksoudian notes in his introduction to Koriwh, Vark\textsuperscript{c} Mastoc\textsuperscript{c}i, Clas. Arm. Text Repr. Ser., Delmar, N.Y., 1985, ix, the ancient Arms. liked animal names, like Koriwh 'cub, whelp', Enjak 'panther', etc.

93. See Ch. 13.


95. Gk. APYAZATH, see Debevoise, *op. cit.*, 47, and A. A. El nitskii, 'O maloluzhennykh ili utrachennykh grecheskikh i latinskikh nadpisyakh Zakavkaz'ya,' *VDI*, 2 (88), 1964, 135; H. S. Nyberg, 'The Pahlavi Documents from Avroman,' *Le Monde Oriental* 17, Uppsala, 1923; and, most recently, M. Mayrhofer, 'Zu den Parther-Namen der Griechischen Awroman-Dokumente,' Mémorial Jean de Menasce, Louvain, 1974. In the same Gk. letter is given also the name Aramazd, in a form which, when stripped of its Gk. ending, is identical to Arm. Aramazd.


96. On the toponym Siwnik\textsuperscript{c}, see W. E. Henning, 'A farewell to the Khagan of the Aq-Aqataran,' *BSOAS*, 1952, 1, 512, and Ch. 9, where the form of this and similar Aramaic inscriptions found in Arm. is also discussed.

97. On burial customs, see Ch. 10; on the site and inscription, see A. G. Perikhatyan, 'Arameiskaia nadpis' na serebrannyoi chashe iz Sisiana,' *P-bH*, 1979, 1, 280-6; see also Arak\textsuperscript{c}elyan, *op. cit.* n. 32, 31 & pl. 1.

101. See G. B. Akopov, 'K voprosu ob "ar'ya" v drevneiranskom obikhode,' in G. X. Sargsyan et al., ed., Iran (Nerjavor ev Mi'jin Arevelk' erken ev zo'akovurdner, 8), Erevan, 1975, 186-91.

102. See E. Herzfeld, Am Tor von Asien, Berlin, 1920, 47.

103. M. Boyce, trans. and ed., The Letter of Tansar, Rome, 1968, 63 & n. 2. On the history of the text, see the translator's introduction. This division of the world into four parts is attested in various cultures outside Iran, as noted by Boyce. The division of the administration of the Artaxiad and Parthian kingdoms amongst four bdašx-kī or setrays, as discussed above, may reflect a similar concept before the Sasanian period, applied in microcosm.

104. The term Persarmenia must refer to the territories acquired by the Sasanian Empire after the partition of Greater Armenia between Iran and Byzantium in A.D. 387, or else to the smaller area that remained in Persian hands after the second partition, in 591. At the time of Ardašīr, Armenia was an independent kingdom ruled by the Arsacids. It became the appanage of the candidate to the Sasanian throne in the last quarter of the third century (see below and Ch. 4), but even if this comparatively brief period of Persian rule is meant, the reference to Persarmenia still cannot be contemporary with Ardašīr I and must be a later interpolation.

105. See ŠKZ, II.14, in M. Sprengling, Third Century Iran: Shapur and Kartir, Chicago, 1953 and V. G. Lukonin, Kul tura Sasanidskogo Irana, Moscow, 1969, 56, 197-8; see also Ch. 4. The text of the inscription, ŠKZ, calls Hormizd-Ardašīr the 'great king of Armenia': MP. 1.23, 1.25 LB 'MK' 'rmn'n; Pth. 1.18, 1.20 RB 'MK' 'rmun'; Gk. 1.41, 1.48 (tou) basileōs Armenias (see M.-L. Chaumont, 'Les grands rois Sassanides d'Arménie,' Iranica Antiqua, 8, 1968, 81). The word order of the MIR. here cannot support the contention of W. B. Henning that the title should be read as Vazurg Armenān Šah 'King of Great Armenia', parallel to the Arm. title T'egavor Hayocē Mecacē (op. cit. n. 96, 517 & n. 4), attested in the Arm. historians and in the Gk. inscription at Gafni as BASILEUS MEGALES ARMENIAS (see Ch. 8).


109. Ibid., 370.

111. Ibid., 125, citing the Talmud, tractate Aboda Zarah, 10 b. On the religions persecuted by Kartir, see H. Bailey, 'Iranian mktk-, Armenian mkrten', REArm, N.S. 14, 1980, 7-10.

112. Ibid., 142.

113. Ekhé, op. cit. n. 70, 9.

114. On the use of Arm. awrén-k, see Ch. 13, n. 91.

115. See the letter of St. Basil of Caesarea, cited in Ch. 16.

116. For instance, the month-name Teirei, from Ir. TIr; see Ch. 9.

117. HAnJB, I, 276; Ir. Nam., 23-6; Diodorus Siculus XXXI.28.

118. In the following Ch. we shall have occasion to discuss the contents of a Gk. inscription found at the site presumed to be Tigranakert, which was probably carved there at the order of Sabuhr II, who besieged and captured the city, ca. A.D. 363. Movses Horenacci composed a short address of the Persian monarch to the besieged citizenry, probably on the model of pseudo-Callisthenes (see Thomson, MX, 282 n. 5), which may be cited for its interesting wording, for it begins: Mazdezana kaj Sapuh arkCayic C arkCay, Tigranakert ac C ork c i c evs ek c anuaneloc i mej Arcac c ev Anarac c 'The brave one of the Mazda-worshippers, Sabuhr king of kings, to (the people of) Tigranakert, (you) who are no longer to be named amongst the Iranians and non-Iraniens' (MX III.26). Since all living men are either one or the other, the implication is that the rebellious burghers will soon be dead.

119. Magie, op. cit., I, 212; HAnJB, IV, 18.

120. Ir. Nam., 223.

121. Loss of intervocalic -r- in the Arm. would produce the form attested in Gk. with the diphthong -ai- as Naïmés. Loss of intervocalic -r- (probably, however, under the influence of following -s-) may be attested in an Arm. loan-word from Mrir, past- 'worship', derived by G. Bolognesi, op. cit. n. 11, 35, from Mrir, parist. The element naïrya- 'manly' is attested, with -r-, in two borrowed Mrir. forms of the name of the divine messenger of the gods in Zoroastrianism, Naïryš.sanha-; these are the proper names Nerses and Narseh or Nerseh, of which the former is the older and more popular (see Arm. Gr., 57; Ir. Nam., 221-5; and HAnJB, IV, 30-70, where AcTean lists 24 instances of Nerses, a Sasanian MP. form, and 232 of the Arsacid Pth. form Nersés). As in the case of pCustipan/pastpan discussed above, the Pth. form became part of the Arm. vocabulary, but Sasanian culture and language had considerably less influence; the same pattern will be seen in religious matters.

The Tertius Legatus of the Manicheans was called by the Persians nyşpyrd *Naršah yazd, i.e., the yazata Naïryš.sanha-, but by the Parthians either myşpyrd, i.e., the yazata Mithra or
nrysfyzd *Narīsafr yazd. In Manichean Sogdian texts, the Friend of Light is called nr(y)nsx vghyy 'the god Nairyō.sagha-' (AHM, 40-1 & n. 1). Thus, it is seen that the Parthians and Sogdians identified the messenger-god also as a divinity of light, for Mithra was the yazata of fire and the Sun (see Ch. 8). The Commagenians also perceived a linkage of Helios and Hermes (see M. Boyce, 'On Mithra in the Manichaean pantheon,' in A Locust's Leg, Studies in honour of S. H. Taqizadeh, London, 1962, 47-58), and the Armen. regarded Tir, it seems, as both a messenger of the gods and a solar divinity (see Ch. 9). In Arm., the very frequent use of the name Nersēs indicates the ancient popularity of a yazata whose cult is otherwise not attested in Arm., where it may have been overshadowed by that of Tir, even as in Persian Zoroastrianism the cult of Sraosā, Mt. Sroś, appears to have eclipsed that of Nairyō.sagha-.

122. Ir. Nam., 184.
123. Loc. cit. and Magie, op. cit., I, 296.
124. On this shift, see Bolognesi, op. cit., 40, who cites numerous examples.
125. Plutarch, Crassus, 33.
126. See Ch. 13 for a discussion of the episode and of the prominence of Artawazd in Arm. epic and eschatological tradition.
127. For the political history of this period of Parthian-Roman rivalry in Armenia before the advent of Tiridates I, see Debevoise, op. cit.; HēP, I, 603-34; and H. Manandyan, Erker, I, 243-97.
129. Gosudarstvennyi Ermitazh, sobranie antichnykh monet, rukopisnyi katalog, No. 19416; X. A. Muselyan, op. cit. n. 73, 76. Bedoukian, 39, attributes this coin to a Roman candidate, Tigran V, ca. A.D. 6.
133. Tacitus, Annales, II.3.
134. PēB IV.4, MX III.3.
137. V. Hakobyan, ed., Kanonagirk<sup>c</sup> Hayoc<sup>c</sup>, I, Erevan, 1964, 471.7.

138. See Ch. 16.

139. Adoyan, <sup>op. cit.</sup>; 61.

140. Kanayean, <sup>op. cit.</sup> n. 23, 519.

141. <sup>Ibid.</sup>, 518.

142. Magie, <sup>op. cit.</sup>, I, 498.

143. <sup>Ibid.</sup>, I, 507-51. It is possible that this is a hellenised form of the Arm. dynastic name Dimak<sup>c</sup>s-ean, which is often attested in the Arm. sources.
CHAPTER 4

ARMENIA UNDER THE PARTHIANS AND SASANIANS

At the close of the Artaxiad monarchy, the Armenian nation found itself at the meeting point of the two great empires of Parthia and Rome. But the conflict between the two empires seems not to have affected Arm. religious affairs; Rome did not seek to turn the Armenians from their Iranised religion, and even acquiesced in the establishment of a branch of the Arsacid house in Armenia, provided candidates to the throne upheld Roman policies. Parthia, whilst regarding Armenia as the second kingdom of its empire, made no attempt to deprive the naxarars of their traditional domains and powers, nor did they apparently seek to impose upon the Armenians any religious belief or institution which the latter did not readily accept.

There emerged upon this scene, however, the powerful message of Christianity, which was to transform the Roman Empire and wrench Armenia from the religious orbit of Iran forever. For all the brilliant and unique power of the person of Christ himself, Christianity came to be an ingenious marriage of Roman organisational structure with an other-worldly teaching, of Platonic trans-national thought with the Jewish concept of a chosen people. Christianity offered more than initiation into a mystery; the Christian became a citizen of a nation chosen by God—in later centuries the Church would uphold the structure of Roman society when the Imperial administration faltered. The Christians offered not only the solace of an attainable wisdom which transcended history and released the adept from it, but introduced the idea—common to Judaism and Zoroastrianism alike—of God working in history, towards a desired end. There was a constant flow of converts to Judaism for several centuries before and after the birth of Christianity, mainly in Rome and Asia Minor, but conversion to Christianity became a flood as teachers of the new faith gradually stripped their cult of the concept of Hebrew exclusivism and of the requirements of Mosaic law governing diet, circumcision, and similar matters. This divorce from normative Judaism occurred over several centuries, and at first it
was in Jewish communities that Christianity took root and began to spread; the process was quickened by the growth of the Diaspora after the Palestinian revolts of A.D. 70 and 131. In Apostolic times, Christian communities seem to have been concentrated in the Roman provinces of Asia Minor and Syria, to the immediate west and south of Armenia, and the Apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew are reputed to have preached the Gospel in Armenia itself, perhaps in the large Jewish communities of Tigranakert, Artašat, and other trading cities. Rome, plagued by barbarian invasion and internal political upheaval, was ultimately to seek stability and order by embracing the very Church it had brutally persecuted, and Armenia, too, would become a Christian state at about the same time (and perhaps before the Edict of Milan, thus becoming the first Christian state).

In Iran, the Parthian Arsacid house was rent by internal conflict. Bloody battles over the succession to the throne in the first-third centuries weakened the country by dividing it into warring factions at the same time that Rome was pressing unrelentingly at its populous western territories and attempting to foment anti-Parthian feeling amongst the Hellenised and other non-Iranian populations of the large cities of Mesopotamia, the administrative centre of the kingdom. In the second decade of the third century, one of the contestants for the throne, Vologases V, secured the support of the Roman emperor Caracalla against his brother, Artabanus V, who seems to have been aided in turn by the Armenian Arsacids and the bulk of the Iranian nobility. At this moment of civil discord, the local ruler of Fārs (Gk. Persis), Ardešīr I, rebelled and overthrew the Arsacid dynasty, which had reigned in Iran nearly five hundred years. Fārs was a semi-independent domain of the Parthian Empire, enjoying the right to mint silver coins; the province was administered by several kings; numismatic evidence indicates that they were pious Zoroastrians. The new Sasanian dynasty embarked upon a campaign to subjugate the various peoples of the Parthian Empire, as well as those lands once ruled by their Achaemenian forebears, to a centralised monarchy. This policy went hand in hand with a policy of organizing the Zoroastrian religion under a parallel administration closely tied to that of the state. These acts were violently opposed by the Armenians, as well as others in the Parthian Empire,
whose cherished image-shrines and fire-temples, staffed by priests of local noble families, were placed in immediate peril. In the mid-third century, Armenia was invaded by the Sasanians and made an appanage of the Empire, much as it had been under the Parthians, although it remains to be demonstrated conclusively whether the country was conquered during or after the reign of Ardesir I. Less than a century after the fall of the Iranian Arsacids, the Armenian Arsacids were converted to Christianity.

The new faith was to serve as a rallying point against the encroachments of the Sasanian state and church, from the restoration of the Arsacid house in the late third century after a brief period of Sasanian hegemony, until the end of the dynasty in 426. Thereafter, the Church remained as an important unifying factor in Armenian national life, against Byzantine Greek and Persian alike. The Battle of Avarayr in 451, in which the Christian forces of Vardan Mamikonian resisted unto death the superior armies of Yazdagird II and his Arm. naxarere allies, who had sought unsuccessfully to turn the Armenians back to Zoroastrianism, became quickly enshrined in the Arm. imagination as a second Maccabean revolt, emblematic of zeal for the Lord against heathen tyranny, and it sealed the destiny of the Good Religion as the guiding faith in that land, although isolated followers of the faith seem to have held out down to the early twentieth century.

We are informed by Tacitus that the Parthian Arsacid king Artabanus III (ca. A.D. 16) wished to re-establish the ancient borders of the Achaemenian Empire, and crowned his son Arsaces king of Armenia at the death of Artaxias, whose brief reign was discussed in the previous chapter. The Romans, anxious to forestall Parthian expansion, made allies of the Iberian king, Pharasmanes, whose brother, Mithradates, was installed on the Armenian throne during a struggle for the succession in Parthia between Artabanus and Tiridates III, the latter receiving Roman support. Ca. 52, Vologases (Pth. Valaxs) I came to power in Parthia and determined to place his brother Tiridates on the throne of Armenia, 'which his ancestors had ruled' (Tacitus, Annales, XII.52). Rome, with her Iberian allies, repulsed the Parthians during several campaigns over a period of ten years, but in 66 the Emperor Nero finally crowned Tiridates king of Armenia in a notable ceremony at Rome.
Vologases I may have been the king who first portrayed fire-altars on Parthian coins and who ordered the compilation and redaction of the Avesta, but there were two other kings of the same name before A.D. 192. It is noteworthy that the Parthian monarch believed his house had a hereditary right to Armenia, however, and that he pursued his policy of conquest with singleminded vigour; perhaps the religious prestige and political success of Vologases combined to produce the Arm. historical anachronism whereby one Vakarsak was held to be the first Arsacid king of Armenia, and younger brother of the eponymous king Arsak of Parthia himself, ca. 250 B.C. In 72, the Caucasian tribes of the Alans invaded the new kingdom of Tiridates I, probably with the support of the Iberian king Pharasmanes I, an ally of Rome. The Roman emperor Vespasian (69-79), who during his reign increased from four to seven the number of legions on his eastern frontiers, annexed the Orontid kingdom of Commagene in the same year.

It seems that Tiridates was succeeded by Sanatruk, but the dates of his reign have been disputed. The Parthian royal name Sanatruk is attested several times in various lands which came under Arsacid rule around the time of Christ. According to Armenian tradition, the Apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew arrived in Armenia during the reign of this king; such a legend is of obvious value as evidence to support the claim of the Armenian Church to autocephalous status as an Apostolic foundation. The structure and custom of Arsacid society in Armenia required a second founder, however, from a native and princely house, in the person of St Gregory the Illuminator; in later literature, artificial links between the two traditions were to be forged. The Apostolic tradition itself bears suspicious resemblance to the mission of Thaddeus to cure king Abgar Ukkama of Edessa (cf. the cure attributed to St Bartholomew noted above, in an Arm. tradition of Aūbak); this Syriac tale is probably a fiction modelled upon the historical conversion ca. A.D. 36 of king Ezad of Adiabene to Judaism. It seems, however, that Abgar IX of Edessa did embrace Christianity late in the second century; the legend attributing the conversion to his predecessor, Abgar V, would, like the Arm. tradition, endow the Church at Edessa with Apostolic foundations. It has been suggested that the fate of the third-century Arm. Sanatruk (mentioned in Classical sources) was
interwoven with that of Abgar IX in reality; this facilitated the chronological shift to the time of Christ in the Arm. Apostolic tradition.\(^\text{14}\) There is attested from the region of Sophene an Arm. bishop of the mid-third century named Meruzanēs, apparently a native Arm. of the princely Arcruni family; this indicates that Christianity had come to Armenia around the time of Abgar IX, from the Syrian communities contiguous to Sophene.\(^\text{15}\) The Arsacids suppressed this tradition of a pre-Gregorian church in the country. According to P\(^\text{6}\)wstos (IV.24), Sanatruk was interred in a tomb of stone at Ani, the centre of the cult of Aramazd and royal necropolis of the Arm. Arsacids;\(^\text{16}\) in the mid-fourth century, the traitor Meruzaan Arcruni led the Sasanian Šābuhr II to the place. The latter ransacked the tombs and kidnapped and held for ransom the bones of the Arm. kings, but was unable to break into the strong sepulchre of Sanatruk. It is noteworthy that the Roman emperor Caracalla had behaved similarly ca. 216 when at Arbela he broke into the Parthian royal tombs there.\(^\text{17}\) Like the Achaemenians before them, the Parthian and Arm. Arsacids are seen to have practiced entombment and burial, presumably with appropriate precautions to prevent the pollution of the sacred earth of the Zoroastrian yazata Spenta Armaiti by corpse-matter.

The dethronement of one Tiridates, king of Arm., is recorded ca. 109-110. It is doubtful whether Tiridates I is meant; the coup was accomplished by the Pth. Pacorus II, who installed his son Axidares on the Arm. throne. It is possible that the deposed king was Sanatruk, but the chronology cannot be established with certainty. It has been suggested that this Axidares, Arm. Ašxadar, is to be connected with the wicked Šidar of Arm. legend, but this seems most unlikely.\(^\text{18}\) Axidares reigned three years; in 113, the successor of Pacorus II, Osroes, deposed the king of Armenia and enthroned the brother of the latter, Parthamasiris, without, however, consulting Trajan (98-117). In 114, Trajan advanced upon Armenia, and had Parthamasiris treacherously murdered at Elegeia, where he had been lured to an interview.\(^\text{19}\) Axidares was restored by the Romans to the throne, and Trajan continued his campaign against the Pths. in Syria and Mesopotamia, but the native population revolted--Trajan was unable to capture Hatra--and the Romans were forced to withdraw.
Parthamaspates, crowned by Trajan at Ctesiphon **ca. 116-7**, ruled but a year, and at the same time Vologases (Arm. Vašarš), son of Sanatruk, reconquered Armenia and ruled until 140-143, with the consent of Hadrian (117-38). The new king founded a city in the plain of Ararat, Vašaršapat ('built by Vašarš'), called in Gk. Kainēopolis ('the New City'). The city became the administrative capital of Armenia, and was in close proximity to Artašat and to the holy city of Bagawān; there may have been temples at Vašaršapat, for stone foundations in Hellenistic style of an earlier building have been found beneath the great church of St Hripšišè in the city, and it is hypothesised that the shrine of a pagan goddess had stood on the site. The town is now called Ejmiacin 'the Only-Begotten (of God) Descended', after a vision in which St Gregory is said to have beheld Christ descending and ordering him to found a church at the spot. Vašarš I resisted successfully a second Alan incursion into Armenia in 134, which was probably encouraged by the Tiberian Pharasmanes II, an ally of Rome. It may be assumed that the Romans had consented to the coronation of the Arsacid simply because they could not do otherwise, but upon his death in 140-143 they installed Sohaemus, a member of the royal house of Emesa (modern Homs), Syria related to the Orontid line of Commagene. Sohaemus, a member of the Roman Senate, was intolerable to the Parthians, and was deposed in 161.

The Parthian king Vologases III (148-92) installed his son Pacorus on the throne of Armenia, but the latter was deposed scarcely three years later by the invading Romans, who restored the crown to Sohaemus. Pacorus appears to have been taken as a hostage to Rome, for he dedicated there a funerary altar to his brother Mithradates, calling himself Aurēlios Pakoros Basileus Megalēs Armenias and invoking 'the gods beneath the earth.' This may be no more than a formal invocation of Greco-Roman divinities; it certainly does not sound Zoroastrian. (But see the discussion of šahapet gerezmanac 'god-) ruler of the tombs' in Ch. 10.) Sohaemus died in 186, and the Romans took advantage of internal troubles at Rome to enthrone Vašarš II (186-98).

At Garni, where Tiridates I had built a temple and left an inscription in Gk. (see Ch. 8), there has been found also an inscription in Aramaic. The text reads: (1) ... (2) MLK RB ZY 'ARLYNJ (/) BRH ZY
WLGS (4) MLK; it is translated: '(2) Great King of Armenia (3) son of Vologases (4) the king.' A. Perikhanyan, who published the inscription, ascribes it tentatively to the Arm. king Xosrov I, son of Valarsē II; the former reigned to 216 and was succeeded by his son, Trdat II. The script resembles that of the Armazi bilingual inscription and of other Aramaic inscriptions from Georgia of the first-third centuries, or of inscriptions from northern Mesopotamia, but the style varies considerably from that of the Artaxiad boundary steles, which are closer to the chancellery Aramaic script of the Achaemenians. It is curious, too, that the spelling of the name of the king's royal father, WLGS, corresponds more closely to the Gk. rendering of the Pth. name than to the Ir. form preserved in the Arm. language, Valarsē; the transcription of the name of Artaxias (Arm. Artašēs) in the Artaxiad Aramaic inscriptions is often similarly Hellenised to a form of Artaxerxes. This case may indicate the continuity of a Greek scribal tradition in Armenia parallel to an Iranian oral tradition reflected in the pronunciation of the same names in Armenian.

Valarsē II steered a cautious policy of friendship with Septimius Severus (193-211), who invaded Armenia and northern Mesopotamia in 194-5 and was welcomed by the Arsacid monarch in the plain of Xarberd with gifts. Like his predecessors, however, Valarsē II died at the hands of the northern barbarians, in 198. His son, we are told by Xorenacē, led a victorious campaign of retribution and arjan hastate hellenacē grov 'erected a monument in Greek script' (II.65) to commemorate his victory. The same Xosrov I appears to have accompanied Severus to Alexandria, ca. 202, and at Thebes left a Greek inscription: Khosroēs Armenios idōn ethaumasa 'I, Khosroēs the Armenian, beheld and was astonished.'

In 211, Caracalla became emperor. The Parthian empire at this time was rent by internal conflict. Vologases V, virtually a puppet of Rome, was opposed by Artabanus V, his own brother, and the Arms. probably supported the latter. When Ardešēr the Persian, son of Pāpak and grandson of Sāsān, came to the throne, Armenia was a kingdom faithful to the Arsacid line and implacably opposed to the upstart from Pārs: in the first-second century, two Arm. kings were Great Kings of Parthia, five were sons of Great Kings, one was a nephew and another a
grand-nephew of Great Kings, and one an Arsacid of unknown parentage. The naxarars, who enjoyed semi-autonomous rule in their domains, occupied hereditary posts in the service of the Arsacid king; respect for his position ensured the maintenance of their own, and rebellions by individual naxarars were crushed ruthlessly, with the slaughter of whole families and the re-apportionment of land amongst those who had loyally fought for the king. The terms 'king' and 'Arsacid' were to be regarded by Arm. writers of the fifth century and later as synonymous; none but an Arsacid could wear the crown, nor could the sins of an Arsacid deprive him of it. The Arsacid king was the bnaq tərm aśxarhis 'the natural lord of this country' (PQ9 III.11).

In religious affairs as in political matters, Armenia was completely integrated into Parthian Iran. The vast majority of the Iranian loan-words in Armenian, which comprise most of the vocabulary of the language, are from Northwest Middle Iranian dialects, that is, from the speech of the Parthians and Atropatensians of the Arsacid period. Nearly all the names of the gods of pre-Christian Armenia are Pth. forms, as are nearly all the terms associated with religious belief, ritual and institutions. In cases where both Parthian and Middle Persian (Sasanian) forms of the same word are attested in Armenian, it is the Parthian word, in almost all cases, which has become part of common Arm. usage. There is little discontinuity in the transition from Artaxiads to Parthian rule; instances of close ties between the two houses are seen in the first century B.C., and, indeed, Arm. historians ascribe to the 'Arsacids' the deeds of the Artaxiads and of the Oron-tids before them, in a telescoped narrative full of Iranian epictopoi. The constant Roman incursions into Armenia, and their interference in political life in the country, never were intended to change the religious or cultural orientation of Armenia, nor did Armenian alliances with Rome ever touch such matters; as was seen, the Parthian Arsacids themselves did not hesitate to form such alliances in the course of their internecine feuds. It does seem that Roman soldiers brought their own gods with them.

All the temples of the yazatas to be discussed in the following chapters existed throughout the Arsacid period, and most had been built before it. Yet, by contrast with the Artaxiads, there is a striking
absence of material evidence, perhaps attributable more to the changing political fortunes of the land than to a paucity of cultural activity, for the Armenian writers of the fifth century drew upon a rich tradition of oral literature, including lyric poetry and music. Not a single coin minted by the Armenian Arsacids, from Tiridates I to the end of the dynasty in 428, has been found, in stark contrast to the abundant numismatic evidence of the Artaxiads discussed in the preceding chapter. It is likely that the Arsacids in Armenia did not rely upon a monetary economy throughout most of the country. In trading cities, the coinage of Parthian and the Roman Empire appears to have been adequate. Despite the severe conditions of foreign invasion and frequent political instability, the Arsacids became firmly established in a country which welcomed them as its own.

In the third century, Armenia became the scene of the confrontation of two philosophies and ways of life which threatened to change its very nature as neither Zoroastrian Parthia nor pagan Rome had ever done. In ca. 226, Ardešir defeated his Parthian overlords and set about a radical reformation of Iranian life. Throne and altar had never been entirely separate under Arsacid rule—Tiridates I of Armenia impressed the Romans as both monarch and Magus—but Ardešir transformed the Zoroastrian Church into a militant, highly centralised bureaucracy at the service of a similarly centralised state. In Armenia, the Vahunis were the hereditary priests of Vahagn, and the royal family presided, as it seems, over the cult of the father of the gods, Aramazd. The priesthood seems not to have been concentrated in a single caste or rigidly hierarchical structure, despite the kšrmapatšw 'high-priesthood' of the royal family. St Gregory immediately sought to enlist the sons of the šurs as candidates for the Christian priesthood, and the provisions of the treaty of Nuarsak (see below), which prohibit training of Armenians as Magi, indicates that a kind of tug-of-war existed between the two faiths, in which the Zoroastrians were not without success. As well be seen, the Christians themselves adopted elements of Sasanian hierarchical structure, much as it had threatened the pre-Christian order. Local cults were subordinated to the state religious hierarchy, and non-Zoroastrian religious minorities were subjected to persecution.
Various teachings came to Armenia from the south and west also. Large communities of Jews had resided in the cities of the country since the time of Tigran II’s conquests in the first century B.C., and some Jews must have been early converts to Christianity, as elsewhere in Asia Minor, assisting the spread of the new religion. For many Christians must also have fled eastwards under the pressure of increasingly severe persecution by Rome. As was seen, Christians also came to Armenia from Syria, to the south. In the first century, the pagan religious leader Apollonius of Tyana visited Armenia; early in the third century, the Edessan Christian heresiarch Bardaišan fled to Armenia to escape persecution under Caracalla, and wrote a History of Armenia during his stay. In the third century, Manichaeism spread to Armenia as well. Later, Mazdakites and Huramiya fled to Armenia. Of the various teachings noted above, Christianity alone would pursue a militant policy comparable to that of the Sasanians, and, indeed, force another wave of refugees to flee to the East: the Monophysites, branded as heretics, whose learning assisted the development of the Hellenophilic school in Arm. literature, and the pagan philosophers, who came to Iran when Justinian ordered their school at Athens closed in 529. The latter, unlike settlers in Armenia, returned West from alien, 'barbaric' Persia as soon as they could, although their knowledge and services were welcomed there (recalling perhaps the experience of some Greek doctors at the Achaemenian court).

The events preceding the establishment of Christianity by St Gregory the Illuminator are linked closely to the campaigns of the Sasanians and their militant Zoroastrian church. In 244, the Roman emperor Gordian was killed in battle by Šābuhr I (241-72); the former's successor, Philip the Arab (244-9), signed a peace treaty with the Sasanians in 245, ceding Armenia to them. It is unlikely that Iran had actually seized the country yet, for Šābuhr attacked the Arm. Arsacid king Trdat II, in 252-3; the defeat of Valerian by Iran in 260 strengthened the Persian position in Armenia further. In the Arm. sources, Trdat II is referred to as Xosrov, and the defeat of Armenia is ascribed to treachery: 'Xosrov' was murdered by one 'Anak', of the princely Surēn Pahlaw family, acting as a Persian agent. Hisē recalls a tradition that 'Xosrov' was murdered by his brothers, and it has been
suggested that 'Anak' was one of them. Although Bailey (written communication) suggests that the name Anak may mean something like 'successful', with base nak- 'attain' and preverb ā- in Iranian (we note that the name 'nkdwty 'daughter of *Anak' is found on a Sasanian seal), it is likely that the name was understood by the chronicler as Pth. anāk 'evil' (cf. Burdar and Sophia, and the possible explanation of Vardan also as an epithet). The implication of the legend is that Armenia could not have been defeated on the battlefield. The Armenian nobles, according to Agathangelos and later historians, caught 'Anak', murdered him, and then exterminated his family, except for one son, who was spirited off to Caesarea in Cappadocia by a noble Persian named 'Burdar' (i.e., burdār, 'carrier') and his wife 'Sophia' (i.e., 'Wisdom'). The details concerning 'Burdar' and 'Sophia' are supplied by Movsēs Xorenac'i, and probably represent a further development of the myth. The son of the murdered 'Xosrov' was saved similarly, we are told, and spirited off by his dāyēgk 'nurse', the naxarār Artawazd Mandakuni, to Rome. The son of the murderer was to return to Armenia as Gregory, the Christian who would convert Tiridates, son of the murdered king, to the new faith. In both cases, a baby destined for greatness is shielded from violence by being rescued, taken away, and raised in obscurity until the day of destiny arrives; one recalls the account by Herodotus of the early childhood of the first Achaemenian king, Cyrus, or the derivative and late legend of the escape of Ardešir, a young man of humble origins, from the court of Ardawān, in the Karnāmag I Ardešir I Pāpakān. A version of this Wandsage is found appended to the beginning of the Armenian Agathangelos, and in earlier Armenian tradition, also, legends of escape from the massacre of a clan are often found: the escape of Artašēs from the general slaughter by Eruand of the sons of Sanatrük (MX II.37); or that of Xēsā, son of the bdešēx Bakur, after the family of the latter are put to the sword for their insurrection against the Arsacid king of Armenia in the fourth century (PE II.9).

There seems little doubt that the missionary activities in Armenia ascribed by Xorenac'i to Ardešir: the establishment of ornumakan and višakan fires and the destruction of image-shrines were in fact undertaken by Šābuhr I, his son. In a letter ascribed to Gordian III
(ca. 242), the Roman emperor addresses the Senate, declaring: 'We freed the necks of the Antiochians from the yoke of the kings of the Persians and the Persian laws.' Persian law at this period was inseparable from obedience to the customs of Zoroastrianism. In describing the campaign of Šābuhr I against the Romans in Syria and Asia Minor in 260, the high-priest Kirdēr mentions Armenia amongst the countries where Magi and sacred fires were found; he notes in the following passage that Magi who were ahlamōgh 'heretics' were punished and set straight. The other countries mentioned in the list are Syria, Cilicia (with Tarsus), Cappadocia (with Caesarea), Galatia, *Iberia (vlwc'n) and Balasagan as far as the Daryal Pass (Alānān dar, Arm. dūrn Alānac). Kirdēr devoted his attentions both to foreign religions, including Christians, whom he persecuted, and to Zoroastrians whose usages were not unacceptable to the Sasanian church. This probably brought him into conflict with most classes and confessions of third-century Arm. society. The Persians were not content merely to impose their laws upon the Arms.; in ca. 252, Šābuhr I installed his son,Ormizd-Ardešīr, on the throne as Great King of Armenia, undoubtedly hoping to establish a pattern of relationship and succession in the country similar to that which had existed under the Parthians. Ormizd-Ardešīr succeeded to the throne of the King of Kings upon the death of his father, ca. 273, and in 279-80, his brother Narseh assumed the throne of Armenia. The latter ruled in Armenia until 293, when he himself became King of Kings. It is suggested by Toumanoff that Arsacid rule was restored to Roman-controlled areas of Armenia ca. 280 under Xosrov II, son of Trdat II. In ca. 287, he was murdered by his brothers; this event may have served as the basis for the anachronistic legend of Gregory discussed above. Then, Tiridates, son of Xosrov II, escaped to Rome, and returned to Armenia eleven years later, under Roman auspices. The murder of Xosrov occurred in the fourth year of the reign of Diocletian (284-305), according to the Arm. historian Sebēsos (seventh century); Tiridates became king in the fifteenth year of Diocletian, and Constantine was crowned emperor in the ninth year of Tiridates. According to the chronology of Sebēsos, Tiridates would have come to power in 298, and St Gregory the Illuminator would have been consecrated a bishop at
Caesarea in 314, i.e., in the seventeenth year of his reign. In his inscription at Paikuli, Narseh refers to one Trdat, king of Armenia. Since the inscription was made in 293-4, it cannot refer to a Tiridates who was not yet king. Toumanoff therefore suggests that Xosrov was killed by Tiridates III, his brother, the Anak of the legend, who was made king of Armenia by the Sasanians; Xosrov's son, Tiridates IV, escaped to Rome and returned to take the throne in 298.

The Iranians cannot have wanted Tiridates IV, but the balance of power had shifted by that time in favor of Rome: in 297, Galerius defeated Narseh and in the following year signed the Peace of Nisibis, according to which the Syrian and Arab marches of Armenia to the southwest were ceded to Rome. It is possible that Narseh was forced to accept the overthrow of Tiridates III in favor of the pro-Roman Tiridates IV because of the military reversals suffered by Iran; he may even have sought Roman support against his nephew, Varahrān III, whom he had deposed to become King of Kings, and towards this end had acquiesced in their demands concerning Armenia.

According to Agathangelos, Tiridates was proud of his Parthian ancestry, and offered sacrifices and prayer to the various yazatas of Zoroastrianism. He even claims to have visited Parthia itself, which he calls his ancestral homeland. (This was even then a fairly short journey, on major roads all the way.) Presumably he paid homage to the fravāšis of Arsacid forebears at Nisa, and made a pilgrimage to Ādur Burzēn Mihr. Indeed, the earliest and most abundant literary evidence of the cults of the yazatas at the various shrines of the country comes from Agathangelos, and forms part of the account of the Conversion of Armenia. The date of the Conversion traditionally accepted by the Armenians is 301-3 A.D., i.e., six years before the edict of toleration of Christianity issued by Galerius and re-affirmed by the Edict of Milan of Constantine in 313; this would make Armenia the first Christian state in the world. In support of the early date, the testimony of Eusebius is cited that Maximianus in 311 fought the Armenians because they were Christian, but it is more likely that the Roman emperor fought the Christians in Armenia with the aid of the Arm. king himself. It would have been sheer folly for the latter to have accepted a religion severely condemned by the very empire that kept him in power.
According to Agathangelos, Tiridates (IV according to Toumanoff; III according to the chronologies proposed by others) imprisoned Gregory for fifteen years. If Gregory arrived in Armenia at about the same time as the Roman installation of Tiridates on the throne, he would have been released—and the king converted—ca. 314, after the Edict of Milan.\(^56\)

In Agathangelos, the very narrative of the conversion of the king is presented in Iranian epic terms: Tiridates, in punishment for his murder of Christian missionaries, is transformed by God into a boar (Arm. varaz), the symbol of Verethragna depicted on the Arsacid royal seal, and the animal of the royal hunt. His conversion at the hands of Gregory is the price of his cure. The general framework, and many of the details, of the Arm. legend of the Conversion, appear to be drawn in part from the Kayanian epic narrative of the conversion of Vištâspa and his court to Zoroastrianism. This epic was preserved by the Parthians, and elements are transmitted in various Zor. Phil. books. In Dēnkard 7, for example, the Iranian nobles were rošnētād 'illuminated' in the Good Religion by Zarathuštra. The Šāh-nāme, also, speaks of the conversion of the nobles of the realm. In Armenia, St Gregory is the lusaworic 'Illuminator' of king and court; this seems to be a Zor. epithet. And we are told little about the common people, including Jewish-Christians, who must have played a major rôle in the Christianization of the country. Later, Xorenac\(^6\) gives his Bagratid patrons a Hebrew pedigree—but in the Davidic royal line.\(^57\) But it may be assumed, myths aside, that official conversion to Christianity was an act of friendship towards Rome; Armenia had suffered greatly already from Sasanian invasion and persecution, and it may have been feared that the country would be absorbed entirely into Persia, were Zoroastrianism allowed to remain as a potential instrument of control by a foreign priestly hierarchy. Nor were the Sasanians in a position to counter effectively Gregory's coup d'État. Šābuhr II (309-79) was still a boy, brought into power after a violent struggle within Iranian ruling circles, and there seems to have been no renewal of systematic persecution against the Christians of Iran itself until 339.\(^58\)

Not all the Armenian nobles and commoners accepted the new religion of Christianity with enthusiasm. The shrines of the yazatas were defended by main force, and armies fought over the temple complex of
Aštīšat. St. Gregory took immediate measures to assimilate the Church into the structure of naxarar and Arsacid society: patriarchs of the Church were buried at T'ordan, near the Arsacid necropolis of Ani, and the main centres of the faith were built on the sites of old holy places of the yazatas; major festivals of the Church were established to coincide with old Zoroastrian feasts, and particular saints seem to have corresponded closely in their character and functions to Zoroastrian yazatas. Gregory was by tradition a naxarar, the son of Anak Surēn Pahlaw—-and in Parthian society, the Surēn family was second only to the Arsacid house itself.

The early hierarchy of the Armenian Church was drawn, not from the Judaeo-Christians, nor from the ranks of the humble and the outcast for whose sake Christ had come, but from the privileged class of the old order: Tayr hraman Trdat...bazmc iwn metad manktwy acel yarvest dpruc iwn, ew kargal i veray hawatarim vardapets: afawel zazgs pācagorc k'urmc iwn ev zmankun noc'a i noyn žokovel...ew znosa yerkus bažaneal, zomans yAsori dpruc iwn kargal, ew zomans i Hellēn 'Trdat commanded...that a multitude of young boys be brought for education in the scribal art, and that trustworthy teachers be appointed over them; particularly [he ordered] that the families of the k'urms of filthy deeds and their children be gathered, and that they be divided in two, some to study Syriac and some to study Greek' (Agath. 840). St. Gregory lived to see his son Aristakes attend the Council of Nicaea in 325, yet his other son and successor, Vrt'anēs, was to face continued opposition from adherents of the old faith. It is noteworthy that the Arm. ecclesiastical hierarchy, being second to the monarchy, drew its centralised character from the Sasanian order as well as the Byzantine: an Arm. patriarch of the fourth century, St. Nersēs the Great, is described by P'awstos (IV.4) as ātagov amesyn zrkeloc 'intercessor for all the deprived', a rough equivalent of the Sasanian MP. priestly epithet driyōšan ājadagōw 'intercessor for the poor.'

P'awstos reports (III.3) that the Queen of Xosrov Kotak (332-8), son of Tiridates IV, stirred up a mob to attack Vrt'anēs as he was offering the Divine Liturgy at Aštīšat, the centre of the fourth-century Church. Xosrov's successor, Tiran, murdered the righteous Patriarch Yusik, who had condemned his sinful and unjust way of life. P'awstos
says of the Armenians (III.13): Yâynm ūzamânsâk čt āgawôrm īwreanc č
awrinâk čäri aznâin, ew novîn āwrinakâw ĵewel sksan, ew nçynpës gorceil.
Ze i ceînjuc č, yorme hetê ari nok ča znâm k čristonêut čeann, lok miyn
îbrev zwkâns imm mardkut čeann yanjins īwreanc č, ew oc čjermeiāndn inc č
hawatovk č ēnkâlan, ayl îbrev zmolorut čiwâm imm mardkut čeann i harkē. Oc č
etè crîpës partn ēr, gitûčeamb yusov kam hawatov, bacy č miyn sakaw
inc čork čzhangelâns gitên hellên kam asori dproučeanc č, ork čēin hasu
inc çyyn p rékčr i šatē. Isk ork čartâčoy k čan zgitûčiwâm aruestin ēin
ayl xâmnânc bazučiwâm mardkân țoçovrdocol č naxararačn ēw kam
ştâkânut čeann...mîk čīwreanc č ēnd anpîtans ēnd anawgûts ēvet čzbawseal
ēin...degereal mașêin yanulâky krt ētcîwâm ēnd čk čoti mtacn ēi hnut ēiwâm
het čanosut čeanc čsovûrčeanc č, barbaros xužaduč mits unelov. Ēw
zhivreanc čergs afaspelac č zîlpassant čeann sîrec čealk č i p çyt č
krt ētcîeancn ē, ew nîm hawatâc čealk č, ew i nyoîn hanapazordealk č...Ēw
zdicn ēhnut čeann pástâmsis i mmanuç ēiwâm poînut čeann gorcoyn ēnd naxaw
katarêîn 'At that time [after the murder of Yusik] they made their king
the example of evil and by his example they began to appear, and to act
as well. For since earlier times, when they had taken the name of
Christianity, they only accepted it in their souls as some human reli-
gion but did not adopt it with fervent faith; (they accepted it) rather
as a confusion of humanity, and by compulsion. (They did not accept it)
as was necessary, through knowledge, hope or faith, but only a few knew
the particulars of the Syrian and Greek writings; those competent in
the latter were few out of many. And those who were not privy to the
wisdom of art were the motley crowd of the peoples of the naxarars of
the peasantry...they occupied their minds only with useless and un-
profitable matters...they erred and spent (their powers) in mistaken
study and trivial thought of the antiquity of (their) heathen customs,
having barbarous and crude minds. They loved and studied with care the
songs of their legendary epics and believed in these and spent every
day with them...And they fulfilled the worship of the ancient gods in
the dark, as though performing the act of prostitution. 62

Later in the fourth century, according to P čawstos, the naxarars
Merûżan Arcruni, whom he calls a kazard 'witch' (V.43), and Vahan
Mumîkoncân, apstambealc čēin yûxê astuacapaştut čeann, ew zanâstuacn
Mazedanc č aînda yanjin aresal pâştēn; aksan synuhetew yerkîn Hayoc č
awerel zekelecis, zteleis aławt c k'ristonoic c yamenayn kólmans Hayoc c, gavaran g avaran c ew kólmanc kólmanc c. Ev nelién zbwam mardik zor i burm arkenénin, t'azul zastuapastut'awn ew i pastawn dañnał Mazdezanc'h 'had rebelled against the covenant of the worship of God and had accepted the godless cult of the Mazda-worshippers, which they served. After that they began to destroy the churches in the land of Armenia, the places of Christian worship in all the regions of Armenia, province by province and region by region. And they persecuted many men, whom they forced to renounce the worship of God and to turn to the service of the Mazda-worshippers.' This was done, of course, at the direction of Sàbühr II, and represents the first of three major campaigns by Iran to return the Arms. to Zoroastrianism, the other two leading to the revolts of 451 and 571-2. On each occasion, the Sasanians found supporters amongst the naxarars, who in 451 were almost equally matched for and against Christianity. The Arm. sources present the pro-Sasanian nobles as superstitious, wicked traitors; no one has yet proposed a revisionist historical view of their motives.

Pawstospeaks of specific practices well known from the pre-Christian period, as well. Meruzan consults magical dice: iianer i hmsys kaådëut'ean, zk'ues harn'snér: ew c'c goyr nma ysòják yurf' c kaxardakanac'h yó yussayrn 'he stooped to Chaldean spells and questioned dice, and there came not to him success in the witches' talisman which he hoped in' (V. 43)—this practice recalls the talismans in the story of Ara and Samiram. The Christian relatives of the dead Musel Mamikonean placed his body on a tower in the hope that he would be resurrected by dog-like supernatural creatures which revive heroes slain in battle; this belief, too, recalls the legend of Ara and Samiram and is a survival of very ancient practices.63 Reverence for dogs is noted by Yovhannes of Awjun, also. In the fifth century, many Armenians returned to their pre-Christian ways during the campaign of Yazdagird II; as we shall see presently, the Christian general Vardan Mamikonean destroyed fire-temples in a score of Armenian cities, and at least ten naxarars opposed him and fought alongside the Sasanian forces. Their leader, Vasak Siwni, encouraged Armenians to renounce Christianity by entertaining them with their epics, of which the fragment cited by Mvso̱s Xorenac'i on the yazata Vahagn is presumably a part.64
Despite their nominal Christianity, the Arsacid kings of the fourth century are almost all condemned by the Church; Aršak II (345-68) and his son Pap (368-73) both seem to have been Arianising heretics, but not outright infidels. In Arm. literature, however, they are cast as villains or heroes in an Iranian context: Pap is described as having snakes which spring from his breast; the account of the death of Aršak II seems to have been cast as an epic using Iranian forms.

Aršak, who assisted Julian the Apostate (361-3) against Iran, was captured by Šābuhr II, Julian's successor Jovian (363-4) agreeing not to intervene in Armenia, provided Iran protected its neutrality. Aršak was invited to an interview in a tent with the King of Kings, who had had half the floor of the tent covered with soil brought from Armenia—the other half was Iranian soil. Šābuhr led Aršak around the tent as they talked, asking him whether Aršak would refrain from attacking Iran, if he were allowed to return home and regain the throne. When he stood on Iranian soil, Paawstos tells us (IV.54), Aršak agreed with deference to all the king's suggestions, but as soon as his feet touched the soil brought from his native land, he became haughty and angry and promised to raise a rebellion against Persia as soon as he arrived home. In various cultures, the earth is regarded as conferring strength or security. The giant Antaeus, whose mother is Gaea and whose father is Poseidon, is defeated only when Heraklēs holds him in the air. In the Welsh epic, The Mabinogion, Macsen Wledig (i.e., Magnus Maximus, who served with Theodosius in the British wars of the fourth century) married a maiden in Eryri and lived at Arfon, 'and soil from Rome was brought there so that it might be healthier for the emperor to sleep and sit and move about.' According to an Iranian tradition recorded by Marco Polo, Kermānīs are peaceable by nature, while people from Fārs are contentious: soil was once brought to Kermān from Isfahān in Fārs, and when Kermānīs trod upon it, they became quarrelsome. (This is, presumably, a Kermānī tradition. A Yazdī saying expresses another point of view: 'If you meet a Kermānī and a snake on the road, kill the Kermānī and let the snake live.')

Procopius (Persian Wars, I.5) repeats the legend of Aršak's interrogation, and cites his source as a 'History of Armenia', probably that of Paawstos. But in the Greek text, the story is used to illustrate a
legal precedent: Aršāk's faithful chamberlain, Drastamat, 71 was allowed to visit his lord in the Fortress of Oblivion, 72 and to entertain him there with gusans and feasting, after Drastamat had rendered valiant service to Iran. This was an exception to the rule according to which prisoners confined to the place were to be forever isolated from the rest of the world—Aršāk had been thrown into the dungeon after the fateful interview noted above. It is probable that the transgression of a royal command in Iran in the favour of a worthy individual was itself a subject in epic: in the Biblical romance of Esther, a text permeated with Iranian names, vocabulary and themes, the Persian king Ahasuerus cannot revoke an order that the Jews be massacred—the king's order is law and irreversible as such—but issues a second order allowing the Jews to defend themselves. The visit of Drastamat and the encounter between Aršāk and Šābuhr both are cast, it seems, in Iranian epic themes—of the various legends cited above about the power of the earth, the Iranian tale of the soil of Fārs seems closest to the narrative of Pēawstos. It is seen that the Armenians continued after the Conversion to weave 73 epics of the kind that Pēawstos condemns as survivals of the old religion.

During his campaigns in Armenia, Šābuhr desecrated the necropolis of the Arsacid kings and stole their bones; the Armenians ransomed them and re-interred them at Ḥagi. The episode is reminiscent of the behaviour of Caracalla at Arbela, described above. 74 An inscription in Greek was found by C. F. Lehmann-Haupt in 1899 on the walls of the ruined town of Martyropolis/Mayyāfārīqīn which might have been made at the order of Šābuhr, or by Julian the Apostate, perhaps, for it refers to TON THEON BASILEA TŪN BASILEŌN 'the god, the King of Kings', a Persian title, 75 and an invocation is made PRONOIAI TŪN THEON KAI TEI TYKHĒI TēH HEMETERAI 'by the providence of the gods and by our Fortune'. It has been suggested that the Arm. king Pēp (368-73) was the author of the inscription, but it seems inconceivable that it could be the work of a monarch who was even nominally Christian. 76

Aršāk II's son, Pēp, apparently pursued a pro-Iranian policy which disturbed Rome; he was murdered in a plot and an Arsacid named Varazdat was placed by Rome on the Arm. throne (374-8). A decade later, Rome and Iran re-established the balance of power in the region by
partitioning Greater Armenia between themselves. In the larger, eastern part, Persarmania, the Arsacid kings continued to rule until 428. As was noted above, Christian teachings in Armenia were transmitted in Syriac and Greek, and were thus inaccessible to the bulk of the population, who continued to recite their epics and hymns of the old gods in Armenian. As we have seen, both Aramaic and Greek were used in pre-Christian Armenia in inscriptions. Xorenacì (II.48) mentions temple histories composed by Olympios, a priest at Ani, site of the shrine of Aramazd, and compares them to the books of the Persians and the epic songs (ergk vipasenac--see n. 73, above) of the Armenians; according to Mowsès, Bardaiṣan consulted these histories and translated them into Syriac (II.66). Thomson demonstrated that Xorenacì was citing in fact the works of various Greek and Syriac writers such as Josephus and Labubna whose works are known. 77 It was seen that the legends of Gregory and Arṣak follow Iranian modes of epic composition, however; in Ch. 2, Gk. inscriptions were cited from the Arm. Orontid cult centre of Armawir, so it is not improbable that a priest named Olympios, a Greek or an Arm. or Persian with a Gk. name, may have resided at another cult centre, Ani. Although Xorenacì's citations are sometimes forgeries designed to impress his patrons as examples of an ancestral literary tradition (to be contrasted with the illiteracy of the Arms. of his own time, which he scorns and laments), there is no reason to suppose that he did not hear of Olympios of Ani. It is recalled also that other antique historical works were composed in Armenia and are now lost: the Babyloniaca of Iamblichus is one example. In Ch. 9, we shall examine the testimony of Agathangelos that there was a priestly scriptorium at the temple of Tir, near Artašat. There is also preserved in the anonymous 'Primary History' at the beginning of the History of Sebēs a reference to inscriptions in Greek on a stele at the palace of Sanatruk in Muṣirn on the Euphrates giving the dates of the Parthian and Armenian kings; the Syrian historian Mar Abas Katina is said to have consulted these. 78

In addition to the epigraphic evidence in Aramaic and Greek from Armenia which we actually possess, there is a brief but interesting notice of pre-Christian Armenian script in a Classical source. It was noted above that the charismatic pagan teacher Apollonius of Tyana came
to Armenia. The biography of the philosopher, who died ca. A.D. 96-8, was completed by Philostratus ca. A.D. 220. According to Philostratus, Apollonius was accompanied on his journey to the East by an Assyrian of Nineveh named Damis, who boasted knowledge of the Armenian tongue, and of that of the Medes and the Persians (I.19). In Pamphylia, the travellers came upon a leopard with a golden collar on which there was written in Armenian letters 'King Arsaces to the Nysian God' (i.e., to Dionysos). Arsaces, Philostratus informs us, was king of Armenia at that time, and had dedicated the beast to Dionysos on account of its size. The leopard, a female, was tame, and had wandered down from the mountain in search of males. Presumably, Damis was able to distinguish between (spoken) Armenian and Persian, but it is likely that the engraving on the beast's torque was in the Aramaic language and script of the inscriptions discovered in this century.

During the reign of king Vramšapuh (388-414), a scribe of the royal court named Maštoc (361-440) was assigned the task of creating a script suitable for Armenian; the nature of the undertaking suggests that the Aramaic inscriptions, although they might contain individual Armenian names or common nouns, were still regarded as written in a foreign language. The need for Armenian Christian texts to counteract the influence of ancient orally recited epics is obvious, and must have impressed Maštoc with particular urgency, as he himself led a Christian mission to the Armenian province of Göğân. That region, according to the disciple and biographer of Maštoc, Korwn, had resisted Christianity, but Maštoc generalizanšeac awandeloc, ew i satanayakan divapašt spasaworut eçen i hrazanduç iwn K'ristosi matuc'aner 'captured all from the traditions of their fathers, and from the demonolatrous service of Satan, and delivered them into submission to Christ.' Maštoc learned that an Assyrian bishop named Daniel had discovered letters which had been yayloc 'found buried and resurrected from other writing systems'; Daniel's alphabet (Arm. n'sanagirs alphabetaç 'alphabetical symbols') was found inadequate to express the sounds of the Armenian language, and Maštoc devised a new script, consulting scribes and scholars in the Syrian cities of Amida and Edessa; he then worked with a Greek calligrapher, Ruphanos, at Samosata.
The Armenian letters finally devised reflect the dual influence of the Northern Mesopotamian Aramaic and Greek scripts, the latter supplying the seven vowels and various diphthongs, the former service as a basis for the invention of letters to represent certain consonants, such as the affricates, for which no Greek equivalents existed. Many of the letters may have been borrowed also from the form of Aramaic used to write Middle Persian. Several mediaeval MSS. declare flatly that Mesrop invented only the seven vowels of the Arm. alphabet; Daniel invented all the 29 consonants. Mani had much earlier adapted the Estrangello consonants to use in Iranian languages; and the Avestan script, with its sophisticated representation of vowels and semi-vowels, was probably conceived in the fourth century, at the same time the Sasanians were exerting pressure upon the Arm. to return to the Zor. fold. For all the hagiographical, nationalistic sentiments expressed by Korin himself in the Vark\textsuperscript{c} Ma\textsuperscript{c}toc\textsuperscript{c}, the Arm. alphabet appears to be less a work of original genius than one element in a general pattern of the development of Near Eastern scripts in the Iranian world.\textsuperscript{82} The first work to be written in Arm. was a translation of the Biblical Book of Proverbs;\textsuperscript{83} the rest of the Bible was rendered into Arm. shortly thereafter, and Korin exulted: \textsuperscript{85}Yayn\textsuperscript{c}n \textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c} \textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c} \textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{c}\te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commercial and administrative purposes in both Iran and Armenia, and late writers report that the long chants of the minstrels were recorded in carefully preserved manuscripts in Persia. Even so, the Zor. written tradition could not match Manichaean or Christian developments, and most Zoroastrian learning was, then as now, oral and conservative. The written Christian Bible was even more critical an advance over Armenian oral tradition than the Christian codex had been over the cumbersome pagan scroll in the Classical West scarcely two centuries earlier. The invention of the Arm. script, and the rapid labours of the Holy Translators of the fifth century, probably helped the Arms. to survive as a nation. Neighboring Cappadocia had had its own dynasties, Zoroastrian faith, and Asianic language, much like Armenia, but it fell under Byzantine suzerainty. St. Basil of Caesarea is said to have remarked that he was glad Cappadocian was too crude a tongue to describe the more abstruse Greek heresies; he wrote in Greek. Cappadocian had no separate script, and it waned; the Cappadocians went the way of the Phrygians, whose language died in the Byzantine period. Had Armenia not been a part of the Iranian sphere, a factor which seems to have facilitated the development of a distinct script, it might well have been absorbed entirely into the Greek milieu.

Amongst the Biblical heroes who became suddenly Armenophones at the hands of Maštoc and his disciples were Mattathias and his sons. In the decisive battle against Sasanian Iran that was to erupt a decade after the death of Maštoc, the sparapet Vardan Mamikonean was to be shown to the nation through the powerful lens of Holy Writ as a latter-day Judas Maccabeus striking the impious attacker of the children of the New Covenant. In 428, Bahrām V in one stroke dethroned both the Arm. king Artašēs V and the leader of the Church, Bishop Sahak Partšew ('the Parthian'). Ctesiphon installed a marzpan 'governor' directly responsible to the King of Kings: Vasak, head of the naxarardom of Siwnik. A Nestorian Syrian named Bar Kišō took the place of Sahak—the Nestorian sect, which was to be anathematised at the Council of Ephesus in 431, was considered less of a potential threat than those Churches which maintained ties with the Orthodox hierarchy of the hostile Roman Empire. The Church in Armenia rejected Bar Kišō and his successor, Šmuēl, and ratified the provisions of the Council of Ephesus,
but the *naxarars* acquiesced in the overthrow of the Arsacid line, retaining their ancestral domains and military units.

The Sasanians under Yazdagird II (438-57) attempted again to impose Zoroastrianism on the Armenians, apparently as part of a general proselytising campaign which was undertaken once Yazdagird had defeated the nomadic Hephthalites on the northeastern frontier of the empire. This victory allowed the King of Kings to concentrate his attention on the western parts of the empire; the war had also provided an excuse to keep far from home the Armenian forces conscripted to serve, should military action be called for. The Prime Minister of the empire, Mihrnameh, despatched to the Armenians a letter directing them to accept the *demi maadezn* 'the religion of Mazda-worship', in which the basic tenets of the faith are outlined. Mihrnameh's description is of the Zurvanite heresy, and in Eklesi's sixth-century text, some of its details derive from the description of Zurvanism refuted by Eznik of Kołb in his *Eiç Agandoc* ('Refutation of Sects', fifth century), and from tazar *Parpec*'. The latters and speeches in Eklesi's *Vas Vardanay ev Heyoc* *Petersazmin* ('On Vardan and the Armenian War') are literary compositions in the manner of Maccabees and of Thucydides. Mihrnameh's letter contains authentic Zor. phrases, as does the decree of Yazdagird II (discussed in Ch. 15). Amongst these is the contention that those who do not accept Zoroastrianism are *xul ew koyr* 'deaf and blind' (presumably because its truth is intuitively obvious): this is a translation of Phl. *kör ud karr* 'blind and deaf', used in the Zand as a gloss of *kay ud karb* 'Kavi(s) and Karapan(s)'.

Eklesi reports also that the *sparapet* 'commander-in-chief' of the Armenians, Vardan Mamikonian, and the *marzpan* Vasak Siwni were detained at Ctesiphon on their way home from the Hephthalite war and were forced to convert to Zoroastrianism. The king had accused them: *žhrak spananêk* ew *žjurs nicek*, ew *zmereals i hol tâkelov zerkr spananêk*, ew *koiarpikâ *arnelev oýz tayk* Harsamon *'You kill the fire, pollute the water, and kill the earth by burying the dead in the soil, and by not performing good deeds' you give strength to Ahriman*. The accusations are couched in Zoroastrian theological terms: to 'kill' a fire means to extinguish it; water is a sacred creation which must not be polluted; and corpses must be exposed or securely entombed.
Whilst the two leaders of the people were at Ctesiphon, Magi were sent to Armenia to enforce the observance of Zoroastrian rituals by the people.96

Vasak and Vardan returned to Armenia; the latter instantly repudiated his conversion, whilst the former took it seriously. The bishops of Armenia had roused the people to violent resistance against the Magi, and the latter, who had, apparently, expected to be welcomed, were ready to abandon their mission. Vasak, seeing that their Sasanian cult seemed foreign and undesirable to his countrymen, took the matter in hand:

Sksaw aysubetew patrel zomans karaseaw ev zomans olokoankan
baniwck: zramikn amensyn ahez baniwck srtat c amn-ray
Hansapazord astat c oyc zvelikis taqarin: ev yerkar temper uraxan c oan, mašelov
zerkeynut c ymn gišerac n yergs arbec kut c oan ev i kak c aw lktut c oan,
k oac rac uc aner omanc zkars erazstakans ev zergs het c anosakans

'Then he began to deceive some with property and others with flattery. He dismayed all the masses with frightful words.97 He daily made more bounteous the offerings to the temple,98 and lengthened the melodies of joy, whiling away the long nights in drunken songs and lewd dances,99 and for some he sweetened the musical scales100 and the heathen songs.101

It is implicit from this passage that the ancient customs of the Armenians differed from those which the Magi now sought to impose upon them, but whether doctrinal differences between Armenians and Persian Zoroastrians still existed in 450, two centuries after the first iconoclastic campaigns of the Sasanians in Armenia, is not stated. There is an indication that regional "interpretations" of the Avesta still existed, though; at a later point, Ekhvē mentions that one Zoroastrian priest sent to Armenia was called Hamakden, i.e., '(Knower) of all the Religion' (Phl. hamāq-dān), because he knew the Ampartk c aš, Bozpayit, Pahlavik and Parskaden.102 These, Ekhvē explains, are the five keštek 'schools'103 of Zoroastrianism, but there is also a sixth (he apparently includes hamakđen in the first five) called Petmog. Benveniste explained Ampartk c aš as 'a treatise on penalties', from OIr. *hamparta-(t)kaiša-; Bozpayit appears to relate to penitence, and Petmog might mean '(a book) in support of the Magi' from *pati-mag-ı-, cf. Vīrēvdat 'law against the demons' (written communication of H. W. Bailey).104
Zaehner suggested that the Pahlavik and Parskaden were the 'Parthian and Persian religions', and notes that in the Manichaean texts from Turfan, the supreme deity is called Zurvan in Persian, but not in Parthian.\textsuperscript{105} We have noted the frequent use of \textit{bag-} in Armenian toponyms, but the word, in the form \textit{bay}, is used with frequency also in Sasanian Middle Persian. Zurvanism, however, is treated as distinctly Persian by Eznik, who distinguishes it from Arm. 'heathen' beliefs, so the distinction drawn by Zaehner may indeed be valid.

Soon after Vasak began his campaign of luring the Arm. back to their old cults, Vardan and other \textit{naxarars} loyal to Christianity threatened to kill him. He made a show of repentance, and participated in a plan to mount a three-pronged attack on the Persians in Armenia. The Arm. forces surprised the Persians in a score of cities and fortresses, and in all of them an\textit{eyrin kizuin stuns pa\textsuperscript{2}stemen kraki} 'burned and incinerated the houses of the worship of fire'. This is obvious irony, like the burning of the Persian \textit{merzpan} in his own sacred fire at Duin in 571.\textsuperscript{106} Vasak, who commanded the central armies, suddenly turned to the Persian side, but Vardan quickly counter-attacked; Vasak and his allies amongst the \textit{naxarars} fled to the safety of his domain of Siwnik\textsuperscript{c} at the end of the summer of 450.\textsuperscript{107} In May, 451, the Sasanian forces under general Mu\textsuperscript{k}n Manwalewurd attacked Armenia in force. On 26 May, the two sides clashed on the plain of Avarayr, on the banks of the river T\textsuperscript{3}mut, to the west of modern M\textsuperscript{a}k\textsuperscript{e}. The Armenian forces under Vardan were defeated, and Vardan himself was killed, but it was a Pyrrhic victory; rebellions erupted throughout Armenia against Persia, and Yazdagird II abandoned his plan to return Armenia to the faith.

Over the next few decades, the Sasanians renewed their campaign, but a successful guerrilla war led by the Mamikonean \textit{naxarardom} forced king Peroz to sign a treaty of religious tolerance with Vahan Mamikonean at Nuarsak, near Xoy, in 484. Armenia was recognised officially as a Christian land. According to the terms of the treaty signed by Vahan Mamikonean and \textit{Mik\textsuperscript{cor}}.\textsuperscript{\textit{V}asaspdat (Gu\textsuperscript{n}asasp-d\textsuperscript{3}d)} (\textit{LeP}\textsuperscript{89})...
needful request of the three is this: that you leave with us the native law of our fatherland, that you make no Arm. man a magus, that you give no one throne or honor on account of being a magus, and that you remove the fire-temple from Armenia... It would seem, however, that practicing Zoroastrians remained in the country, and there was a fire-temple at Duin, recently excavated, which Vardan Mamikonean II destroyed (see Ch. 15).108

The Armenians sought also to avoid Byzantine domination. The refusal of the Synklētos to grant aid to the beleaguered forces of Vardan in 451 had embittered Arm. opinion, and may have been one cause of the refusal of the Arm. Church to recognise the Christological definitions of the Council of Chalcedon convened in the same year--Arm. clerics had not been in attendance. In the summer of 451, Byzantine attention was probably focused upon events in the West, where the Huns were routed near Troyes; Armenia was not the priority of Byzantine foreign policy in that fateful year. Legislation in the Byzantine-held part of Armenia tended to break up the domains of the naxarars and to deprive them of their hereditary powers; such acts were regarded with profound suspicion by the nobility on the Iranian side of the border, and their support must have emboldened the Church further to dissociate itself from Byzantium. Eventually, the Arm. Church even accepted direction from the King of Kings. Such a policy was profitable also from the point of view of relations with the Sasanians, who wished to maintain good relations with the land they still regarded as the second kingdom of Iran, and, according to Stepānos Ašožik, Xusrō II Parvēz (591-628) ordered the Christians of the empire to follow the 'Armenian' faith.109 Christian Armenia still maintained close relations with Iran, down to the end of the Sasanian dynasty. It appears that some Armenians may have married Iranians, practiced Zoroastrianism, and resided in Iran in the Sasanian period. A fourth-century chalcedony seal, probably from Iran, is inscribed in Phl. *‘Immdwfty ‘Armen-duct ‘daughter of (an) Armenia(n)’--probably the name of the noblewoman who owned it. It depicts a woman, probably the goddess Anāhītā, who holds a trefoil. She dwarfs a turbaned man who faces her with one hand raised in salute; he may be a magus. As Christians often depicted Christian scenes or symbols on their seals in Sasanian Iran, it is likely the owner of this one was a
Zoroastrian. Armenia is written in PhI. as 'lmn or 'lmyn; it is found abbreviated 'lm on a coin from the Sasanian mint at Duin.109-a

The Zoroastrian faith lived on in Armenia after the Battle of Avarayr and the Treaty of Nuarsak; instances of its survival will be seen in the following chapters. Even in the times of Justinian I (527-65), under whose intolerant rule Monophysites and philosophers fled the Byzantine Empire for the comparative safety of Iran, John of Ephesus still found 80,000 pagans to convert in Asia Minor, and Tabari claims that a treaty between Justinian and Xusrō I stipulated that Zoroastrians in Byzantine dominions have fire-temples built by the Emperor for them. This would have included Byzantine-held Armenian lands, and one surmises that the restoration of confiscated or desecrated fire-temples is meant.110 When the Arabs entered Duin in the mid-seventh century, they were to find 'Magians' amongst the inhabitants;111 many, undoubtedly, were Persians, but others may have been Armenians, who, like the informants of Movses Xorenacī perhaps a century later still,112 whiled away the long nights with the songs of Vahagn, Artasēs, and Artawazd.
Notes - Chapter 4

1. S. T. Eremyan, 'Hayastanê ev verjîn Partêm Arsâkûneri paykêrê Hîomi dem,' F-DH, 1977, 4, 59-72, suggests that the Arm. tradition found in Agathangelos of the raids carried out by the Arm. king Xosrov against Ardesîr I in support of Ardavân V refers more likely to campaigns by the Arm. Trdat II against Valaxû and the Roman backers of the latter. According to Agathangelos 19-22, Xosrov raided Ctesiphon, massacred numerous Persians, and then made vows (uxt-awor linel) to the seven bagins of Armenia (i.e., the cult centres of Artasat, TÇordan, Ani, Erêz, TÇil, Bagawatû and Astasat—key some of these sites there were several bagins; see Chs. 5-9). He honoured his Arsacid ancestors (see Ch. 10 on Arm. ancestor-worship) with offerings of oxen, rams, horses and mules, all of them white (cf. the Av. stipulation that offerings be hemê. gaona- 'of one colour', Yt. 8.58; on the Ir. terminology of sacrifice in Arm., see Ch. 15), as well as offerings of gold, silver, and other costly stuff.


3. On aspects of this policy, see Ch. 15.

4. Opinions as to when the Sasanians first conquered Armenia vary. S. H. Taqizadahe, 'The Early Sasanians, Some Chronological Points which Possibly Call for Revision,' BSOAS, 11, 1943-6, 6, 22 n. 1, notes that according to Tabari and the Nihâyât al-arab, Ardesîr was crowned after his conquest of Armenia and other countries; the 'Letter of Tanûzâr', a document purported to have been written at the time of Ardesîr, refers to 'Persarmenia' (see Ch. 3); and Movses Krenacê reports that the Sasanian king Artasîr established a fire-temple at Bagawat in Armenia after destroying the image-shrines there (see Ch. 5). According to C. Toumanoff, 'The third-century Armenian Arsacids: a chronological and genealogical commentary,' KEArm, N.S. 6, 1969, 251-2, Armenia became a vassal state of the Sasanians after the defeat of the Roman emperor Gordian by Iran in 244—the Arm. king Trdat II having sought the aid of the Romans in assisting the sons of Ardavân V (who were his first cousins) against Ardesîr. Armenia was actually invaded by Sâbûr I only in 252, and the sons of the latter, Ormizd-Ardesîr and Narseh, became Great Kings of Armenia before attaining in turn to the throne of the King of Kings.
5. Tacitus, *Annales*, VI.31. The Parthians seem in Western Iran to have claimed legitimacy as heirs and descendants of the Achaemenians; see J. Neusner, "Parthian political ideology," *Iranica Antiqua* 3.1, 1963. As E. Bickerman demonstrated subsequently in "The Seleucids and the Achaemenids," *La Persia e il mondo greco-romano*, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Quaderno No. 76, Rome, 1966, 87-117, the Eastern Iranians scarcely recognized Achaemenian rule, and their internal stability was nearly independent of it. The Parthians appear to have adopted Western Iranian ideology seen also in the political propaganda of Antiochus I of Commagene, who claimed Achaemenian ancestors.


7. See Ch. 8 on the Zoroastrian aspects of the ceremony.

8. See MX I.8; Korenac's generally attributes the deeds of all kings after the remote eponymous ancestor Hayk himself to the Aršakuni 'Arsacid' house—an indication that the Armenians perceived the religious and administrative forms of the earlier, Artaxiad dynasty as unchanged and uninterrupted by Pth. rule; we shall return to this suggestion presently.

9. Two of the legions were stationed in Melitene and Satala, in the west of Armenia; on evidence from Satala, which is considered to have been the site of a temple of Anahit, but is more likely to have been a Roman military shrine, see Ch. 7.


11. Ibid., 16 & n. 3; according to Greco-Roman sources, Sanatrūk would have reigned from 215-7. The free-standing statue of one Sanatrūk, king of Hatra, has been excavated (see H. Ingholt, *Parthian Sculptures from Hatra*, New Haven, 1954, 6), and there was a king of Parthia, Sinatruces, who reigned ca. 78-68 B.C. The name may mean 'one who triumphs over enemies', from OIr. *sana-taruku*- (see M. van Esbroeck, 'Le roi Sanatrōk et l'apôtre Thaddée,' *REA* Arm., N.S. 9, 1972, 242 & n. 8). According to Debevoise, op. cit., 237; Sinatruces was a king of Armenia who succeeded to the throne of Parthia, early in the third century A.D. Owing to the apparent popularity of the name in the Arsacid period, there may have been several kings bearing the name of Sanatrūk in Armenia, but Arm. tradition is unanimous in placing the reign of Sinatruces at the time of the mission of the Apostle Thaddeus to Armenia, i.e., in the second half of the first century.

12. According to a local tradition, the Apostle Bartholomew cured 'king Sanatrūk or the son of king Trdat' of leprosy at a spring of milk (Arm. kat'nahīv), and the church of St Bartholomew at Abak was built to commemorate the event; according to another tradition, a pagan temple had stood on the site (see M. Thierry, 'Monastères arméniens du Vaspourakan, III,' *REA* Arm., N.S. 6, 1969, 163). The popular tradition appears to support Manandyan's chronology, noted above.


15. *Loc. cit.*; Meruzanēs, Arm. Meružan, is a Mīr. name (see Ch. 8).

16. On Aramazd, see the following Ch.; on interment, see Ch. 10.

17. Debevoise, *op. cit.*, 263.

18. Mamandyan, *op. cit.*, 23; see Ch. 13.

19. Debevoise, 221; on the location of Elegeia in Armenia, see Ptolemy, *cit. by Garsoian/Adontz, 113*.

20. Vašaraspat may also be the city of Azara, 76°10'-40º50', referred to by Ptolemy (see S. T. Eremyan, 'Vašars II-1 k'alek'akan haraberut'yunner Hromi ev Part'veneri het,' P-Ę, 1976, 4, 38).

21. See Ch. 7 n. 62.


23. *Corpus inscriptionum graecorum*, 6559, *cit. by Manandyan, 49*. The 'gods' referred to may be Greco-Roman, but more likely the yazata Spenta Armaiti is meant, with other chthonic deities. It is known that the Arm. Orontids buried their dead at Angz, site of the shrine of TorkC, equated with the Mesopotamian Nergal, lord of the underworld. A possible derivation of the name Sanatrūk was cited above which contains the element *taruka- 'vanquishing'; the OIr. base is etymologically related to Asianic *tarh-, itself the base of the name of the powerful god attested in Arm. as TorkC (see Ch. 11). It is unlikely that Sanatrūk is to be regarded as a theophoric name with TorkC-, but it is quite possible that the Pth. rulers of Armenia, long familiar with the beliefs of Mesopotamia, accepted TorkC/Nergal as one of the 'gods beneath the earth', perhaps equating him with the Iranian Yima. Such a formulation would not have been unique in the development of Western Iranian Zoroastrianism; cf. Mesopotamian Nabû and Iranian Tīrī (Ch. 9). The Pths. buried their dead, as we have seen, and evidence from the burial ground of Šahr-i Qūmīs (probably to be identified with ancient Hecatompylos) suggests other funerary practices not attested in Zoroastrian texts, most notably the provision of a coin placed with the corpse, probably as 'Charon's obol' (see J. Hansman, D. Stronach, 'A Sasanian repository at Shahr-i Qūmīs,' *JRAS*, 1970, 2, 142-55, and appendix by A. D. H. Bivar on p. 157 with a discussion of the Gk. loan-word from Persian, danakē, 'a coin used as Charon's obol'). The bones at the site were broken, as though the bodies had been exposed before burial, in accordance with Zoroastrian law, and torn by animals (cf. Herodotus I, 142,
who reports that the Persians leave a body to be torn by a bird or dog, and then bury it. Despite the apparent practice of exposure before interment, the Parthian practices are substantially different from those enjoined by the Vīdēvdāt, a late Avestan text apparently compiled in the Parthian period. If there were no sinners, there would be no sermons; and one may suppose that the work, most of which is a dreary treatise on purity and pollution, was published because practice had diverged so widely from the canons of the Good Religion.

25. Ibid., 127.
26. Erenyan, op. cit., 44.
27. Corp. inscr. graec. 4821, cit. by ibid., 49.
28. Cf. the Arm. proper name Pap (Arm. Gr., 65; HAnJB, IV, 222-4), from the same Ir. base as Pāp-ak.
29. Toumanoff, op. cit. n. 4, 243.
30. See S. M. Krkysăryan, 'Tagavorakan išxanut'ye Arăkuneac Hayastanum,' P-bH, 1971, 1, 196-206 and Idem., 'Tagavorakan išxanut'ye hın Hayastanum,' Banber Erevani Hamalsaran, 1969, 3, 158-67. An example is Săuk, head of the Sākuni family, who was induced to rebel against the Arm. king Trdat by the Persian king Sēbuhr and took refuge in his fortress of Okān. One Mamgon tricked Săuk by asking him to the hunt, where a heathen killed him. The Arm. king gave Okān and all the property of the Sākuni house to Mamgon and his descendants, the Mamikoneans (MX II.34).
32. Poets recited historical and religious lays to the accompaniment of musical instruments, see e.g. the song of Vaḥagn, Ch. 6; the minstrels were called gusans, after a Pth. word *gōsān (see M. Boyce, 'The Parthian gōsān and Iranian Minstrel Tradition,' JRAS, 1957). For the strong connection of such literature to the pre-Christian religion, see below.
33. See Ch. 8.
35. The Sasanian persecution of the Jews was noted in the previous Ch.; in his inscription on the Kaçaba-yi Zardust, the third-century Sasanian high-priest Kirdār records that he harried Jews, Christians, Buddhists and followers of other faiths. The 'Letter of
Tansar', a mediaeval document based on a sixth-century redaction of a letter attributed to a high-priest of the third century, describes the suppression of Zoroastrian cult centres within Iran itself which lay outside the jurisdiction of the Sasanians (see Ch. 15).

36. See MX III.35, P6 IV.55. To the north of Armenia, Jewish grave-stones of the fifth-sixth centuries have been found at the ancient Georgian capital, Mtskheta (G. V. Tsereteli, 'Epigráficas de Mtskheta y Meskhetia', V, 1948, 2, 50), attesting to the existence of a community there; it exists to this day. The above-mentioned Arm. historians report that the Sasanians in the fourth century deported the Jews of Armenia en masse to Iran. Most of them probably settled in the large, well-established communities of Mesopotamia, such as the great Talmudic centres of Sura and Pumbeditha; those who remained there must have been assimilated into the Christian majority; there is no record, from the close of the Sasanian dynasty down to this day, of an indigenous, Armenian-speaking Jewish community.


38. Segal, op. cit. n. 13, 35-7.

39. Eznik attacked the Manichaeans in his fifth-century 'Refutation of Sects'; on Mani's Epistle to the Armenians, see Ch. 5; on the Mazdakites and Huramiya, see B. Dodge, tr., The Fihrist of an-Nadim, New York, 1970, vol. 2, p. 817, and A. Christensen, Le Régne du Roi Kawād et le communisme Mazdakite, Copenhagen, 1925, 83.


41. Manandyan, II, 86.

42. Ibid., II, 92.


44. This name seems as important symbolically as the two Iranian epithet-names Anak and Burdar, for Wisdom was regarded with particular esteem by Christians and Zoroastrians alike (on Arm. imast-ūtēwim 'wisdom', see Ch. 5).

45. Martirosyan, op. cit. n. 43, 153.

46. On the legend, see N. Adontz, 'Grégoire l'Illuminateur et Anak le Parthe,' RDEA, 8, fasc. 1, 1928, 233-45.
47. Although the Iranian vocabulary of the myth of Gregory and the general proximity of Arm. legend to Iranian forms (cf. the story of Arsak II, below) seem to place the myth in Iranian tradition, the form is fairly widespread in the oral literature of various cultures, and is called a Wartdersage (see J. Vansina, Oral Tradition, London, 1961, 73). In modern Greek folklore, the survivor of a holocaust is regarded as the mayia (NP. māya) 'yeast' which regenerates the Hellenes. According to Agathangelos, Anak was pursued and caught at the bridge called Tape'reakan which spans the Araxes at Artašet. He was killed by being thrown from the bridge; this detail recalls the death of Šidar at the hands of the evil spirits called gysk6 in Arm. epic (see Ch. 13). The name Tape'reakan apparently contains the element tap6 'flat'; Minorsky connected the toponym Dhūgh-tāb to Arm. on the basis of the second part of the name; it is found in the works of the poet Xāqānī, a native of Shirvan in Azerbaijan (twelfth century) whose mother is called 'of Mōbadian origin', i.e., a Zoroastrian. She seems to have been a Nestorian slave-girl converted to Islam, however (see V. Minorsky, 'Khāqānī and Andronicus Comnenus,' BSOAS, 11, 1943-6, esp. 566 n. 1).

48. See Chs. 5 and 15.

49. Taqizadeh, op. cit. n. 4, 11.

50. KKZ, 12-14, in which Armenia is called 'Imn' ēstr *Armen šahr. The non-conformist priests of the passage following are called 'ismwēk' w gvmc'k GBR Mव BXN mγustn ahlomŏgh u &gomarzāg mard ke andār magustān 'heretics and destroyed (p. part.) men amongst the Magi'. The reference seems to be to the priesthood generally, including clergy in Armenia and Asia Minor, the k'urms and pyraithoi whom the Sasanians considered nominally Zoroastrian, but unorthodox in their practices. The word gvmc'k, translated by I. Gershevitch as 'pernicious' ('Višāpa,' in N. Ya. Gabarzev, ed., Voprosy iranskoj i obshchei filologii, Tbilisi, 1977 [= Fest­schrift for V. I. Abaevl, 65], was connected by Henning with Sgd. and M&F. wimarz 'destroy' (BSOAS, 11, 1946, 713 n. 5 and BBB, 100), from the OIr. base marz-, cf. Phl. marz-idan 'coire', NP. mālidan 'rub'; with preverb vi-, it means lit. 'to rub out, i.e., destroy' (cf. Arm. marz-im 'I exercise', Mod. Arm. marz-aran 'sports stadium').

51. On this title, see the preceding Ch.

52. Manandyan, II, 107; Toumanoff, op. cit. n. 4, 256 et seq. The chronology of the period of the Sasanian Great Kings of Arm. and the Arsacid restoration is not certain, and the opinions of scholars differ widely (see I.Kh. Ter-Mkrtchyan, Armianskie istochniki o Srednei Azii, V-VII vv., Moscow, 1979, 14 n. 2, for a comparison of chronologies suggested by Soviet Armenian scholars).

53. Toumanoff, 264. The independent naxarars of these territories, which included the Arcurumid domain of Sophene, were thereafter
outside the aegis of the rule of the Arsacid kings of greater Armenia, to the northeast, through the fourth century. It is suggested that naxarars from this region who made treaties with the Sasanian kings and returned to the Zoroastrian faith, such as Meruzan Arcruni (see below), were exercising legitimate sovereign power from their own point of view; from the vantage point of the historians, who universally support the Arsacid position, they were apostates and traitors (see N. G. Garsoian, 'Armenia in the fourth century. An attempt to re-define the concepts "Armenia" and "loyalty", REArm, N.S. 8, 1971, 341-52).

54. A. A. Martirosyan, 'Sasanyennere ev Hayastani k'alak'akan srjadarje III darum,' P-bH, 1979, 1, 47.

55. Ibid., 49.


57. On the varaz; see Ch. 6; see also N. G. Garsoian, 'The Locus of the Death of Kings' and 'The Iranian Substratum of the "Agat'angelos" Cycle,' full ref. in the Intro., n. 10.


59. In the mid-fourth century, the Council of Laodicea forbade certain exaggerated cults of angels of Christianity, because these angels were invoked, it was argued, for magical purposes (see A. Momigliano, ed., The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the 4th Century, Oxford, 1963, 107).

60. Arm. vardapet, lit. 'teacher, doctor'; this and many other Mir. terms became titles in the Arm. Church hierarchy, see Ch. 15.

61. The expression k'rmordi 'son of a k'urm' is found in the Book of Lamentations' of the tenth-century mystical poet St Gregory of Narek (68.3): Aragunk' en xndrel zvrez stac'cain arawel ar is, k'can eremm zEalisin af ratal mankuns bet'elac'is k'rmordis 'They hasten against me to exact vengeance the One who receives it, [a vengeance greater] than that of Elisha from the young boys of Bethel, the sons of the priests.'

61-a. See N. G. Garsoian, 'Sur le titre de Protecteur des Pauvres,' REArm N.S. 15, 1981; on the continuity of the term into Islamic society as wak'lu 'l-ra'aya, see Perry, JNES 37.3, 1978, 205; Sasanian Jadagow is said to be equivalent to Phl. hayyar 'helper' in the Denkard, and one recalls the heroic cayyar of early NP. literature, defenders of the poor.

62. On the concealment practiced in the performance of forbidden religious rites, compare the descriptions of Arewordi meetings, Ch. 16.
63. On the legend of Ara and Šamiram, see Chs. 7 and 13. This use of towers probably predates Zoroastrianism in Armenia; see D. Stronach, 'Urartean and Achaemenian tower temples,' JNES, 1967.

64. See Ch. 6.

65. See Garsoian, op. cit. n. 56, 311.

66. See Chs. 11, 14.

67. Eremyan, op. cit. n. 40, 10.


70. Marco Polo; The Travels, Penguin Books, 1972, 63.

71. The name seems to be a MP. form meaning 'Welcome' (drūst āmad).


73. Arm. ;top 'epic' is a loan, cf. OIr. *v(a)ip-, Av. vīra- 'habile, expert' (E. Benveniste, 'Etudes Iraniennes,' TPS, 1945, 74).

74. On the hypogeum at Ak̄, see Ch. 10.

75. For photographs, transcription, translation and commentary on the inscription, see C. F. Lehmann-Haupt, 'Eine griechische Inschrift aus der Spätzeit Tigranmokertas,' Klio, 8, 1908, 497-521 (the Ir. title in G., 504). In an Arm. text describing the martyrdom of St Atom Anuni, his son, and Vars, Nerseh and Varjavor at the hands of Yazdagird II in the fifth century, the Sasanian king is called dic-a-xārn 'mixed of the gods', i.e., of divine birth. In a scholion to the epithet isodaimōn 'equal to a divinity' used of the Persian king by Aeschylus, The Persians, line 632, it is explained that tovs basileas theous kalousein boi Persai 'The Persians call the kings gods' (L. H. Gray, 'Two Armenian Passions of Saints in the Sasanian Period,' Analecta Bollandiana, Vol. 67, Melanges Paul Peeters, I, Brussels, 1949, 369; the Arm. text of the martyrology is published in Sop'erk Haykakānk, Vol. 19, Venice, 1854, 69-82). In MX III.65, the Armenian patriarch Sahak Partcew (388-439) at the court of Bahram Gōr (Bahram V, 420-38; Arm. Vram) criticises the belief of the poets (kertcakc)n that the princes are ncyynasermankc astuacoc2 'of the same seed as the gods'. According to Thomson, MX, 345 n. 15, the refutation is drawn from Philo, but it is as likely that the Arm. expression is a calque on MP. yazdān cihr 'of the same seed as the gods'. In the History of Step'anos Asočik, Tiridates III calls himself dicuvcaxārn partcew 'A Parthian, mixed of the gods' (trans. Emin, Moscow, 1864, 292).
76. L. A. El'nitskii, 'K istorii antitserkovnykh i antikhristianskikh tendentsii v Armenii v IV v.n.e.,' VDI, 92, 1965, 127, and 'O maloiizuchennykh ili utrachennykh grecheskih i latinskih nadpisyakh Zakavkaza'ya,' VDI, 88, 1964, maintains that the inscription belongs to Pap, but this suggestion seems unacceptable, in view of the title of King of Kings, which Pap would not have used, and the invocation of many gods which Pap would not have made. The inscription seems to contain a warning to the citizens against rebellion; such a warning by Sābuhr is, indeed, preserved by MX (see our discussion of arya- and anarya- in Ch. 3). G. X. Sargsyan, Hellenistakan darsın Hayastanē ev Moryes Xorenc'ın, Erevan, 1966, 66, compares the formula of the Greek invocation in the inscription to a passage in the Gk. version of Agathangêlos: pronoia genetai apo tèn theôn boêtheias 'providence comes from the help of the gods'. The crucial word in the inscription, though, is tykhē 'fortune', Mr. baxt or xwarrah (see Ch. 9 on Arm. baxt and p'farkc), which is not found in the passage from the Gk. Agath.

77. See Thomson, MX, 15-16 et seq.

78. See Ibid., 357; the Primary History apparently predates Xorenc'î, and the tradition of the discovery of the stèle at Kun may be authentic. But Xorenc'î attributes to Mar Abas additional information, which, MX claims, come from the Parthian royal archives; much of it, however, comes from Gk. texts, and the attribution is spurious (Thomson, 53-6).


80. VM, 5.

81. VM, 6; the Arm. word dprut'iyun, from duir 'scribe' can mean a book, records, literature in general, or writing. The latter, in the sense of foreign scripts, seems to be meant here.

82. This is the development proposed by A. Perikhanyan, 'K voprosu o proiskhozhdenii armianskoi pis'mennosti,' Pereèmeniatskii Sbornik, 2, Moscow, 1966, 103-133. A. B. Abrahamyan, Hayoc' gri ev gr'cut'yan patmut'yun, Erevan, 1969, and Hayoc' gir ev gr'cut'yun, Erevan, 1973, derives the alphabet mainly from Greek. Like Greek, Arm. is written from left to right, and the early Arm. uncials, with their thick and thin lines, resemble the Greek book hand of the fifth century. On Koriwn, see most recently K. H. Maksoudien,
Intro., Koriwn, Vark c Mashtots c, Delmar, N. Y., 1985. The MSS. are Erevan Matenadaran 6962, 47b; 7117, 111b; etc., cited by P. M. Poçosyan, 'Davit c Anhašt c "Estč'negreank c" gitakan ev petmakan arzek c,' in G. A. Brutyian, S. S. Arevisatyan et al., eds., Davit c Anhašt c: Hin Hayastani mec pëlisop c, an, Erevan, 1983, 546.

83. On the significance of this choice, see Ch. 5.

84. I.e., Maštoc c and Bishop Sahak Part c w.

85. WM, ll.

86. The meaning of the word Avesta is not known with certainty; 'Authoritative Utterance' is a likely interpretation, suggested by Boyce, Zoroastrians, 3. T. C. Andreas apud K. F. Gcel ener, Grundriss der iranischen Philologie, hrsg. von W. Geiger und E. Kuhn, Strassburg, 1895-1904, II, 2, para. 1, traced the word to Av. upastä 'foundation'. A folk-etymology is provided in the Greater Bundahisn (177.7-8, cited by Dasturs K. M. Kutur and D. Pahlan, 'Pahlavi Folk-Etymology and Etymological Curiosities,' in J. C. Cayagee et al., ed.; Dinshah Irani Memorial Volume, Bombay, 1943, 173):

\[\text{\textit{pet\'k} MMW\'s we\'l\'sn. \"pyck st\" d\'sn. ZY yz\'t Abast\'g k\'\-s wis\'\r\'\i\'\n asb\'z\'ag st\'y\'\i\'\n yazd 'The Avesta, whose meaning is unblemished (asb\'z\'ag) praise of God.'}\]

Another derivation cited by Kutur and Pahlan is from Av. ā- + vista (pp. of vid- 'to know'), but the suggestion of Andreas corresponds more closely to the Phil. form. Arm. avet-aran, with a base from OIr. *ā-vet- ('speak forth'), cf. Turfan Mir. nvydg 'tidings' (see H. W. Bailey, 'Iranica II,' JRAS, July 1934, 508-9, on Arm. aveti-kč 'good tidings'=Gk. euaggelion), looks superficially like Avesta, but probably is not related. For a recent etymology, see H. W. Bailey, 'Apaštāk,' AI 24, 9-14.


88. Elīšē, p. 9, refers anachronistically to the Hephthalites as Kusans, i.e., a central Asian kingdom defeated ca. 270 by the Sasanians. According to the Arm. tradition of Agath. and others, the Arm. Arsacids considered the Kusans their cousins and the only other branch of the Parthian royal house which actively resisted Ardasir after the death of Ardvān V, ca. 226.

89. MP. Wuzurg framādār, transcribed by Elīšē, 24 as vzurk hramatar and trans. as Arm. hazarapet; on the latter title, see Ch. 16.

90. Elīšē, 24.

90-a. See B. M. Dhabhar, Translation of the Zend I Khurtak Avistāk, Bombay, 1963, 6 n. 2; H. W. Bailey in BSOS 6, 1931, 591; and
91. Arm. kərpikar, a transcription of Phl. kirbakkar(-In) 'pious deeds'.

92. On Arm. Haramani, see Ch. 14.

93. Ehr. 46. The name Vardan, somewhat too appropriately, perhaps, to be an entire coincidence in this case, means 'hero' in Pth., cf. NP. wālān 'brave' (see Shaked in AI 25, 514).

94. See Ch. 15.

95. Tiridates I on his journey to Rome travelled overland to avoid polluting the sea (Ch. 8); on washing first with gömēz and only afterwards with water, see Ch. 15.

96. On the particulars of these, which included the maintenance of sacred fires, the killing of noxious animals, washing with gömēz (bull's urine), and wearing a face-mask while baking, see Ch. 15.

97. Promises of hell fire in retribution for apostasy from the Good Religion are probably meant here. In Zoroastrian communities to this day, simple believers find the fear of damnation in the world to come a powerful support of faith, as expressed in the Arādy Wirāz Nāmag. The book describes in vivid detail the tortures of hell, and some copies are illustrated (see, e.g., Zoroastrians, 21).

98. Arm. tačar can also mean 'palace'; on the Ir. loan-words ročik and patručak, see Ch. 15.

99. The voluptuous dancing girls and performers depicted in Sasanian and pre-Christian Arm. art (e.g., a player of pan-pipes on a silver rhyton of the Orontid period and a terracotta female lutanist, bare-breasted, from Artasat, in B. N. Arabəcelyan, Achnittcr hin Hayastani arvesti patmut'yan, Erevan, 1976, pls. 59, 87-b) were condemned as heathen and demonic by Yovhamēs Mandakuni in the fifth century Mīhrmarseh condemned the Christians as haters of human generation by reason of their celibacy; Eznik countered by attacking Zoroastrians as kinemol- 'woman-crazy', perhaps with reference to upper-class polygamy.

100. The reference here is probably to the dastgāhs of Iranian music, attested from the Sasanian period. The system of modal scales corresponds to the Indian ragā or Arab maqām.

101. Ehr. 64.

102. Ibid., 143-4.

103. Arm. k'ēst, has been derived from the same Ir. base as the loan-word k'tēk 'teaching, religion', cf. Av. tkēēs- (Arm. Gr., 258);
it is attested also in the fifth-century Arm. trans. of Ephrem Syrus (HAB, IV, 576-7). It may be connected with Phl. ĺaṣṭag 'doctrine' (MacKenzie, 22). The initial k- in Arm. is to be explained as contamination by the better-known loan-word kēsā, of closely similar meaning, rather than as dissimilation (for cf. Arm. cīst 'true', cf. Phl. nām-cīst(-īk), cit. by Bailey, 'Iranica II,' op. cit., 511, who defines the Phl. word as 'known by name, particular, famous'). The base of Phl. cīst- is Av. kāes- 'teach', from which both Av. tkaēsa- and Phl. ĺaṣṭ-ag are derived. J. P. Asmussen, 'A Zoroastrian "De-Demonization,"' in S. Shaked, ed., Trano-Judaica, Jerusalem, 1982, 115 and n. 15, notes that in Manichaean MP. kēs means 'false teaching'; it has the same pejorative sense in Ezē, and, subsequently, in Ezēš.

104. HA, 1927, 763, cit. by R. C. Zaehner, Zurvan, A Zoroastrian Dilemma, Oxford, 1955, 29 n. 5; Christensen (loc. cit.), interpreting differently the first element hampart- Def., defined it as 'a complete collection of doctrines relating to the faith', and explained Bazpayit as Phl. *Bëzapatatr 'a confession of crimes committed'. Petmog, Zaehner notes, is not clear; it looks like a reversal of the Arm. form mogpet. Benveniste's explanation of part- as having to do with penalties accords with the meaning of the Arm. loan-word part-kā 'debt, duty'; in the Lord's Prayer, z-a-part-i-s (acc. pl.) renders Gk. ophelēmata (on the etymology, see Arm. Gr., 228).


106. Ezēš, 69.

107. Ibid., 74-6.


111. See Ch. 16 on the edict of toleration granted the various faiths in the city.

112. See C. Toumanoff, 'On the Date of Pseudo-Moses of Chorene,' HA 75, 1961, 467-76, who supports a date in the eighth century.
CHAPTER 5
ARAMAZD

Having observed the historical development of Zoroastrianism in Armenia, we turn now to an examination of the cults of individual yazatas, in order of their apparent importance in Armenian sources. It is fitting that we begin with the discussion of Ahura Mazda, the Lord of Wisdom, the supreme divinity of Zoroastrianism, invoked first in every act of worship, and the one whose name is most frequently attested. It is not proposed here to enter into an exhaustive treatment of his cult in Iran, but only to elucidate those aspects that have a particular bearing on the Armenian evidence.

The study of the cult of a supreme god in pre-Christian Armenia presents three major problems. The first concerns Ahura Mazda himself. There are attested in Armenian two forms of his name, Aramazd and Ormizd, and two forms of the name of his worship, or worshipers, mazdeacci and (den i) mazdez. In both cases, the latter form is Sasanian Middle Persian and is treated generally as foreign by Armenian writers, while the former term derives from an older Iranian form (although attested only in Armenian texts of the Sasanian period and later) and is regarded as native. Were Aramazd and Ormizd worshipped in the same way in Armenia?

The second problem is that of the two Semitic supreme gods, Bel and Ba'alšamin. Both are mentioned in Armenian literature, and the god Baršamin (i.e., Ba'alšamin) was worshiped in Armenia. Bel Marduk was the supreme god of the pagan Mesopotamians of the Hellenistic period, and Ba'alšamin was the supreme god of Syro-Phoenicia; it appears that Achaemenian Zoroastrianism influenced strongly the development of their cults. By the second century A.D., the Palmyrenians regarded them as virtually identical: two names for the creator and lord of the Universe. The Semitic
deity worshiped in Armenia would have been seen to occupy a position of supreme dominion similar to that of Aramazd. Were the cults of the two divinities related?

The third problem is that of the name given in Armenia to the God of Christianity, Astuac. It appears to have been preferred to di-k'god', perhaps because the latter word occurs only in a plural form in texts; but by etymology Astuac may reflect ancient Armenian beliefs.

IRANIAN AHURA MAZDA

One of the most important aspects of Ahura Mazda in Zoroastrian belief is that he is the Creator (Av. dadvah-, dātar-; Phl. day, dādār), the maker of all good things. Zoroastrians have used various images to describe the manner of his creation. Although essentially he willed the world into being through his mind (Av. manah-), he is called metaphorically the 'father' of the Amēsa Spēntas; the Armenians, too, called Aramazd the father of all. Although he is entirely good, Ahura Mazda is not omnipotent, for he cannot prevent evil from invading his good creation. Consequently he is to be regarded as the commander-in-chief of the forces fighting the cosmic battle against evil, and images of him in Zoroastrian temples of the post-Alexandrine period presented him as a manly, warlike figure. St Acindynus destroyed in a fire temple the eidolon tou andriantos 'image of the statue (of Zeus [= Ahura Mazda])'. At Mæxēta in Georgia, St Nino beheld a great bronze image of 'Armaz' which was dressed in a cape and helmet with ear-flaps, and held a sharpened, rotating sword.

We have noted in the preceding chapter the iconoclastic campaign of the Sasanians in Armenia, and shall have occasion to mention it again shortly. It may be noted here briefly that the Sasanians depicted Ahura Mazda in bas-relief, and a Pahlavi text relates that Zarathuštra was privileged to behold Ahura Mazda in the form of a man. Sasanian Zoroastrians therefore also visualised the supreme god as a powerful, manly figure, but there is no suggestion that the bas-relief representation of the deity was an object of cult.
Fire, the most important symbol of the Zoroastrian faith, is referred to frequently in Zoroastrian texts as the son (Av. putha-) of Ahura Mazdā, and a Zoroastrian does penance pēnāsumeud mihr ud mān ud ātaksī Óhrmazd 'before the Sun and Mithra and the Moon and the fire of Ahura Mazdā.' In Armenia, as we shall see later, the 'fire of Ahura Mazdā' was referred to as ormdakan hur.

Ahura Mazdā is closely associated in Zarathuṣtra's original revelation, and in all subsequent Zor. theology, with the seven Amēsa Spêntas, the Bounteous Immortals. Although these were not generally personified in the temple cult as were the lesser yazatas such as Mithra or Anāhita, perhaps because the Amēsa Spêntas were seen mainly as emanations of the abstract qualities of the Creator himself, Spênta Armašti was worshipped in Armenia as an earth goddess (Ch. 10), Haurvatat and Amerētāt survive as flowers (Ch. 12), and Omanos (perhaps Vohu Manah, the Good Mind) was an object of cult in Asia Minor (see Ch. 14). There is recognition in the Arm. texts of a tier of Iranian gods above that of the lesser yazatas, for the Arm. bishops of the fifth century, in responding to the Persian polemicists in Eīšē, speak of Mihr (called by the Persians mec astuac 'the great god') as but a hamharz kēa j ewt ēnerordac oc astuacoc 'adjutant of the mighty heptad of gods' -- i.e., the seven Amēsa Spêntas (Phl. haft amahraspandān). The latter personified the principal creations, of which the inanimate ones were understood by Christians as the elements, so Arm. tarrapaśut ēwn 'worship of the elements' was to Arm. Christians identical to Zoroastrianism and its 'fire-worship'.

The Sasanian kings were offended that such worship of the ordik Astucyc 'sons of God' was seen by the Christians as hetc anos 'heathen', i.e., polytheism. To the Zors. it manifestly was not, and Bahram V was outraged when told by the Christian Yakovik that such worship was of things 'deaf and blind' (xlic oc ew kuracoc, epithets the Sasanians themselves were wont to apply to those who rejected Zoroastrianism) and not of the Creator (araričc).

Ahura Mazdā, Lord of all the Universe, is the particular guardian of kings, the temporal lords of the world. Darius I boasts at
Behistun vašnā Auramazdāhā adam xšāyathiya amiy 'by the will of Ahura Mazda I am king'; and, according to Arrian, Darius III prayed for aid to Zeus, i.e., Ahura Mazda, 'to whom it is given to order the affairs of kings in this world.' Under the Sasanian king Ormizd I (A.D. 272-3), Kirdēr received the title Ūrmzd movbed. This title is to be connected with the god, rather than the theophoric-named king; yet it is possible that this particular rank of movbed was to be connected with the royal family, reflecting the belief that the supreme god was the yazata most directly associated with it. We shall have occasion to return to this theme in connection with the Armenian cult of Aramazd at Ani and elsewhere.

It is noteworthy that Ahura Mazda came to be identified with the chief divinities of both the Semitic and Greek pantheons. In an Aramaic inscription from Arebsun, he seems to have been identified with Bel, the husband and brother of Den Mazdayasnī. And there is said to have been a votive inscription at the Frēdatāra temple at Persepolis in which three divinities are mentioned: Zeus Megistos, Apollōn-Helios, and Artemis Athēnā. Zeus Megistos, as we shall see, is also a Greek name for Baʿalšamin.

**ARMENIAN ARAMAZD**

The fusion of the two words Ahura Mazdā into one, as seen in the inscription of Darius cited above, is attested in Old Persian from the fifth century B.C. The words continued to be separated in Avestan texts, however, and there is a possibility that in Armenia the two separate words were recognised. There are found in Assyrian cuneiform texts a number of proper names which appear to contain the Iranian element *mašta*, identified with **Mazdā**, and on this basis a derivation of the Armenian proper Maštoc, gen. sg. Maštoc, was proposed from **Mazdā**. The word is first found as the name of a bishop of Siwīk consecrated by Catholicos Nersēs the Great in the third quarter of the fourth century. At around the same time there was born in the village of Häcēkac in Tarawn the blessed Maštoc, later called also Mesrop Maštoc, who invented the Armenian script around the turn of the fifth century. His life and deeds are recorded in the Life written in the fifth century by one of his disciples, Korīwn. Variants of the name as Maždoc or Maštoc are
found in early texts, but they are rare.\textsuperscript{17} In Greek, the forms Mastoubios, Mastēntēs and Mastous are attested for the Armenian name. Mnac\textsuperscript{c}akanyan argued that Maštoc\textsuperscript{c} must be a word of some religious significance apart from its use as a proper name, for the service book of the Armenian Church is called the Maštoc\textsuperscript{c}. This suggestion seems farfetched, however, for the name of the prayerbook is that of Catholicos Maštoc\textsuperscript{c} (ninth century), not St. Mesrop Maštoc\textsuperscript{c}. Narek is the name given, similarly, to the Lamentations of St Gregory of Narek (tenth century), and it, too, has no special meaning.\textsuperscript{18} It is equally farfetched to propose an etymology of the name Maštoc\textsuperscript{c} based upon the hypothetical reading of names of a remote language and time, all the more so since no similar form of the name of Ahura Mazdā is found elsewhere in Armenian, or, indeed, in the Iranian languages from which loan-words are found in Armenian. Arm. mazd alone means 'thick, compact', and although it is probably an Iranian loan-word,\textsuperscript{19} it is not related to Mazdā- 'Wisdom'. Maštoc\textsuperscript{c} may be related to the Av. proper name Maxstay-, attested in the Fravardin Yast. (Yt. 13.116\textsuperscript{20}), or it may be a derivative of Arm. mašť-im 'I go bald'; G. Jahukyan derived the name from *IE. *mad- 'damp, wet' with the suffix *-to-.\textsuperscript{21}

It is perhaps more interesting to seek a form related to Mazdā in the writings of Maštoc\textsuperscript{c} themselves. According to Koriw, the first words translated into Armenian from Scripture—the Bible being the first text written in the newly-invented Armenian alphabet—were from the Book of Proverbs:\textsuperscript{22} Čanač\textsuperscript{c}el zimastut\textsuperscript{c}iwn ëw zxrat, inanal zbans hancaroy = LXX gnōnai sophian kai paideian, noēsai te logous phronēseōs (Prov. I.2). In the fifth century, few other languages possessed terms which conveyed the power and attraction of what was expressed by the Gk. word gnōsia (cf. gnōnai), used of the goal of innumerable religious sects and philosophical schools throughout the Mediterranean world, and Sophia, enthroned as divine in Byzantine Christianity. In Iran, Xrad 'Wisdom' (the Arm. loan-word above means wisdom, learning, and counsel\textsuperscript{23}) was similarly personified and exalted.\textsuperscript{24} Maštoc\textsuperscript{c} cannot have translated this particular passage first for any canonical reason other than to exalt Christianity as the only true source of wisdom, be it the Gnostic Sophia or the Zoroastrian Xrad. For the Book of Proverbs does not come at the beginning of either the New or Old Testament, it
is not prophecy, nor does it even bear particular witness to the actions of the divine in the world. But Maštoc was schooled in both Greek and Persian. He had worked as a missionary in regions of Armenia where Christianity still had not taken hold, and it is likely that he translated Proverbs first because of its similarity to religious genres of the East, such as the Wisdom of Ahiqar or the andarz literature of Iran, which would have been familiar and readily understandable to Armenians. The word used for Gk. sophia is the abstract noun imast-utciwn, from imast 'meaning', Arm. imanam 'I understand'. Lagarde connected the verb with Indo-Ir. man- 'think' and Emin connected imast with Mazdā. Such a suggestion is tenable only if iman- is the base, with ending -am. Although Mazās (fifth century) uses a form iman-āt 'understanding', which would support such an analysis, the aorist imācay would indicate an inchoative in -anam with base ima-. If the base does contain -man- (the conjugation then being explained as assimilation of the form by Arm. grammar—an unprovable hypothesis), then the form imast could be regarded as parallel to Arm. hražar-em 'renounce' and hraž-est 'renunciation'. If i- is taken as a preverb, we have an Ir. loan, i-mast, parallel with Av. Mazdā-, wisdom par excellence.

While the above examples are hypothetical, references to Aramazd in Classical Armenian texts are clear and abundant. Tiridates III in Agath. invokes zmecn ew zarin Aramazd, zararin erknin erkri 'the great and manly Aramazd, Creator of Heaven and Earth' (Agath. 68), in full accord with Zoroastrian conceptions of the Deity. He requests liutciwn parartutčean yaroyn Aramazaday 'fullness of abundance from manly Aramazd' (Agath. 127). Arm. parart 'fat, rich', apparently an Ir. loan-word, is used by a later Christian writer to describe the foods eaten by the Children of the Sun, whose enjoyment of earthly bounty he thought voluptuous. Although Christians are bidden to ask only for their daily bread and to live in poverty, the Zoroastrians do not regard wealth as a barrier to spiritual awareness, nor do they consider reasonable enjoyment of it as sinful; the invocation by the Armenian king may reflect this conspicuously Mazdean attitude which Agathangelos reproduces in scorn. In the Pahlavi zand of the Vīdēvdāt (IX. 53-57), it is the schlōmōg 'heretic' who is said to remove širišnīh ud čarbīn 'sweetness and fatness' (cf. Arm. loan-word čarp 'fat') from the land by ignoring the
laws of purity. Fatness (Av. āzūtī-) is also praised in the Gāthās (Y. 49.4).28

Aramazd is hailed as creator not only of all physical substance, but of the lesser gods as well; at Ami, the Armenian Arsacid necropolis, St Gregory and his cohorts korcanec in zbagn Zews dicān Aramazday, havrn amaneal dicān amenayni 'destroyed the shrine of the god (dicān) Aramazd, named the father of all the gods (dicān)' (Agath. 785). The word di-kā may be considered here the equivalent of either Ir. yazata or baga; Agathangelos explains 'Parthian' Bagawan as 'Armenian' Dicāwan (Agath. 817). Anahit is called the cnund...mecin arin Aramazday 'child...of the great, manly Aramazd' (Agath. 53), and at Bagayači, St Gregory destroys the Mrhakan meheann amaneal ordwoyn Aramazday 'temple of Mihr, who is named the son of Aramazd' (Agath. 790). At Tcil, Gregory obliterates the Nanēakan meheann dstern Aramazday 'temple of Nanē, the daughter of Aramazd' (Agath. 786).

In the Mediaeval Armenian History of the Hripcsimean Virgins is mentioned sastik yoyž bazmutćıwin diwacć, zor asēn Tun Aramazday ew Astik, mehean erku, yanun yaćax paštamacćı tawn kardayin or ē Pasat: zor ēw ayžm mardik āsxarhin vićel asen: tćuis ē Pasatay diwacć ē gal, anlur ēw animacć 'a great crowd of demons which they called the House of Aramazd and Astik, two temples. Because of the frequency of religious services they called the house Pasat, and even now when people of the country argue they say "You seem to come from the demons of Pasat, senseless and meaningless.";32 It appears, then, that in each temple in Armenia devoted to a given yazata, the subservience of that yazata to the creator Ahura Mazda was emphasised, as is only proper, for every major act of public and private Zoroastrian worship contains his invocation. As these prayers must be recited in Avestan, it is not surprising that local people remembered them as 'senseless and meaningless'. In Zoroastrian communities today, most worshipers have only a vague idea of the literal meaning of their prayers. The Muslims of non-Arab countries who memorise long passages from the Qur'ān often have no idea what they mean, and similar examples may be adduced for many other religions. The entrenchment of Christianity in Armenia was no doubt greatly aided, at least after Maštocć, by the simple fact that the Bible and Divine Liturgy were read in Armenian. The pejorative attitude of
the Christians is paralleled by the Muslim description of Zoroastrian prayers as Arabic zamzama 'mumbling'. It was suggested in a note that the explanation of Pasat sounds very much like that offered by Agathangelos for Astišat, the shrine of Vahagn and Astık. The description of Pasat may indeed be a corruption of the narrative in Agath., and the name of Aramazd mistakenly substituted for that of Vahagn, for, as we have seen, Aramazd was prominently invoked in all temples, and would have been remembered as the primary heathen god, while Astık was recalled as a female consort of the ari 'manly' deity.

According to Xorenacци, Tigran II in the first century B.C. had kargе kормет i yAnи dіс n Aramazdey 'appointed Mažan high priest of the god Aramazd at Anи' (MX II.53). Mažan was the brother of the king. Xorenacци reports that the naxarарdom of the Vahunis supplied the hereditary high priesthood of the cult centre of Vahagn, at Astišat, while exercising temporal power over their local domain. Similarly, the Artaxiad royal family supplied the high priests of Aramazd, the supreme Lord who ruled the other gods just as they ruled all the provinces of Armenia.

Mažan was entombed at Bagawan, and at that place, according to Xorenacци, Važars tawn аškarхазумб kargeаc iskben amи noroy, i mutн Nawasardi 'Važars instituted a celebration for the entire country at the start of the new year, at the beginning of Nawasard' (MX II.66). Gregory the Illuminator fixed the commemoration of the martyrs St John the Baptist and St Athenogenes at Bagawan on dіс n Amanoroy amenaber nor ptкoc тawnin, Hiwренкаl dіс n Vanatri, zor yarajagovn isk i nмин tewoj пaтʃeин yuraxutcеan Nawasard awur 'the festival of the first fruits, of the god of the New Year, the bringer of all good things, of the hospitable and sheltering god, which in earlier times they celebrated joyfully in the same place on the day of Nawasard' (Agath. 836). These various epithets refer to Aramazd. In the Arm. version of the Chronicle of Eusebius, translated in the fifth century, reference is
made to Aramazday awtarasirin 'of) Aramaz philoxenios', and Arm. hiwrasēr Ormādakan dīc h Vanatāri 'the hospitable god Ormāz, the Shelterer' is used to translate LXX Gk. Dios Xeniou (II Macc. VI.2); in the Arm., a MP. form of the name is used which we shall examine presently. Grigor Aršaruni, writing in 690, stated that 1 Nawasard was the feast of Aramaz in Armenia.37 The first fruits are harvested in Armenia in mid-late August, so Nawasard must have been an autumn festival. Armenian writers regard Nawasard as a native word, and use it to translate a proper name, NP. Nawrūz, i.e., MP. No Rōz,38 the vernal New Year whose celebration anticipates the resurrection of the dead at Frašegird, even as nature in spring rises from the dead days of winter. There is a tradition amongst the Armenians of Naxijewan recorded by Zelinski that they won a great battle on Nawasard;39 perhaps the legend is a shadowy recollection of the Zoroastrian belief that the cosmic battle of good and evil will end in final victory for Ahura Mazda.

Xorenac'i wrote, oć Aramaz d k, ayl i kamec s i l i h Aramaz, Coric c ews ayloc c anuanec c eloc c Aramaz, yorec c mi ă ew Kund omn Aramaz 'There is no such person as Aramaz, but for those desiring that there be an Aramaz, there are four others called Aramaz, of whom there is also a certain Kund Aramaz' (MX I.31). Ananikian explained kund as 'brave',40 which would accord well with the epithet ari 'manly' discussed above; yet it is also possible that the word is the common Arm. adjective kund 'bald' and refers to the statue of Zeus phalakros 'the Bald' that is said to have existed at Argos.41 There is a Zoroastrian demon called Kundag,42 but it is unlikely that the two have anything in common. Xorenac'i was perhaps attempting to impress his Bagratišd patron with his recondite learning; a creator of the cosmos unable to preserve his own hair is a curiosity. For Zoroastrians, who regard baldness as a deformity caused by Ahriman, it is an impossibility. Certain MSS have instead of kund omn Aramaz the words katarum Aramaz 'the perfection Aramaz', which seem to hint at an eschatological concept of completion and fulfillment. The four Aramazds may be the tetrad of Ahura Mazdā, Infinite Time, Endless Light and Wisdom, a Zoroastrian adaptation of a quaternity originally conceived, it is suggested, by devotees of Zurvan, consisting of Infinite Time and three hypostases of his cult-epithets. Ephraim Syrus, whose works were translated into
Armenian in the fifth century, wrote that Manasseh uñleac zpatkern ñorek dimean i taçarin Tëarñ 'straightened the four-faced image in the temple of the Lord;' the mediaeval Armenian writer Tiranun vardapet added, Toker zanirawut ñokovrdean kco zor yanc ñean yort h Yrovbovamu ew i ñamuz i patkern ñorek dimean or kayr i yanc's ew i muts taçarin srbut ñean zor hayk c Aramazd ew yulk c Zews asen 'Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of thy people, who transgressed by the calf of Jeroboam and by Tammuz, by the four-faced image which stood in the passages and in the entrances of the temple of holiness, which the Armenians call Aramazd and the others call Zeus.'

It is most likely, however, that the four Aramazds are the four days of the Zoroastrian month (the 1st, 8th, 15th and 23rd) named after the Creator, as stated in the third chapter of the Greater Bundahišn: nâm ñ xwêñ pad h gyêg andar mëhigân passâxt Ohrmazd 'his own name was ordained by Ohrmazd in four places in the months.' In the Armenian month, each of the thirty days is named, as in the Zoroastrian calendar, and the names are attested in a table attributed to the seventh-century scholar Anania of Širak. In the Arm. calendar, the first day of the month is Areg 'of the Sun', which may or may not refer to Aramazd (the name of Ahura Mazda in local forms is given to the Sun in various E. Ir. languages, including Khotanese); the 6th day is Mazdeî or Maztê+, which may contain the element Mazda-; the 14th is VanatCurt, perhaps the epithet 'Shelterer' often applied to Aramazd; and the 15th is Aramazd.

As we have seen, Aramazd was regarded by the Armenians as the Creator of heaven and earth, father of the gods, provider of all bounty and sustenance, a manly and warlike divinity who was especially venerated by the royal family. His cult was observed in all the temples, but particularly at Ani and Bagawan, the two royal shrines of the country. Ani had been the principal shrine of the Orontids, whose necropolis was located at Angâ, but as the political centre of Armenia shifted decisively towards the east in the Artaxiad period, a second royal shrine was established, Bagawan. There, the royal family celebrated their sovereignty and affirmed the unity of the country at the New Year, in a festival dedicated to Aramazd.

In the fifth-century translations of Classical literature into Armenian, Aramazd regularly renders Gk. Zeus. In the Arm. translation
of pseudo-Callisthenes, Alexander before his death invokes Aramazd; in the Arm. version of the life of Helikonis of Thessaloniki (second century A.D.), the saint destroys zayl bagins Aramazday ew Asklepios; other shrines of Aramazd and Asclepios; obviously, Aramazd has been used here to translate Zeus, while no native equivalent of Asclepios was found. A misreading of Gk. diakosmos as diokosmos resulted in the Hellenophilic Armenian calque aramazdasxarh. An Arm. commentary on Chrysostom explains Dios, zor Hayk c Aramazd asen...Zews, zor ew Dion koc c'en, ew hayeren Aramazd 'Dios, whom the Armenians call Aramazd... Zeus, whom they also call Dion, and in Armenian, Aramazd,' thereby covering most of the declensions of the Greek word. In the Arm. translation of Eusebius, the definition is widened to include Bel: Ew zBelayn asen or yunaren Dios t c argmani ew hayeren Aramazd 'And of Bel they say that it is translated into Greek as Dios and into Armenian as Aramazd.

The Gk. Agathangelos has ton bomon Kronou tou patros Dios pantodaimono where the Arm. text cited above (Agath, 785) reads zbaginsn ews dic c'n Aramazday hawrn dic c'n amenayni, and the Arm. Eusebius explains Krovn...zor hayr anuanen Aramazday 'Kronos...whom they call the father of Aramazd [i.e., of Zeus].' Xorenac c'i calls the Biblical Shem Zruan, i.e., Mr. Zurvan, and makes Astlik his sister. It appears that Zruan has taken the place of Aramazd (cf. the relation of the latter to Astlik in the History of the Hripsimean Virgins cited above), although other references to Kronos are to be explained within the context of Greek mythology. There is in modern Arm. mythology an old man called Zuk or Zamanak 'Time' who sits upon a mountain and rolls down alternately black and white balls of thread. But there is scant evidence to indicate that the teachings of Zurvanism were elaborated in Armenia to any great degree; as we shall see, Eznik in his attack on Zurvanism has in mind a cult prevalent amongst the Persians, not the Armenians.

Certain natural sites other than temples seem to have been dedicated to the cult of Aramazd: a mediaeval writer refers to mayrekan Aramazd 'Aramazd of the grove(s)', and there is abundant evidence that Armenians revered particular trees and groves and used them for divination.
gawazanin) dedicated to the Armenian Catholicos Petros on the birthday of the latter, the scholar and nobleman Grigor Magistros Pahlawuni (d. 1058) wrote that the staff is oč. kełnin aramazdean, ayl Mambrein abrahamean 'not the oak of Aramazd, but of Abraham at Mambre' (cf. Gen. XIII.18, XIV.13, XVIII.1). But Grigor boasted a Classical education, and was probably referring to the oak of Zeus at Dodona, substituting Aramazd for the Greek name in imitation of ancient writers.

It was noted previously that, according to Herodotus, the Achaemenians ascended to mountaintops to perform rituals. In Yasna I.14, Mount Uši.darēna and the other mountains are invoked as Mazdă-created and glorious in sanctity; the great fire of Burzīn Mihr burned on Mount Rēvand in Xorāsān; and on two Parthian ostraca of 73 and 32 B.C. from Misa is found the proper name Grprn, interpreted as meaning 'glory of the mountain(s)'. A number of other mountains in Iran are sacred: Zarathustra in Western Iranian tradition is reputed to have conversed with Spēnta Armaítī on Mount Asnava, where the fire of Gušnasp was enthroned; according to Qazvīnī, the Prophet spoke with Ahura Mazda on Mount Sabalan, northeast of Lake Urmia. Further west, according to Maximus of Tyre (late second century A.D.), the Cappadocians 'consider a mountain as a god, swear by it and bow to it as a sacred creation'; this mountain was undoubtedly Mt Argaeus, which towers over Kayseri, ancient Mazaca/Caesarea, and which has a lofty central peak and two lesser ones to either side. Far to the east, in Sogdia, was the Rock of Ariamazes, i.e., Ahura Mazda, which was captured by Alexander in 327 B.C.

In Armenia, coins depicting mountains were struck in the Artaxiad period, portraying either a single peak with an eagle at its summit, or two peaks (probably Ararat); the eagle, also represented in figurines as perched upon a stepped pyramid probably representing a mountain, was used symbolically by the Armenians to represent Varēnah- 'glory'. In Cappadocia, also, coins were minted on which Mt Argaeus is shown on the reverse with an eagle or other figure on it. A complex web of legendary deeply permeated by Zoroastrian conceptions surrounds the awesome massif of Ararat, and a day of the month is named after it; eight other mountains also are venerated thus. A mountain in the region of Sivas (Sebastia) is named after the goddess Astāik; in modern Soviet
Armenia, there are mountains which bear the names of the legendary hero Ara and the fiendish monster Azdahak. The highest peak of the Bargušt chain, in the Zangezur region of Soviet Armenia, is Mount Aramáz (3392 m.); one may see in the name a parallel to the distant rock in Sogdia, likewise named after the supreme Lord.

ORMIZD

Anania of Širak wrote: Belos yunaren Dios, hayeren Aramazd, parekeren Ormizd 'Bel is Dios in Greek, Aramazd in Armenian, and Ormizd in Persian.' In fact, the name Ormizd is used also in an Armenian context: Tir is called by Agathangelos diwan grcoOrmizd 'the scribe of Ormizd', and the Arm. version of II Maccabees 6.2, cited above, contains the form ormzdakan. The seventh-century writer Sebêos puts in the mouth of a Sasanian king the boast es yaltoceic erdueal i mec astuaçn Aramazd 'I shall triumph, having sworn by the great god Aramazd', when he ought to be swearing by Ormizd. By the fifth century, the two forms, Aramazd and Ormizd, appear to have been almost interchangeable in use, but the distinction between them was remembered. Aramazd belonged to the pre-Sasanian, native cult. The use of the form Ormizd with reference to Tir may indicate that the temple was connected with Persian traditions, or else that the foundation of a scriptorium for religious learning was an innovation of comparatively late date; in Iran, writing had been reserved traditionally for matters such as commerce, law and administration. The mathra- 'sacred Word' of the Religion had to be learnt orally.

According to Xorenac, the Sasanian Great King of Armenia, Artašir, zhurn ormzdakan i versy bagin or i Bagawan, anšej hramays luc 'ordered that the fire of Ormizd on the altar which is in Bagawan be kept burning continuously.' This king was Ohrmazd-Ardašir, the figure Ormizd I and wuzurgsäh Arminan of the inscription of Šābuhr at the Kašaba-ye Zardušt, the same king during whose reign Kirdēr became Ohrmazd mowbed. Anania vardapet (after tenth century), in a 'Paean to the Cross', refers to the zormzdakan ew yramakan hrapaštun 'fire-worship of Ormizd and Vram', using the MP. form of the name of the yazata Vērēthraghna-, who was worshipped in Armenia only under the NW Mr. name Vahagn. The term ormzdakan hur may refer merely to the common Zoroastrian practice, noted above, of hailing fire as the son of
Ahura Mazdā; vramakan hur is an Arm. translation of MP. Ātāxšā i Wahrām, the highest of the three grades of holy fires, which must indeed be kept blazing continuously. It is not known whether the 'fire of Ormizd' represented a particular grade, such as a royal fire, for the term is obscure and did not survive the Sasanian period--nor, indeed, did the equally perplexing rank of Ohrmazd mowbed. The 'fire of Wahrām', too, was apparently a Sasanian innovation. The Armenians had fire temples, called atrušan, from Pth. *āta∪ōsān, and there may have been various grades of the sacred fires before the Sasanian period: we have cited in a note the testimony of Isidore of Charax that the Parthian Arsacid sacred fire at Asaak burned continuously, yet there are in Armenian also references to the heathen ancestors of the nation as moxrapasē 'ash-worshiping'. This epithet indicates that some fires were buried for a time, the red embers carefully embedded in ash to keep them alive; infidels may have ignorantly or maliciously assumed that the mound of ash upon the altar was an object of cult. Since the fire was not actually extinguished, one could pray before the mound of ash, knowing it to contain living fire. This grade of fire would have corresponded to the Adarēn fire, a lesser grade than the kind kindled at Bagawan by Ohrmizd-Ardāsir. But the word atrušan was used for all sacred fires, regardless of grade.

The two Armenian writers of the fifth century who use the form Ormizd exclusively are Elīšē and Eznik. By neither is the form used with reference to Armenian beliefs. To Elīšē, chronicler of the Battle of Avarayr, Ormizd is the god of the Sasanian Zurvanists who are seeking to impose upon the Armenians the dēni mazdezm, a cult so unlike their own form of Zoroastrianism that the mowbeds must employ Armenians who follow native customs distinct from those of the invading Persians as intermediares in their proselytising mission. To Eznik, the god Ormizd is son of Zruan, both part of the kēšē 'teaching' of the Persians, again distinct from the pre-Christian Armenian religion. Eznik attacks as a kēšē related to that of the Persians also the teachings of Manichaeism. Although his source on the doctrines of the 'Persian' faith was probably the Syriac translation of the Peri tēs en Persidi magikēs of Theodore of Mopsuestia, it is likely that there were Manichaéans in Armenia in the fifth century.
mentions an epistle of Mani to the Armenians, and a Sogdian Manichaean fragment mentions the same document: ...\text{\textit{rmyn}} (f) [\text{\textit{ruytyy}} upyst] 'And he writes in the epistle] to Armenia'. A Parthian text on Mani's last journey tells us he was accompanied by a certain nobleman named Bêêt; there was an Armenian nobleman named Bat of the Saharuni family, but he lived a century after Mani's death. It is perhaps noteworthy that Mani's mother came from the Kamsarakan family, a branch of the great noble clan of the Kărēn, which became one of the prominent naxarardoms of Arsacid Armenia. The Arm. Manichaean texts seem to have used the names Zruan and Ormizd, and Eznik could have heard these terms first-hand.

In the fifth century, the Persian Denşapuh, according to Step'anos Ašokik (II.2), established an ormzdakan hur in Šētunik; T'ovma Acruni (II.1) wrote that Šewasp Acruni during the reign of Yazdagird II (fifth century) founded an ormzdakan mehean in Duin, the Armenian capital, and established a sacred fire there. In both cases, these are foreign institutions imposed by invaders or traitors, rather than survivals of the old customs of Zoroastrian Armenia.

MAZIT\textsuperscript{c} I-K\textsuperscript{c}

The Arm. term deni mazdezn, describing the Zoroastrian religion, is simply a transcription of MP. It appears that there was also a native Arm. form, although the sole attestation of it we possess is from a text of the seventeenth century. According to an Arm. MS., the late fifth-century philosopher Davit\textsuperscript{c} Anyalt\textsuperscript{c} 'the Invincible', arar girk\textsuperscript{c} mi, or koči 6000-eak, cw en yoyž xrt\textsuperscript{c}in cw k\textsuperscript{c}̄nīč\textsuperscript{c} amenayn bani 'made a book called the Six Thousand, and it is very complex and scrutinises everything'. Armenian folk tradition ascribes the work to King Solomon. The term 'Book of Six Thousand' (Arm. Vec\textsuperscript{c} Hazareak) appears to refer not to a single work, however, but to a wide variety of magical, angelological, astrological and mathematical texts of considerably varying length, composed or copied over nearly thirteen centuries. The earliest text of the name we possess is a table of division based on the number 6000 by Amania of Širak. The table is arranged with the divisor in the left-hand column, the dividend in the right, and the quotient in the centre, viz.: 14 428 6000. The base of 6000 seems to be derived from ancient Mesopotamian mathematics; Arm. sos '60 years' and ner
'600 years' are to be derived from Sumerian ūnû and nēru, via Gk. sósos and nêros. Anania of Širak was also an astrologer, and it is recalled that in the Roman Empire practitioners of that art were called also mathematici because of their complex calculations, and Chaldaei because of their Eastern lore. It does not seem altogether unreasonable, therefore, that Anania should have been cited as one of the early transmitters of the occult wisdom of the Vec Nazarek, although his sole contribution to it was a simple arithmetical table. It is indisputable, however, that the number 6000 possessed further mystical significance, for many and marvellous properties are ascribed by Armenians to the book, to this day. From the days of the Talmud on, throughout virtually the entire Christian world, the belief was current that Christ had redeemed the world in its 6000th year, and that 6000 years later the world would come to an end. Pliny the Elder (d. A.D. 79) says that Eudoxus handed down a tradition that Zoroaster had lived 6000 years before the death of Plato (Nat. Hist., 30.1 (2). 3f., tr. by W. S. Fox and R. Pemberton, Passages in Greek and Latin Literature Relating to Zoroaster and Zoroastrianism, K. R. Cama Or. Inst. Publication 4, 1929, 45 and 109). Sometimes, the period of 6000 years in which we live was divided into three parts: 2000 of emptiness, 2000 of the Law, and 2000 of the Messiah. What is most striking about these conceptions is the manner in which they seem to have been adapted to the 12,000-year Zoroastrian cosmology, which seems to have been originally a period of 6000 years. In the developed cosmology of the Bundahisn, the assault of Ahriman upon the material world comes at noon on the first day of Fravardin in the year 6000. In a poem by the fourteenth-century Arm. poet Yovhannes Télkuranci, we find these lines: Sern ŏn ładəm drəxtən ehan, / Yerkir jgec wərər səwar, / Dw sətəni zna matənc, / Or cərc ərcəc am vec hazar. 'Love removed Adam from Paradise, / Cast him into the world and made him giddy, / And betrayed him to Satan, / Who tortured him six thousand years.' The three periods mentioned above in the Christian scheme appear illogical and forced. Do they come before or after the advent of Christ? If they come before him, how is the present era to be divided? They make sense only in the Zoroastrian scheme, in which there are three ages: spiritual creation, material creation, and the mixture of good and evil in material creation (two
periods of 3000 years' duration each in the age of bundahišn 'creation', and one period of 6000 years called gumēzišn 'mixture', in which we live now). The Armenians, as is seen from the mediaeval lyrics cited above, also knew the 6000-year (or 12,000-year) cosmology. It appears that there may indeed have been a Zoroastrian source for the concept. A short version of the Vec Hazareak, a treatise on spells involving angelology and astrology, is bound in an Armenian miscellany of astrological and magical manuscripts, Brit. Mus. Or. MS. 6471, fol. 233a-b.

The text is on paper, in a mixed notrgir and bolorgir hand, with 29 lines to a page. The text is very worn, and most of the title, as well as a number of words on the verso page, is illegible. The MS. is dated A.D. 1611, and in his colophon on fol. 258, the scribe writes, 6000-eak marsvan ari 'I acquired the Book of the Six Thousand at Marsovan.' Although the colophon is written in two columns, the handwriting is nearly identical to that of the text on fol. 233a-b. Even if the scribe did not copy the Vec Hazareak himself, the style of the script is late and probably contemporaneous with the author of the colophon. In the text there is a preamble tracing the transmission of the Vec Hazareak which mentions first that it came i mec imastasiracn ev mazdēac wac from the great philosophers and *Mazdeacci-kc. Dionysius the Areopagite, Abraham, Plato, Aristotle, Porphyry, Dawit c Anyaltc, Anania of Širak and Sts Sahak and Mesrop come after. The word *mazdeacci, here attested as a hapax legomenon in the abl. pl., appears to be a native Arm. word meaning 'Mazdean', the only such word we possess for the pre-Christian faith.

BAcALIŠAMIN

Xorenac'i mentions a Scythian tyrant named Barsam whom the Arm. hero Aram fought and killed in Assyria, ev zays Barsam vasn aruš-čan iwroy bazum goroc כ astuaac wac pastec in Asorik כ Žamanaks yolovs. 'And the Assyrians worshipped this Barsam for many years, having deified him on account of his many manly deeds' (TX 1.4).98 One notes the epithet ari 'manly' in the abstract noun aruš-čim here; as we have seen above, it is one of the most frequent epithets of Arm. Aramazd. The same historian records that Tigran II ink'n ijanē i Mišagets, ev gteal and zBarsaminay zpatkorn, zor i pčoskroy ev i bivrēš azazmeal ēr arcat'ov, hramay šel kalekenn yanān t'ordan 'himself descended into
Mesopotamia and found there the statue of Baršamin, which was of ivory and crystal set in silver, and he ordered that it be taken away and erected in the village of Tordan' (MX II.14). Several centuries later St Gregory the Illuminator, according to Agathangelos, ḥasanēr Daranālec gawārn, zi ew and zanuaneloc' n zsun astuacoc' n zbaginsen korcansc' en, or ēr i geawān Tordan, meget anuaneal spitakac'af dic' n Baršaminay: nax zn korcanēn, ew zpatker norin p' srēn 'arrived in the province of Daranā in order to destroy the altars of those falsely named gods, where in the village of Tordan there was a temple of the god Baršamin, named "of white glory". First they destroyed it and shattered his image' (Agath. 784).

The god appears also in Armenian traditions on the origin of the Milky Way galaxy. Anania of Sirak wrote, Omank' yarēnoc' n hayoc' asac' in, t'ē i xist ārēayni, Vahagn naxin hayoc' gołac' aw zyarōn Baršamey asorwoc' naxnoyn, zor ew mek' sovorec' ak' bなかwuts' eamb Yardgoji het anuanel 'Certain of the earliest men of the Armenians said that during a bitter winter, Vahagn,99 the ancestor of the Armenians, stole straw from Baršam, the ancestor of the Assyrians, which [straw] we have become wont in science to call the Trail of the Straw-Thief.'100 This corresponds exactly to a Persian name of the Milky Way, kān kašān, indicating probably a similar legend (see M. Haug, Essays on the Religion of the Parsis, London, 1878, 217). A much later version of the tale, recorded by the nineteenth-century Arm. ethnographer Garegin Sruanjiemanc', has it the other way around, and the names are forgotten: Šamanakov uriš araracoc' astuac iwr mšaknerē ērkēr, mer erkri astucoc' kalēn gołc' er, u mer astucoc' arēstaknerē net ašlav zarker spanner en gožerē, yard t' ap' er erknic' erešn u mnač' er 'Once upon a time a god of other creatures sent his plowmen to steal straw from the stores of the god of our land, and the angels of our god struck and killed the thieves with bow and arrow. The straw fell to the floor of Heaven and remained there.'101

Ba'gal Šamin, whose name means 'Lord of Heaven', was the chief divinity of the Phoenician pantheon. His name is attested as early as the fourteenth century B.C. in a treaty between the Hittite king Suppiluliumas and king Muqadu II of Ugarit.102 He was not originally a Mesopotamian god. In Arm. tradition, the eponymous ancestor of the nation,
Hayk, refused to submit to the Assyrian Bel and fought successfully for independence from his rule.\textsuperscript{103} The Arm. translator of Eusebius, cited above, equated Bel with Arm. Aramazd. Armenian writers seem to have preserved some memory of Mesopotamian gods; why, then, do they identify Barsam(in) with Assyria?

It seems that the religious tolerance and political stability of the Achaemenian Empire, and the influence of the cult of a single, supreme god Ahura Mazdā, encouraged the development in the northern Semitic world of a trans-national monotheism. The syncretistic philosophies of the Hellenistic period, in which the various gods of different nations were often regarded as the same divine personage possessing merely different names,\textsuperscript{104} can only have strengthened such a trend. In Phoenicia, the concept of a heaven inhabited by numerous gods in council, some of whom might be disobedient to the chief god, was replaced by the vision of a supreme Lord for whom the lesser gods were but angels and servants.\textsuperscript{105} Throughout most of the first millennium B.C., Bašal Šamin was primarily a weather god, like the north Syrian Hadad and the Anatolian Tĕšub. Even after he became a supreme god, he retained this function; a bilingual inscription of A.D. 134 from El-Ṭayyibe is dedicated by one Agathangelos of Abia LECL šMN MR C ILM / Dii megistōi kerauniōi 'To Bašal Šamin, Master of the World/ To Zeus, the Greatest, the Thunderer.'\textsuperscript{106} The same epithet of 'Thunderer' was applied to Aramazd of Mešet'c'a by Movses Xorēnak'c'i, who reports that St Šumē (Geor. Nino, see above) korcanaec c zanwy pacyin patkern Aramazday or kayr mekusi i kašak'c'en getoyn hawri 'nd mē; anc'c anelov: zor sovor Šin erkrapel aygun aygun i tanec'c iwrik'c c' c' iwr, zi handēp noc'c a crewēr: isk et'c ok'c zohel kamēr, an'c' c' ēlēnd getn ara'ji mehenic'c' n zohēr 'destroyed the image of Aramazd the Thunderer that stood alone outside the city; a powerful river'\textsuperscript{107} flowed in between. They were accustomed to do obeisance to it, each on his own rooftop every morning, for it faced them. And if anyone wanted to perform a sacrifice, he crossed the river and sacrificed before the temple(s)!' (Mk II.86). One also notes an Armenian Artaxiad coin with the image of a thunderbolt on the reverse,\textsuperscript{108} identical to the thunderbolts held by Adad, the Babylonian god of tempests, in a bas-relief from a stele of ca. eighth century B.C. found at Arslan Taš.\textsuperscript{109} On another bas-relief from Commagene of the first century B.C.,
Ahura Mazda is shown with a tiara and diadem decorated with winged thunderbolts. The epithet megistos 'greatest', applied to Bα'λ al Šamīn in the bilingual inscription cited above, is found applied, it seems, to Ahura Mazda in the *Frōtadāra Gk. inscription cited earlier, where he is called Zeus Megistos.

The epithet spitakapćār may refer to the ivory of the statue at T'ordan, or to the brilliant lightning of the Thunderer, or to some other divine quality. The Zoroastrian faith itself is called al-dīn al-abyād 'the white religion' in a letter of Xañ, brother of Afšīn, cited by Tabarī (ed. de Goeje, III, 1311). White (Arm. spitak) dogs called 'gods' (Arm. astuac-k č) by Movses Xorenac'i (II.7), probably the marvellous creatures called aralēz-k č save lost children and resurrect the dead; perhaps their whiteness bears some relation to the white glory of Baršāmin in Armenia. The epithet spitakapćār may be echoed in the description by Lazār of P'ārpi (fifth century) of the vision of St Sahak Partčew (387–439): "...ew kangneal erewec čaw inj yerki bemb čorek č kusi ampešēn, oroy barjrut ċiwnn hasaner minčew yerkins, ew laynut čiwnn taraceal lnoyr zamenayn erkir. Ew i veray bembin erewēr tetraskel č yoskwoy srboy, xorenard, ěst aržani spassawor utc čean Teārīn, cackeal yoyčy barak ktawov spitakapćayl gunov 'And there stood revealed to me on earth a four-sided tabernacle of cloud, whose height reached Heaven, and whose breadth extended to fill all the earth. And atop the tabernacle was a tetraskelēs č of pure gold, vaulted, according to the worthy service of the Lord, covered with an exceeding fine linen of shining-white colour' (ĒP č I.17). The vision of St Gregory (Agath. 787) also contains the image of a four-sided vault, supported by pillars. The buildings described in both visions, it has been suggested, derive their shape from the temples of pre-Christian Armenia. Much later Armenian church architecture contains elements of the ćahār tāq and squinch, an architectural form common in the Sasanian period which may have evolved under the Parthians; it is that form which is apparently described in the above vision of St Sahak. The pillar-dome motif is a common decorative feature in Armenian, Syriac, and Byzantine illuminations of the canon-tables in manuscripts of the Gospel; in Armenian, the structure is called by an Iranian name, however, xoran, derived from Pth. wwxm. In St Sahak's vision, the structure is called by a Gk. name by P'arpeči,
yet it seems sound to suggest that pre-Christian imagery was used from the Zoroastrian past. The word spītakap'ayl 'shining-white' used in the narrative is very like spītakar, and perhaps it echoes the ancient epithet of the pagan god. But the vision continues, and the true enlightenment of the saint comes only with the lifting of the shining white veil; it is tempting to imagine here a warning to the followers of the old dispensation that what once seemed radiance is now outshone by the fulfillment of Christ, and that the heathens hold not light but that which obscures it and will be torn away, even as the holy curtain of the Temple at Jerusalem was rent at the Crucifixion. The image of radiance is of such general importance in Zoroastrianism that it cannot be a property ascribed exclusively to one divinity or another, but one notes that the Arm. translator of Philo calls the shining rainbow gawti Aramazday 'the girdle of Aramazd', and the same expression is ascribed independently by Tōvma Arcruni (I.1) to the tarrapast-k.[20] 'worshipers of the elements'--a likely designation of Zoroastrians (see the discussion of the Āmeša Spentas above), whose careful reverence for the holy elements of the Mazdā-created world is a conspicuous feature of the faith. The epithet 'of shining glory' may well have been applied to the Supreme Lord, if he was regarded as girding himself in rainbows.

In the writings of Dawit Anayašt, the name of the planet Jupiter is translated as Aramazd, and the name of the planet is Ohrmazd in Pahlavi writings.

It is seen that both Aramazd and Bāsamīn shared a number of characteristics. In Palmyra, by the second century A.D., Bel and Bāsamīn were both worshiped as identical deities, and their separate functions as creator and weather god respectively, had coalesced entirely. Bāsamīn could be regarded as equal to Aramazd and perhaps even identical to him. It is unlikely that Tigran II (according to MX) established purely by coincidence the temple of the former at Tordan, a village scarcely a few miles from Ani, where the shrine of the latter stood. In the Christian Arsacid kingdom of Armenia, the members of the royal family were buried at Ani as of old, whilst the Catholicoi—descendants of the Sūrēn family, the second clan of Parthia after the Arsacids themselves—were buried in Tordan. Such an arrangement, which served to express the balance and accord of throne and altar,
indicates that Aramazd and Barsam before the Conversion must have been associated. The Armenian legend of the origin of the Milky Way must go back to a time when Barsam(in), occasionally confused with the other Semitic divinity Bel, was regarded as a weather god merely. Such a confusion is not implausible, for both names contain the word ba\(^{\text{cal}}\) 'lord'. For Barsam(in) is pitted against Vahagn, also a weather god; it will be seen in the following chapter that he had assumed the functions of the earlier Hurrian divinity Tešub. It is interesting to note that Ba\(^{\text{cal}}\) Šamīn is called Kronos in an inscription of the Hellenistic period from Byblos,\(^{121}\) but, as seems to be the case with the Gk. translation of Agathangelos cited above where Aramazd is called Kronou...Dios, this would be a manner of stressing the primeval supremacy of the god, and need not imply the influence of Zurvanist doctrines.

The cult of Barsam seems to have disappeared from Armenia after the Conversion. The Synaxarion of Tēr Israel records the martyrdom at Ctesiphon, probably in the fourth century, of one Barbašmēn 'Son of Ba\(^{\text{cal}}\) Šamīn' at the hands of Šabuhr (II),\(^{122}\) and the Arm. version of the Wisdom of Ahiqar mentions one Bēšim.\(^{123}\) Both references probably go back to Syriac sources.

ASTUAC

Aramazd, because of its obvious associations with the old religion, is besides a personal name, and could not therefore be used as a name for the Christian God. Arm. di-k\(^{c}\), a native word,\(^{124}\) was obviously unacceptable, also, for although it has been used with both singular and plural meaning, as we have seen, the base form attested is a plural, implying polytheism. By the fifth century, when Eznik wrote, astuacapastüt\(^{\text{im}}\) 'worship of Astuac' implied Christian piety, while a diwc\(^{c}\) past\(^{c}\) was a heathen.\(^{125}\) Astuac, used in the singular or plural, could refer, with or without the qualification of a proper name, to non-Christian gods also: Šabuhr II accused Sts Abdişoy, Sahak and Simeon, saying, oc\(^{c}\) past\(^{\text{ek}}\) zastuacs im 'you do not worship my gods',\(^{126}\) and swore to the Arm. Arsacid king Tiran i Mihr mec astuac 'by the great god Mihr' (MX III.17).\(^{127}\)

Various etymologies of the word Astuac have been proposed since the mediaeval period.\(^{128}\) Acaşean and Marr both support a derivation from the name of the god Sabazios,\(^{129}\) who was apparently worshipped on the
western border of Armenia, in Cappadocia, as a talisman of his has been found there. His worship was associated further to the west of Asia Minor, in Lydia, with the cult of the 'Persian' goddess, Artemis Anaeitis; one inscription found there reads: Εκόπσα δένδρα τεόν Δίος Σαβαζίου καὶ Αρτεμίδος Αναιείτις 'I cut down trees of the gods Zeus Sabazios and Artemis Anaeitis.' Sabazios appears originally to have been a chthonian deity. There may be a reference to Sabazios in a late mediaeval Armenian manuscript published by Macler which depicts crudely drawn demons and prescribes talismans against them. One 'demon' boasts, Mardoy xelkCES tenem or īsat xōsī or līni oC ċal oC načal 'I take away a man's senses so he speaks so much that he is neither well nor ill.' The spell one recites reads: Muxtakin šarian, azuni, sabazuz ali ēsay dil īsat bi išn acqy azay vjay. The form sabazuz may be a form of the name Sabazios; the verse as a whole seems to be gibberish, although several Arabic and Persian words and phrases may be distinguished. But the etymology of Astuac has yet to be explained with certainty.
Notes – Chapter 5


2. Ibid., 195.

3. Ibid., 194.


8-a. One notes in Cappadocia also a toponym Ouadata, which seems to be OIr. *vâtâ.dâta- 'created or given by Vâta,' the latter being the Zor. yazata of wind, whose name is otherwise not found in the Arm. area. But this suggestion must remain tentative, for this form of the toponym is found only in Ptolemy and may represent a corruption (by Zoroastrians?) of an earlier name. See W. M. Ramsay, The Historical Geography of Asia Minor, 1890, repr. N.Y., 1972, 297.

8-b. Ekšē, text p. 35, lines 7-8.

8-c. MX III.63, based on tpC (see Thomson, tr. of MX, 339 n. 3).


9. DB I, 11-12.


11. KKZ, 4: u-m kard nâm Kirdâr i Ohrmazd mowbed, Ohrmazd bay pad nâm 'and I was ordained with the title mowbed of Ohrmazd, by the name of Ohrmazd the Lord.' It is probably the god referred to here, not the monarch. In Sasanian Pahlavi, the king is customarily referred to in this and other inscriptions as in bay 'his present majesty', and when he is called bay, the word precedes his name; when reference is made to the divine origin of kings, either bay (from OP. bâga-) or yazd (cf. Av. yazata-) may be used. Although the office of Ohrmazd mowbed is attested for later reigns of other kings, and in those cases definitely cannot have been a rank bearing the name of the reigning monarch, its origin is still uncertain.
12. Gray, op. cit., 24; Boyce, Hist. Zor., II, 274-5; M. Lidzbarski, Ephemeris für semitische Epigraphik, I, Giessen, 1902, 59-74, 319-26, and H. Donner, W. Röllig, Kanaanische und aramäische Inschriften, 3rd ed., Wiesbaden, 1971, III, 311 n. 254. Den Mazdayasniš is the Zoroastrian religion (MP. den I māzdaša, Arm. transcription deni mazdezn, lit. 'religion of the worship of Mazdā'), here personified as female (cf. Av. daēnā-, nom. f.). The next-of-kin marital tie alluded to in the inscription was common in Armenia; see Ch. 3, esp. on Tigran and Erato. Photographs of the inscribed stones from Arebsum were kindly supplied to this writer by the Türk Arkeoloji Müzesi, Istanbul, Env. Nos. 7753, 7754. They have shallow reliefs which may be interpreted to depict the creation of the world by Bel or Ahura Mazdā.

It is as Creator, indeed, that the Zoroastrian God is chiefly invoked. Env. No. 7753 shows two hands, perhaps those of the Creator, clenched over an inverted trapezoid covered with Aramaic, beneath which is an eight-spoked wheel very like the Buddhist Wheel of Dharma set in motion by Sakyamuni. From it water radiates in waves. At the bottom a duck is shown against a background of leaves, and fish with donkey-like faces (perhaps the Avestan kara-fish) swim in the water. The scene is one of striking motion and intricate beauty.

13. E. Herzfeld, Iran in the Ancient East, Oxford, 1941, 275, cited by M. Boyce, 'On the Zoroastrian temple cult of fire,' JAOS, 95, 3, Jul.-Sept. 1975, 460 & n. 49. These would represent the customary Iranian triad of Ahura Mazdā, Mithra and Anāhitā, attested since the reign of the Achaemenian Artaxerxes II. On the substitution for Mihr (Mithra) of Vahagn in the Armenian triad, see Ch. 8. From Herodotus onwards, Zeus was the Gk. 'translation' of Ahura Mazdā, amply attested thus in Hellenic references to the Persians.


16. A. Mnac'akanyan, 'Mastoc' anvan stugabanut'yunē,' Lraber, 1979, 8, 81.

17. HAnjB, III, 214-5.


20. AirWb., 1112.


22. Korivn, WM, 8.

23. Arm. Gr., 162.

25. In Mediaeval Armenian, xikar as an adjective was a synonym for 'wise', indicating that knowledge of the book was very common. For instance, the fourteenth-century poet Yovhannes of Tīkurān calls upon his beloved with these words: Tur inji xrat: du xist xikar es 'Give me counsel; you are very wise' (E. M. Pivazyan, ed., Hovhannes Tīkurānci, Taker, Erevan, 1960, X.61). In the same century, Kostandin of Erznka wrote, Xēlōkkēd ler du, ayd xikar... 'Be careful, that wise one...' (H. M. Poturean, ed., Kostandin Erznkacī, XIV daru Zclovrdakan banastcī, Venice, 1905, XVII.4). The thirteenth-century Arm. poet Frīk praised Aṣk manuk, mec hawr ordi, u ārip, dawst u xist xikar 'The comely lad, son of a great father, an exile, a friend, and very wise' (Abp. Tirayr, Frīk Diwan, New York, 1952, XVI.42). The Classical Arm. text of the maxims of Āḥ iqār, chamberlain of Senakerim of Nineveh, was published by F. C. Conybeare, ed., The Story of Āḥ iqār, London, 1898, and A. A. Martirosyan, ed., Patmut'cwm ew xratk C Xikaray Imastnoy, Book I, Erevan, 1969. On the Iranian wisdom literature called āndarj 'precept', a similar genre, see M. Boyce, 'Middle Persian Literature,' Handbuch der Orientalistik, 1 Abt., 4 Bd., 2 Abs., Lief 1, Leiden, 1960, 51-5. The word is found as an Arm. loan, āndarj 'testament', to be connected with the Sasanian title attested in Arm. texts as ānderjapet; Biblical henderjapet (= LXX oikonomos) reflects an earlier borrowing, and, as in numerous other cases, the earlier form is the one which became common in Arm. Correspondence between the Āḥ iqār and āndarj texts is shown by F. De Blois, 'The admonitions of Adurbd and their relationship to the Āḥ iqār legend,' JRAS, 1, 1934, 11-33.

25. On the ending -o in Arm. see the discussion of gr-o in Ch. 9; on ēmanam, cf. HAB, II, 241.

26. Bailey, TPS, 1956, 95 ff., derives Arm. harazar-em from Ir. *fr-Var- 'remove, send away', with the base gar-/jar- 'take' (cf. Arm. ger-em 'take (captive)'). P. Considine, 'A semantic approach to the identification of Iranian loan-words in Armenian,' in Bela Broganyi, ed., Festschrift Oswald Szemerényi, Amsterdam, 1979, 215-17, suggests a primary base gad-/jad- 'ask', with pre-verb fra-, hence 'beg off!', cf. Av. Jasti- 'prayer, request', Pth. hwjstg 'blessed', Phl. zastan 'to beg', from gad-. Hrazest would then be derived from *hræzest (cf. the variation of -s/-b/-z- in forms of the name Maṣtoc cited above).


28. On the parart food of the Arevordik, see Ch. 16.
29. Here used as pluralis tantam, subsequently as pl.; see below.

30. The Arm. text reads _tawn_ 'holiday', probably a scribal error for _tun_ 'house'.

31. MS. var. Pa±at, by confusion of _±_ (2) with _š_ (2). Pa±at may be a contraction of _Paš(t)išat_ with _sat_ 'worship' (see Ch. 3, n. 121) and _šat_ 'joy' hence 'abundantly' (cf. Arm. Gr., 28; AON, 408), through hapology. The explanation of the name is probably borrowed word for word from that offered by Agath. (see Ch. 6) for Astisat, the centre of the cult of Vahagn and his consort Ast±ik.

32. AHK, 53.

33. See Ch. 6.

34. MX II, 55.

35. Presumably Vašars (Vologases, Pth. Valaxš) III of Armenia, A.D. 148-92 (see Thomson, MX, 210 n. 1). This is probably an anachronism, however, for the name goes back to OP.

36. M. Awgarean, ed., Ewsebios Kesaraç'i, Žamanakakanç ërkmasnegy, Venice, 1818, II, 240; Ovid, Metamorphoses, X.224, calls Jupiter 'the god of hospitality'.

37. S. H. Taqizadeh, 'The Iranian Festivals adopted by the Christians and condemned by the Jews,' BSOAS, 10, 1940-2, 640.


40. Anamikian, 24.

41. Clement of Alexandria, Protrepticus, II.39, cit. by G. Xalatçancç, Armyanskii epos v Istorii Armenii Moiseya Khorenskago, Moscow, 1896, 291-2. In the nineteenth century, many Arm. villagers regarded men who were bald (kÇacÇal) or smooth-faced (kÇosa) as afflicted by evil and therefore dangerous; this would appear to be a survival of Zoroastrian attitudes to be noted below. See G. Srvenjtyancç, Erker, I, 1978, 161. It appears that the beardless old man serves as an apotropaic figure against evil in the Persian folk holiday of kőse bar nişîn on 22 November (cf. T. W. Redhouse, Türkçe-İngilizçeya Sözlükü, Constantinople, 1890, repr. Beirut, 1974, 1594, s.v. kősa). At TatÇew in Armenia, at the start of Lent and on Nawasard in the autumn there was a similar celebration involving a kÇ cosa 'beardless (man)'and gyalin 'bride', who would play dead. Amongst the Armenians of Ganja, the ceremony was called kőse geldi 'the beardless one has come' (A. A. Õdabašyan, 'Amanorehay Zołovrdakan tonacçuyocçum,' Hay azgagrutçyun ev banahyusutçyun, 9, Erevan, 1978, 27.

43. See R. C. Zaehner, Zurvan, A Zoroastrian Dilemma, Oxford, 1955, 219, citing H. S. Nyberg, 'Questions de cosmogonie et de cosmologie Mazdéennes,' JA, July-Sept., 1931, 47 et seq.; Zaehner, following Nyberg, defined the basic Zurvanite tetrad as Time (Zurvan), Space, Wisdom and Power. Neither formulation accords a place to Ahura Mazda, however.

44. Ep' rem Xuri, Meknut c iwnc mac ordac c, III, Venice, 1836, I, 490.


46. See also Gray, op. cit., 22, and AHM, 11; in Yasna 16, the invocation is given of all the calendar divinities in order, showing all four days explicitly devoted to Dadvah Ahura Mazda--Ahura Mazda the creator (Phl. Day).

47. AHM, 157-8.

48. See Ch. 11.


53. Ibid., I.31.

54. MX I.6.


56. See Ch. 12.

57. Grigor Magistros Pahlawuni, Ta'basac c ut c iwnc, Venice, 1868, 89.


59. A. V. W. Jackson, Zoroaster, The Prophet of Ancient Iran, New York, 1899, 48; W. E. West, 'Contents of the Masks,' in Pahlavi Texts, 4 (SBE, 37), 190 n. 6, citing (Indian) Bd. 17.7 and Wirzadaghbs I Zadspram, 11.8-10; on Arm. references to this fire, see Ch. 2.
60. *Ibid.*, 34; on Sabalan in Arm. tradition, see Ch. 6.

61. Fr. Dübner, ed., *Theophrastii characteres...Maximi Tyrii dissertationes*, Paris, 1840, oration 8.8 (*Et theois agalmata hidryteon*).


64. Quintus Curtius, VII.11, cit. in Arrian, op. cit., n. 10, 233 n. 48.

65. See Ch. 3.

66. See *ibid.* and Ch. 9.


68. See Ch. 13.

69. The 13th day is called Parxar (= Gk. Paryadres, in Tayk³, *AON*, 358). The 16th is called Mani, according to AHH and *AON*, 466, also Sepuh. The latter word derives from a MtAr. form with the ending -puhr 'son', possibly *vispuhr*, and is a rank of the Arm. nobility; it may be used here as an honorific title of the sacred mountain. The name Mani may be related to OIr. *mainyu- 'spirit', cf. Arm. Hara-man, a form of the name of Angra Mainyu (see Ch. 14). The 18th day is Masis, acc. pl. but in Mod. Arm. nom. sg. of Masik³, i.e., Ararat; the 20th is Aragac, site of the hypogeum of Akg³ and therefore probably a sacred place (see Chs. 9, 10). The 21st day is Gergor or Grgo (named either after the mountain of that name on the Euphrates near Nemrut Dağ, or else after the bathing-place of the goddess Astēk; see YM 31 and Ch. 6), see A. G. Abrahamyan, G. B. Petrosyan, ed. & trans., *Anania Shirakac'i MatenagrutCyun*, Erevan, 1979, 257 for the variant name. The 26th is named after Napat, Gk. Niphatē, a mountain in Całkota, whose name is derived by Hübschmann, *AON*, 457, from Ir. *ni-pata- 'guarded'. The 28th is *Sin*, mentioned in MX I.6 in connection with Zruan, in Sasanuk³/Sasun (*AON*, 316); the name may be Ir., cf. NP. *kūr-i sin* ('mountain of silver'), 'a borough on the slope of a mountain with a silver mine' in Xorasan (V. Minorsky, *Hudūd al-Cālam*, London, 1970, 104). The 29th day is named after Mt Varag, near Van, site of one of the most important monasteries of western Armenia until the 1915 Genocide (see Ch. 9, discussion of Varəguna-). One other name may be mentioned here which is a toponym of Zoroastrian interest, although not a mountain. The 17th day, Asak, is perhaps the Asaak of Isidore of Charax, *Stathmoi Parthikoi* (ed. E. Miller, Paris, 1839, 253-4), en bē Arsalakēs prōtos basileus apedeikhthē, kai phylattetai entautha pyr
athanaton 'where Arsaces was made first king, and an immortal fire is guarded there', a place of sufficient importance to Zoroastrians in the Arsacid period to warrant memorial as the name of a day of the month.

70. Gabikean, op. cit., xxxii.


72. 'Bargušati leinašitc a,' Hayrenikc i jayn, Erevan, 6 Feb. 1980, 7-8. The name Mt Aramdz is not mentioned in a known Clas. Arm. source; one cannot therefore determine its antiquity.

73. Anania Širakac i, Mmacordc banic c, St Petersburg, 1877, 31.

74. Agath. 778; see Ch. 9.

75. R. Patkanean, ed., Patmutc ivn Sebōsī, St Petersburg, 1879, 37.

76. MX II. 77.

77. See Ch. 3 on the title great King of Armenia with citation of ŠKZ.

78. AHH, 51.

79. On the fire-cult in Armenia, see Ch. 15.

80. Arm. Gr., 139.

81. A Mlr. loan-word; see ibid., 256.


84. M. Boyce, ed., A Reader in Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian (Acta Iranica, ser. 3, vol. 2), Leiden, 1975, 43 (Text k-1). This man appears to have been a convert from Zoroastrianism to the religion of Mani. He is called in Pth. Šahrdrār, and must have been a sub-king, possibly a Babylonian or Armenian (see W. B. Henning, 'Mani's Last Journey,' BSOAS, 1942, 944-5).

85. Arm. Gr., 32.

86. W. B. Henning, 'Mani's Last Journey,' BSOAS, 1942, 944.


88. See Ch. 3.
89. H. S. Anasyan, Haykakan matenagitut'yun, I, Erevan, 1959, xli.18, citing Erevan Matenadaran MSS. 3408, vol. 144a-b; 462, fol. 218a; and 220, fol. 290a-b.

90. S. Šahnazarean, M{o}y barbař, Beirut, 1972, 88.


94. The Very Rev. Fr. Khajag Barsamian, b. 1951 in Arapkir, Turkey, told us that in his native town the people feared a man who possessed the book. When he opened the palm of his hand, faces appeared in it; he was clairvoyant, and could locate lost property. In Akn in the nineteenth century, it was believed that the text contained all the secrets of the witches' sciences (kaxardakan gitut'canc), and that the one who mastered it would have all the demons (dewer) at his beck and call. But one could also go mad from the study of it (Y. K. Čanikean, Knut'ivn' Aknay, Tiflis, 1895, 145-6). According to Mr. Bedros Norehad, The Armenians in Massachusetts, Federal Writers' Project, Works Progress Administration for the State of Massachusetts, Boston, 1937, 128, Armenians in the New World left most of their superstitions behind in the Old Country, yet many still believed in the potency of the Book of Six Thousand. This writer was told of it by two young Cypriot Armenians in London, 1975, who assured him that a mark appears somewhere on the body of one who has become a master of the lore contained in the book. So long as the mark remains, he has the supernatural power to perform all manner of beneficial deeds; should he misuse this power, though, the mark vanishes with it. Such a belief goes back to ancient Iran: according to Velleius Paterculus, first century A.D., Hist. Rom. 2.24.3, Parthian ambassadors to Rome came to Sulla; amongst them were Magi who beheld certain marks on his body and foretold by them that his life would be glorious and his memory immortal. The Arm. belief may have a more recent source, however; Muslims believe that Muhammed had a mark on his back which proved he was the Prophet (R. M. Aliév, ed., Sa'dif, Galistän, Moscow, 1959, 219 n. 2). Some Armenians view the book of Six Thousand as wholly evil: in New York, 1979, an Armenian lady from Beirut actually backed away from the present writer and urged him in genuine fear to abandon his study of it.

95. See C. A. Patrides, 'Renaissance Estimates of the Year of Creation,' The Huntington Library Quarterly, San Marino, California, 26, 1963, 315-22. Classical and Mediaeval Arm. writers claim that the world will last 6000 years altogether, the 7th age being that of the repose of the righteous—equivalent to Zoroastrian wizārān, at the end of the period of bounded Time—(cf. Agath. 336, Irenæus, Adv. Haer., V.28.3, Xosrov Anjewac'i Etenth
century], Meknutciwn srboy pataragi, Venice, 1869, 30) or else that it was in the 6000th year that Christ appeared (Agath. 671, Teikuranciwn infra). Since the principal justification in Christian sources for the figure of 6000 is that each millennium reflects one day of the six of Creation in Genesis, the confusion of two schemes above, the first of a single 6000-year epoch, and the second of a 12,000-year period at the mid-point of which a decisive event occurs (in Zoroastrianism, the ebgaṭiḥ of Ahriman; in Christianity the epiphania of Christ), must have been occasioned by the Zoroastrian cosmology. For the latter admits, as will be seen, of a similar disparity of 6000-year and 12,000-year epochs, while the scheme of a world week ending in a Great Sabbatical Age does not. The ambiguity of the Christian system lies in the fact that the Zoroastrian concept is, ultimately, inapplicable to it. The onslaught of the Evil Spirit brings 6000 years of struggle; the coming of Christ would rather be seen to inaugurate a time of rest, and it would appear that Christian writers are therefore puzzled as to what the further 6000 years represent; Agathangelos, as we have seen, uses both systems.

96. See M. Boyce, Zoroastrians, London, 1979, 74-5, who proposes an original world-era of 6000 years which was later elaborated to 12,000 (see also n. above), and Zaehner, Zurvan, op. cit., 95,133.

97. Teikuranci, op. cit. n. 24, XIV.53-6.

98. On the form Barsam, see Arm. Gr., 291.

99. See Ch. 6.

100. A. Abrahamyan, ed., Anania Širakaciwn, Tiezeragitutiwn ew tomar, Erevan, 1940, 30.


103. See Thomson, MX, 360-1.

104. One of the most eloquent and well known examples of this tendency is found in the Transformations of Lucius of Apuleius (second century A.D., see Ch. 14), where Isis reveals herself to the earliest of picaresque heroes at the culmination of his quest, as Phrygian Pessinuntica, Cretian Artemis, Cretan Dictynna, etc. (see Robert Graves, trans., Apuleius, The Golden Ass, New York, 1971, 264-5). This revelation became the inspiration of the nineteenth-century theosophist H. P. Blavatsky, in whose bulky work Isis Unveiled (New York, 2 vols., 1877) a similar underlying unity is sought in the varieties of Oriental and Occidental religious experience.


107. The Kura.

108. See Ch. 3.


111. Boyce, op. cit. n. 13.

112. On the aralēz-k, see Ch. 13.

113. Gk., a structure supported by four pillars.


115. A. Ghilain, Essai sur la langue Parthe, Louvain, 1939, 57, reviewed by W. B. Henning, BSOAS, 1940, 509.

116. The curtain was called in Heb. pargōd, an Ir. loan-word borrowed from NW MIR. by Arm. as varagoyr (= LXX Gk. katapetasma), cf. Perso-Latin paragauda, Sgd. pt v'w (E. Benveniste, 'Mots d'emprunt iraniens en arménien,' BSLP, 53, 1957-8, 69).

117. See NBHL, s.v. Aramazd.

118. Such an image is not confined to Armenian tradition; cf. Psalm 104.2, in which David declares to the Lord, Arkar zloys orpēs zavt'occ, jgec'or zorkins orpēs xorēn 'You have donned light as a garment, and cast the heavens as a canopy,' cf. LXX anabolomenos phōs hōs himation, ekteinōn ton ouranon hōsei derrhin.

119. NBHL, s.v. Aramazd.

120. F'3 III.11; Garsof, 'Prolegomena,' 181.

121. Teixidor, op. cit., 46.

122. Synaxarion, op. cit., fasc. 5, 4 Margats/10 June.


126. Synaxarion, op. cit., fasc. 4, 10 Marer/May.

127. On Mithra as the yazata who is witness and guardian of oaths and contracts, see Ch. 8.

128. In the tenth century, Xosrov Anjewaci proposed a derivation from ast eac mez 'he brought us here', and Schröder in 1711 suggested azduq 'bringing impulse'; these are obviously mere folk etymologies. Attempts have been made to derive Astuaq from Ir.; E. Boyé, JA 2, 652, suggested *Astvast 'god of gods', from Mr. yazd, and Meillet, too, saw in ast- a form from Av. yazata-. Windischmann, followed by Lagarde, considered the word a loan from Av. astvant-, 'corporeal', but this seems semantically unsatisfactory. Tervisean in 1877 suggested the Ir. base stu- 'to praise'. The Arm. version of the Martyrdom of St Eustathius explains, Astuaq awcumn t'argmeni, est endarjakut'een lezuin Gamrac' 'Astuaq is translated as "unction" throughout the language of Cappadocia' (AHM, 17), and Bugge and Jensen also suggested etymologies from Asianic tongues: the former cited the toponym Estwedios and the latter adduced a Hittite form Ostasos, meaning 'great god' (see HAB, I, 279-82).


131. F. Cumont, TMMM, I, 235.


133. Macler, op. cit. n. 49, pl. 68, 18th dew.

134. Mu'tsakan šarjan may mean 'ruler of the evil ones', cf. Arabic muhtakim 'governor, ruler', šarr 'evil' (with NP. adj. ending -i and pl. -an ?); ali say dil šati means 'King 'Ali, delight of the heart' (NP. 'Ali šan dil-šādi), and may be part of a Shi'a invocation. Macler does not offer translations of the spells in the MS.

135. Prof. H. W. Bailey in a letter has suggested for Arm. astuaq the Ir. base stu 'great, strong', with a-; an etymology on the same base is discussed most recently by J. Hilmarsen, 'Armenian astuaq "God"', Annual of Arm. Linguistics 4, 1963, 8f.
Chapter Five. Plate 1. View from citadel of Kemah (Ani-Kamax), looking up the upper Euphrates (Photo by T. S., T12. 22. 20(a)).
CHAPTER 6
VAHAGN

The name of the yazata Verethraghna- is found in Arm. as Vahagn. This form derives from a pre-Sasanian MR. word, cf. Sgd. Vaṣāghn, Saka Verlaagn, Kuśana ORLAQN. The name of the last king of the Zariadrid dynasty of Sophene was Artañēs, and in an inscription at Nemrut Dağ, the contemporary Commagenian king Antiochus I equated the Gk. divinities Hēraklēs and Ārēs with the Zoroastrian god, whose name appears as Artagnēs, very like the form from Sophene, which is probably Arm. The Arm. Vahagn has been derived by Toporov from a hypothetical Pth. *V(a)rhragn. As the equation with Hēraklēs and Ārēs would imply, the Iranian god is the personification of Victory; his name means 'one who smites resistance'. Verethraghna is considered the 'standard-bearer' of the yazatas in the struggle against evil; and in historical times, he came to be regarded as a protector of travellers, the sick, and the demon-afflicted. It is perhaps because of his identification with victory and the Zoroastrian belief that fire is a warrior against the darkness of the assault of evil against the good creations of Ahura Mazda, that temple fires of the highest grade were dedicated to him by the Sasanians. As an upholder of righteousness, Verethraghna is closely allied to Mithra and Rashnu, especially to the former. In the Mihr Yašt (Yt. 10), he appears as a powerful and raging boar (Av. varāza-) who destroys any man false to the sacred contract; this became by far the most important and popular of his numerous incarnations, as we shall see. It has been suggested that the Bahrām Yašt (Yt. 14), which incorporates a number of archaic passages, was compiled in Arsacid times, when the prestige of the yazata enjoyed great popularity. In Hellenistic times, Iranian Verethraghna was equated by Classical writers with Hēraklēs.

Two important centres of the cult of the divinity in Arsacid times appear to have flourished in close proximity to Armenia—one is indeed cited by an Arm. writer—and therefore deserve brief
discussion here. Mount Sabalān, 4270 m. in height, rises at 36° N.Lat., 47° 33′ E.Long. According to Qazwīnī (ca. A.D. 1263), Zarathustra went to the mountain from SFML and brought a book called Basta (the Avesta?) from there. He adds that, according to the Prophet Muḥammad, the mountain lies between Armenia and Azerbaijan. At its summit is a frozen pool and the grave of one of the prophets. On the mountainside are hot springs where the sick are cured—one recalls the curative powers ascribed to Verethraghna—and at its foot is a large tree at whose base there grows a plant fatal to animals. The Armenian writer Grigor Magistros (11th century) in one of his letters writes, 0C° mořac c syč c zSpandiar i Sabalanin kalov lerin 'I will not forget Spandiar, who stands in Mount Sabalan,' comparing this tradition to the Arm. belief that king Artawazd languishes in Mt Ararat. Later, he speaks of mayrm Sabalani, zormē asen Part 'ewk c eric c k ałak ac c yostoc c u kertac c eal, isk armat ev mi joc c nora i věm yeśap c oxel, Spandiaryay zna kangmea1 arjan 'the cedar of Sabalan, about which the Parthians say that three cities were built of its branches, whilst its root and trunk were transformed into rock: Spandiar erected it as a monument.' Spandiar is probably an early form of NP. Isfandiyār, from OIr. spentō.data-. Movsēs Kalankstuač'i (7th century) in his 'History of the Alans' refers to a great tree worshipped with sacrifices by the barbarian Hon-k c, which they call T'angrit c xan (i.e., the Turkic sky-god Tengri), and the Persians call Aspandiat. Although the Arms. revered certain trees, the reference here is most likely to Persian, and not Armenian, custom, for the common derivative of Av. spentō.data- in Arm. is Spandarat, a NW Mlr. form, as distinguished from Spandiat; the shift of -d- to -y- in the latter is characteristically SW Ir. According to the Farhang-i anjoman-i ārāf Nāsiri, s.v. Savalān, the mountain was an abode of religious hermits even in pre-Islamic times; the Magi considered it so sacred that they swore by it; and there is a frozen lake at the summit, in the depths of which there lies an enormous statue of human shape. In the Arm. legend, Artawazd is a sinister figure; in the tradition of Mt Sabalān to which the tale is compared, we find the epic figure Spandiat. In the Yādgār 1 Zarārān, 'The Memorial of Zarār', a.
Parthian epic preserved in Pahlavi, Spandiaθ is a hero, but in the Šāh-nāme he is an opponent of the hero Rustam. Perhaps because of this, Grigor Magistros regarded Spandiar as a villain; he cites a legend which is not found in the Šāh-nāme, in which it is said that erbm nŋŋŋn k c nun Kostom, i veray haseal patahmamb Spandiar anuaneal, sparnayr zDabawand i veray nora holovel. Zor zart cuc eal rĕstagesn ayn sot cahern aysink n sarzegal zvaer ibru erbm Kn̄os yaknarkeln zOKmplios ew i cayrs kawškin artakiteal i verf nahenjer.

Once, while Rustam was sleeping, the one named Spandiar happened upon him and threatened to roll Mount Damavand over him. The rĕstages, that is, the shaggy-haired one, shook his locks, even as Kronos once leered at Olympius, and, shaking it with a tap of the tip of his boot, restrained himself.

It is probable that Spandiar came to be associated with the holy mountain in popular legend as an apocalyptic figure imprisoned and doomed to rise and fight a hero, even as Aži Dahaka is to leave Damavand at the end of days, when Thraetaona shall awaken from millennial slumber to fight him. The various references to a statue indicate that in Parthian times the mountain may have been the site of an image-shrine. There is only one certain reference to it in pre-Islamic literature: in the Šahrīstānīhā i Erān, a mountain is mentioned called ֳšwb'n. In his Annals (XII.13), Tacitus describes a campaign of the emperor Claudius (1st century A.D.) against the Parthians, during which the Parthian king Gotarzes went to Mount Sanbulos to offer sacrifices to the various gods of the place, 'and amongst these Hercules with especial solemnity, who, at stated times, warns the priests in a dream, "to prepare him horses equipped for hunting, and place them by the temple;" the horses, when furnished with quivers full of arrows, scour the forests, and return at night with empty quivers, panting vehemently: again, the god, in another vision of the night, describes the course he took in traversing the woods; and beasts are found stretched upon the ground in all directions.' The god called Hercules, Gk. Heraklēs, is undoubtedly Verethraghna; the divine hunt perhaps reflects the hallowed Iranian institution of the royal hunt; the favoured quarry was the wild boar (symbol of Verethraghna and
heraldic animal of the Arm. Arsacids, as we shall see below) or the onager (cf. discussion of the name Guras in Ch. 3). It is likely that Sanbulos is the mountain now known as Sabalan, the site of an important temple of Verethraghna, probably an image-shrine, and a place of royal worship and pilgrimage.

Sir Mark Aurel Stein associated Sanbulos with another site, at a considerable distance to the south. This is a complex of over twenty caves, one of which is natural and of vast proportions, the others smaller and some of them man-made, in the cliff-face at Karafto, near Sagizz, Iran. Although the caves are at some elevation, it would be unreasonable to call the site a mountain; the identification, which, we think, is not accurate, was prompted rather by a Greek inscription, dated tentatively to ca. 300 B.C., over the lintel of the entrance to Room A. The inscription was read first by R. Ker-Porter, who published a fragmentary version of it in his Travels in Georgia, Persia, Armenia and Ancient Babylonia, II, London, 1822. The inscription, a shortened form of a common Hellenistic apotropaic formula, reads: Ηρακλῆς enthade katoikei/ mēden eiselthoi kakon 'Hēraklēs resides herein;/ might no evil enter.' This inscription may or may not be associated with the Iranian cult of Verethraghna; its general Hellenistic character makes this virtually impossible to determine. P. Bernard, who is inclined because of Pliny's use of the name Cambalidus for the rock of Behistun to identify Sanbulos with the latter rather than with some other place, notes that the inscription at Karafto is of a form typical of houses, not of sanctuaries, and that it is entirely Greek in character.

Armenian sources concerning Vahagn are numerous. In Agath. 127, king Tiridates invokes in an edict addressed to the Arm. nation the aid of the triad of Aramazd, Anahit and Vahagn: ew k'cājēn Vahagnē 'and may bravery come to you from brave Vahagn'. Such a characterisation would stress the martial aspect of Verethraghna noted above. After the conversion of the Arm. king to Christianity, St Gregory proceeded to demolish the temple of Vahagn: Ew ḫraw ekn ešas i sahmans Hayoc ċluaw Grigories, t'cē Vahēvanean meheann mnačcēal ē yerkrin Tarawnoy, meheann mecaganj, li oskwov ew
And when he reached the boundaries of Armenia, Gregory heard that the Vahevanean temple had remained in the land of Tarawn, a temple of great riches, full of gold and silver, and many gifts of the greatest kings had been dedicated there. It was the eighth renowned cult, named after Vahagn the Reaper of dragons, a place of prayers of the kings of Greater Armenia, on the summit of Mount Karç, above the river Euphrates, which looks across to the great Taurus mountain. It was also called Yastisat because of the frequency of religious services in the place. For at that time three shrines still stood there. The first was the Vahevanean temple; the second was that of the Golden Mother, the goddess of Golden Birth, and the shrine was thus named the Golden-Built of the Golden Mother goddess; and the third was the shrine named after the goddess Astik, addressed as the Chamber of Vahagn. According to the Greek, this is Aphrodite. Now, St Gregory set out to destroy this also, for even then ignorant men of confusion sacrificed at these remaining shrines' (Agath. 809).

Agathangelos then relates that St Gregory returned to the temples of Astisat with relics of St John the Baptist and St Athenogenes. He ordered that the shrines be smashed, but dewk 'demons' concealed the doors from his deputies (Agath. 812), whereupon the saint prayed and a great wind from the holy Cross swept men and buildings from the mountain, leaving no trace. Gregory then ordered that the two Christian martyrs whose relics he deposited be commemorated at the place on 7 Sahmi. He then proceeded east to Bagawan, destroyed the images of the gods there, and ordered that the same two saints be honoured on
The location of the temple is corroborated by Xorenac, according to whom Tigran (II) commanded that the statue of Aphrodite, as the lover of Hēraklēs, be erected next to the statue of the latter in the places of prayers' (MX II.14). Astișat became the first Mother See of the Armenian Church. According to P'awstos, Chorepiskopos Daniel was appointed at the monastery yavurs yorum korcanac zbagns mehenic' Herakleay, ays ink'c Vahagni, orum te$oy Astișatn kardac'c'ail: ur nax ed zhimans ekelec'woy srboy.... Ew yaçax ēr yakn a'ēberm i nerk'c oy sarabarjr mehenate'woyn Heraklean, or kay dêm yandiman lerinn mei orum c'uln anuaneal kardan, i bagmin te$őjē i bac'agyn ibrew k'aręngac mi i nerk'c oy kusē, i doym corcorakin i sakaw andafakin i hac'c ut purakin orum anun te$oy isk Hae'c'ac draxt koc'c'en 'in the days when [St Gregory] destroyed the altars of the temples of Hēraklēs, that is, of Vahagn, which place is called Astișat, where [St Gregory] first laid the foundations of the holy Church.... And often he [Daniel] was at the spring below the summit, the place of the temple of Hēraklēs, which stands opposite a great mountain which they call the Ox [i.e., the Taurus], about a stone's throw away on the side below the place of the shrine, in a little, sparsely wooded valley, in a grove of ash trees which they call the Grove of the Ash Trees' (P'B III.14).

The various passages cited above raise a number of questions. The name Vahevanean is found in MSS. also as Vahevahean. The tenth-century historian T'ovma Arcruni mentions that a Vahevahean mehean was located in the village of Abewakank on the eastern slopes of Mount Varag, a few miles south of Van; the Christian Joroy vank 'monastery' was later built on the site; T'ovma adds that king Artaxias (I) had commanded that meheans of Hēraklēs and Dionysos be built in Lesser Aŭbak, to the southeast. 21 Vahe vahe is the chorus of a wedding song of Vaspurakan, the region where the two temples were located; the song was recorded by the ethnographer E. Lalayean at the beginning of the twentieth century: Eg barew, ay eg barew/ Eg arerun tank barrier/ Ta t'agaworin sat arew/ Vahe Vahe 'Greetings,
O greetings to the dawn./ Let us greet the dawn of the Sun./ That is give the king [i.e., the bridegroom] much Sun [i.e., a long life] ./ Vahē, vahē.25 Benveniste suggested a connection between Vahēvahē and some ancient orgiastic cry, citing the bakkhebakkhon aśai of Aristophanes.26 The word may come from a form of the name of the yazata, however, for the members of the naxarardom of the Vah(n)-uni considered themselves descendants of the divinity, and supplied the priesthood of the cult. Xorenac27 writes that king Artaxias I found in Asia Minor gold-plated bronze statues of the Greek divinities Artemis, Hēraklēs and Apollōn; these were equated by the Armenians with Anahit, Vahagn and Tir.27 Zor arereal karmacetan, or ūn yazgē Vahuneac, zApolonin ev zArtemidayn kangne cin yArmawir: isk sHērakleaya zaunapetknem, zor arereal ēr i Dkivēsēy ev i Dipinosē kretac woy, zVahagn iwreanc varkanelov namni, kangne cin i Taraw yivreanc sep bakan geven yAštisat, yet mahuann Artasisi 'The high priests, who were of the Vahuni family, took them. They erected [the statues] of Apollōn and Artemis at Armawir, but the manly image of Hēraklēs, which had been fashioned by Scyllos and by Dipinos the Cretan, they set up in Taraw in their own village of Aštisat after the death of Artašēs, considering him their ancestor Vahagn' (MX II.12). One of the Vahunis, Vahē, is reputed to have died fighting on the Persian side against Alexander of Macedon.28 In view of the close connection of the family with Aštisat and the similarity of the names Vahuni and Vahō to Vahēvahēan, it seems most probable that the latter term is merely an adjectival form of the name of the yazata. We shall see presently why Vahē, i.e., Vahagn, was to be invoked in a wedding song praising the dawn, some seventeen centuries after the obliteration of his cult.

The name of the site of the temple, Aštisat, is explained by Agathangelos and Xorenac27 as composed of two MTr. bases: yast 'prayer' and sat 'abundant'. The latter suffix is encountered often in Arm. toponymy, as we have seen in the cases of Artašēt, Eruandasat et al.29 In early Christian times, Aštisat was called the teki shawt, i.e., 'place of prayers'—a rendering of the old epithet of the place without the specifically Zoroastrian term yast.30 Eznik uses the term yast aṣrael in describing the ritual performed by Zruan
(Zurvan) so that Ohrmazd might be born; the associated verb yaz-em 'I sacrifice' is also used in texts without reference to specifically Persian practices. 31 J. Markwart connected with the Ir. base yaz- also the name of a place in Armenia attested in Greek in Strabo, Geog., XI.14.14, as Iasonia. 32 An Arm. proper name from Siwnik, Yazd, is attested in the History of Lazár PCarpec (late 5th century); this would be the sole attestation of a word for Av. yazata- in Arm., here a MR. borrowing. 33 The tradition of a temple complex in Tarawn with three idols survived down to the early years of this century amongst the Arms. of Naxijewan. They related that when St Gregory heard of the temple, he hastened there and arrived on Nawasard. In order not to anger the crowd, he told them to proceed with their festivities, but he removed the three golden images of the gods and set up in their place the holy Cross. The feast was called Surb Xac. 'Holy Cross' thereafter. 34 In the fifth-century Arm. translation of the Bible, Vahagn is used to translate LXX Gk. Hēraklēs (II Macc. IV.9), but he seems to have been regarded also as a sun god. In the fifth-century Arm. translation of Philo, we find the explanation k'änzi koč'en omank ...zhur Hepčestosn ew aregakn zVahagn 'for some call...fire Hēphaistos and the sun Vahagn.' 35 In a Mediaeval tawnakan matean 'Book of Festivals' we are told Omank zaregakn pastec'in ew Vahagn koč ec'in: ew aylk' c zlusin, ew Artemis jayneć'in 'Some worshipped the Sun and called it Vahagn, whilst others worshipped the moon and called it Artemis.' 36

A source of such an identification may be sought in this citation by Xorenac'i of an ancient epic: Sora ordi Bab: Tiran: Vahagn, zormś asen araspelk: Erkněr erkin, erkněr erkin, erkněr ew covn cirani: erkn i covun unśr zkarmriku ežegik: ēnă eišegan počă cux laner, ēnă eišegan počă boc'elănēr: əw i boc'ovn vazel xarteś patanecik: na hur her unśr, boc' unśr mawrus ew oc'kunk'n ēn aregakunk. Zeys ergelov omanc bamberamb, luak' isk akanjač'c merovk. Yet oroy ew ēnă višapac asēin yergn kivnel məa ew yaut'c el: ew kari iin nmanagoyns zHeraklay nahtakut 'eunc' mma ergēn. Ayl asēn zaa ew astuacac'ele: ew and yashxarin Vrač' zosa c'ap'c hasaki kangneal patuśin zohiwc. Ef sora en zarnik' Vahunik' 'His
son(s) [i.e., of the Eruandid Tigran] (were) Bab, Tiran and Vahagn, about whom [i.e., Vahagn] the legends say: "Heaven was in labour, earth was in labour, the purple sea was in labour. The labour in the sea seized a red reed. Along the reed stalk smoke ascended; along the reed stalk fire ascended. And out of the fire leapt a golden-haired boy. He had fiery hair and a fiery beard, and his eyes were little suns." We have heard with our own ears how some sang this to the accompaniment of the bambirn. After this in the song they spoke of his fighting with and vanquishing dragons, and they attributed to him in their songs much that was very like the exploits of Hēraklēs. They also said he was deified. And in the land of the Georgians yonder they honoured with sacrifices a full-scale statue of him. And the Vahunis are of his line! [MX I.31]. The Arm. song quoted by Xorenac shows alliterative qualities, and may be divided into metric lines and hemistichs. The concepts of physics implied in the song of the birth of Vahagn are archaic and find a parallel in the Vedas, where plants, born of water, become sticks, which when rubbed together give birth to fire. Survivals of this image may be perceived in mediaeval and modern Armenian poetry and folklore. In the nineteenth century, the Arms. of Bukovina, a Romanian district then part of the Russian Empire, told of a mythical creature, the covacul 'sea bull', which gives birth to a son by blowing fire through a reed. Out of the reed leaps a huge man with beard and hair of fire; two dogs accompany him. The epithet 'Dragon Reaper' used of Vahagn by Agathangelos will be examined shortly; bulls and the sea will both be seen to play a significant part in the legend as we reconstruct it. The distant image of Vahagn may be perceived also in these lines describing the four holy creatures of the heavenly Chariot by the tenth- eleventh-century Arm. poet, Vardan of Ani: Ew box p'orjanac/ Vareal i māj/ ciegnan ev akanc'n:/ Ew extiw cerac cloy anceranali hogwoyn/ Manuk norogel/ Ew t'ewawk arāgakann slac eal i ver 'And the flames of tribulation/ Flared up in the reed and in the springs:/ By the disease of age was renewed/ The child of ageless soul,/ And on wings of the Sun he soared aloft."
The bambiṁ was probably a stringed instrument similar to the lute. The tenth-century Catholicos Yovhannes of Drasxanakert wrote, Tigran oneal ordi z'Bab, z'Tiran, z'Vahagn zor i kntoc' ahar asebaxs ēnd višêpoc' hambawêin krui nna ew yalt' cel, ew ēnd k'ajin Hêreklesy nahatakut' enoc' nna hamemate. Asì ban yVahagnê, t'ë i nahangin Vrac' est t'Cap' hasaki nor a andri kangeal patuën zohikc. Ev i zarmic' sora serin Vahunic'. 'Tigran beżat the sons Bab, Tiran and Vahagn. With strums of the plectrum they celebrated his struggle against and victory over the dragons, and likened his [deeds] to the exploits of brave Hêrekles. The story about Vahagn says that in the province of Georgia they erected a full-scale statue of him and honoured it with sacrifices. And the Vahunis are among his progeny. It is seen that the above is virtually a literal citation of Xorenac'i, except for the explanation of the bambiṁ. Fragments of terracotta bas-reliefs from Artasat depict long-necked stringed instruments similar to the lute, an instrument which is played with a plectrum.

Before recounting the Herculean deeds of Vahagn, we may examine several other references to his sunlike, fiery appearance and golden hair. The Arm. word hrat, which means 'fiery', is also the name of the planet Mars, called after Verethraghna by the Iranians, and the word may thus be an epithet of Vahagn, for it was also paired (as a planetary name) by mediaeval Arm. astrologers with a star named Xoz 'Pig'; the boar, it is remembered, is the principal heraldic animal of Vahagn. The Arm. loan-word varaz 'boar' is found alone or in compounds as a proper name, and it was used often by the Arsacid kings on their seals. According to Agath. 727, king Tiridates was transformed into a pig (xoz) during his persecution of St Gregory, and the word may have been used with the meaning 'boar', for St Nersës Snorhali (d. 1173) wrote in a poem that the king became varazakerp 'the shape of a boar'. It is likely that Christian polemicists sought thus to turn the images and powers of the Zoroastrians against them; the king is brought low in the very form of the yazata whose symbol had represented his erstwhile glory. The word hrat, according to Malxašenac', was also used in the sense of a sacred fire; it is not certain whether in this case the word was used with
reference to Vahagn, although in Sasanian times the name of the yazata came to be associated with the highest grade of sacred temple fire, as we shall see presently.

The image of the fiery Vahagn appears in two texts on the history of the province of Tarawn. The first is the Patmut'siwn Tarawnoy 'History of Tarawn', whose author calls himself Zenob, and is given the surname Glak, after the monastery of St Karapet, which bore also that name. The events of the text take place in the time of St Gregory, and the local temples and their destruction are described in minute detail. The second narrative, ascribed to Yovhan Mamikonean, purports to be a continuation of the first to the seventh century, but it is generally agreed that the two histories were compiled at the same time, perhaps as late as the eighth century.47 The two texts contain much that is puzzling and perhaps spurious, yet we may glean from them information no doubt derived from local tradition of great interest.

According to Zenob, St Gregory the Illuminator commanded him to teach Christianity at the monastery of Glak, in a place called Innaknean ('Nine Springs'), where the image-shrines of Gisane and Demetr had stood. The place is almost certainly the same site where in Agathangelos we learn that the shrines of Vahagn, Anahit and Astïk had been established, and where the relics of St John the Baptist (Arm. surb Karapet48) and St Athenogenes were deposited. The Monastery of St Karapet founded there was a place of pilgrimage until the first World War. It stood at an elevation of about 6400 ft. over the Aracani river (Tk. Murat Su), a few miles from the town of Muš (see Pls. IV, V), on Mt K'ark'ë (cf. Agath. above), also called Innaknean.49 Zenob calls the Monastery of Glak kayen n'sxarac srboy Karapetin 'the station of the relics of St John the Baptist'.50

When Gregory determines to destroy the shrines of Tarawn, the k'urms get wind of his plans and tell the priests of Astïsat to gather fighting men, zi mecn Gisane i paterazm elaneloc 51 and urac''eau i'xansn 'for great Gisane will go to war against the apostate princes'.51 Presumably, this place is the shrine of Gisane and Demetr, but the identification is not stated. The k'urms make their battle plans at Kuark52--perhaps a form of K'ark'ë--and the
high-priest Arjan⁵² goes out to lead the forces, with his son Demetr second in command. When the Christian naxarars attack, Arjan taunts them: Yaraj matik⁵⁰, ov denakorosk⁵⁰, ew uracaw⁵⁰ zhayreni astuaces, ew tšnamik⁵⁰ barep'arín Gisanéi: oc⁵⁰ giték⁵⁰ zi aysawr Gisane i paterazm eleal é ēnd jez, ew matneloc⁵⁰ ē zjez i jeís mer, ew harkaneloc⁵⁰ ē zjez kurut'camb ew nahuamb 'Come forward, you who have abandoned the dën⁵³ and apostasised the gods of your fathers, who are enemies of Gisane of fair glory! Do you not know that today Gisane has arisen to battle against you, and will deliver you into our hands, and will strike you with blindness and death?⁵⁴ It will be seen presently why the foes of Gisane should be stricken specifically with blindness.

The battle is then joined. The armies of the k'urms are joined by the men of Višap k'azak⁵⁵ 'City of the Dragons', a city also referred to as Avj k'azak⁵⁵ 'City of the Serpents', an Arm. translation of the Mr. loan-word.⁵⁵ The epithet of Vahagn in Agath. 8?9, Višapkal 'Dragon Reaper', is found in one MS. as višpak'azak⁵⁷ 'City of the Dragons'; such an error may indicate that the copyist associated the legends of Vahagn and of Gisane. Others came from Mešti, a nearby town which was still inhabited in the twentieth century,⁵⁶ and from Tirakatarn k'azak⁵⁶, 'the City of the Summit of Tir', where the Arm. Monastery of the Holy Apostles (Afak eloc⁵⁶ vank) was later to be built, also near Mus.⁵⁷ One of the k'urms who fought was the k'mapet of Aštisat itself, Metakēs or Mesakēs (MSS. differ, and both names are attested in Ir.).⁵⁸ It is not implausible that Zoroastrian priests should have fought for their temples. At the consecration of a sacred fire, Zoroastrian priests carry swords, maces, shields and daggers, which are hung on the walls of the fire temple and may be used to defend it against infidel attackers; the sole recorded instance of this, however, was in India, in the eighteenth century.⁵⁹

The heathen priests and their armies are defeated, of course, and the great statue of Gisane, fifteen cubits in height, shatters of its own accord into four pieces; the dews 'demons' of the place are seen to flee in the shapes of winged men, wasps and rain clouds. A Christian church is built on the site of the temple of Demetr—the
tačar 'temple' of Gisane stands but two cubits distant—and relics of St John the Baptist and Athenogenes are deposited there. The sons of the kūrms, 438 in all, are taken away to be trained as Christian priests, and their long hair (Arm. ğes) is shorn. 60

Zenob then explains that Demetr and Gisane were two Indian princes hounded out of their country by their king, Dinakṣi(s). They fled to Armenia and were given the province of Tarawn by Vaŋarsak (Vologases, i.e., the earliest of the Arsacid line). They built a city, Višap Kārkē, and erected statues of their gods at Aštisat. When they died, their own images were erected by their sons, Kuar, Maltēs and Horean, on Mount Kārkē. The spring of Gisane on that mountain was reputed to cure the sick, and the name of the god (or deified man) is explained as gisawor 'long-haired'. 61

The Mir. loan-word ğes has been encountered before; the shaggy hero Rustam in the legend cited by Grigor Magistros drives off Spandiar by flailing his dense locks. To this day, Mount Kārkē is called by the Arms. of Muš Māo-cam 'the tresses of Muš', 62 and Zenob notes that the local people kept their children long-haired even after the Conversion, in memory of Gisane. 63 P`awstos (V.43) describes the young son of Vaŋcē Mamikonean, Artawazd: ...ēr na i tioč tēsay: e`v ēst mankut cavann awrini, ēst krawnic Hayoc`ıpöς awrēn ēr, zglux manktoyn, soynpēs i ņamanakik gerceal ēr zglux mankann Artawazday, e`v c`c`uns ēr t`čeal e`v ğes arjakeal ′he was a boy in years, and according to the custom of childhood, according to the religion of the Armenians, as was fitting, so had the head of the child Artawazd been shaved at that time; one lock was left to grow long.' Apparently, children had been left entirely gisawor in earlier days.

The tradition of the origin of the cult presents some problems. The mention of India may refer to eastern Iran, perhaps to the Kušano-Bactrian culture; it is recalled that the legend of Šestagēs Rustam probably stems from the traditions of the Sakas, an eastern Iranian people. Demetr could be the yazata Spēnta Armaiti, Arm. Spandaramet, the female divinity of the earth and of fecundity, here equated with Demēter and perhaps to be identified with Astēk, the consort of Vahagn cited above. 64 The names of the three sons sound suspiciously like the names of villages in the Muš area, and the
sons are probably fictional, eponymous figures from local tradition. It is not explained who the gods of Demetr and Gisane enthroned at Astišat were; probably Demetr and Gisane themselves were the gods. The derivation of the name Gisane from an Ir. word, suggested by Zenob himself, reinforces our supposition that the name is Iranian; other Arm. names containing ges are attested in fifth-century Arm. texts, such as Gisak or Vard-ges; the latter, meaning 'rosy-haired', may indeed refer to the hur her 'fiery hair' of xarteas 'golden-haired' Vahagn. Long hair, one recalls, was a conspicuous feature of the pre-Islamic Iranian peoples of various epochs, which Classical writers often noted with contempt. Why did Gisane blind his enemies? For an explanation, we must examine the narrative of Yovhan Mamikonean.

The scene of Yovhan's History is the early seventh century. By this time, the Monastery of St Karapet, Glakay vank, is a well-established Christian shrine. Yet St Karapet seems to have assumed the aspects of Gisane. When a noblewoman, Mariam of the Arcruni house, commits a sacrilege, she is set upon and slaughtered near the monastery by ayr mi gisawor ēnd amps orotac ēal...ār na sur srear ēw tacak uc ēal ēw yarean nerkekēl 'a long-haired man thundering above the clouds...with a sharp sword drenched and bedaubed in blood'. It is obvious that this is the image of warlike Verethraghna, shaggy-haired (gisawor, Gisane) Vahagn, seen here also as a weather-god, thundering above the clouds. Later, the Sasanian Persians attack the monastery, but its entrance is miraculously hidden from them, even as the door to the mehean of Astišat was concealed from the minions of St Gregory, centuries before (cf. Agath. above). Later, Smbat, son of gayl Vahan (Vahan the Wolf), of the Mamikonean house, advances on the Persians, loudly invoking St Karapet. Then, yankarcakē tesin ayr mi gisawor, or loys pāylēr i herac nora, ēw zac's t'snameac ēn kurac uc anēr. Zor teseal kējēn Smbatay, asē cēzawrsn: Kējālerec ēarkē, ordeakkē, ēw mi erknēc ikē: zi surb Karapetn mex i t'ikunns baseal kēy, ēw ēnd mer inkēn paterazmi. 'Suddenly they beheld a long-haired man, and light shone from his hair, and blinded the eyes of the enemy. When brave Smbat saw this, he said to the troops: "Take courage, little sons, and do not fear,
for St Karapet has arrived to stand behind us, and he himself fights alongside us. This supernatural figure cannot be other than Vahagn, whose eyes and hair are aflame, in whom Arjan must have hoped when he boasted to the Christian naxarars that blindness and death would be the recompense for their apostasy from the dēn. The two eyes, apparently of the Virgin Mary, in the Melody of the Nativity of the tenth century Arm. poet St Gregory of Narek, are described as being erku p'aylakajew aregakan nman 'like two fiery suns'. This may be a memory of the image of Vahagn. Sight was anciently believed to be the result of light emanating from the eyes. The ninth-century Pahlavi text Īskand-Gūmānīg Wizar, I.56-7, calls a benevolent gaze čašm ī xwarsēd 'the eye of the Sun', and Mary at the Holy Nativity is the very embodiment of love, of course, for the Lord. Light of the eyes is associated by Zoroastrians with victory as well (as with Vahagn): Hvare.čiṭhra ('the Sun-faced'), who is the son of Zarathuṭstra by his second wife, is to lead the army of Vištāspa’s immortal son, Pēšōtanu, in the last days. Christ, too, is come to vanquish Death.

Armenians continued to invoke St Karapet, the ancient Vahagn/Gisane, down to recent days. Until the shrine was destroyed by the Turks in the Arm. Genocide of 1915, St Karapet of Muš was a place of pilgrimage for Arms., second in importance only to Ėjmiacin. St Karapet was considered the patron of minstrelsy; the fourteenth-century bard Yovhannes of Tčikuran invokes the saint in his poems, and in the eighteenth century the Arm. āmāk 'minstrel' Sayat-Č-Nova, court musician of king Irakli at Tiflis, attributed his mastery of musical instruments to the power of Karapet. Until recent times, jugglers and other performers would gather outside the monastery gates on feast days of the Church, and poets would sing the praises of St Karapet for lovesick young men. In one Armenian folk song, St Karapet—like Verethraghna—is referred to as the protector of wayfarers.

Natives of Muš still relate how St Gregory the Illuminator cast the heathen priests of Aštišt, the kʻurms, into a 'bottomless sea' (Arm. an(y)atak cov) beneath a small domed chapel in the monastery called the deveri kayanē 'station of the demons', ēzoxk'i ēur 'gates
of hell' or Diwtun 'House of the Demon'. One of the old pagan priests, called the kal dew 'lame demon', still is said to slouch unseen through the monastery, taking dust from under it to build a hill beneath the P're-bat man—the bridge over the Batman Su (Aracani). This hopeless, Sisyphean labour is to end with the second coming of Christ. On the association of this demon with a bridge, one may note that some European bridges, such as the Pont de St Cloud of Paris, are in popular superstition considered to have been made by the Devil. The Arm. avs, a demon, pushes people off bridges (see Ch. 13 on the adventure of Šidar).72 One ēnuk song of Tarōn relates: Inasaworic zoùwoo ciwan lcêc c zndan:/ Kal dewn ekaw assac c: Eman,/ Zis mi dner zndan./ Es k ežim surb Karapetu p'osehan... 'The Illuminator collected the demons and filled a prison with them. The lame demon came and said, "Alas! Do not put me in prison. I will become the dustman of St Karapet..."' 73

The Diwtun is a pit beneath the Chapel of the Holy Resurrection (Surb Yarut 'ïwn), a building of recent construction in a southwestern part of the Monastery in Xec p'ak, the Yard of the Cross (cf. the festival of the Holy Cross in the legend from Naxijewan cited above).74 The chapel was opened for services only on Easter, hence perhaps its name. Šmbat Šahnazarean, who was raised at St Karapet, wrote that the noise of mumbling, as of indistinct voices, could be heard emanating from beneath the place where the chapel stood. Once, on Easter Sunday, the children of the monastery school were leaving the chapel after the Divine Liturgy. The priest warned them to step carefully near the door, for there was a big, open hole there, with slits like handholds cut into its sides. When all the worshippers had left, young Šmbat, who had remained behind, in hiding, took a lighted candle from the altar and climbed down. Up to this point, the details of the memoir are plausible. At Xor Virap, in Soviet Armenia, there is a chapel over the subterranean cavern where St Gregory is said to have languished in prison before the Conversion. There is an open hole, with handholds, to the right of the altar as one faces it, and there is indeed a cavern at the bottom, with another altar and yet more holes, in the sides of the cavern. From these, we were informed by an Arm. peasant woman, visaps had emerged to torment the saint.
After the description of the place, however, Šahnazarean's narrative assumes the character of fantasy. In the cave below, he found a heap of brick tablets inscribed with unintelligible characters. Then he beheld two huge bronze statues, which, he claimed, were images of Demetr and Gisanė, like huge pillars supporting the roof of the cave.\textsuperscript{75}

The nineteenth-century Arm. ethnographer Fr. Garegin Sruanjtean\textsuperscript{c} described the site in an article, 'The Tradition of the Lame Demon of St. Karapet' (in Arm.) (first published in the journal Arcuik Tarōnoy ['Little Eagle of Tarawn'], 2/37, 1 March 1865, 49-50; reprinted in his Groc\textsuperscript{c} u Broc\textsuperscript{c}, Ch. 30, repr. in his Erker ['Works', with some deplorable abridgements], Erevan, 1982). He reports that the local people believed devoutly in the Lame Demon, Arm. Ka± Dew; those who doubted whether his heap of dust at F̄re Bat\'man was ash were denounced as anhawat 'unbeliever' or farmason 'Freemason'. It it interesting that the Arms. insisted so vehemently that the dust was ash, for this belief presumably preserves the memory of the way the Zoroastrians of ancient days would have removed excess ash from the fire temple to the waters, as Bombay Parsis still do.

Sruanjtean\textsuperscript{c} describes a round hole filled with earth and stones to one side of the altar in the portico (gewit\textsuperscript{c}) of the chapel of the Resurrection—the place, that is, where Šahnazarean claims there was a gaping hole. Pilgrims hastened thither, demanding to be shown the Demon of the Divatun, the house of the demon(s), but when the caretaker could not oblige them, they protested he was being kept from them on purpose. Sruanjtean\textsuperscript{c} laments that all wanted to see the Ka± Dew, but nobody asked to see the graves of eminent Christians at the monastery.

We now approach the questions of Vahagn the višapak\textsuperscript{c}a\textsuperscript{h} of višaps, and of Astāik, of the sea and bulls, of the two festivals of St John the Baptist and St Athenogenes, and of iconographic portrayals of Vahagn. As for višaps, Arm. legends abound on the variety of forms they take, the places they inhabit, and the mischief they perform. The prayers of holy men are said to petrify them. Some live in mountain palaces; the thirteenth-century writer Vahram vardapet reported: Asen teseal omanc\textsuperscript{c} i\textsuperscript{h}a\textsuperscript{jahc} ec višapac\textsuperscript{c} i lerins barjuns
ew bnakut'ivns 'They say some have seen the temples and dwellings of the k'cakh' and visapk' in the high mountains.' Every two years, it is said, the visapk' of Ararat fight those of Aragac; this tale is perhaps inspired by the traditional rivalry thought to exist between the two volcanic peaks themselves. There are two steles called visaps in the thickly wooded district of Lori, near the Georgian border (these monuments and their origin will be discussed shortly). Their presence is explained in two tales, in both of which the hero is the theologian Yovhannës of Awjun (eighth century). In the first, Yovhannës was praying when two huge visaps attacked him. His servant cried out in alarm. The theologian paused, made the sign of the Cross, and the creatures were instantly petrified. Out of the navel of one of them sprang a rivulet of water which to this day is reputed to cure people of snakebite. In the second tale, Yovhannës was celebrating the Divine Liturgy when he heard a hissing sound. He sent one of his seven deacons outside to find out what the matter was. The deacon did not return; a second was sent, who also vanished, and so it was with all seven. Finally, Awjnec'i left the church himself and saw a huge visap and a woman who was carrying bread to a ploughman in the fields. Yovhannës commanded that the visap vomit forth the seven deacons it had eaten; they, the visap, and the hard-hearted woman were turned to stone. South of the village of Areni on the right bank of the Arpa river (Tk. Arpachay) there is another visap stele. A villager of Areni told the Soviet Armenian scholar Sargis Harut'yunyan in 1958 that a priest's daughter was once walking along the river-bank collecting herbs. A visap sprang out of the water and was about to devour her; happily, her father saw the monster in time and said a prayer, and it was turned to stone. Sat'o Ayvazyan of Galnit told the Soviet researcher Grigor Karakanyan in 1965 of the origin of four visap steles near the fortress of Kaladip, in the foothills of the Gelam Mts. of Soviet Armenia: according to the tales of aged wise men, a visap came down out of the sky to destroy humanity, but God petrified it. One nineteenth-century informant claimed that visaps have been 'pulled up out of the mountains into the sky,' and Vahram vardapet, cited above, wrote in a letter to the Armenian
Cilician king Hetcum that 'many men have seen viṣṣaps ascend from earth to heaven'. In an early Arm. translation of Origen, we find this explanation: **Ew vəsn dzaüranc ic leranc zors viṣṣap anuanemk** ew xaramani asemk. **Ew bazum kendaneac i mecamec viṣṣap, i c'amak'aynoc asemk p'ji, avji, ew mardoy c'arin b'nawori dnelov anuank' oc zbnut' iwnn šrjen. Viṣṣap asemk ew anerewoyt c c'ar zawrut oc, or xndrelov zawrut' iwn i Tarsnē, char zardarn i ċ'arac'ar harnuacs oc miov masamb, ayl amenayn masembk, artak cnovk ew nerk'hawk' !...And about the mountains difficult to traverse which we name viṣṣap and call xaramani. And we call viṣṣap many of the largest animals; of those on land, the elephant and serpent, and an evil and violent man, but when the names are once applied, they do not change their nature. We call viṣṣap also the invisible evil power, which, asking power of the Lord, struck the righteous man with grievous blows, not in one part, but in all his parts, outer and inner.'

It would seem from the above citations that the term viṣṣap must cover a fairly wide variety of monstrous or evil creatures. In the Gk. version of Agath., the Arm. epithet viṣṣapak'at is translated as drakontopniktos; in the Arm. translation of the Bible, viṣṣap is used to translate LXX Gk. kōtos, the big fish that swallowed Jonah on his unsuccessful escape to Tarsis (i.e., Tarsus, in Cilicia, in the vicinity of Armenia). As we have seen above, Classical Arm. writers explain viṣṣap as avj 'serpent', but because the viṣṣap is no mere snake, we have preferred the English rendering 'dragon'. Two proposed derivations of the word from Ir. warrant attention. Arm. viṣṣap, like Syriac vēṣap and Georgian veṣap'i, has been held by Benveniste to come from a Pth. form of the Av. adjective *viṣāpa- 'with poisonous slaver', which, he presumed, had formed part of the name of a dragon, *Azi Viṣāpa. More recently, Bailey connected Arm. viṣṣap with Khotanese Saka guksapā 'large', from an older *viṣāpa- in the sense of 'extended hugely', with the base vai-/vi- 'to extend'. It is noted that Av. mazan 'huge' is used of demons, and that Arm. viṣṣap is used of anything monstrous. This second etymology is strongly corroborated by the translation of Origen cited above, and appears to explain better the wide variety of
applications of the word than does the first. It is evident, however, that in the Classical Arm. sources the višap is specifically a monstrous serpent (awj) or dragon.

In a letter addressed to Törnik Mamikonean, Grigor Magistros relates the tale of a fish called Aşdahak (i.e., Aži Dahaka⁸⁹), which gave a concubine a huge pearl; she took it to the king, who had it set in the crown called Ezdadovsen, a word which Magistros explains as meaning 'God-given'. It is probably a transcription of NP. *yazdadād 'given by the yazata'. The king then ordered that the gods be honoured with rich offerings, and that the image of this fish be carved, together with the effigies of the other divinities, and that sacrifices be made on the banks of the river Phison, where it had appeared to the concubine.⁹⁷

The above legend is the first explanation we possess of the origin of the stone steles, three to four metres long, that are found scattered over the expanse of the Armenian Plateau, often near bodies of water. These are called višaps by the Arms. and aždahas by the Kurds and Turks; the latter word, originally the name of a demonic monster in the Avesta, came to be in NP. a generic word for serpent or dragon, and it is likely therefore that the tale related by Magistros was of local origin and recent date, despite the references to pre-Islamic polytheism; the river Phison, one of the four rivers of Paradise, is a specifically Christian feature that identifies the tradition as Armenian, rather than Iranian.⁹¹ In 1909, N. Marr and Y. Smirnov studied a number of steles at a place in the Geğam Mts. called Višapner by the Arms. and Aždaha-yurt by the Kurds. Some of the steles have wavy lines carved into them to represent water; others are in the shape of a fish.⁹² A number have carvings in relief of the hide of an ox.⁹³ Some have rude Christian crosses cut into them, indicating that they had been sacred objects before the Conversion and remained so.⁹⁴

What have oxen to do with višaps? The answer is to be sought in the literary and archaeological monuments of ancient Anatolia, in the Ebc Adandoc. 'Refutation of Sects' of Eznik of Kožb (fifth century), and in modern Armenian folklore.
2.09

Eznik argues that Եւս է Եբ Բառնայում Եր Եր Եզանք։ Անսանք
ԱՅՆԱՆԵՐԸ ԲԱՐՆԱՆԵՐԸ ԷԱՄԲ ԻՎԻԿ ԵԱՍՏՈԿԸ ԲՐԱՄԱՆԵ, ԶԻ ՄԻ
ՇՈՒՐՆ" ՄԱՐԴԵՅ ԿԵՄ ԱՆԱՆՆՈՅ ՄԵ}$етցի$ ԱՊԱՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ;
'And if [a višap] be raised up, it is not by so-called oxen, but by some hidden power, by the com-
mand of God, lest its exhalations harm man or beast.'

Why višaps
should be lifted up is explained also in a folk belief recorded late in the nineteenth century: višaps
when they reach the age of 1000
years are large enough to swallow the world. Gabriel and the other
angels find višaps of this age and drag them up to heaven, fighting
them with swords of lightning (cf. the thunder of St Karapet in the
apparition of Gisane in the narrative of Zenob Glak, above). This
cosmic battle is perceived by men as a storm. When the višap
is
taken to heaven, it is cast into the Sun, which burns it to cin-
ders.

In another version of this tradition, the višaps grow at
the bottom of Lake Van. When they are a thousand years old and be-
come able to swallow all the water of the lake, angels descend and
drag the fully-grown višaps out of their lair; the water churns and
a storm rages. When the višaps are cast into the Sun, their ashes
descend as a mist.

This belief appears to go back at least to the
seventh century, for Anania of Sirak explains the idiom višap hanel
'to extract a višap', used in fables, as a storm; in some modern
Arm. dialects, the word višap or usap alone means 'storm'.

The presence of oxen is perhaps explained by the scenes por-
trayed on a Hurrian golden bowl found at Hasanlu, in Iranian Azer-
baijan. The Hurrian weather-god, Tešub, is shown crossing the sky
in his chariot, which is drawn by a bull. Water pours out of the
mouth of the bull onto a monstrous creature whose upper half is
human, but whose lower half is a mountain with three dog-headed
snakes sprouting from it. The creature appears to be submerged in
water, for it is surrounded by bubbles. It is known from Hittite
literary sources that Tešub was the progeny of another god named
Kumarbi, and that Tešub had a consort, a goddess named Hebat or
Hepit.

Tešub was a prominent divinity also of the Urartean, and
was called by them Tešebia; the cities of Tešcbaini (Karmir Blur,
near Erevan) and Tüsia (Arm. Van; the Urartean name survives in the
Arm. name of the surrounding district, Tosp) were named after the
god. Teišeba was one of the members of the supreme triad of the Urartean gods, Haldi, Teišeba and Ardini (corresponding to the Assyrian triad of Aššur, Adad and Šamas). Tešub/Teišeba was a weather-god, like Tarhunda, who was worshipped by the Luwians, an Indo-European people, and by other Asianic peoples of Anatolia; the Asianic god is attested in Arm. as Tork, who appears, however, to have become a divinity of the netherworld. It is as a weather god that Vahagn appears in the legend of the origin of the Milky Way, which relates his contest with the foreign weather-god Bel or Barsēm(in), discussed above. Vahagn, and not Tork, endured as a weather god.

One of the celebrated deeds of Tešub was the slaying of a dragon, Illuyankas, whose name is also a Hittite common noun meaning 'serpent', and the spawn of the monster; according to some accounts, the battle took place at sea. Vahagn, it is recalled, bears the epithet višapakā; Toporov, following Abeyan, takes the second part of the word from Arm. kal-em 'I reap'. Xorenac notes that Vahagn was the vanquisher of many višaps. He would pluck them selectively, as they reached deadly maturity, much as one might reap a crop when it is ripe, but leave the unripe plants to grow. These višaps were drawn up to heaven, presumably, on a chariot pulled by oxen, as on the Hurrian bowl. It has been suggested that the half-man, half-mountain on the bowl is Ullikummi, about whom we shall speak in Ch. 8. But the three serpents may represent Illuyankas and his progeny, which the weather-god Tešub prepares to reap from the sea-bottom and drag heavenward on his ox-drawn chariot.

The same ancient legendary which seems thus to have informed the cult of the Zoroastrian yazata Vahagn in Armenia, may have survived also in Iran. Qazvīnī relates that the Persians believed the sea-dragon to be either a hurricane or a black serpent dwelling on the sea-bottom. The silver Klimova Cup of the Hermitage, Leningrad, a piece in Sasanian style, shows a fully-clothed man carrying bow and arrow, who is standing in an archway which rests on a wheeled platform; two oxen at each side--four in all--pull at traces attached to the platform. Above each pair is a winged being who whips the animals. The being to the right seems to be pouring water onto the
heads of the oxen (cf. the Hasanlu cup); the water is represented by two wavy, diverging lines. On the top of the arch of the wheeled platform (or chariot?) is a crescent moon. Within it is a beardless figure who sits cross-legged on a throne, with the two horns of another crescent moon emerging from behind his (or her) shoulders. To the right of the figure stands an ax. Perhaps this is the moon god (who is male in Iran), or else a goddess who is the consort of the warlike, masculine figure below with his full beard and typically Sasanian bunches of hair. The figure may be Verethraghna, but in the absence of a serpent in the scene one cannot suggest with certainty that this cup portrays the same legend we have sought above to link with Arm. Vahagn.

Zoroastrianism was not the only monotheistic religion to adopt the myth of serpents which had to be slain or neutralised, lest they devour or destroy the world. The heroic deed of the Arm. Zor. Vahagn appears in the Babylonian Talmud, inspired, as it seems, by the ancient Babylonian legendry heard by Jewish sages of the Sasanian period, but here it is an example of the farseeing wisdom of God/himself: in Tractate Baba Batra 74b it is said that if God had not castrated the male and slain the female Leviathan, they would have mated and destroyed the world (presumably by the number and size of their offspring). Neither visaps nor Leviathan are wholly extirpated; their issue is periodically reduced, in the first case, or precluded, in the second. The reasons are probably correspondingly various: for the Zoroastrians, evil is always present and always to be combated, in this world of mixture. For Jews, the Leviathan, for all its monstrosity, is an example of God's majesty and economy.

Iconographic depictions of Verethraghna in Armenia may be found on the coins of Tigran II, where a bearded male nude is shown frontally, standing; a lion's skin is draped over his right arm, and with his left hand he leans on a club. This is the usual Greek rendering of Hēraklēs, and is reproduced also in a statuette from Hatra, from about the same period, and fairly close, both geographically and politically, to Arsacid Armenia.

Another piece, discovered recently, deserves discussion here. In 1979, a fragment of rose-colored tufa was found in the gold mines
of Zod, ca. 12 km. east of Basargechar, near the SE shore of Lake Sevan and just south of the Šāh-dag range, in the Arm. SSR.110 Two human figures are carven in high relief on two sides of the object. Suren Ayvazyan, who published a brief description of the find (without, however, providing dimensions and other archaeological details of importance),111 together with a small photograph, identified the two figures as Vahagn and Astāk. Mr Ayvazyan kindly sent at our request two good photographs of the stone (see pls. II and III, appended to this chapter), and his proposal seems justifiable, although the date he suggests, the first or second millennium B.C., seems to us too early.

The male figure holds what appears to be a giant snake, perhaps a višap; this and the musculature of his body suggest Vahagn. The naturalistic depiction of the human figure would derive from Hellenistic forms, and the powerful torso recalls the Artaxiad Arm. coins cited above, the relief of Hēraklēs--Artagnēs from Commagene, or the naked male figures in bas-relief at the temple of Garni in Armenia.112 The snake, if such it is, blends into the folds of the drapery of the woman. Her figure is exaggeratedly and voluptuously feminine, and may be compared to the figure of Aphrodite in bas-relief on a terracotta piece from Artašat, in which the goddess is shown partially naked and in the act of undressing.113 This figure bears little resemblance to the ceramic figurines of the heavily draped and sedate mother goddess Anahit or Nane, also found at Artašat.114 It is, rather, of the Aphrodite anadyomenē type found commonly at Dura and elsewhere in the Greco-Roman world. For Anahit, although regarded as a goddess of fertility (Agath. 68), was also considered mayr amenayn zgastut c 'mother of all chastity' (Agath. 53), very different indeed from the bas-relief of Zod.

Zod, Classical Arm. Cawdk c , has gold mines which have been in use since the fifteenth century B.C.; settlements and graveyards of the second–first millennia have been unearthed; and various bronze weapons, items of personal adornment, talismans with depictions of the Tree of Life and other implements have been found dating from the twelfth century B.C. The place has been continuously settled throughout historical times, with the river Zod affording access
from the east to Lake Sevan, and there is a seventeenth-century Arm. church there. The area was known to Agathangelow, who refers to it as Cawdek, a region between Siwnik and Utik (Agath. 597). The purpose of the tufa carving itself is impossible to determine. Because it is carved on two sides, it may have served as part of a larger structure, perhaps as the corner of a shrine or other building, or of an altar. In all recorded periods, Arm. reliefs are characterised by smooth, finely dressed stone and flat backgrounds; this piece is rough, and, it seems, unfinished.

The legend of Vahagn's dragon-reaping appears to have its source in the ancient myths of the peoples who inhabited the Ararat Plateau in the second and early first millennia B.C. Similarly non-Iranian, it seems, are the details of his origin and the presence of a consort, Astik. Teşub's birth is mentioned in Hittite texts, as is his female consort, called Hebat or Hepit. The name Astik is composed of Arm. ast 'star' with the diminutive suffix -ik, probably used here also in an honorific sense; the closest parallel is found in a 'Manichaean' prayer cited in the Oskiporik, a thirteenth-century miscellany: 'The Manichaeans swear by the Sun and say "Little light, sweet little Sun, you are full of the heavens (lusik arewik k'azc rik, li es tiezerök)."' According to Yovhanæs of Awjun, the 'Paulicians', also Sun-worshippers, addressed it thus: Arewik, lusik 'Little sun, little light'. As it will be argued in Ch. 16, the reference in both cases is probably to the Arewordik 'Children of the Sun', apparently a community of Arm. Zoroastrians who survived through the mediaeval period. Aboyan and others have identified Astik 'Little Star' with the Syrian goddess Kaukabta, of which her name would be a translation. The 'little star' is Venus, Gk. Aphroditē; in the Arm. translation of Philo, Astik is identified with Aruseak '(the planet) Venus'. A temple of the first century B.C.-A.D. 32 at Palmyra contains a bas-relief of Hêraklēs accompanied by a goddess with a radiant nimbus. In other reliefs, she is replaced by a star in a crescent (cf. the crescent on the Klimova cup, discussed above). The cult of Hebat/Hepit survived in Maionia, in Asia Minor, long after the fall of the Hittite empire; she is called mētēr Hipta in a Greek inscription found there.
According to the seventh-century writer Vṛtanaēs kertōkē, "the poet", Astēk...zor mayr cankutēancē koņen amenasyn hetanōskē: ew bazum en arbecōtōiwnkō sora ew anaśakutōiwnkō 'all the heathens call Astēk the mother of passions, and her drunken orgies and debaucheries are numerous.' In the nineteenth century, the Armenian priest and ethnographer Garegin Sruanjteanē recorded this legend, told by the people of Muş: the place where the Euphrates enters the plain of Muş from the mountains of Kinč is called G(u)īg(a), and there is a pool there where Astēk bathes. Young men used to climb nearby Mt Daçon and light a fire in order to behold the beauty of the naked goddess, and that is why the waters send up a mist there—to shield her from their eyes. It is perhaps noteworthy that Kinč is a native Arm. word for the wild boar, called also varez, the animal symbolic of Vahagn (cf. above). There is in the vicinity of Muş also an ancient fortress (Arm. berd) referred to by Zenob as well as other writers, ancient and modern, called Astēkan berd 'Fortress of Astēk', Astēn, Astaberd, or Astēawk. This may have been the structure described by Tovma Arcruni (I.8), according to whom Artaxias I i mējerekarmateangogajewhortinpocū...sine āstara barjrabersj pocoraccy mijocăw, ev i veray kangmē zAstēkan patkern ew mewt nora ztun ānju paştpanutēcan krocēn 'built in a three-cornered, concave little valley a lofty tower, at the centre of the cavity, and on it he erected the statue of Astēk, and nearby it [the built] a treasure-house for the protection of the idols.'

We have noted the adjective vramakan 'of Verethraghna' applied to sacred fires, and the apparent identification of Verethraghna in Arm. also as Hrat 'fiery', the latter also an epithet applied to holy fires. In the preceding chapter, it was noted that there may have been varying grades of sacred fires in pre-Sasanian, Zoroastrian Arm., and in Zoroastrianism the 'fire of Verethraghna' is indeed the highest grade. The information we possess concerning the cult of fire in Arm. will be treated at greater length in Ch. 15; it is sufficient to remark here, however, that the forms Vram and Vahram, used as proper names alone or in compounds (e.g., Vramśapuh, Anuśvram), appear to be Sasanian, and are clearly distinct from forms such as Artagnēs, Artanēs, Vahagn and Vahan, discussed.
previously. As a yazata in Armenia, Verethraghna is called invariably by the name Vahagn, never by the later, Sasanian form, and the vřamakan krak 'fire of Vṛām' is mentioned generally as a foundation of the Sasanians or their Arm. confederates. It is also important to note that Arm. Hrat Mecn in one case at least is a rendering of a toponym, Phraata, and need not refer to Verethraghna at all. We cannot therefore agree with Benveniste’s suggestion that the vřamakan krak was an Arsacid institution. 125

It was observed that Verethraghna is a close companion of Mithra in the struggle against evil; in Yt. 14, the two appear together with Našu. In a Mithraic relief found at Mannheim, Mithra is accompanied by Hēraklēs, behind whom stands a wild boar rampant. 126 In the Acts of St Acepsimas, the saint refuses the demand of the Magian high priest that he offer sacrifices to Helios and Arēs, i.e. (in a Persian context), Mithra and Verethraghna. 127 In Iran, Mithra, a god of fire, came to be identified with the greatest of all physical fires, the Sun, but in Arm. he was equated rather with Gk. Ἑρμής--the god of fire--alone, and not with Helios (cf. MX II.14). Tiridates in Armenia invoked Aramazd, Anahit and Vahagn, in striking contrast to the common Iranian triad of Ahura Mazdā, Anāhitā and Mithra attested since the time of Artaxerxes II. We shall see in Ch. 8 how the cult of Mithra may have been eclipsed in Arm. by the cult of Vahagn.

For the temple of the latter enjoyed vast prominence, to the extent that it became the first See of the Arm. Church, before the centre was shifted to Važarsapat, in the northeast, at or near the royal capital of the country. Xorenac 128 refers to the cult of Vahagn in Georgia, but Georgian sources do not refer to the yazata. To this day, however, the Georgians celebrate 'the great feast of summer', Atengenoba, in honour of Atengena, 129 i.e., St. Athēnogenēs, whose relics, it is recalled, were transferred to Astisat by St Gregory when the cult of Vahagn had been eradicated there. The feast of the martyr Athenogenes is celebrated in the Syrian Orthodox church on 24th July, 129 while in Armenia it is celebrated on 17 July 130 (Arm. 11 Hrošic 131). All of these data affirm that it is indeed a summer feast. Why was Athenogenes, Arm. Atcanginēs, so
important? The Arm. Synaxarion relates that he lived in Sebastia (Tk. Sivas), immediately contiguous to Armenia, Ἐω ἰ εἰς μιλιμο ὅ ς τε ὅ τε .phi mi ἐν χ ἱ ρ α ὑ ρυ ὁ ρο μ ὅ ὅ τε ρο ὅ τε ὅ τε. For the inhabitants of the place because of fear of the visap used to offer it a youth, as it had exhausted all the animals of the region. The saint freed the youth and slew the dragon. In memory of this heroic act, the text continues, a hind comes down to the church once a year on this day and is sacrificed to God. It is easy to see how this legend might have been linked with the heroic, dragon-slaying exploits of Vahagn; it is recalled that legends of propitiatory sacrifices to visaps were still related until recent days. A relief from Bayazit published by Ališan and reproduced by Ananikian depicts two robed, priestly figures in soft, 'Phrygian' headdresses; between them is a walled-in portal, above which stands an animal which resembles a hind; perhaps the scene portrays an ancient sacrifice which survived as a ceremony of the Church.

St Gregory, according to Agath., ordained that the feast of St Athenogenes be celebrated on 7 Sahmi at Astisat, but on 1 Nawasard at Bagawan. Neither 7 Sahmi or Nawasard corresponded in the fourth century, around the date of the Conversion when these events are said to have taken place, to either of the two dates in July. Sahmi is the name of the third month, probably to be derived from Georgian sami 'three'; the word has no apparent religious significance which might enlighten us about why Gregory chose that month. The popular Arm. tradition of Naxiǰewan cited above has Gregory arrive at Astisat on Nawasard. Agathangelos states that king Tiridates waited a month (Agath. 817) for Gregory to come to Bagawan from Astisat, so Gregory was at the latter place in mid-late July, corresponding to the twelfth month of the Arm. calendar, Krotic', which immediately precedes the New Year. This is in accord with the evidence from the Synaxarion and Georgian and Syriac sources concerning the date of the feast of St Athenogenes, but not with the date of 7th Sahmi.
It is probable that Gregory arrived at Bagawan on Nawasard, and offered reverence to the same saints, at the royal centre of cult on the specifically kingly holiday of Nawasard, as he had done at Aštišat a month before. It is recalled that the Artaxiad kings struggled to subject the cult of Vahagn, dominated by the Vahunis, to their own control—and their centre, like that of the newly-Christian Tiridates, was the temple of Aramazd, at Bagawan. Gregory's action, inexplicable otherwise—for why ought a saint to receive two separate days in his honour—may be viewed as a gesture of altar to throne of both fealty and equilibrium. The burial of kings and catholicoi at the neighbouring necropoli of Ani and T'ordan, discussed in the previous chapter, reflects the same delicate relationship.

Grigor Aršaruni, writing ca. 690, called 7th Sahmi the festival of Vahēvahean, whom he calls 'the golden mother demon', confusing Anahit with Vahagn. In the Arm. calendar, the 7th day of the month is named after Astik; the 19th, after Anahit; and the 27th, after Vahagn. Perhaps the three dates we have, 11 Erotic, 1 Nawasard, and 7 Sahmi, all reflect Zoroastrian festivals replaced by Christian observances. The first, which endured as the feast of Athenogenes, must have been dedicated to Vahagn; the second was consecrated to Aramazd; and the third, 7 Sahmi, belonged to a goddess, most likely Astik rather than Anahit. It is not St Athenogenes, however, whom we encounter as the successor to Vahagn, but St John the Baptist, and the relics of both saints were deposited, as we have seen, at Aštišat. St Karapet, is, of course, a figure of incomparably greater importance in Christianity than Athenogenes; he is no less than the forerunner of Christ, and better entitled thus to assume the mantle of Vahagn, who was second only to Aramazd in the pantheon of ancient Armenia.
Notes - Chapter 6

1. See Ch. 3 and C. Toumanoff, Studies in Christian Caucasian History, Georgetown University Press, 1963, 292-3; Strabo, Geog., XI.14.15. Another form of the name of Verethraghna may be Arm. Vahan, displaying similar loss of -g-. As a common noun, the word means 'shield', corresponding admirably to the meaning of the first part of the name of the yazata.

2. TMMM, I, 143; E. Benveniste, L. Renou, Vrytra et Vrthragna, Paris, 1934, 70, 82; Thieme, apud JAOS, 80, 1960, 312 ff., cit. by V. N. Toporov, 'Ob otrazhenii odnogo indoevropeiskogo mifa v drevnearmyanskoj traditsii,' E-bH, 1977, 3, 98 n. 61. The form Artagnas preserves the old -th- from the name of the yazata as -t-; a similarly archaic form is noted for the name of the Sasanian king Behram in the Syriac martyrology of Candida, written probably in the fifth century, viz. WRTRN. The latter form is found also in the hagiography of the martyrs of Bet Slokh of the time of Sabur II, see S. P. Brock, 'A Martyr of the Sasanid Court under Varhran II: Candida,' Analecta Bollandiana, vol. 96, 1978, 171 & n.1.

3. See Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 268; Stronghold, 71.

4. Boyce, Stronghold, 69-70; Benveniste-Renou, op. cit., 39. Such fires are attested in Arm. as the Sasanian vr'am-akan krak 'fire' (see Ch. 5 and below). It seems clear that the yazata himself, and not the abstract quality 'victorious', is meant in the epithet applied to the highest grade of the fire. Verethraghna, Mr. Varhran, actually dwells within fire the way the soul dwells in the body, according to the ninth-century Dādīstān-i Dēnīg (Part I, Questions 1–40, ed. by T. D. Anklesaria, repr. Shiraz, 1976, p. 59, question 30.7, differently translated by West, SBE 18, Phl. Texts 2, 65, 31.7): Be'ān ī ka pad wuzurg vānīshā I dādār mēnōgān gētīg vānīshāhā paymōzend, Axw-iz ō gētīgān mēnōg-sōhišānīg vēnīshāhā paymōzend. Byā, Axw pad gētīg-sōhišān mēnūgān did pad ān hangōšīag tūwān, cīyon ka tainīhā wēnēnd I kē-ē ruwān āndar, ayāb ka ātāxā wēnēnd kē-ē Varhrān āndar, ayāb, āb wēnēnd kē-ē xwēs mēnōg āndar ast. 'Just as when, by the great victoriousness of the Creator, the spirits clothe themselves visibly in material form, so the lord also conjoins to material creatures vision which is sensitive to the spiritual world. Moreover the lord may see the spirits in material tangibility in the same way that they see corporeally that thing in which is a soul, or when they see fire, in which is Varhrān, or when they see water, in which is its own spirit.' The male bust which appears in the altar-flame on the reverse of the coins of several early Sasanian kings probably represents Verethraghna, the yazata in the fire (see R. Göbl, Sasanian Numismatics, Braunschweig, 1972, 19).

5. Yt. 10.70; ARM, 62 & n.


9. Ibid., 220 (letter no. 76).


11. See Ch. 12.


13. Cit. by B. L. Tchukasizian (Ćugashyan), 'Echos de légendes épiques iraniennes dans les "Lettres" de Grigor Magistros,' NEArm, N.S. 1, 1964, 324.

14. See Ch. 13.

15. See E. Benveniste, 'Le Mémorial de Zarēr,' JA, 1932, 117-34; on the name Zareh in Arm., see Ch. 3.


17. Grigor Magistros, op. cit. 8, 127 (letter no. 54).

18. Restagēs is a hapax legomenon in Arm. (HAB, IV, 149); the Ir. loan-word gēs 'lock of hair', trans. by native Arm. her 'hair' (or cam 'tress' in a legend from Mus, cf. below) here (as in a ref. to Gisane to be discussed below), is clear; but ėst- is more difficult. Translated by Arm. sec 'thick', it may be related to NP. rust 'solid, strong, firm'.

19. Artakēt and derived part. artakiteal are found only in the writings of Grigor Magistros, and the meaning seems to be 'to shake' or 'to hook' (as a fish) (HAB, I, 342(.


22. See K. V. Trever, Ocherki po istorii kul tury drevnei Armenii (2 v. do n.e.-i v.n.e.), Moscow-Leningrad, 1933, pl. 76.

24. TCA I.8, III.18. On Dionysos, by whose name Spandaramet is probably meant, see Ch. 10.


27. On Anahit-Artemis, see Ch. 7; on Tir-Apollōn, see Ch. 9.

28. On this personage, see Ch. 8.

29. See Bailey, Zor. Probs., 4 n. 2.

30. Cr. PБ IV.14.


33. Cit. in Arm. Gr., 55.


35. Cit. by MA 1, 75.

36. NEHL, s. v. Vahagn.

37. Various studies have been made of the metre of the 'Birth of Vahagn', as the song has come to be called. The division of a line into hemistichs is common in Mediaeval Arm. poetry. Certain theories concerning the poem defy good sense, however. S. Petrosyan, "Vahagni ergi" akrostikosmeri verakanman ev vercanman pcorj,' Lraber, 1981, 4, 78-87, breaks the poem into nine lines, adds ev 'and' to line 3 and na 'he' to line 8, gratuitously, doing violence to metre and meaning, and arrives at two acrostics: (2) Ermnér (3) *ew (4) *end = *Erwênd Eruand (i.e., Orontes); and (7) na (8) *na = *Nana. These, he concludes, are the parents of Vahagn. Xorenac't calls Tigran, not Eruand, the father of Vahagn, and nowhere is it suggested that he had a mother called Nana (i.e., Nanē, on whom see Ch. 7). Xorenac't's tendency to euhemerise the figures of ancient legend is well documented, and it is obvious enough from the song itself that those who composed and recited it did not for a moment think that Vahagn had two human parents.
Acrostics belong to written traditions; there is no reason whatsoever to imagine that the song was written down until Xorenacci himself recorded it. The interpolations are unjustifiable on any grounds, the results are arbitrary and wholly unconvincing, and Petrosyan's hypothesis hardly merits rebuttal, except that, incredibly, it was published in a scholarly journal. On the Vedic concept of fire, see Oldenberg, cit. by Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 45.

38. AH, 1895, 298; A. Matikean, Aray geçecik, Vienna, 1930, 238.


40. Arm. kntntoc; the text has the misprint kantoc (see HAB, II, 611 s.v. kntntoc, which in Modern Arm. is used only to mean the bow of a violin or kemanč). 

41. Yovhannēs Drasxanakertc'i, Patmut'cwn Hayoc, Tiflis, 1912, 23.

42. B. N. Arakelyan, Aknarkner hin Hayastani arvesti patmut'yan, Erevan, 1976, pl. 87.

43. AHH, 143. Cf. NBHL, s.v. Hrat, citing the 5th-century Arm. trans. of Aristotle: Hratn, Herakley isk ew aresi asac Cainan 'Hrat is the one called also after Hēraklēs and Arēs.'

44. P'C'B IV.53; Arm. Gr., 81.


46. S. Malkaseanc, Hayerēn bac'c atrakan ba'aran, repr. Beirut, 1955, s.v. hrat; see also Ch. 2.

47. See L. H. Babayan, Dvavner Hayastani va'k feodalizmi daraşrjani patmagrut'yan, Erevan, 1977, 328-9; S. T. Eremyan, ed., Kulturana rennefeodal'noi Armenii 4-7 vv., Erevan, 1980, 132.

48. Arm. karapet, with the sense of 'forerunner (of Christ)', is to be derived from OIr. *kārā-pati- 'leader of caravans', one who preceded travellers, like the modern Persian Kāvyūd (see H. W. Bailey, 'Iranica II,' JRAS, July 1934, 512).

50. ZG, 14.

51. Ibid., 25.

52. The name seems to be the same as the noun arjan, which means 'monument' or 'statue'; on Arm. mah-arjans 'funerary monuments' (one of which, suspiciously, is mentioned by ZG immediately after the death of Arjan), see Ch. 10.

53. The Ir. loan-word den 'religion' (see Ch. 5 on the den(i) mazdezn in Arm.) is never used by Arm. writers with reference to Christianity, but only when they are referring to the religion of the Parthians or the Persians (cf. Hāišē on the parskaḏēn, Ch. 4).

54. ZG, 27.

55. AON, 479. The etymology of Arm. višap will be discussed below.

56. H. F. B. Lynch, Map of Armenia and Adjacent Countries, London, 1901, Megdik, north of the Murat Su near Mush; cf. AON, 323 and pl. IV at the end of this Ch. (where Mešti is shown between St Karapet and Aštišat, on the plain of Muš below Mt Kparkē).

57. See J. M. Thierry, 'Le couvent des saints apôtres de Muš,' HA, 1976; on Tir, see Ch. 9. Arakcēloc Vankc, which is 10 km SE of Muš, is in the valley below Mt Tir(i)nkatar or Cir(i)nkatar in the Taurus chain. The Christian site was sometimes called by the local people Aregmacag Tirinkatar vankc 'Monastery of Tirinkatar of the Dawn,' preserving the pre-Christian theophoric name with Tir- (see K. & A. Avetisyan, op. cit., 208-9). The sunrise was seen over the place, from Muš; Arms. attach particular importance to their sunrise prayers, even as their Zoroastrian forebears did to those of the Havan gān, and the east (Arm. arewelk 'place of the rising of the Sun', cf. Gk. anatolē, Rus. vostok, etc.) is popularly called ašotcaran 'place of prayer'. Zoroastrian temples must have access to a source of living water, and the Mešraget river flows past Arakcēloc Vankc, just as the shrine of Aštišat was located above the Aracani and had springs near the summer where the temples stood.

58. Cf. the Scythian names, attested in Gk. transcription as Mēsakos and Mētakos/Mēthakos (Ir. Nam., 203-4); the name myske, read as Mēsak, is found on a Sasanian seal (P. Gignoux in La Persia nel Medioevo, Rome, 1971, 537).


60. ZG 32-6.

61. Ibid., 36-7, 42.

63. ZG 37.

64. The confusion of gender—Demetr is called the brother of Gisane—does not necessarily rule out this equation, for it will be seen that Arm. Spandaramet translates the name of the male Gk. Dionysos, and Herodotus thought the Persian Mithra was female (Ch. 10). At the temple of Bel in Palmyra itself, the Palmyrene moon god Aglibol, who was emphatically masculine, was represented by a Hellenistic artist as the Greek goddess Selene; this does not seem to have troubled the Palmyrenes (see M. Colledge, The Art of Palmyra, Boulder, Colorado, 1976, 237-8).


66. YM 11.

67. Ibid., 17 et seq.

68. Ibid., 35.

68-a. The hymn, with this analysis, was presented in translation as a communication by this writer to the 1984 meeting of the Société Internationale d'Études Arméniennes at Trier.


71. Komitas vardapet, M. Abeck', Hazar u mi xa2, Erevan, 1969, 22; Zoroastrians of our acquaintance recite the Bahram Yast from the Xorde Avesta before a friend or relative is to depart on a long journey; cf. Stronghold, 70.


73. K. & A. Avetisyan, 205.

74. Shahnazarian, op. cit. n. 49 (Lusaberd), 24-5. A rare photograph of the building is reproduced as pl. I at the end of this Ch.; in pl. V, the conical dome of the building appears above the massive monastery walls in the rt. foreground. The chapel is obviously an Arm. Christian structure, although it may stand on the site of an earlier temple.
75. Sahnazarean, Lusaberd, 26. This writer sought to locate Mr Sahnazarean in San Antonio, Texas, in 1979, but was unable to do so; it is therefore impossible to tell whether this account is intended as a report of what he actually saw, or as a literary fantasy.

76. See Ch. 13 on these supernatural creatures.

77. AHH, 194.

78. MA 7, 65; Avandapatum, no. 11.

79. See Kirakos Ganjakeci, Patmut'ıwn Hayoc, Erevan, 1961, 70.


81. Avandapatum, no. 136.

82. Ibid., no. 161.

83. MA 1, 89.

84. AHH, 187.

85. Xaramani is one of several Arm. forms of the name of the evil spirit, Angra Mainyu; see Ch. 14.

86. Ereven Matenadaran MS 6036, fol. 124b-125a, cit. by E. Petrosyan, H. Najaryan, ed., 'Naxarcher Oroginesi haykakan t'argmanut'yunneric,' Ejmiaclin, 1979, 2, 22. The implication of the text, whose wording is somewhat obscure, is that whatever is called a visap, be it prodigious beast or evil man, cannot change its corporeal nature. Eznik argues this very point (458 para. 138): 'Noympes ew visap oc mi angam ajwajew erewer, ew niws angam mardkakerp, orpes yarajagoyun isk asac'aw te or marmawor inc e, yayl kerparans oc'karé pocoxel.

'Similarly, the visap did not appear one time as a serpent in form, and another time in the shape of a man; but, as was said earlier, whatever is corporeal cannot change into another shape.'

87. Benveniste, RDEA, 1927, 7-9 and Benveniste-Renou, op. cit., 79 n. 1, cit. by Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 91 n. 42.


89. On Av. Ah. Dahaka and Arm. A'dahak, see Chs. 13, 14.

90. Grigor Magistros, op. cit., letter 75, cit. by Tchukasizian, op. cit., 325. The visap steles may have received sacrifices of oxen, the animals who pulled the chariot of the god. Certainly sacrifices of some kind were made. In one recorded version of the Arm. epic of Sasun, the hero Sanasar kills a
vişap which has been denying people access to a spring because they have ceased to offer human sacrifices to it (St. Kanayeanc, Sasma cer vepi ērekk popopoxak, 108-9); a similar act of heroism is ascribed by the Arms. to St Athenogenes (see below).

91. The image of a serpent bearing a jewel may be Arm., for in an Arm. mediaeval magical text which lists 666 azg awjic 'types of serpents', there is one which has a hyacinth jewel (akunt) on its head (AHN, 168). The number 666 has eschatological significance in the West, and was probably adopted by the Arms. from Gk. sources (see Ch. 14). Tchukasizian's suggestion that the tale is of Sasanian origin seems improbable, for no Sasanian king would have made effigies of the yazatas as objects of sacrifice.


93. Ibid., e.g., fig. 14b, vişap from Tokmağan göl.

94. Ibid., 62-3.

95. Eznik, 456 para. 140.

96. AH, 1, 351, cit. by MA l, 88.

97. MA 7, 65.


99. AH, 6, 35, cit. by Marr-Smirnov, op. cit., 98.


103. See Ch. 11 on Tork, and Ch. 5 on Vahagn and Baršam(in).


105. Toporov, op. cit. n. 2, 99.

107. See H. Seyrig, 'Antiquités syriennes,' *Syria*, 18, 1937, 44 fig. 25.


111. S. Ayvazyan, 'Ezaki gtsac,' *Sovetakan Hayastan* monthly, Erevan, 1979, 8, 30.

112. See *Afakelyan*, op. cit., pls. 27, 44, 45.

113. See Ch. 3.

114. Ibid and Ch. 7.


116. NBHL, s.v. Arewik.

117. Ibid., s.v. Vahagn. The name Aruseak is an Iranian loanword, cf. Av. aurusa- *white*. A connection may possibly be drawn here to the similar cult epithet, Gk. leucothea *white goddess*, of a divinity worshipped in Georgia, whose temple was probably at Vani. The same or another Leucothea was worshipped in Greece, in Messenia (Pausanias 4.34.4). One need not comment here on the creative theories of the poet Robert Graves concerning the White Goddess as a universal figure.

118. H. Seyrig, 'Antiquités syriennes,' *Syria*, 24, 1944, 62; P. Kretschmer, *Kleinasiatische Forschungen*, I, 2-3, cit. by G. Kapantsyan, *Istoriko-lingvisticheskie raboty k nachal'noi istorii armyan*, Erevan, 1956, 276. Kapantsyan suggested that Arm. h(t)pit 'I put on fancy dress' and xtpt-anke 'fancy dress', be derived from the name of the goddess Hepit. The fifth-century cleric Yovannēs Cathlicos Manakuni inveighed against gusans 'minstrels' in his sermon *Vaqn anavrēn t'aterac diwakanac* 'On the heathen theatres of the demonic' as promoters of pagan ways, and later, the Oskirork paired jugglers (acparar) with sectarians (alandawork) (NBHL, s.v. acparar). We have noted that the monastery of St Karapet at Astisat became a place of pilgrimage for minstrels and other entertainers; they were perhaps following old traditions frowned upon by the Church, which had been connected to the festivities of Vahagn and Astlik. It is perhaps noteworthy in this connection that Zoroastrian holidays even in
poverty-stricken Iranian villages today are marked by music, dance and other forms of entertainment. Such levity invites the disapproval of the Muslims, whose own festivals are morose in comparison, and the similarly ascetic faith of Christianity might be expected to be equally hostile. In the Christian centuries, the tradition developed of Astāk as the daughter of Maniton, who was the son of Noah. This tradition, reflected in MX 1.6, was culled from the uncanonical Sibylline Oracles: Astāk translates Gk. Aphrodite (see E. Durean, Hayoc hín krōnē, Jerusalem, 1933, 47). Maniton and Astāk became invisible, it is said, and the Arm. tradition adds here independent of the Gk. that, 'whoever catches a glimpse of them, sees that they have weddings and cymbals and gusans every day' (MA 7, 85). The connection of Astāk with personal adornment and pleasant entertainment was enduring; the case of Hepit rests on a fortuitous and unprovable etymology, and is less certain.

119. Cit. by Durean, op. cit., 47; cf. the description of the feasts of Maniton and Astāk (n. 118, above).

120. One day of the Arm. month bears the name Gṛgu̱ṛ, which is probably an onomatopoetic rendering of the sound of the gurgle of the waters as they rush through the narrow mountain defile (see Ch. 5).


123. Durean, op. cit., 47.


125. Benveniste, Titres et noms, 15.

126. TAMM, I, 143.

127. Loc. cit.


132. Loc. cit.
133. Ananikian, pl. II; AHH, 177, fig. This relief is, unquestionably, Urartean, despite the Hellenising style of the engraving reproduced in Alişan's book. See T. B. Forbes, Urartian Architecture, BAR International Series 170, 1983, fig. 56.

134. L. H. Gray, 'On Certain Persian and Armenian Month-Names as influenced by the Avesta Calendar,' JAOS, 28, 1907, 336.

135. Taqizadeh, op. cit., 639.

List of Plates - Chapter 6

Pl. I. Chapel of the Monastery of Surb Karapet, Muş. Photo taken before 1913. The Arm. caption handwritten on back of the original reads, К'рмакан ժընկի մմաջորդ, ս. Կարապետի ժողովածու մեծջ 'Remnant of a building of the к'рмакан, in the yard of St Karapet.' From the collection of the late Harutiun Hazarian of New York. I am indebted to Ruth Thomason (Thomasian), director of Project SAVE (an Armenian photographic and documentary archive), for a copy of the photograph (SAVE ref.: Hazarian 18–78).

Pl. II, III. The bas-relief excavated at Zod, Armenian S.S.R. Photographs courtesy of Mr Suren Ayvazyan, Erevan.

Pl. IV. Map of the district of Muş, from Sargis and Misak Băşean, Harazat patmuc'awn Tarınoy, Cairo, 1962, 8–9. St Karapet and Astișat are in the upper left-hand corner.

Pl. V. The Monastery of St Karapet (the dome of the chapel of Pl. I is visible to the fore), from Băşean, ibid.
PLATE III.
KEY TO LOCATIONS ON MAP (PLATE IV)

1. Plain of Mush
2. City of Mush
3. Surb Karapet
4. Ashtishat
5. Murat su (Aracani)
6. Shatakh (Korduk)
7. Xoyt c
8. Baghesh (Bitlis)
9. Batman su
10. Lake Van
11. Xlat c (Akhat)
PLATE V.
CHAPTER 7
ANAHIT AND NANE

The worship of the two goddesses Anahita (PhI. Anēhīd, Arm. Anahit) and Nane (or Nanai, Arm. Nane) is widely attested in Iran and in countries to the west and east in pre-Islamic times, although Anahita alone of the two is recognised in existing, canonical texts as a yazata of Zoroastrianism. Both goddesses were worshiped in Armenia, and they shared so many aspects, in Armenia as elsewhere, that it seems fitting to consider them together. For both seem to have derived many of their characteristics from the Great Mother goddess of ancient Asia Minor, whose cult flourished in remote ages before the revelation of the Zoroastrian faith, and which may in part survive still in the reverence paid by Armenian Christians to the Virgin Mary. It is proposed to consider first this most ancient of cults and its connection with Nanē in Armenia and other countries, and then to discuss Iranian Anāhītā and Arm. Anahit.

The name of the Great Mother goddess, known to the Romans as Magna Mater, is encountered most frequently in Asia Minor as Kubaba or Cybele. This and the name Nana are considered to be Lallwörter (e.g., English Papa, Mama) meaning 'mother'. The cult of the mother goddess has been dated as far back as the Palaeolithic Age. The goddess is usually shown enthroned, with lions (or, sometimes, leopards) to either side of her, as on a terracotta figurine from Catal Hüyük (ancient Phrygia), ca. 6000 B.C.2 Cybele was regarded as the Mother of all, the Queen married to the Sky-god, who was king. As the earth, she was both the source of life and the abode of all at its end. Another of her titles seems to have been 'the lady', as attested in the North Syrian theophoric name Alli-Kubaba, meaning 'Kubaba is the Lady' (seventeenth-sixteenth centuries B.C.).3 Cybele was the ruler, not only of the land, but of the life-giving waters, also: in a hymn of the second century A.D., probably from Pergamon on the western coast of Asia Minor, she is described as ruler of 'the rivers and the entire sea'.
The mother goddess is referred to often together with her young son and lover, the dying and rising god best known as Attis. The legend of the divine pair is often related thus: The Great Mother made herself into a rock called Agdus, with which Jupiter (i.e., the Sky-god, see above) desired to have sexual relations. He spilled his seed on the rock, and in the tenth month a bisexual being named Agdistis was born. The gods perceived the danger of such a being, for Agdistis could impregnate himself and give birth, and was not therefore subject to the natural order established by the divine powers. Bacchus stole up on the sleeping Agdistis and tied his virile parts to a tree. When Agdistis woke and tried to move, he was emasculated, and the blood that fell to the ground caused a tree to sprout (the pomegranate or almond, in most accounts). Nana, the daughter of the river Sangarius, took the fruit of the tree and put it in her lap as she sat (or, she sat beneath the tree and the fruit fell into her lap). The fruit vanished, and later a child was born, Attis. Sangarius, angered by the violation of his daughter's virginity, tried to kill her, but was unsuccessful. Attis was exposed to die, but the animals nourished him. The Great Mother then became the boy's lover, and numerous terra cotta figurines from Asia Minor and Syria show the Great Mother seated, with the young Attis on her lap. These figurines show Attis as a naked babe; in other scenes he appears as an adolescent youth of great beauty, attired as a Phrygian shepherd.

Then, according to the legend, Attis became enamoured of a nymph named Sagaritis, daughter of the river Sangarius (like Nana, above); The Mother Goddess learnt of this, and in her rage and jealousy drive Attis insane. The distracted youth mutilated his genitals with a stone under a pine or fir tree (and that is why they are evergreens: his blood made their leaves immortal). Attis, it was believed, rose from the dead, and the ceremonies of Roman devotees of his cult were held in March and divided into two parts: the tristia, commemorating his passion and death; and the subsequent festivities called hilaria, celebrating the awakening of the god after his long winter slumber.

Nana was often identified directly with the Mother Goddess; such an equation is logically in keeping with the legend related above, in which it is clearly implied that the relationship of youth and goddess was an
incestuous union of mother and son. Just as the Great Mother was called by various names, so also was Attis. In remote Sogdia, as we shall see, the goddess Nanāi was imagined as grieving for the dead youth Siyāvāz, whilst in Armenia it was believed that the jealous Assyrian queen Semiramis had killed her young lover Ara the Beautiful, who rose from the dead with the help of supernatural dog-like beings; belief in such beings persisted into Christian times.  

The goddess Nana described above is probably to be identified with Nanā, patron goddess of the Sumerian city of Uruk, whose name in Sumerian, Innin or Inanna, means 'Lady of Heaven'. Nanā was principally a goddess of fertility, and this role is in keeping with the various associations of earth, water, sex and motherhood referred to above in our discussion of the Great Mother. But she was also a figure of awesome and destructive might (as, indeed, was Anāhitā, as will be seen). In a Sumero-Akkadian hymn, Nanā is praised in one strophe as the embodiment of love, but in the next, she is the goddess who 'takes away the young man in his prime/ She removes the young girl from her bed-chamber...'. Her title, 'Lady', as we shall see, was applied later in Zoroastrian and Arm. texts to Anāhitā. In ca. 1700 B.C., the Elamite king Kuter-Nahhunte captured the statue of the goddess of Uruk and bore it off to Susa, where it remained until Aššurbanipal recovered it in 646 B.C. The cult of the goddess continued to flourish, of course, in Mesopotamia, and the Persians probably adopted it from the conquered Elamites; under the Achaemenians, army and administration must have spread the cult to eastern Iran, for in later centuries it is abundantly attested there.

According to II Maccabees I.13, the Seleucid king Antiochus IV (mid-second century B.C.) sacked the temple of Nanaia in Persis (LXX Gk. Nanaia hieros; Arm. tačar Naneay--Naneay is the gen. sg. of Nane): evidence that the cult of the goddess persisted there. Theophoric names such as Bathnania, Mekatnanaia and Baribonnaia are attested from Hellenistic Mesopotamia. In the fourth century A.D., the Sasanian king Šābuhr II commanded a general named Mučain or Mušīn, a recent convert to Christianity, to worship the Sun, Moon, fire, Zeus, Bel, Nebo and Nanāi 'the great goddess of all the world'. The name of the general is probably Arab, so it is possible that Šābuhr was referring to the
gods of pagan Mesopotamia rather than to Ir. yazatas. The Sasanians were not, in general, concerned by the conversion of a non-Iranian from one alien religion to another, however, so perhaps it was the important rank of the convert in this case that troubled the king. In the same century, reference is made to a Mesopotamian settlement named 'Ninety' after ninety families of the southern district of Mesene who had emigrated with their idol Nanai; about a century later, in A.D. 484, a Nestorian Christian, Nanai of Prat, presided over the Nestorian Council of Beth Lapat; apparently, the fact that Nanai was a female divinity did not prevent men from bearing her name.

In the Parthian period, Nana was widely venerated. An image of Artemis in Greek dress from Palmyra is labelled NNV *Nanai, and an inscription on an ostraca from Nisa, the heart of the Arsacid kingdom, reads: (1) ŠNT 159 (2) MW 'yzny (3) Mnystukan 'Year 159 (2) from the temple (3) *Nanaistānakān'. The last word of the inscription appears to mean 'of the place of Nanai'; the Pth. adjectival ending -akan borrowed by Arm. is used similarly with the name of a yazata and the word mehean 'temple' to denote a temple of that yazata, as we have seen in our discussions of Aramazd and Vahagn; the toponymic suffix -stan, also borrowed by Arm., is used in that language to describe mainly large districts or countries (e.g., Hayastan 'Armenia'), but it can be used also to describe far more limited aggregates (e.g., gerd-a-stan 'household'). In Ir., -stān may refer to a country or a single locus, e.g., OP *Bagastāna, modern Behistun. The Pth. adjective may refer, therefore, either to a temple estate or an entire province, cf. Anætica in Armenia, below, or it may be the name of a temple alone. We are inclined to regard the word as descriptive of a temple estate at least, for the ostraca from Nisa are records mainly of the accounts of vineyards, some of which belonged to very large estates.

The cult of Nana was prominent farther east. A four-armed goddess seated on a lion or lion-shaped throne is found portrayed at Usrushana, and on a silver dish from Chorasmia. In Sogdian, the name of the goddess is found as nny *Nanai, and the theophoric names nny-bṭk *Nanai-vandak 'servant of Nanai', nny-šṭ *Nanai-šāt 'given by Nanai', and nny-šr *Nanai-šāvar 'gift of Nanai' are attested in a group of documents called the 'Sogdian Ancient Letters', dated to ca A.D. 311;
the authors of the letters seem to have been worshipers of Nanai and to have believed in their native Old Iranian religion. Nanai was the city goddess of Panjikant, and was called 'the Lady' (Sgd. Nανα 'Nan(a) the Lady'). In a fresco from that city is shown a scene of mourning over a dead youth, probably Siyavax̄. The wall-painting, much restored, has been dated to the seventh-eighth centuries A.D. In a Manichaean text, preserved, unfortunately, only in very fragmentary form, a scene of terrible grief and mourning is described: '...purifying...without delay...he dismounts, and there take place spilling of blood, killing of horses, laceration of faces, and taking (= cutting off?) of ears?'. And the lady Nan(a), accompanied by her women, walks on to the bridge, the smash the vessels, loud they call out, they weep, tear (their garments), pull out (their hairs), and throw themselves to the ground. There seems little doubt that the fresco and the text refer to the same event: the mourning of Nana over her dead son-lover. Henning tentatively suggested that the latter be identified as a mysterious figure named Küghūne who appears just before the scene in the Manichaean fragment, and is called also 'son of Ahriman'; the Manichaean would have frowned on the wild and destructive ceremonies described, and may have sought merely to calumniate Küghūne. In contrast to this vivid tristia is a terracotta statuette of a woman holding a pomegranate, with a little boy standing to her left; the piece is dated to the second-fourth centuries A.D. and comes from the territory of ancient Sogdia. Terracotta figurines of a goddess standing alone are common in Sogdia, but this type is rare, and it is therefore suggested that it was produced from a Parthian model, but it is clear at least that it must represent Nana (cf. the pomegranate, above) and the young Attis, before his tragic self-mutilation and death.

A terracotta statuette of a mother suckling a child—presumably Nana and Attis—was found at Koy Krylgan Kala in Chorasmia; the same scene is shown on a medallion of greenish glass mounted in silver with a ring at the top for a neck-chain, from Balalyk Tepe, also in Chorasmia. Nana is found also on coins of the Kušano-Bactrian kings Kaniška and Huviška: she appears on the reverse, facing forward and seated on a lion which is standing or walking to the left. There is a crescent over her shoulders, with the horns pointing upwards to
either side. The inscription on the coin reads ΜΟΝΑ ΣΑΟ in Bactrian Greek script; it has been suggested that the letter S was written mistakenly in place of the Bactrian letter san ( الرجل). The second word would then be reconstructed as ΣΑΟ 'king'\(^25\) (or, in this case, 'queen', presumably). The crescent probably represents the planet Venus, with which the Mesopotamian goddesses Nana and Ištar (Astarte) both were associated.\(^26\)

According to MX II.14, Artaxias I established the statue of the goddess Athēna at T'īl, in the province of Ekeleac\(^2\) (Acilisene)—within a short distance from the shrine of Anahit at Erēz (Eriza), as we shall see below.\(^27\) In his description of the campaign of Gregory to destroy the meheans of Armenia, Agathangelos mentions the temples of Anahit and Nanē together: Εὐ πα γετάκορι καὶ σαμανακίκις γαώριν Εκελέακ\(^2\) έλενορ. Εὐ and ερεώελα διώκεν ει με ει μεχενακάκις Ηᾶυοκ\(^2\) τ'ηγαωροκάκις, ει τελίς παταμάκακις, γ'Αμαθακάκις μεθενίν, γ'Ερέζων άωανί: άρι κ' άκαμ' αθόνανωρ σαρωρ ζάδων διώκεν διώκεν μαρτνοκάκις ειν, ει μεκαγοκάκις βαρβάροις ζηλίνσε ήΰζεποκάκις έκακάκις άανέκ. Ουκ' Π' ακστάκακις έδεάλκακις, εϊ κτάνπ εν νοκά κορκαναλ βαρη-αβερη περίσποκάκις έκακάκις. Εϊ ορκ' διέθαλε διαίλε έιν ζγαστακάκις ζαρωρκάκις, σουβα Αγίαρ τ'ηγαωρωμάν έρενορ, π' άαρέις ζοσκή πατκάρα Άμαθακάκις καναςκ' άι δικάκ'ν: εϊ σουμένων, ιτάλεν άκανδεάλ νατνάκακις, εϊ ζοσκάκις ει μεχενακάκις άωαρ άωαρ. Εϊ αντι κτάνπ ογνύ λαγηκάκις ανκάκακις, εϊ άκανδεάλ άανακάκις έμεθακάκις δαστην Άραμαζάναν ι τ'ίλην άωανί. Εϊ ζεργάκις έρκοκ'ν μεχενακάκις άωαρεάζ σαρωρ ζάδων ει νούσπ ανάκακις σούβ εκελέκακ'ών άιστυκάκ' ήτιον άωλακ' άανέρορ. 'Ανδ' αντί κτάνπ, ογνύ Καρτάκης άωαρ άωαρ. Η Άραμαζάνα κατά τέκτιν ανα ογνύ ανα ογνύ Καρτάκης άωαρ ανα ογνύ Καρτάκης άωαρ.
destroyed the temple of Nanē, daughter of Aramazd, in the village of T'ēl. They pillaged and gathered the treasures of both temples and left them, together with the places, as a gift to the service of the holy Church of God' (Agath. 786).

In the Greek text of Agath., Nanē is called Athēna, as in Xorenacī above. Armed resistance to Gregory and his forces has been discussed in the previous chapter, and is seen to have been in keeping with Zoroastrian principle. We have seen also how Ani, T'ordan and Astišat became Christian holy places; the same transformation was effected at T'ēl.

Aristakēs, the son of St Gregory, was buried there (MX II.91; FōB III.2), as was St Nersēs the Great in the mid-fourth century (MX III.38). The reference to Nanē as 'daughter of Aramazd' need not be taken literally, and may be compared to Yt. 17.16, dedicated to the yazata Āsi (Phil. Ard), where the goddess is addressed thus: pīta tē yō Ahurō Mazdā 'thy father is Ahura Mazdā'. Although the hymn is late, Āsi is mentioned in the Gāthās; as a goddess, Āsi represents fortune, prosperity and fecundity, like her Sanskrit counterpart (and cognate) Śrī, who was at times identified with the earth.29 The two divinities, Āsi and Nanē, may share certain aspects, and perhaps also the appellations cited. In both cases, the words 'daughter' and 'father' would be allegorical in a Zoroastrian context. But in the legend of Cybele and Attis, the filial and maternal relationships are emphatically literal, and the Arm. worshippers of Nanē, like the other peoples who worshipped the Mother Goddess and her divine Child under various names, may have believed that Nanē was daughter indeed of the supreme God.

As we shall see presently, there were numerous shrines in Armenia to Anahit, but the temple of Nanē at T'ēl is the only centre of the cult of the goddess which is attested with certainty. At the foot of Mt Arnos in Vaspurakan, however, is Nanenic for 'Valley of *Nane-ank', and it has been suggested that the valley was named after a temple of Nanē which may once have stood there. A Christian church was built at the site, and, as we have seen, shrines of the new faith were commonly established in the holy places of the elder religion.

A large number of terracotta figurines have been discovered at Artaxata and Armawir which depict a lady enthroned. She is dressed in robes, and a veil suspended from the top of her high tiara falls evenly
on both sides to the base of the pedestal of the statuette. To her left, with his back to the viewer and his head at her left breast, stands a little naked boy.\textsuperscript{31} There is no doubt that these figurines served as cult statues of the Great Mother and the child Attis. It is known that the tragic legend of the pair was told in Armenia as the epic of Ara and Šamiram, referred to above, yet it is not known whether the Mother Goddess was called Šamiram; it is, indeed, unlikely that a lady portrayed in legend as the queen of a hostile foreign state would have been accorded reverence. It is more likely that the goddess was called by the name of Nanē. For although it appears that the cult of Nana was widespread throughout the Iranian lands, we shall see that Anāhitā was the principal female divinity who absorbed such functions as Zoroastrian values would permit her to assimilate. The legend of the mutilated son and the wild rites of mourning performed at his death are, obviously, at variance with Zoroastrian ethical principles, which forbid self-mutilation and excessive grief; for a Zoroastrian, his body is part of the good creation of Ahura Mazda and must not be abused thus, and in bereavement one is bidden to be steadfast and calm, resolute as a good soldier in facing Ahriman-created death. Nana would therefore remain as the great Mother Goddess of the legend, worshipped in Armenia and Parthia, but ignored in Zoroastrian texts. Anāhitā, officially acknowledged by throne and priesthood alike, could not be regarded as the Great Mother entirely, for the reasons we have enumerated, although certain aspects of the divinity were absorbed into her cult.

It was seen above that Nana was often accompanied by a lion or other animal or pair of animals. A coin tentatively ascribed by Babelon to a king of Sophene or Commagene of the second century B.C., shows on the reverse a goddess seated frontally above and between two winged, leonine creatures seated on their haunches and facing away from her.\textsuperscript{32} It is likely that the figure represented is Nanē. An inscription of one Julia Amnia, who claims she is the daughter of king Tigranes of Armenia, is found on an altar dedicated to the Magna Mater at Falcrii, north of Rome, and is dated to the first half of the first century A.D.,\textsuperscript{33} it is possible that the Tigranes referred to was one of the Roman candidates placed on the Arm. throne.\textsuperscript{34}
Nane and her young son may be depicted also in bas-relief at Čnk-us, a village near the bend of the Euphrates south of Xarberd—at the other, southwestern edge of Armenia from Artaxata, where the mother-and-child figurines were unearthed. According to Gairik Gеorganе, a native of the town, there is a little bridge over a valley to the east of Čnk-us Bridge. Near the little bridge is a carving in rock (Arm. k'areken kertuack) depicting a woman with a babe in arms. The people of the Arm. villages of Čnk-us and Atiš explained that the child had defecated and its mother, wanting to wipe it clean and finding no rag, committed the unpardonable sin of using a piece of bread instead, whereupon she and the infant were turned to stone by God.

The goddess Nane may be remembered in an Arm. tale recorded by the ethnographer G. Serenc at Van in the nineteenth century. Love between Christian and Muslim is a common theme in the region, providing numerous opportunities for narrative complexity and often, also, a tragic dénouement. In the Arm. versions, the Christian boy is usually called Yovhannes and the Muslim girl is Aysha. The love story is attested in verse as early as the fourteenth century, attributed variously to Yovhannes of T'lkuran or Yovhannes of Erzana (Tk. Erzincan). In the prose version recorded at Van, Yovhannes falls in love with a huri called Salcum Paşa who has disguised herself as a Turkish girl. The couple, hounded by their respective communities, take refuge with an obliging hermit who resembles somewhat the Friar Laurence of Shakespeare. The girl, who has been poisoned by her mother, appears to the hermit as a fiery being, whom he addresses at 'my Nane'; when he asks her to take a seat, she falls down dead. Later, she rises from the dead; the boy arrives, they both die, light shines over them, and the angel Gabriel bids the monk dig them a holy grave. The word nane in Armeno-Turkish dialect means the same as English 'mama' (as, indeed, did presumably the name Nana originally), so the hermit may not necessarily be calling the huri by the name of a divinity, although the supernatural nature of the huri and the circumstances of the story (love and death) might be seen to support such a contention.

We turn our attention now to Anāhitā (Arm. Anahit), a divinity who, as will be seen, shared many of the attributes of the Great Mother, Nana. It has been suggested that the western Iranians early had learnt to
sacrifice to an alien goddess, presumably Assyro-Babylonian Ištar, the Lady of the planet Venus, and of love and war, whose cult, as we remarked above, came to embrace that of various mother-goddesses. The Persians, according to Herodotus (1.131), sacrificed to the 'Heavenly Goddess', whom later Greek writers called Aphrodite Anaitis or simply Anaitis. The latter name was explained by Bartholomae as OP.

*anā-hitiš 'undefiled', the name the Persians gave to the planet Venus. This form, with long -i-, might explain why the Phil. Anānīda and NP. Nāhīd contain the long vowel where Av. Anāhītā does not. The latter is the fem. of an adjective meaning 'immaculate', an epithet used also for the yazatas Mithra and Haoma. *Anāhītiš was then apparently assimilated, through the epithet anāhītā, to the river-goddess *Harahvati (Arēdvī Sūrā), the hypothetical OIr. form postulated in part from the Skt. name Sarasvatī, a goddess of the waters. The name is preserved in the Av. toponym Haraxvaitī, Gk. Arachosia, a region with many rivers and lakes in eastern Iran (where the original Sarasvatī probably was). The word arēdvī, attested only here, probably is an adjective meaning 'moist, humid', and sūrā is a common epithet meaning 'strong, mighty'.

*Harahvati was identified with *Anāhītiš, it seems, because the former, as a river-goddess, was worshipped also for fertility. The name *Harahvati seems gradually to have been forgotten, and the goddess Arēdvī Sūrā Anāhītā came to be accorded the place of *Vouruna Apam Napāt 'Vouruna the Son of the Waters', the third Ahura 'Lord' of the Zoroastrian pantheon (the other two being Ahura Mazda and Mithra). Although Apam Napāt continues to be invoked in Zoroastrian prayers—the hypothetical proper name of the god, *Vouruna, cf. Skt. Varūna, having been lost—it is Anāhītā who was regarded among the people as the preeminent divinity of the waters and of fertility. The early Achaemenian kings invoked the supreme God, Ahura Mazda, alone in their inscriptions, but Artaxerxes II (405-369 B.C.) mentions the triad of Ahura Mazda, Anāhītā and Mithra.

Anāhītā is invoked for fertility, possessions, and victory. Although she is principally the goddess of waters—Yt. V, dedicated to her, is called either by a MR. form of her two epithets, Ardvīsūr, or Ābān 'of the waters'—she is also a hamkār 'fellow-worker' of the amēsa spēnta Spēnta Ārmaiti, guardian of the earth. As we shall see,
the Arm. Spandaramet was a deity of fertility, and the association of the two yazatas may reflect not only the natural alliance of earth and waters, but also the chthonian, fecundative aspects of the earth-goddess adopted by the early Western Iranians. It is recalled also that the Great Mother was queen of waters and lands alike.

Anahita's particular title in MP. was bānu 'lady'; the title is found in Sasanian inscriptions, in MP. portions of the Zoroastrian liturgy where Ardvisûr is addressed; and in modern Persian usage, both Zoroastrian and Islamic, it has been demonstrated that the title bānu used in the names of certain shrines represents Anahita, even where the name of the yazata proper has been forgotten. It was noted that the title 'Lady' was applied to Nana, both in Mesopotamia and in eastern Iran. The particular sacrifice offered to Anahita, in ancient and modern times alike, is the cow or bull, perhaps because of the connection of the animal with fertility.

No single Greek goddess could be found as the exact equivalent of Anahita. Thus, according to Plutarch (Artaxerxes, IV), the Persian king Artaxerxes II visited at Pasargadae a temple to a warlike goddess likened to Athêna; while Clement of Alexandriâ quotes Berosus to the effect that the same king sponsored at Babylon and other cities the cult of Aphrodite-Anaitis. In the divine triad of the Frāsdāra inscription in Greek from Persepolis (cited in Chs. 5, 6 above), the female deity is called Artemis-Athêna. In these various cases, it is most likely Anahita who is referred to; one recalls that Nana was identified mainly with Athêna. In Asia Minor, the shrine of Zela (Gk. Zêlitis: Strabo, Geog. XII.3) built on a hill named after Semiramis (cf. the legend of Ara and Šamiram noted above), was dedicated by the Achaemenians to the worship of Anahita, called by Tacitus (Annales III.63) the 'Persian Diana'. In Yt. 5.21, Anahita is worshipped at the foot of Mt Harâ, which bears the constant epithet bērôzaiti 'the Lofty'. In an inscription from Ortaköy, Cappadocia, near Nigde, on an altar, three hieroûloi invoke in Greek Agathêi Tykhêi Theâi Megistêi Anaeitidi Barzokharal 'Good Fortune, Great Goddess Anaeitis Barzoxarâ.' The latter cult epithet, from OIr., meaning 'of Lofty Harâ', indicates the strongly Zor. character of her cult in Asia Minor, together with the tenacity of local beliefs and traditions.
There was a great and ornate temple presumably to Anāhitā in the Parthian period at Kangāvar in Kurdistan, described by Isidore of Charax as a temple of Artemis; in the Sasanian period, the principal temple of the dynasty was Ādur Anāhid at Staxr, where the forebears of Ardašir I had served as priests. Both temples probably contained images of the goddess originally, but a fire was installed in the place of the idol at Staxr, according to Mas'ūdī, generations before Ardašir's rise to power. Unusual features of cult, appropriate, though, to a war-like goddess, are recorded for the Zoroastrian times: the severed heads of enemies were hung from its walls. It is likely that the shrine at Kangāvar retained its effigy of Anāhitā until the end of the Arsacid dynasty; the image was probably splendidly adorned, and it has been proposed that the description of the goddess in the Ardvišūr Yasht is based upon an actual cult statue of the late Achaemenian period. Although the Sasanians vigorously suppressed the worship of images in the Zoroastrian religion, they were not averse to depicting the yazatas in bas-reliefs, as we have seen in the case of Ohrmazd, and a woman, probably the goddess Anāhid, is shown in the relief of Tāq-i Bostān presenting a crown to Kusrō II (late sixth-early seventh century). It has been suggested that female figures on Sasanian silver plates and vases may represent Anāhitā.

References in Arm. texts to the goddess Anahit are plentiful, and the principal ones from the major Classical sources will be cited forthwith; we shall then discuss the significance of the information, in relation both to Ir. Anāhitā and to the Christian Tirnaveur 'Mother of the Lord', the Virgin Mary, who absorbed aspects of the goddess in the beliefs of Arm. Christians. Towards the beginning of the History of Agathangelos, the scene is set thus for the ensuing conflict between the old faith and Christianity: Yaranin amin Trdatay ark'ayut'cena Hayoc mecac'c, xalac'cin eskin hasin yEkeleec'c gauve, i gewin Brizay, i meheann Anahatan, zi and zhos matusc en: ew ibrew katarac'cin zgoron anarzanuc'cena ijin banaker'c an ar ap'n getoy nav Gayzkaoc'en. Ibrew eskin emut i xorvan andr ew yent'ris basmecc'aw, ew ibrew end ginis mtihrman et t'agaworn Grigorí, zi psaks ew t'aw ostas cařoc'c nuers tarc'i bagin Anahatkan patkerin. Ayl na oc'c ainoyr yanja paštawantar linel dic'cč erkrpaguc'cena (Agath. 48-49). 'In the first year of the reign of
Trdat of Greater Armenia, they set off, journeyed, and arrived in the province of Ekelec, at the village of Erêz, at the temple of Anahit, in order to offer sacrifices there, and when they had completed the unworthy deed they descended and pitched camp on the banks of the river called the Lycus. When the king came into the tent for dinner, and when they had drunk their wine, he commanded that Grigor take wreaths and leafy branches of trees as gifts to the shrine of the statue of Anahit. But he (Gregory) did not undertake to participate in the worship of the god. The mediaeval theologian Yovhannes of Erznka may be recalling this scene in his Commentary on Matthew (Meknut in S. Avetaranin, or ēst Mat Cteosi, Constantinople, 1825, 444): Ev darjeal yet moacn mo rac cons ekeal arar cons znunks saart awors i paston kroc n divac jonên. 'And again by their sins coming to forgetfulness of the Creator, they dedicated leafy boughs to the worship of the idols of demons.' The enraged king thereupon threatens Gregory with death, et s oc s armc cons yanjn dic n pastewn matuc anel, manawand ayn mec Anahit tikno js, or ē p aik azgis mercy ev kec uc i c or, zor ev t agawork amenayn patuen, manawand t agaworn Yunac: or ē mayr amenayn zagut ceanc, barerar amenayn mardken bnt e en, ev onund ē mecin arin Aramazday 'if you do not undertake to offer worship to the gods, particularly to this great Lady Anahit, who is the glory and giver of life of our people, whom all kings honour, particularly the king of the Greeks; who is the mother of all chastity, the benefactor of all mankind; and who is the child of the great, manly Aramazd,' (Agath. 53). Grigor responds coolly that the one called Anahit tikin 'Anahit the Lady' (Agath. 59) may have been a historical personage deified in remote ages, but assuredly no divine being. The king again reproaches Gregory for scorning the gods, particularly Aramazd and zmecc Anahit, orov keay ev zkendanuc iwn krê erkirs Hayoc 'the great Anahit, by whom this land of Armenia lives and thrives' (Agath. 68).

In an address to his nation, Trdat proclaims Ojocn hasal ev šinuc iwn dic n awmakanuc eamb, liut iwn parartuc ean yarocn Aramazday, xamakaluc iwn Anahit tikno js, ev k a juc iwn hasc E jez i k a jen Yahagnē amenayn Hayoc c aixarthis 'May health and prosperity come to you and to all this country of Armenia by the help of the gods, rich fullness from manly Aramazd, providence from Anahit the Lady, and bravery
from brave Vahagn' (Agath. 127). According to Lucian, De Dea Syria, Arms. and Medes travelled to Hierapolis in Syria to adorn with jewels the statue of 'Hera', i.e., Astarte. It is possible that they regarded the goddess as their own Anahit, whose name is used to translate that of Hera in the Arm. version of the Alexander Romance of Pseudo-Callisthenes. At the triumph of Christianity, Grigor travels around Armenia, destroying the pagan temples. At Artaxata, he levels the temple of Tir and the shrines of the god Anahit' of the Anahitakan meheann 'temple of Anahit' (Agath. 778, 779). The temple at Erêz is pillaged next (Agath. 786, see above), then the complex of temples at Astisat with its shrines of the Oskemayr 'Golden Mother', Astãik and Vahagn (Agath. 809). It is generally accepted that Oskemayr was a cultic epithet of Anahit.

Movses Xorenac refers to Anahit only as Artemis, and never by her Ir.-Arm. name, but the identity of the goddess is nowhere in doubt. Her statue is said to have been erected at Armawir (MX II.12), moved from there to the holy city of Bagaran, and finally to Artašat (II.44); the foundation of her shrine at Erêz is attributed to Tigran (II.14), and the dying Artašes is portrayed as asking the idols there for bûskut 'healing and much life' (II.50). The request of the king corresponds to the life-giving attributes and caring providence ascribed to Anahit in the narrative of Agath.

Other references to Anahit concern her cult and temples. The temple at Erêz (Gk. Eriza) in Ekeleac (Gk. Acilisene) was particularly well known to Classical writers; Cassius Dio (36.48, 53.5) calls the entire region of Acilisene Anaitis khôra, and Pliny (Nat. Hist., V.34, 83) calls it Anaetica, indicating that the temple possessed very extensive estates. According to Plutarch (Lucullus, 24), cattle branded with the symbols of the goddess: a torch or half-moon, grazed on the temple lands, and it may be assumed that these were intended for sacrifice. One recalls that cows in particular were offered to Anāhitē, and, according to one Arm. MS., Trdat yârajin ami et nuers Anahitay kaputak erin, i gezn Eriza 'On the first of the year Trdat gave offerings to Anahit: a blue heifer in the village of Erêz.' Strabo (Geog., XI.14.16), who claims that Anahit is the most popular of the Persian divinities worshipped by the Armenians, adds that the virgin daughters
of Arm. noblemen (Gk. epiphaneastatoi) become temple prostitutes at Eriza.
The practice of such ritual prostitution was widely attested in Asia
Minor and elsewhere in the ancient world, and such a practice at Erızı
may have provoked the seventh-century writer Vrt'cences k'ert'cək 'the Poet'
to decry Anahit ev pحقق c Lewnc c iwr ev patirk'c 'Anahit and her lewdnesses
and falsehoods'. Such practices would be repugnant to orthodox Zoro-
astrians and are not mentioned in the Arm. texts, whose authors, one may
be certain, would have derived the fullest possible polemical advantage,
had they known of them. It is difficult also to reconcile temple prostitu-
tion with the cult of a goddess called by Agath. 'the mother of all
chastity' and equated most frequently by Arm. writers (and exclusively,
by Xorenac'i) with Artemis, that most chaste of Greek divinities.

Several other temples of Anahit may have existed in Armenia. The
remnants of the foundation of a monumental stone building in the style
of the building at Gəmni (on which see Ch. 8) have been unearthed be-
neath the great church of St Hrip'sime at Vəlarsəpat (Ejmiacin). The
saint, one of the most prominent of the Arm. Church, was a virgin nun
and companion of St Gregory, and it has been suggested that the church
bearing her name was erected where the temple of a pagan goddess had
stood earlier. During the excavations at Satala (Arm. Satał, Tk.
Sadağ, Saddak) on the Kelkit river, north of Erzincan, late in the nine-
teenth century, a bronze head of the Gk. Aphrodite type was unearthed.
The piece, dated to the second-first century B.C., is 36 cm high and
93 cm in circumference, of very fine workmanship, and was cast perhaps
in western Asia Minor. Alfred Biliotti, who spent nine days at the
site in 1874, reported rough stone walls 18 feet high, with traces of
ashlar facing, and found a sculpture which he identified as a winged
victory. The excavations of Satala yielded also bronze legs which had
belonged to a lifesize sculpture of a horse, and a brick was found
stamped LEG XV NP I. This is undoubtedly an abbreviation of the name
of the Roman Legion XV Apollinaris, which was stationed in Armenia dur-
ing the campaign of Corbulo in A.D. 62. There was a large Christian
community at Satala in the fourth century; the bishop of the town at-
tended the ecumenical Council of Nicaea in 325, and St Basil of Caesarea
visited the community in 372. Armenian scholars have sought to iden-
tify the bronze head as having belonged to a cult statue of Anahit,
and the town appears to have been sufficiently important in ancient
times to have been a religious centre, although there is nothing to sug-
gest that the shrine was Arm. or Zor. It may have been frequented
though, like the more distant shrine at Hierapolis mentioned above.

On the slopes of Mt Ararat there is a spring called Anahtakan
ábbwr 'the spring of Anahit' to this day. The origin of the fountain
is ascribed in popular tradition to St Jacob of Nisibis, who, as we have
seen, climbed a Mt Ararat far to the south, in Gordyene. The attribu-
tion is doubly spurious, in that a spring bearing the name of a Zoroas-
trian yazata cannot have had anything to do with a pious Syrian saint,
and probably was named before his quest for the lost Ark of Noah. Arms.
believe that the spring cures barrenness and prevents locusts from eat-
ing crops;67 both properties accord well with the characteristics
of life-giving protection and fecundity ascribed to the goddess in texts.

In a mediaeval account of the apostolic mission of Sts Thaddeus and
Bartholomew in Armenia, mention is made of a place in the district of
Anjewac k called Darbnac KCar 'Blacksmiths' Rock' where there was an
incessant din, the sound of blacksmiths striking anvils. St Bartholomew
halaceac zdarbinsn zgorcöneys cCarin, ew zkušen pšreac or yanun
Anahtay ėr 'drove out the blacksmiths, the ministers of evil, and shat-
tered the idols, which were in the name of Anahit.68 Blacksmiths, as
we shall see, struck their anvils to strengthen the bonds of the wicked
Artawazd, imprisoned in Mt Ararat, and in Iran and Armenia blacksmiths
and the iron they forged represented the struggle of good against evil.69
It is possible, therefore, that Darbnac KCar had been the site of a
Zoroastrian shrine of Anahit; the Christian Hogwoc Vank 'Monastery
of All Souls' was founded on the site.70

Pawstos mentions a Greek hermit named EpipC'an (i.e., Epiphanios),
who lived i meci lerinn i težl dioc žor koč'en at c'or Nahatay 'in the
great mountain, in the place of the gods, which they call the Throne of
*Nahat' (P'B V.25). It is not known where this mountain was, although
at the death of St Nersés the Great, we are told by Pawstos that
Epiphanios and a Syrian monk named Sažita71 beheld a vision and hastened
to T'ël in Ekešec, where Nersés had just been buried. It is possible,
therefore, that the mountain called At c'or Nahatay was not far from Erëz,
the site of the temple of Anahit. The name *Nahat, gen. Nahatay, is
attested only here, but from the reference of P'awstos to the gods and the NP. form Nāhīd we may assume it is a form of the name Anahīt. One notes also the cult epithet 'barzoxara' of the goddess; it would have been appropriate to call a mountain after Anahīt 'of Lofty Harā'. As was noted earlier, the NP. form and its Phl. predecessor retain the long vowel -ī- of the hypothetical form *Anāhītīs. In the Arm. case, however, the replacement of -ī- in (A)nahīt by -a- probably indicates that the name of the goddess was subjected to internal development in Arm., as evidenced by the intrusive -a-, cf. loan-words xoraxet, Sandaramet, Spandaramet et al. 72 Arm. -i- is a weak vowel in final syllables, cf. Anahit, gen. sg. Anahītay, and the form attested in P'awstos may conceivably have evolved from the gen. sg. form or from the adj. anahta-kan, both of which are attested far more often, as we have seen, than the simple nom. sg., in references to the cult of the goddess and her temples.

In the ancient Arm. calendar recorded by Anania of Širak, the 7th month and the 19th day of the month were named after Anahīt; the same writer, in a list of the planets, equates Gr. Ap'o̱róditē (Aphrodītē; i.e., Venus), Arm. Lusaber (lit. 'Light-bringer') and 'Persian' Anahīt. 73 As we have seen in the previous chapter, the Arms. tended to identify the planet with Astīk, but the crescent or half-moon on the heifers of the goddess in Armenia probably reflect the Ir. identification of the goddess with Venus, the only planet besides the moon whose phases are visible from Earth with the naked eye. We shall see that this symbol, the sacrifice of cows, the title 'Lady', and the characteristic of life-giving fecundity, were all transferred from Anahīt to the Holy Mother of God, Mary, by Arm. Christians.

The mediaeval cleric Anania vardapet wrote: Avarhneal es du lusanker a'rاغast, or škeltas ox nazanawk zawrac'ar i veray patkerac'ın drawšeloc', eu hareal xorzakec'er znmai pacuans divanu'ēr ew k'ažaper' pancansc' Anahitn tiknoj 'Blessed are you, canopy etched in light, who have triumphed in magnificent delicacy over graven images, and have stricken and destroyed the vain, demonolatrous pomp and overweening boasts of Anahīt the Lady.' 74 The Arm. Feast of the Transfiguration, Vardavar, celebrated on the seventh Sunday after Pentecost, is a holiday of the waters, and, as such, retains aspects of the cult of Anahīt, who,
as we have seen, is preeminently the yazata of the waters in later Zoroastrianism. In Dersim until recent times, calves born with a half-moon or star on their foreheads (both, presumably, were regarded as symbols of Venus) were sacrificed on Vardavar, and offerings of flowers and branches were made to the Holy Mother of God (cf. Agath. 48-9, above); it was also believed by the inhabitants of the region that Anahit bathed on Vardavar morning where two rivers met—a similar legend exists concerning Astāk, as was seen in the previous chapter. 75

In Christian times, the Virgin Mary has been regarded by the Arms. as the saint who cures those afflicted with venereal disease, who are called Tiramōr xečere 'the poor ones of the Lord's mother'. The latter used to go for a cure to the Kajberunac Xat'un Tiramōr Vank 'Monastery of the Lady Mother of the Lord, of Kajberunik [province]' at the village of Aknanc near Arçes (on the NE shore of L. Van). 76 It is seen that the title of Anahit, 'lady' (Arm. tīkin), is now found as Armeno-Turkish xat'un, applied to the Virgin Mary. 77 St Barbara (Arm. Vaṙvaṙ), too, may have acquired these ancient characteristics of Anahit: there is a cave called Cakkevank ('Monastery of Flowers') in the side of the mountain named after Ara in Soviet Armenia (on Ara, cf. above). Until not long ago, women who were barren used to go to the cave on Vardavar and pray for fertility as they stood beneath the drops of water that trickle down from the roof of the cave. If the drops touched them, they believed St Vaṙvaṙ had consented to grant them their desire.

Amongst the Kurdish tribesmen of Dersim are many who still mark their loaves with the sign of the Cross and remember how their Armenian forebears, harried by their Muslim persecutors, had abandoned their farms, adopted the creed of Islām, and fled to join the armed Kurdish clans of the mountains. Many of these Kurds recalled traditions still more ancient, for they spoke of a Spring of Anahit whose water they called 'mother's milk'. When two parties were in conflict, they would be brought to drink from the spring, whereupon they acknowledged that they were brothers of the same mother, and the dispute was settled. 78

The Mirag clan, who still remembered the Arm. tongue, offered reverence to a shrine of Ana-yi Pil; 79 the Kurds called Anahit either Anahid or Ana, and the word pil is a form of NP. pīr 'old man, Islamic saint'. In Iran, various ancient Zoroastrian shrines were called those of Muslim
pîrs, in simple ignorance or perhaps as a camouflage against desecration. The Zor. shrines did not contain tombs, however, as many of the wholly Islamic pîr-shrines do. The Mirag clansmen persisted also in calling the pîr their 'great mother', preserving, as it seems, a usage even more ancient than the name or cult of Anahit herself, and one may justly marvel at the remarkable tenacity of this Zoroastrian cult in Armenia, informed in part by the ancient worship of the Mother Goddess of Anatolia, in surviving the successive depredations of the two great and militant faiths, Christianity and Islam. Anahit, the giver of life, herself lived on amongst her children, as the Great Mother and as the yazata of the curative and life-giving waters of the rivers and springs and of Vardavar.
Notes – Chapter 7


2. Ibid., 14-15; cf. also 54 fig. 19, pl. 38.

3. Ibid., 9-10, 24.

4. Ibid., 10.

5. M. J. Vermaseren, The Legend of Attis in Greek and Roman Art, Leiden, 1966, 10 and pl. 1.1. On the volume and diffusion of terra cotta cult statuettes in the classical world, see R. MacMullen, Paganism in the Roman Empire, New Haven, 1981, 42. The large number of these in Armenia would be typical.


7. On the legend of Ara and Šamiram, see Ch. 13; on the tradition according to which Semiramis killed her lovers after the sexual act, see Vermaseren, op. cit. n. 1, 16.


10. W. W. Tarn, Hellenistic Civilisation, London, 1941, 140. Nana may be depicted on a relief from Elam, where there was a temple to the goddess called by Gk. writers ta Azara (see W. B. Henning, 'The Monument and Inscriptions of Tang-i Sarvak,' Asia Major, 1952, 177).

11. See A. Christensen, L'Iran sous les Sassanides, Copenhagen, 1936, 152; and J. M. Fiey, 'Mαγειών, Général de Sapor II. Confesseur et Évêque,' Le Muséon, Louvain, 1971, esp. 447 n. 40.

12. N. Figulevskaya, Goroda Irana v rannem srednevekov'ye, Moscow-Leningrad, 1946, 45.


14. Ašârēn, Hānīb, IV, 18, deriving the Arm. name Nana from Latin Nonnus 'father', cites the name of an Assyrian deacon, Nana, who came to Arm. in the ninth century to refute the Chalcedonian heresy. In view of the Mesop. Nanai, cited above, it is more likely that Nana is similarly a theophoric name. We find Nana invoked in an Aramaic incantation text from Nippur, ca. A.D. 600 (G. Azarpay, 'Nanā, the Sumero-Akkadian Goddess of Transoxiana,'
JAOS 96, 1976, 537, and it is reasonable to assume that her cult, like that of the Moon god Sin of Harran, lasted into Islamic times. In the twelfth century in Arm. it is found also as the name of a woman (ibid., IV, 19). On the mixing of the gender of pagan deities, cf. the discussion of 'Demetr' in the preceding Ch.


17. Azarpay, op. cit., figs. 5, 6; B. N. Mukherjee, Nanā on Lion, Calcutta, 1969, 89 and pl. 47.


21. Sogdian Manichaean MS. M 539, second page, translated by W. B. Henning, 'The Murder of the Magi,' JRAS, 1944, 144. On the symbolism of the bridge, which in Arm. mythology appears to represent the transition from life to death, see Ch. 13.


23. V. A. Meshkeris, Koroplastika Sogda, Dushanbe, 1977, 23 & n. 34 (fig. 2.1).

24. Ibid., 5, 25.


27. The word Tcil probably comes from a Semitic word for 'hill', cf. Heb. tēl; the name of the Arm. capital city, Duin, similarly, comes from a MP. word for 'hill' (see MX III.9 and V. Minorsky, 'Sur le nom de Duin,' Iranica, Tehrān, 1964, 1). On Tcil, see J. Markwart, Südarmenien und die Tigrisquellen, Vienna, 1930, 177-83 n. 1. A number of Arm. towns bear the name Tcil or derivatives of it, making it likely that the word is a generic term for
a topographical feature. G. Halajyan, Dersimi Hayeri
azzagru't'yunem, Erevan, 1973, 80-81, explains the names of the
villages Tcil and TC1-ak (with diminutive ending) in Dersim
province as Arm. hoablur 'hill of earth'.


29. Bailey, Zor. Probs., 68.


31. See E. N. Arak'elyan, Aknarkner hin Hayastani arvesti patmut'yan,
Erevan, 1976, pls. 84-86; G. A. Tiracyan, I. A. Karapetyan,
'Armaviri 1974-6 t'cpezhumner,' P-bH 3, 1981, 288, fig. 5.

32. E. Babelon, Catalogue des Monnaies Grecques de la Bibliothèque
Nationale: Les Rois de Syrie, d'Arménie et de Commagène, Paris,
1890, cxviii, fig. 40.

33. Vermaseren, op. cit. n. 1, 68, citing Corpus Inscr. Lat., XI,
3080.

34. Cf. Tacitus, Annals, VI.40.

35. Arm. kertuack', from kert-em 'I build', could mean a building, a
statue in the round, or a carving. We have chosen the latter
meaning, for a bas-relief would have been afforded better protec-
tion from the elements. Yet a statue cannot be ruled out en-
tirely, for it is recalled that the monoliths of Nemrut Dağ stand
only a short distance away.

Persian Beliefs and Customs, tr. C. A. Messner, New Haven, Human
Relations Area Files, 1954, 183, cites an Iranian tale which is
evidently of the same type: A woman cleaned her child's bottom
with some dough from a mixing bowl. The Prophet Muhammad,
angered by her disrespect for bread, overturned the bowl on her
head. It became a shell, and she, the first tortoise.

37. G. Serenc, Vanay sag, II, Tiflis, 1892, 112-17, repr. in
A. Mnaccakan, Haykakan mjinadaryan zoovrodakan erger, Erevan,
1956, 191-5.

38. See Mnaccakan, op. cit., 183-90; E. Pivazyan, ed., Hovhannes
T'kurancci, Taler, Erevan, 1960, appendix V; and A. Srapyan,
ed., Hovhannes Erznkac'i, Erevan, 1958, III.


40. Yt. X.88; cf. AHM, 115-6.

41. M. Boyce reconstructed the early history of the cult of Anahita
42. The connection of the yazata with the waters is noted also in the proper name Āb-Nāhīfd (āb 'water'), found in the NP. text of the Pth. epic of Vīs and Rāmīn, 9.5, and in the form Ūw-Nāhīr amongst the Zoroastrians of the Yazd area today (M. Boyce, 'Bībī Shahrbānū and the Lady of Fārs,' BSOS, 30, 1967, 1, 39; Stronghold, 250 n. 20).


44. Boyce, 'Bībī Shahrbānū...', op. cit., 36-7. In Sasanian inscriptions the ideogram MLcT, read as bānūg 'Lady' is used. The Sasanian queen is not called bānūg, although the title was used, it seems, under the Arsacids: she is called instead bāmbiš. The latter word is used in Arm. as a title and, possibly, as a proper name: Sebōs calls Sirin bāmbiš tīknac tikīn 'queen, lady of ladies'; PoB names the wife of Athenaogenes, who is also sister of the Arm. king Tirān, Bāmbiš, but in the latter case the title may have been mistaken for a proper name (see Arm. Cr., 32, 116-17; HAn1B, I, 378). The native word tīkn 'lady' was used both for a queen and as the epithet of Anāhit (see below), in keeping with the Arsacid practice in Iran.

45. See Boyce, 'Bībī Shahrbānū...', op. cit., 42-3 and Hist. Zor., I, 173.


49. Boyce, Zoroastrians, 89; Schippmann, op. cit., 298-308.

50. Schippmann, 200-203; Boyce, Zors., 101, 106.


52. F. Windischmann, Die persische Anahītā oder Anaitis, München, 1858, 118-9; Yt. V.126-8.


55. It is noteworthy that this greeting is completely Zoroastrian in spirit; in PhI., the ideogram used in greeting is Aramaic ŠLM 'peace', but its Iranian transcription is drōd, a word which means, above all, 'health'. It is unrealistic to wish another peace in a world locked in conflict with evil, and more to the point to hope for health (Arm. ḏišan) to survive and resist. Šinutcin, lit. 'construction', from Arm. šin-em 'I build', i.e., prosperity, also accords with the Zoroastrian conviction that earthly wealth is to be enjoyed in just moderation. On Anahit as Hera, see Lucian, De Dea Syria, ed. and tr. by H. W. Attridge, R. A. Oden, Society for Biblical Literature, Scholars Press, Chico, California, 1976, 44 (text), 45 (tr.); and A. M. Wolchohian, tr., The Romance of Alexander the Great by Pseudo-Callisthenes, New York, 1969, 52 and n. 90.1.

56. For a complete translation of this passage, in which the Erazamoyn temple of Tir is described, see Ch. 9.

57. Translated in Ch. 6.

58. See Thomson, Agath., xxxix. Another epithet of the goddess in the passage (Agath. 809), Oskehat 'grain of gold', is found as an Arm. fem. proper name in the thirteenth century (HAnjB, IV, 189-90). As is seen from the evidence cited, the title 'Lady' for the goddess was as common in Arm. as in Iran, although the native word tikin was used, rather than an Ir. loan-word (on the formation of the Arm. word, see C. Dowsett, 'Armenian Tēr. Tikin, Tīzerk', École des langues orientales anciennes de l'Institut Catholique, Mémorial du Cinquantième 1914-1964, Paris, 1964). The 'golden' aspect of the goddess Anahit and her perennial title of tikin may be linked in the Arm. fem. proper name Oskeťikin 'Golden Lady', attested thrice in written sources of the thirteenth-sixteenth centuries (HAnjB, IV, 190-1). According to Hesychius, a lexicographer and grammarian who lived in Alexandria, ca. fifth century A.D., 'Zarētis was the Persian Artemis' (cit. by Mukherjee, op. cit., 23 n. 32). The Persian Artemis was, of course, Anāhītā; the name Zarētis may contain the Ir. element zar- 'gold', cf. Arm. Oskemayr, or it may be an alternate pronunciation of the name of the cult centre of the goddess in Asia Minor, Zēlitis, mentioned above.


60. Cit. by E. Durean, Hayoc 3 hın krōně, Jerusalem, 1933, 36.


63. See the British Museum Catalogue of Bronzes, no. 266, and Arakelyan, op. cit., 21 & pl. 21.

64. See Ch. 8.

65. See T. B. Mitford, 'Biliotti's Excavations at Satala,' Anatolian Studies, 24, 1974, 221-36.

66. E.g., AHH, 463.


68. AHH, 42.

69. See Ch. 13.

70. AHH, 48.

71. See Arm. Gr., 296.

72. See Ch. 10.


74. Cit. by AHH, 293.

75. On the Arm. ceremony of the casting of vicaks 'lots' on Vardavar and its similarity to the Irani Zoroastrian Yekadula game, see Ch. 12. On the beliefs of the Arm. of Dersim, see K. V. Melik-Pasayan, Anahit dic'cuhu pastamunk'c', Erevan, 1963, 132, 135, 147. S. E. Taqizadeh, 'The Iranian Festivals adopted by the Christians and condemned by the Jews,' BSOAS, 10, 1940-42, 643-6, noted that in the Iranian calendar 19 Asfandarmad (the 12th month) was the date of the festival called 'the Nawruz of rivers and running waters', which he seeks to equate with the 19th of the Arm. month (which was dedicated to Anahit, as we have seen) of Hrotric (the 12th month) and with the Feast of the Transfiguration, which is referred to as Nausard-El 'the New Year of God' (cf. the Arm. loan-word nawasard) in Syriac sources. Such a coincidence would have occurred in A.D. 425, 439 and 481. It is not clear, however, that such calendrical equations were made by the Arm. during the above years, which were not of particular historical significance.


77. In Ch. 16, it will be seen that the Arm. Children of the Sun offered cakes to one called 'the Lady of Heaven'; the Armeno-Tk. form is attested, significantly, also in the proper name
Nanaxa'tun 'Nena the Lady', from a MS. of A.D. 1479 (HAnjB, IV, 20).


79. Ibid., 257.

80. See Boyce, 'Bibi Shahrbañü...', op. cit., 30.

81. Halajyan, 257.
CHAPTER 8
MIHR

Of all the yazatas of Zoroastrianism, it is Mithra (Av. Mithra-, Phl. Mihr) who has attracted the greatest scholarly attention, for the religion of Mithraism was a cult of the first importance in the Roman Empire during the early centuries of Christianity; many of the spiritual values of the two religions are similar, and in the second and early third centuries it was still by no means clear which would prevail ultimately over moribund Greco-Roman paganism. Monuments of the Mithraic cult have been excavated from Syria to Britain, and references to the god Mithra in classical sources are also numerous.

As we shall see, it is possible that Roman legionaries stationed in Armenia and Pontus learned of the Zoroastrian yazata, were impressed by aspects of his cult, and spread it to the west, where it acquired numerous non-Zoroastrian accretions in Europe and developed into an independent religion. The impressive performance of the Arm. Arsacid Tiridates I at the court of Nero is widely noted by Classical historians, and the invocation by the Oriental potentate of Mithra may have provided additional impetus to the growth of the new cult at Rome.

Aspects of the Arm. cult of Mihr may go back to the prototypes which inspired the Roman armies: the hero Mher in Armenian epic was led to a cave at Van by a crow, and the western Mithra, who had a raven-familiar, was worshipped in temples called spelaea 'caves'. The ubiquitous theme of Mithraic bas-reliefs, the tauroctony (i.e., slaughter of a bull), may have been inspired by the Zoroastrian tradition of the sacrifice of the bull Hadhayans that is to take place at Fraşegird. Arm. worship of Mithra, however, including the aspects noted above, appears to have been solidly within the framework of Zoroastrianism, and evidence that the Mithraic cult existed at all amongst the native population of Anatolia is meagre.¹

It is proposed, therefore, to consider Arm. Mihr as a Zor. yazata, and to examine his cult primarily in the light of the Iranian evidence. Artaxerxes II, as we have seen, was the first Achaemenian king to invoke
a triad of yazatas: Ahura Mazda, Anahita and Mithra—in inscriptions, rather than Ahura Mazda alone. As one of the three ahuras, Ahura Mazda and (*Vouruna-) Apem napat being the other two, Mithra stands at the head of the Zoroastrian pantheon. As a judge of souls, a guardian of covenants and a fighter against evil, he epitomises the Zoroastrian ethic and world-view. Zoroastrian temples are called 'gates of Mithra' (NP. dar-i Mihr), a term attested, however, only after the Islamic conquest of Iran; we shall have occasion to note its use in Arm., as well.

It is recalled that in Achaemenian times the Arm. vassals of the Persian king brought 20,000 horses to him each year on the great festival of *Mithrakana; in Sasanian Iran, Mihragan was a festival second in importance only to No Roz, which was consecrated to Ohrmazd, and Zor. tradition holds that by presiding over the second half of the month through the 16th day which bears his name, Mithra is subordinate only to Ohrmazd, the Creator, of whose creations he is the Protector. Mithra appears to have been primordially a god whose function it was to be the overseer of contracts, and this function of seer was naturally associated with light. Mithra was identified with fire, too, at a very early stage, it appears, perhaps because the administration of justice was so closely linked to the ordeal by fire, perennially connected in Iranian tradition with oath-taking. As we shall see, it is mainly as a god of fire, equated with Greek Hephaistos, that the yazata was known in Armenia. The name Adarmeheki, apparently meaning 'fire of Mihr(agan)' (discussed in n. 37), is interesting in this context. But in Iran at least by the Parthian period, Mithra had come to be ritually identified with the Sun, which is at once the greatest of all physical fires, and the source of the light by which the god oversees the conduct of men.

In Arm., the name of the god is attested in the MIr. form Mihr (in Arm. epic, the yazata appears as a hero called Mher). In proper names, Mihr is found alone, or in compounds with the forms mirh-, meher-, mrh-, meh- and mir-. The OIr. form mithr- (rendered in Arm. as mitır-) is found in Arm. texts, and in Classical and Arabic sources relating to Armenia. In MX III.17, the Sasanian king Artāsir invokes Mihr mec astuac 'the great god Mihr', and the Arm. bishops in their letter to the Sasanian Prime Minister, Mihrnarseh, ca A.D. 450, refer to Mihr astuac 'the god Mihr' (Eṣīse, II). Parthian Manichaean missionaries identified
their Tertius Legatus with the yazatas Mithra and Nairyō-sanha; the two divine names are paired also in the case of Mihrnerseh above, and a Christian monastery in Caucasian Albania was called Ners-Mühr. A seventh-century bishop of the Alans was named Mihr, and an Alan prince was called Zaş-Mühr. The eighth day of the Arm. month was consecrated to Mihr, according to the list preserved by Anania of Širak (seventh century), and an Arm. named Mihr-Artasir was the lord of Siwnik in the mid-sixth century. The following names in Arm. contain mihr-: Mihran, Mihrdat, Mihriar, Mihriban, Mihrapuh and Mihru; with meh(e)r: Mehrab, Mehri, Mehrizad, Mehrmelik, Mehrīsat, Meher, Meher(ean), Mehrewan, Mehruni(k), Meher and Mher; with the metathesised form mrh- are found Mrhawan, a fourth-century Albanian version of the name attested above as Mihriban, and Mrhapet, perhaps originally a priestly title. The latter name is found only once, on an undated xavćar 'Cross-stone' from Arčax. We shall discuss shortly also the form mvehakan mehean 'temple of Mihr' (Agath. 790). The form meh- is found in Mehendak, from OP. *Mithra-bandaka- 'servant of Mithra', Mehewan (cf. Mrhawan, Mihriban above) and Mehnuni, the latter being the name of a naxarar family (cf. the Vahuni clan in Ch. 6). Mehekan, also attested as Mehek(i), the name of the 7th month of the Arm. calendar and a fem. proper name, from OP. *Mithrakēna- (see above) may be cited here, as well as the Arm. generic term for a (non-Christian) temple, mehean, which we shall discuss at greater length presently. With the form mir- are attested the name of the Armeno-Kurdish Mirag clan in Dersim (see Ch. 7), and the Arm. and Albanian names Mihrawra and Mihrawrik. The OIr. mithr- (Arm. mitc) is found in Mitc̣roos, the name of a Chaldaean (!) king in a list provided by Xorenac̣ (MX I.19). The Arabic version of Agath. refers to Ṭordan in Daranaği (see Ch. 5) as Mitrodan, but this may be a scribal error.

An inscription at the monastery of Gekard (Ayrivank) states that Mitc̣ereaṇc̣ sin ḳurmḳ Parsic̣ 'The priests of the Persians were of the *Mitc̣ereans.' The ending -eăn is commonly used in Arm. as a patronymic suffix in family names, and it is possible that this is a reference to the great Mihran family of Arsacid Iran, whose residence was probably the Khāro-mitřeq̣ mentioned by Ptolemy (Geog., VI.26). The district was near Ganjak, the site from mid-Sasanian times of the sacred fire of
Gušnasp (Arm. Všnasp). In Gk. sources, the name of the family is attested as ... tou Mirranou oikarkhias... dēmou d' Arsakiou; the Arm. inscription may preserve an earlier form, and the Arms. could easily have regarded the great Mihran family as guardians of the sacred fire of neighbouring Atropatene. In the Arsacid period, the fire particularly exalted by the Parthians was Ādur Burzēn-Mihr; the name Mrhapet in Arm. was cited above, and the element -pet (OIr. -peti) 'chief, ruler' is commonly found in religious titles in Arm. The above evidence would tend to support the supposition that the name of the yazata was associated with priestly titles, even as it will be seen to be an element of Arm. mehean 'temple'.

Greek sources preserve a number of names with mithra- associated with Armenia. An Orontid monarch named Mithranēs is attested, ca. 331 B.C., and the Arms. fought Alexander at Gaugamela under two generals, Orontēs and Mithraustēs; it has been suggested that the name of the latter is to be derived from OIr. *Mithra.vahista- 'Mithra (who is) the best'. An Arm. named Mithrobuzanes fought Artaxias for the throne of the country over a century later. Plutarch in his Life of Lucullus mentions an Arm. general of the first century B.C. named Mithrobarzanēs who fought under Tigran II.

During his campaign of destruction of the old temples of Armenia, St Gregory Gayr hasanēr i Mrhakan meheann anuneal ordwoyn Aramazday, i glwln zor Bagayarlcn koc en est part ewaren lezuin 'Came to the temple of Mihr, who is named son of Aramazd in the village which they call Bagayaric in the Parthian tongue' (Agath. 790). (See Pl. IV at the end of this Ch. The photographer has asked to be identified by his initials only.) We have already encountered the word mehean as 'temple' in a variety of contexts. It was proposed by Gershevitch that the Arm. word is to be derived from an OIr. form *mithra-dana 'place of Mithra', with the Arm. ending -ean from MP. -yän, the latter form resulting from the normal shift of intervocalic -d- to -y- in SW Mir. Earlier, Meillet had proposed that the word be derived from OIr. *māithryāna-, also meaning 'place of Mithra'. The first part of the word, meh-, undoubtedly comes from the name of the yazata, but the ending is more of a problem. It was proposed above that Mīcær-ean was a native form; the same might be true of meh-ean. In all known cases, the OIr. suffix
-dāna- is attested in Arm. as -(a)ran, via forms borrowed from NW MIr., not SW MIr. As we have seen, most borrowings from the latter are restricted to the Sasanian period, and in cases where both NW and SW Middle Iranian forms of the same word are attested in Arm. (e.g., NW pastpan and SW pūstipan), the earlier, Arsacid 'Parthian' form generally is the one more frequently used. It is unlikely that the Arms. would have borrowed from their Sasanian adversaries a religious term of such central importance to the ancient Arm. cult, when they resisted other innovations of less moment. A derivation from Sasanian MP. *mihryān is probably to be ruled out. There is another argument against the adoption of the loan-word at such a late date, although it is more hypothetical. Had the Arms. borrowed the word during the Sasanian period, i.e., at a time not remote from that of Agathangelos, they would have known its meaning, 'place of Mithra', as the foremost signification of the word. Why would Agathangelos, with his sensitivity to the 'Parthian' meanings of names, have produced a pointless tautology such as mrahakan mehean 'place of Mithra, of Mithra'? If the term had become general in Armenia before then, when was it introduced? It would have had to have been made a part of the religious terminology between A.D. 226, the date of the Sasanian accession to power and the earliest possible time of direct MP. influence in Arm., and the Conversion less than eighty years thereafter. This is not enough time for a specialised term to take on such broad meaning. But if the term had become a general one in Persis, instead, then why is it nowhere found there? Surely a word of such prominence could not have been lost merely in the great proliferation of religious grades and offices of the early Sasanian period.

It is probable that the word mehean is to be assigned to the Arsacid period or earlier. The ending -ean could have come from the form proposed by Meillet, or else it is an Arm. suffix, ultimately of Ir. origin, like MitCe-ean. The importance of Mithra in Zor. in Arsacid times has been noted already, and, as we shall see, the concept of the yazata in Arm. seems to have ceased to develop long before the Sasanian period.

By Pth. times at least, as we have seen, Mithra had come to be associated with the Sun. At Nemrut Dağ (first century B.C.), the god is called Mithras-Apollôn-Mēlos-Hermēs. Christian Syriac writers of the
Sasanian period emphasise the Persian belief that Mihr and the Sun were identical; and to this day, the Zoroastrian litanies (NP niyāyeš) to Mihr and Xwarsēd, the Sun, are recited together daily during the first watch of the day, the Hāvan Gāh, which is ruled by Mithra. In the fifth century A.D., Eznik of Kočb describes a Persian myth in which the Sun is a mediator between Ahura Mazdā and Angra Mainyu, and calls the Sun Arm. datavor 'judge'; these references seem to identify the Sun with Mithra, who is described by Plutarch as a mediator (Gk. mesitēs), and who is referred to in the Phl. books as dādwar 'judge'. But the Arm. writer here is not describing a belief common amongst those of his own nation. In Armenian sources, Vahagn, not Mihr, is identified with the Sun. Mihr is called by Xorenac'i Hepéstos (Gk. Hephaistos), and although Tovma Arcruni (I.3) identifies Hepéstos with the Sun, he adds that the god has hur vars 'fiery hair'. The latter description indicates that the Arm. writer had in mind Vahagn, who is often referred to thus, and not Mihr. The Arms. regarded Mihr as guardian of covenants as well, preserving faithfully the most ancient characteristic of the yazata in the adjective vatmīrb 'perfidious', with the initial element vat 'bad' (Phl. wad).

In the ancient Arm. calendar, the 8th day of the month was called Mihr, and the 7th month was called Mehekan or Meheki, a name descended from OP. *Mithrakana (Phl. and NP. Mihragēn). In the Zor. calendar, the festival of Mihragēn was originally celebrated on Mihr Rōz of Mihr Mēh (the 16th day of the 7th month), but with the first calendar reforms of the Sasanians, the date of the festival was shifted to the 21st (Rām Rōz), and since pious Zoroastrians, perplexed by the reform, were fearful lest they mark the feast at the wrong time, it came to be celebrated as a six-day festival, from 16-21 Mihr Mēh, the last day being called 'Great Mihragēn'. The 21st day of the month of Mihr, one notes, would not have been connected to the cult of the god before the third century A.D. In the Arm. Church, 21 Mehekan is the date of the feast of St George the Soldier (Arm. Gēorg); if any connection is to be sought between yazata and saint on the basis of this circumstance, it is to be assumed that the Christian feast was established in the Sasanian period to coincide with Great Mihragēn, and without reference to the ancient Arm. calendar, in which the 8th day of the month is consecrated to Mihr.
There are two possible reasons for this. First, the Christians of Mesopotamia, with their profound influence on developments in Armenia, lived at the centre of the Sasanian state, and they may have equated their feast with the Zoroastrian observance; the Arms. would then have followed them. The second possibility is that the Arms. themselves set the date of the feast, for Great Mihragān was second in importance only to Nō Rōz itself in the calendar of the Sasanian state—as the older date, the 16th, had been in bygone ages (cf. Strabo, above, on the Achaemenian *Mithrakāna*)—and would thus have been recognised in Armenia, at least, as yet another insidious innovation of the Persian enemy which invited Christian response.

In Georgia, aspects of the cult of St George bear comparison to the cult of Mithra. At the Monastery of Ilori in Mingrelia, it was customary to lock a bull in the church overnight, announce that Mithra had stolen it, and then appoint a youth to slay it. This rite has been linked to the Mithraic tauroctony, and in Zoroastrianism sacrifice plays an important role at Mihragān. St George is also often shown mounted, like Mithra. In Armenia, such connections as may be perceived between saint and god are far less explicit. St George, unlike St At‘anginās or St Karapat, is a comparatively obscure figure, and the few legends told of him centre on the Monastery of St Georg of P‘ut‘kī. This sanctuary is called after Mt But‘ (like Bt‘-ārič, see Ch. 14), a volcano whose fiery cone made it a place of pre-Christian worship, perhaps of Mihr, a lord of fire; according to the mediaeval author of a 'History of the Image of the Mother of the Lord', or telin But‘ lai: känzi ānu

k‘rmāpetin But‘ kardo:yr 'the place is called But‘ because the [pagan] high priest was called by the name of But‘.' Next to the church are the ruins of a vaulted hall; according to local popular tradition, this was a mehean in ancient times. The monastery had cocks which were reputed to warn travellers in the mountains if a pass was to be snowed in. The cock is a bird sacred in Zoroastrianism to Sraoša, a yazata whose function as guardian and overseer of men and their deeds linked him with Mithra. Another monastery of St Georg is Devc‘a or Devk‘se Vank‘, SE of Sebastia, which was said to have taken its name from the dev‘ 'demons' that lived on the site before it was consecrated to Christian worship; that is, there had probably been a Zoroastrian shrine there before St Gregory.
The Parthian Arsacids who came to the throne of Armenia in the first century A.D. were pious Zoroastrians who invoked Mithra as the lord of covenants, as is proper. An episode which illustrates their observance of the cult is the famous journey of Tiridates I to Rome in A.D. 65. Tiridates, the first Arsacid king of Armenia, travelled to Nero’s capital to receive his crown, going by land as far as possible in order to avoid polluting the sacred creation of water. At the coronation ceremony, Tiridates declared, ‘I am, my lord, a descendant of Arsaces and a brother of the kings Vologaesus and Pacorus, and your servant. And I have come before you, my god, to be obeisance to you even as unto Mithra, and I shall be as you decree, for you are my fate and my fortune.’ During his stay at Rome, the king initiated Nero into ‘Magian’ banquets. It is not certain what the latter were, for Zoroastrians are not supposed to sup with infidels at all; perhaps what is meant here is that Tiridates took the bazā, probably with barsom (the Zoroastrian ritual bundle of twigs used in religious ceremonies, cf. Arm. barsmunk). This routine act of prayer before meals, which are then eaten in silence, is at once so conspicuous and so common that in one Judaeo-Persian text the Zoroastrians are distinguished by it from adherents of other religions. Tiridates could not have neglected this essential ritual, regardless of the circumstances. Iranian literature records a number of instances in which kings in dire distress and great haste still refused to take food until they had performed the necessary rituals. The oath taken by Tiridates is in keeping with orthodox Zoroastrianism, and Xenophon depicts the Persian king swearing by Mithra in both the Cyropaedia and the Anabasis.

It has been suggested that soldiers of the Roman legion XV Appollinaris, which was transferred from Pannonia to Armenia to fight in Corbulo’s ill-fated campaign of A.D. 62, may have acquired knowledge of the yazata as a sun god in Armenia (more likely Pontus) and carried his cult back with them. If so, Tiridates was swearing by Mithra and impressing by his ritual silence at banquets the patricians of Rome, at the same time that the legionaries were returning west with tales of the Sol Invictus ‘the Invincible Sun’, Mithra.

Before his departure to Rome, in about A.D. 64, the 11th year of his actual reign in Armenia, Tiridates left an inscription at the
ancient fortress of Garni (see plate I, appended to this Ch.). Mosaics have been found at the site which depict scenes from Greek mythology and bear the caption μέτοικα μεθα 'we laboured, taking nothing [i.e., no wages]. The palace for which the mosaics were made is called by Xorenacci a τον ονα πέρος 'cooling-off house' (MX II.90), and he attributes it to Tiridates III (late third century) and says it was built by the latter for his queen, Xosrovidukt. Perhaps the building was so called because of its baths and pools; cf. the aquatic scenes in the mosaic floor. Garni stands at the edge of a wedge-shaped promontory overlooking the deep ravine of the river Azat in the Cēsam mountains, and in the summer its cool breezes are a pleasant relief after the stifling heat of the plain of Ararat. As was seen in Ch. 3, the great cities of Artaxiad and Arsacid Armenia stood on this plain, and Garni was a fortress of enormous strategic importance for the defence of the cities of the plain from barbarian marauders to the north and east, whose incursions were a perennial threat to both the Roman and Iranian empires, for whom Armenia served as a buffer.

Xorenacci adds that Tiridates III γράφω ἔνα παλάτιον ομορροφή 'wrote in it [i.e., the palace] his memorial in Hellenic script' (MX II.90). The inscription (see pl. 2) was found in the fortress-wall of Garni, not in the ruins of the palace. It is also apparent, on paleographical grounds, that the inscription was made in the first century, and it has, accordingly, been assigned to Tiridates I. The inscription, in Greek, was discovered in 1945 on a block of basalt 165 cm long, 50 cm high and 79-80 cm thick; the letters are about 5 x 5.5 cm in size. The stone rests in the fortress-wall, which stood about 6.5 m high. Owing to weathering and other damage, there are many lacunae in the inscription, and readings have varied considerably. The most reasonable rendering seems to be that of A. G. Abrahamyan, yet his reading, too, involves the restoration of many words where lacunae are too large to allow for a completely convincing reconstruction. Without attempting to restore the text and leaving most of the lacunae, a fragmentary translation may be attempted: The Sun Tiridatēs of Greater Armenia, lord as despot, built a temple for the queen; the invincible.../ in the eleventh year of his reign./... Under the protection of the.../ may the
priest \textsuperscript{60} to the great cave (? \textsuperscript{61}/ in vain (?) \textsuperscript{62} of the witness and thanks.\textsuperscript{\textdagger} Tiridatēs, a Parthian by birth, may refer here to Mihr implicitly with the Sun, thus associating himself with the yazata. Mithra receives frequently in Mithraic inscriptions the epithet 'invincible' (Latin Invictus); cf. ton anikēton here. The word litourgos (sic), as noted, may refer either to a priest or to the performer of a public service. Who is 'the witness'? This, too, may be a reference to Mithra, who is both witness to men's deeds and judge. \textsuperscript{63} Although Arm. scholars such as Arrakēlyan insist that the colonnaded building at Gañī was a temple of Mithra, there is no evidence to support this save the inscription—and one cannot be certain that the inscription refers to it. The only temple of Mihr in Arm. known beyond doubt is the shrine at Bagayařič in the province of Derjan, far to the west. From the inscription, we know only that Tiridatēs calls himself the Sun.

The importance of Mithra in Zoroastrianism is amply attested in both Iran and Armenia; numerous terracotta figures of a horse and rider found at Artaxata and in the Parthian empire may represent Mithra on horseback; we shall see the Arm. Mher portrayed thus in the Epic of Sasun. \textsuperscript{64} In two inscriptions of Artaxerxes II, the triad of Ahura Mazdā, Anāhitā and Mithra is invoked. In Agath. 127, however, Tiridates invokes Aramazd, Anahit and Vahagn, in that order. Mithra is conspicuously absent. It is recalled that Mithra and Verethraghna are often represented together in Zoroastrian texts, in Christian hagiographies, and, apparently, on Mithraic bas-reliefs. In Armenia, it was Vahagn, not Mihr, who was equated with the Sun (cf. the Classical Arm. commentator on Genesis, who noted that \textsuperscript{c} omank \textsuperscript{c} zaregakn pastec \textsuperscript{c} in ew Vahagn koc \textsuperscript{c} ec \textsuperscript{c} in 'some worshipped the Sun and called it Vahagn'); and the hero who fought Alexander and was known to the Greeks as Mithraustēs, seems to be the same person as the Vāhē of Xorenacī. The name Vahē is probably a form of Vahagn. \textsuperscript{65} It seems that Vahagn excelled Mihr in importance, certainly by the time of the Conversion, when Aštīsat became the first See of the Arm. Church; Bagayařič, though much closer to Ani, Torďan, Tčil and Erēz than Aštīsat, which was also distant from Bagawan, Artašat and Valaršapat, became an obscure shrine of little importance.

The cult of Vahagn absorbed the older reverence of the great weather-god, Tešub, and the cult of Anahit absorbed, at least in part, that of the Great Mother.
Mithra, too, seems to have been associated in Armenia with a pre-Zoroastrian mythological figure, but not one likely to become popular amongst Zoroastrians. Pseudo-Plutarchus (De Fluviis, XXIII.4) relates a curious tale in the course of his description of the Araxes. The river was as symbolic of Armenia as the Tiber was of Rome; when Tacitus opined that the Araxes tolerated no bridges, his readers did not need to consult a map to understand the metaphor. Pseudo-Plutarchus writes: 'Near it (the Araxes) also is a mountain Diorphus, so called from the giant of that name, of which this story is told: Mithra, being desirous of a son, and hating the race of women, impregnated a certain rock; and the rock, becoming pregnant, after the appointed time bore a youth named Diorphos. The latter when he had grown to manhood challenged Ares to a contest of valour, and was slain. The purpose of the gods was then fulfilled in his transformation into the mountain bearing the same name as he.'

M. Schwartz has noted the similarities between this story and the Hittite legend of Kumarbi. Mithra, the parent of Tesub, wished to regain the heavenly kingship which he had lost to his son, and impregnated a rock which gave birth to the monster Ullikummi. With the help of Ea, the god of water, Tesub succeeded in destroying the mountain-like giant. Benveniste and Adontz have noted the similarity of the story also to the rock-birth of Agdistis; this is but a later version of the same ancient Anatolian legend.

There is nothing Zoroastrian in the tale, which seems to have been re-cast in a deliberate attempt to discredit Mithra. Perhaps the priests of Vahagn had come to regard the expansion of the cult of Mithra with suspicion as usurping the various attributes of 'their' yazata: as Sun god and weather god, as divinity of victory, and even as dragon-reaper. St George of Cappadocia, the dragon-slayer; St George of P'ut'ki, who could control storms, and whose cocks could predict snow; both must have absorbed aspects of Mithra, the yazata they replaced in the new, Christian faith of the Armenians. Mithra is referred to by
Pseudo-Plutarchus as to tēn gynaikōn genos misōn 'hating the race of women', a detail not elsewhere attested in recorded versions of the myth, and a characteristic which would have been particularly repugnant to Zoroastrians. Mihrnarseh (whose name was discussed above) in his letter to the noblemen of Christian Armenia heaped scorn on their priests, who anergen zcunūds mardoy ew goven zanordut c. 'dishonour human birth and praise childlessness' through their celibacy. Mithraism is a wholly masculine faith, and the Arms. may have regarded this and other non-Zor. aspects of the Roman cult with feelings of revulsion which the Vahnunis could have used to their advantage. The cult of the Zoroastrian yazata was certainly not extirpated, but Vahagn seems to have taken his place in royal invocations of the third century. And even before that, Mithra is seen only in his ancient and primary aspects as a god of fire and of covenants; the development of his cult that is observed elsewhere in the Zor. world, did not take place in Armenia.

One locality where the god survives in legend down to this day is Van, and Sasun to the west of L. Van. It was a practice of the Urartean kings to carve into rocks and cliff-faces blind portals called 'Gates of God', before which sacrifices and other rituals were performed. As Tušpa (Van) had been the capital of Urartu, the Gate of God in the rock that rises over the town may have been of particular importance to the Arms. of later times. The Armenians named it Mheri dūrn 'the Gate of Mithra' (see Pl. 3), substituting the name of the yazata in the Urartean title. In Zoroastrianism, the phrase dar-i Mihr is attested in Iran only in Islamic times; the Arm. name, which is identical, is found in the epic of Sasun. The main events of the epic commemorate the uprising of the Arms. of Xoyt (a particularly wild district of the mountainous canton of Sasun) against the Arab Caliphate in A.D. 850; but many legendary episodes of great antiquity are interwoven. The story of Pōk r 'Little' Mher is one of these.

Mher is a guileless, rough youth who rides around Armenia on his horse, getting into trouble at the hands of hostile and crafty men. Eventually, he tires of life, and complains, Šarang kay inji, mah unim 'I have neither offspring nor death.' He arrives at Ostan, in Hayoc Jor, and carries on from there to Van, but encounters the usual hostility and cunning. He is about to turn away, but his mother
commands from her grave, Ḵō tez Agrawu ḵarn ē,/ Ong Agrawu ḵar
'Raven's Rock is your place./ Go to Raven's Rock.' His father then
speaks from his grave, adding Ḵō tez Agrawu ḵarn ē/ Aśxarḵ averi, mēk
ēl śinvī,/ Or getin ḵō jiu aṣjew ċimanyay,/ Aśxarḵ ḵonn ē 'Raven's
Rock is your place./ The world will collapse and be rebuilt anew./ When
the earth can bear your steed,/ Then the world will belong to you.'
Mher turns around to return to Van and sees that mēk aṣraw kēr kē xōsēr
'there was a crow and it spoke.' Mher wounds the bird, which flies into
a cave; Mher gallops after it, the hooves of his mount sink into the
ground, and the gates of the cave close. The rock of the cave (the lat­
ter thought to be one of the caves in the Rock, or to lie behind an
Urartean blind portal) is called Agrawu ḵar 'Raven's Rock', Vanay ḵar
'Rock of Van' or Tospan blur 'Hill of Tosp'. The cave is called Mheri
dūrm or Ṯem̱ Ṯem̱ Maže (from Tk. Maže 'cave'). Here is a possible
source for the western Mithraic spelaeum. The blind portal has a cunei­
form inscription on it, and black water can sometimes be seen trickling
down from above; local people explained that this was the urine of
Mher's horse. Twice a year, it was believed, the cave yawns open, on
Ascension Day and the Feast of the Transfiguration, Arm. Hambarjman tawn
and Vardavar. Mher then may be seen astride his steed, the ċarx-i
falak 'wheel of fate' in his hands. According to one account, Mher
emerges from his cave to test the earth, and, seeing that it is still
not firm enough to support his weight, he returns to his place. Once, a
shepherd in the tale asked Mher when he would come out for good, and the
hero replied that he would return to the world only when a grain of corn
grows bigger than a walnut. The re-emergence of Mher seems to be con­
nected with an eschatological belief in a time of fullness and ripeness
when all untruth shall have been defeated.

In other versions of the legend of Mher, it is told that he will
destroy the world when the Wheel of Fate he holds ceases to turn. Or,
it is related that God sent his six mounted angels to fight Mher. They
defeated him, and he pleaded to God for mercy; the Lord confined him
thereafter to Raven's Rock. The latter version resembles somewhat the
legend of Kumarbi cited above, in which Diorphos, the son of Mithra
(rather than Mithra himself, as here), is defeated by the collective ef­
forts of the other gods, Arēs (i.e., Vahagn) in particular, and made
into stone (cf. confinement in a rock, here). Like other Armenian heroes associated with apocalyptic events, Mher is variously regarded as good or bad. In one Arm. legend, he appears as similar to Ai Dahāka, who will rise and cause havoc, but will then be vanquished for good by Thrašaona: Mher u ur jin ku gan ašzar. Nor Mher kotorum keni, verj ke martirosvi 'Mher and his horse will come into the world. Mher will slaughter anew, and in the end he will be martyred.'

We have seen that Mher was guided to his cave by a talking raven (Arm. agraw 'crow, raven'). Gershevitch suggested that the bird is to be identified with Ah. Karšiptar, a name for which he proposes the meaning 'black-winged'. Karsiptar flew through the var of Yima spreading the evangel of Zarathustra. In Georgia, it is believed that the hero Amiran, whose name is a derivative of Mihr, is fed by a crow, and is confined in Sa-Korne, 'Crow Mountain'. An Arm. xacán 'Cross-stone' from Zangezur depicts a crow rescuing people from a serpent. In Lori, there is a place called Agravi gerezman, 'Raven's Tomb', so named because a raven, trying to warn some plowmen that a serpent had slithered into their tešan (a drink of yoghurt and water), drowned itself in the bowl where the beast lay hidden; this alerted the men, who made the bird a tomb to show their gratitude. Similar stories are told elsewhere of ravens saving people from snakes, or from eating food poisoned by snakes, and there is an Arm. incantation scroll which mentions an ūjahagāramates 'serpent seen by a raven'; one imagines that such a serpent is afforded scant opportunity to do evil.

Perhaps in Arm. tradition the var of Yima was remembered as the cave of Mher, the hero who upholds truth in a world polluted by sin, guided to his refuge by a raven, perhaps the bird Karšiptar. Although the cult of the yazata Mihr seems to have declined amongst some Zors. in Armenia, events in that country possibly contributed to the rise of Mithraism in the west; the original, specific meaning of the word mehean may have been forgotten, yet the god is still called by name, by the old men who still recite from memory the epic of Sasun. But Mihr, brooding in his cave, might well have said, as his cult was degraded by some devotees of Vahagn, 'If indeed men were to worship me by mentioning my name in prayer, as other yazatas are worshipped with prayers that mention their names, I should go forth to righteous men.'
Notes - Chapter 8

1. F. Cumont first proposed an Anatolian prototype for the Mithraic mysteries; this thesis has been challenged by several scholars. Most recently, it was criticised on the basis of insufficient archaeological evidence by I. Roll, 'The Mysteries of Mithras in the Roman Orient: the problem of origin,' Journal of Mithraic Studies, 2, 1, 1977, 58-62. Per Beskow, 'The Roots of Early Mithraism,' Études Mithriaques, AI 17, 1978, 14, suggests that Mithraism spread from Pontus to Dacia and other Roman provinces.

2. See Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 49, 52.


5. Ibid., 86 and 'On Mithra's Part in Zor.,' op. cit., 17 n. 35, 26 n. 62.


8. Ibid., 24.

9. See AHM, 31 et seq.


16. Ibid., 313-5, 415-6. On Mher, see further below. With the exception of the latter, most of the names in this group are attested only from ca. fourteenth century and later. For a list of names containing mihr-, see also Tëc. Avdalbegyan, 'Mihë Hayocë mej,' Hayagitakan Getasotut'yunner, Erevan, 1969, 14-5.

17. HAnjB, III, 476.
18. On the Mehnunis, see ZG, 48; this may be an alternate form of the name Mehruni, cited above. See also Arm. Gr., 53-4 and HAnkB, III, 311-12. Mehendak is attested also in the forms Merhewandak and Mehrewandak (cf. Arm. Gr.).

19. AHH, 154.

20. Avdalbegyan, op. cit., 14; Kağankatuć, op. cit., 103. The name Mirag is perhaps to be compared to the Sgd. inscription incised on a partially gilded Sasanian silver vase of the fifth-sixth century whose weight, however, is recorded in Pahlavi. The Sgd. proper name is read by Lukonin as 'Mithrak' (V. G. Lukonin, Persia II, New York, 1967, 224 n. 183).

21. N. Marr, Kreshchenie armyan, gruzin, abkhasov i alanov, St Petersburg, 1905, 119.


24. M. Boyce, Zoroastrians, 88; the name of the founder meant 'Mihr the Lofty'.

25. Examples include mog-pet, krm-a-pet and bagna-pet in the pre-Christian period, Christian vardapet 'doctor of theology, priest' (cf. Phil. vardbad, an office of the Sasanian Zor. Church, SKZ 32, cited by E. Benveniste, 'Études iraniennes,' TFS, 1945, 69), and hazerapet, the title of the religious leader of the Arm. Arwoldik (see Ch. 16). On questions of the Arm. priesthood and fire-cult, see Ch. 15.


27. Ir. Nam., 208-9.

28. Cf. Agath. 817, where Tiridates gayr hasanēr i k̆ałak̆ agevač Bagawan, or anuaneal koc̆ i part̆ avarēn lezun̆ Dĭ c̆ awan 'arrived at the komopolis of Bagawan, which is named from the Parthian language Dic̆ awan.' In both cases, baga- 'god' is regarded as a Parthian word. Bagyarić is found on Lynch's Map of Armenia as Pekerij, west of Erzincan; shortly to the west of the village was an Arm. monastery of the same name, Pekerij Vank, see also AON, 410 and 379-80 on the toponymic suffix -arić, -arinć. On Arm. Btarić, anglicised Put Aringe, see Ch. 14. In the same province
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as Bagayarič, Đerjan, was the fortress of Mihrbod 'the fortress of Mihr' (G. Halajyan, Dersim Hayeri azagartçyunč, Erevan, 1973, 19).


31. Boyce, op. cit. n. 3, 22, 30 n. 102.

32. Ibid., 27; Stronghold, 50; 'Mihragan among the Irani Zoroastrians,' Mithraic Studies, I, 113.

33. R. C. Zaehner, Zurvan, a Zoroastrian Dilemma, Oxford, 1955, 101; see also S. Shaked, 'Mihr the Judge,' Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam 2, 1980, who identifies Mihr also as miyančig (= mesités) from a PhI. passage (see esp. p. 12).

34. MX III.17.

35. Tcovma Arcruni describes a Nestorian who robbed a church at Ostan as vatmirh (Tca III.27). We may note here a ceremony of oath-taking attested in Armenia which may be related to ancient Zoroastrian custom.

In the final stanza of a love poem, the fourteenth-century Armenian bard Yovhannēs T'lkuranci admonishes himself: Xew Yovhannēs T'lkuranci, Xist mi haner zotk'ed i črēn:/ Ažēk surat'ın erb mefani,/ O'amk'ed gnav gnn crensān 'Crazy Yovhannēs T'lkuranci,/' Do not take sharply your foot out of line./ When the splendid visage dies,/ Colour flees to dry earth from the face' (E. Pivazyan, Hovhannes T'lkuranci, Tačer, Erevan, 1960, XI.17-20). T'lkuranci appears to have been a cleric, and a frequent theme in his poems is the renunciation of holy vows by a priest for the sake of a pretty girl.

The withdrawal of one's foot from a line is an idiom which seems to represent the breaking of a vow or an oath. The thirteenth-century writer Mxit'car Gos in his Datastanagirkc 'Law Book' warns Christians against the ways of other nations: 'Ev kam orpēs aylazgik urac'čtean ėrīnakaw tan erdum: kam yekešči mtanelov zloyz njucz'čanel, ev kam beranov, i jur ev i jētč pččel, kam xač i getni nkarel ev koxel, kam zēan zjetoy unel, kam oskr i jēs ańul, kam i getni erkus cirs ańel ev i miyo i niwsn mtanel. Zī ayd amenayn ev aydīsik'čd urac'čtean ėrīnak ē zor čos part yanj ańul k'ristonēči t'čōw mah hasanē kam tan k'čakum.' 'Or the way those of other nations swear an oath of disavowal: by entering the church and extinguishing the light, by blowing with one's mouth on water or on oil, by tracing a Cross in the ground and then treading on it, by holding a dog by the tail, by holding a bone in one's hand, or by making two lines in the earth and stepping out of one into the other. For all these and their like are an example of disavowal which a Christian must not undertake even if death or the destruction of his house threaten!' Mxit'car Gos, Datastanagirkc.
Vašarsapat, 1880, 51, cit. by G. Têr-Pêlošean, 'Naxni Hayoc'
hogepastut-eun ñrjanic,' Yusarjan-Festschrift, Vienna, 1911, 233.

A century later, the poet Yovhannes was warning himself not to step out of line (Arm. cir) for the love of a girl, so clearly the practices which Mxit'ar Gos condemns as foreign were widespread enough amongst the Armenians themselves.

What kind of disavowal was meant? It is immediately evident that at least certain of the practices mentioned by the Armenian lawgiver would be reprehensible to Zoroastrians, and, like the breaking of the kustî mentioned by Têlkuranći in another poem, might even symbolise apostasy. Extinguishing a fire was a method favoured by Iranian Christians of the Sasanian period for renunciation of their ancestral faith (see Boyce, Zoroastrians, 139); here, the practice seems to have been conveyed to a church. Allowing the breath deliberately to pollute water, a sacred element, and oil, which was presumably the fuel for a flame, would be considered criminal by Zoroastrians in a religious context; during Zoroastrian rituals, the breath is kept away from sacred objects by the face-mask (Ph. padâm, Arm. pê'anđam, see Arm. Gr., 254). It is known that Zoroastrians regard the dog as a particularly holy creature, and it has been suggested that for Zoroastrians who rejected their faith for Islam, 'maltreating a dog...was a distinctive outward sign of true conversion' Boyce, Zoroastrians, 148. It is likely that the specific gesture of apostasy in yanking the hapless creature's tail became a general formula of disavowal. The Armenians must have learned some practices from their Iranian Muslim neighbours, particularly the latter, primarily because the mediaeval lawgiver considers them foreign, but also because Christianity has no particular bias against dogs; mistreatment of them appears to have been a Muslim custom which was evolved as a deliberate offence to the Zoroastrians (loc. cit.).

Zoroastrians when taking an oath are required to step over a furrow (NP kas) which is drawn about a fire with the knife used for cutting the barsom (NP kard-i barsom-cên). The process is described in the Sogand name 'Book of Oaths': 'ân kas...ke sôgand mîxorad...bar pây [emended by Dhabhar from pâli weekend] u rû barîtatâs kardan u az bûrîn-i kas pây dar kaş nibađan 'He...who is taking the oath (lit. 'eating sulphur')...should stand up and turn his face to the fire and from outside the furrow place (his) foot within the furrow' ('Saogand-Nâma, or the Book of Oaths,' in B. N. Dhabhar, The Persian Rivayats of Hormazyar Framarz, Bombay, 1932, 47-8; text: M. R. Unvala, Dārāb Hormazyâr's Rivayat, I, Bombay, 1922, 51, lines 17-19). The oath is taken, and then the advice concerning it is read yet a second time, and a second furrow is drawn (Dhabhar, 49). This seems to be why Mxit'ar Gos, with his attention to legal detail, mentions two furrows. Têlkuranći, who is using a popular idiom, has only one. But the meaning is nonetheless clear: by stepping over the line, one enters a sacred precinct, the pây or 'pure place' (Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 166) where, presumably, one's oath will be heard by Mithra himself. To step out meant to break one's oath, this much is clear from Têlkuranći, and it is indeed probable that such a rite was employed by the Armenian Zoroastrians.
It is likely, however, that Modern Armenian usage reflects contamination by American idiom, as in an editorial in Hayrenik¹, Boston, 16 May 1975, 1: "Memaccman ayn kalakakanut'cin, or kə hetapndui əryan artak'ın naxararut'ean koțmə, piti karenay off'-mijanut'ean ciren durs gal 'Will the policy of relaxation pursued by the present State Department be able to step out of the line of non-interference?'


37. L. H. Gray, 'On Certain Persian and Armenian Month-Names as influenced by the Avesta Calendar,' JAOS, 28, 1907, 338; Boyce, Stronghold, 84 n. 40. In the Dictionary of Eremia vardapet, 178, is found the Biblical name Aramfelii corrupted to Adarmehek (see M. Stone, Signs of the Judgement..., Univ. of Penn. Arm. Texts and Sts. 3, 1981, 208). The form seems to be an Iranized word meaning 'fire of Mihragan' (on similar Iranized Biblical names in Arm., see this writer's 'The Name of Zoroaster in Armenian,' JAAS, 1985 [in publication]).


41. AH, 49, 50 & n. 1 on But⁰; on the site of the mehean, see A. A. Manuc'aryan, K'nnut'yun Hayastani 4-11 dareri sinararakan vayagrer'i, Erevan, 1977, 248–9.

42. Ibid., 54.

43. See Boyce, Stronghold, 257; Hist. Zor., I, 60, 203. In Armenia, certain of the functions of Sraosa seem to have been acquired by Tir; see the following Ch.


46. Cassius Dio, 63.5. It has been suggested by A. Dieterich, 'Die Weisen aus dem Morgenland,' Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, 3, 1902, that this journey served as the prototype of the Biblical voyage of the Magi to Bethlehem in Christian writings. The Arm. word for the Antichrist, Nefin, gen. sg. Nefin, has been derived from Gk. Nero, i.e., Nero, whose name was numerically equivalent to 666, the number of the Antichrist (cf. Revelations
XIII.18). John Chrysostom likened the Roman emperor to the Antichrist (see HAB, III, 441). The Arm. word for 600, ner (from Sumerian nēru, via Gk. nēros '600', see G. B. Dahaukyan, 'Ob akkadskikh začimtvovalnyakh v armianskom yazyke,' P-bH, 1980, 3, 111, citing H. Açafean; see also our note on the Arm. Book of the Six Thousand in Ch. 5), would have lent further weight to a correspondence already established between Nero and the number of the Antichrist, if indeed the name of the number in Greek did not influence the equation in the first place (on 666, see Ch. 14). The journey of Tiridates would have been viewed by Christians as a demonic parody of the adoration of the Magi. In Cappadocian Greek, the word nēria, used in folksongs, means 'Charon, or Death' (HAB, op. cit.), and may be related to Arm. Nerēn.

47. Pliny, op. cit. n. 45: magicis etiam cenis initiaverat.

48. See Arm. Gr., 119 and Ch. 15.

49. See M. Boyce and F. Kotwal, 'Zoroastrian bēj and drōn - I,' BSOAS, 34, 1971, 1, 56.


51. See AHM, 34.

52. C. M. Daniels, 'The Role of the Roman Army in the Spread and Practice of Mithraism,' Mithraic Studies, II, 251. Evidence was noted in the preceding chapter of the legionaries at Satala, where there seems to have been a temple of Anahit.

53. The site is attested in Urartean records as Giarniani, conquered by king Argišt I in 782 B.C.; see N. V. Harutjunyan, Biainili (Urartu), Erevan, 1970, 211, 428. It is unlikely that the imposing colonnaded building at Garni had been built yet. R. D. Wilkinson, 'The Ionic Building at Garni,' REARM N.S. 16, 1982, 221-44, argues convincingly that it was a Roman tomb of the latter half of the second century A.D.

54. See B. N. Akak'elyan, Aknarkner hin Hayastani arvesti patmut'yan, Erevan, 1976, colour pls. 23-27; the scenes portray aquatic gods and fish (ibid., 92-5).


56. The first interpretation to be published was that of S. D. Lisic'yan in the daily newspaper Sovetakan Hayastan, 23 Sept. 1945; in 1946, H. Manandyan produced another reading (both are published in Akak'elyan, op. cit. n. 55). K. V. Trever published a considerably different restoration of the text, with translation, in
Nadpis o postroenii armyanskoi kreposti Garni, Leningrad, 1949. M.-I. Chaumont, following F. Feydit, persisted in reading (AURĒLIOS TIRIDATES at the head of the inscription (Recherches sur l'histoire d'Armenie, Paris, 1969, 179), comparing the title to another Gk. inscription, found on an altar at Rome, which reads AURĒLIOS PAKOROS BASILEUS MEGALĒS ARMENIAS 'Aurelius Pacorus, king of Greater Armenia' (cit. by S. T. Eremyan, 'Vaşarş II-i Konaşakakan haraberut'yunnerē Hroni ev Partevneri het,' P-bH, 1976, 4, 37, = Corpus inscriptionum graecorum, 6559). As is seen in our Pl. 2, there is an ample margin to the left of the inscribed part of the smooth surface of the stone, and no chance whatsoever of a lacuna; the reading AURĒLIOS is utterly impossible.


58. Restoring Gk. anaks or anaktor from ana....

59. Restoring naidion from nai....

60. Gk. litourgos; the word can also mean one who performs a public service, or a minister, cf. the statement in the later mosaic that the artist laboured without receiving wages; perhaps a similar service is referred to here. The correct spelling of the Gk. word is leitourgos; the form here indicates iotisation.

61. Restoring spēlaion from sp.... One thinks immediately of the Mithraic spēlaeum, but the reading is wholly hypothetical.

62. Gk. metamate.

63. Arm. vkey 'witness' is to be derived from Pth. wigān. In Pth. Manichaean texts, Mithra is called dābah ud wigān 'judge and witness', see Boyce, 'On Mithra in the Manichaean pantheon,' op. cit., 53, and Yt. X.92.

64. On the equestrian figures, see Ch. 3. It is apposite to note here the use of the equestrian figure in other cultures under Iranian influence to symbolize the defeat of evil powers, a theme appropriate to Mithra. In the Dura Mithraeum, Mithra is shown mounted, though as a hunter, not a soldier. The whole scene is drawn directly, as it seems, from Pth. Zor. iconography (on the fire altars and cypresses in the Mithraeum, see this writer's discussion of Pēvand in the art. 'Armeno-Iranica,' Boyce Festschrift [in press]). The triumphant Mordechai is shown as a Pth. rider in the Purim Fresco of the Dura Synagogue, whilst the vanquished Haman is depicted as a slave-groom in Roman dress (see D. Tawil in JNES 38.2, Apr. 1979, 95-7 and figs. 1-3). In Christian art, St George is often shown on horseback, stabbing a dragon; this scene finds a Jewish parallel in the scene of a mounted Solomon smiting a demoness (Lilith?) on an antique gem (see F. M. and J. H. Schwartz in Museum Notes of the American Numismatic Society 24, New York, 1979, 184-6). Both scenes are most likely inspired by the Pth. Zor. image of Mithra.
65. ANH, 96.

66. See Sahinyan, op. cit. n. 26, 173.


70. Ebuli, p. 27 (II).


72. The name Mher, pronounced Mêher, is to be traced to a Pth. form attested in the name Meherdotes (i.e., Mithradates), the brother of Osroes and father of Sanatruces (Arm. Santruk), early second century A.D. (see N. C. Debevoise, A Political History of Parthia, Chicago, 1938, 235).


74. Ibid., 317.

75. MA I, 351.

76. On the shared Zoroastrian aspects of these two Christian feasts, see Ch. 12.

77. The phrase is a borrowing from NP. Compare to this image the tradition, preserved by Porphyrius and Dio Chrysostom, that Zoroaster dwelt in a cave adorned to represent the world and the various heavenly bodies; the cave was located in the side of a mountain (A. V. W. Jackson, Zoroaster, The Prophet of Ancient Iran, New York, 1899, repr. 1965, 34 & n. 3). One recalls also the tradition of the cave in the Mons Victorialis where the Magi are said to have awaited the Holy Nativity, which is itself often referred to in Arm. books as having occurred in a cave (see Ch. 13).

78. H. Örbeli, Haykakan herosakan ëposê, Erevan, 1956, 52-3.


82. Avdalbegyan, *op. cit.*, 46.


85. See Avandapatum, pp. 97, 224, 241, 262, 269; *AHR*, 154; and Avdalbegyan, *op. cit.*, 48.

86. Yt. X.55.
Pl. 1: The building at Garni.
Nabû

In the Babylonian pantheon of the first millennium B.C., Nabû, a god of Sumerian origins whose Babylonian name appears to be derived from a Semitic base nbi- 'to call', was regarded as the first son of the god Marduk. During the autumnal akītu-festival, the Babylonian king would proceed to the nearby cult centre of Nabû, Borsippa, where the image of the god was ceremonially removed from its place; it was Nabû's task to journey to the underworld and bring his father Marduk from there. The akītu-festival was a celebration of the rebirth of nature, symbolised by the release of Marduk from his captivity beneath the earth; the imprisonment of Marduk and his release by Nabû are connected with the essential symbolism of the festival. Nabû might thus have been seen as an emissary and guide between this world and the next, a function which will be seen also in the Armenian Tir, and the Armenian Christian Groz. In Susiana, Nabû's underworld journeys may perhaps be reflected in the attribution to him of chthonic powers, symbolised by the serpent. But this is not a clearly recorded function of Nabû. He seems to have been identified with the planet Mercury, the swiftest of the planets. He was also the sage and scribe of the gods, the divine inventor of script (Sumerian DINGIR.Dim.sar), and his temple generally had a library attached to it. Nabû fixed the destiny of man; as the swiftest luminary in the sky, he could be regarded as the messenger of the will of the gods, and as inventor of writing, he recorded past and future events. The art of writing was learned by the Iranians from Mesopotamia, and the first element in the word for scribe, CP dipivâra-, MP dabîr, Arm. loan-word ēpur, came from Akkadian dipi 'writing, record.' To a certain extent, the Iranians always regarded writing as foreign and even demonic: the Sāh-nāme attributes its invention to the diivas. This sense of the uncanny might, correspondingly, have applied to the god connected with the scribal art. It will be seen that the scribal god was disliked and feared as the Arm. Groz. The Armenian god
Tir, who possessed many of the attributes of Nabū, was called the scribe of Ormizd; in later centuries, when the name Tir was suppressed or forgotten, the god was to be remembered simply as the sinister Gro± 'the writer' of human destiny, who comes to men when they are to die.

As the planet Mercury, Nabū was equated with Hermēs in Hellenistic times, but his main Greek counterpart was Apollōn, the god of writing and the arts, who was identified astrally not with Mercury but with the Sun. In the Middle East and Cyprus, Apollōn was associated with death and the underworld; he is linked with Resēp, the shooter of plague arrows, and it appears that as a sun god associated with death he was associated also with the Iranian Mithra. In the temple of Nabū at Palmyra there is a bas-relief of a curly-haired, youthful god with a rayed nimbus around his head. He is flanked by two eagles in side view, their bodies turned towards him and their heads facing the nimbus crossing his head. The same scene is shown as the ornamentation of a temple pediment in a graffito found at Khirbet Abū Dūhūr, northwest of Palmyra, dated A.D. 147. The god depicted is presumably Nabū-Apollōn. A similar scheme, of two eagles flanking an eight-rayed star, but without the face of the god, was the most common ornament on the tiaras of the Artaxiad kings of Armenia on their coins; we shall examine the symbolic significance of this scene below.

The cult of Nabū, or Nebo, survived in Sasanian Mesopotamia: a martyrrology preserved in Syriac relates that Sābuhr II (A.D. 309-379) commanded a general named Muʿāʾin to abandon Christianity and to worship Nebo and other gods. As his Semitic name indicates, Muʿāʾin was most likely neither an Iranian nor a Zoroastrian, and the Sasanian king was therefore probably not referring to Tir, the Zoroastrian yazata he himself worshipped.

In the Christian literature of fifth-century Armenia, the name of Nabū in Deuteronomy 32.49 is simply transliterated as Nabaw, the diphthong aw probably pronounced ʌ, and is not translated into Tir. In an Armenian MS of the Book of Acts cited by Ananikian and Akārean, a marginal gloss explains Hermēs as Tir dîk 'the god Tir,' Tir understood here as the bearer of divine decrees, but this addition was probably made several hundred years after the translation of the Bible by the school of Maštoc early in the fifth century. The translators rendered
Dionysos as Spandaramet in Maccabees (see Ch. 10), so they did not always feel constrained to transliterate the names of pagan divinities from the Greek rather than translate them into terms more familiar to the Armenian reader. Movses Xorenac'i (II.27), following Labubna of Edessa (Arm. Єрзубна Єдесиач'i), gives the names of the four Semitic deities of Abgar of Edessa (called the king of Armenia in the Arm. tr.) as Nabog, Bēl, Baṭ'nik'āl, and Tārat'ā, with MS. variant readings Nabag, Nabat, and Nabok, for 'Nabog' (i.e., Nabû). The Arm. text of Labubna gives Neboy, Bēl, Baṭ'nik'āl, and Tārat'ā. Nabog, etc., may be a Sasanian MP. form of the name with wk for final ō. The Armenians, it will be seen, tended to identify Tir more often with Apollōn than with Hermes.

Iranian Tir(i)

The name Tir is nowhere to be found in the Avesta, yet this yazata is extremely prominent in Zoroastrianism. The fourth month and the thirteenth day of each month bear his name, and theophoric names with Tir- are numerous in Iranian. These show that Tir was a divinity of importance in Achaemenian times: the names Teriyadā and Tiridad(d)ā are found on Elamite tablets, and a silver libation bowl found at Tel el-Maskhuta in Egypt, dated ca. 300 B.C., bears the Iranian name TRYPRN, Gk. *Tiriphernes, in Aramaic letters.

It seems that the cult of Nabû was adopted by the Western Iranians, who assimilated Nabû to their own, probably minor, stellar divinity Tir. Gershevitch has suggested that the name is to be derived from a root tr- meaning 'to move swiftly,' because of the swift movement of the planet Mercury. The aspect of the God Tir as scribe and master of destiny is preserved in modern Persian tradition, which assigns epithets to Mercury such as dabīr-i falak 'scribe of fate' and ahtar-i dānīš 'star of knowledge'; an Arabic name of Mercury, al-Kātib 'the writer' similarly preserves the memory of Nabû. From Sasanian Iran is found the MP. name *Dabīrbōxt 'saved by the Scribe (i.e., Tir)' on a seal.

In order for Tir(i) to be worshipped by Zoroastrians, it was necessary that he be somehow equated with an Avestan divinity, Tištrya. Tištrya is identified with the star Sirius and is pictured...
in the Avesta as bringing rain and fighting Apaōša, the demonic personification of drought, none of these functions are shared by Tir, but Nabū as the planet Mercury was associated with the coming of 'life-giving rain and flood' in Babylonia, and *Tīrikāna- was a rain-festival. This important function thus linked Tīri-Nabū and Tīštrya.

The elaboration of astrological ideas by the Zoroastrians, probably in Sasanian times but at any rate centuries after the adoption of Tir, presented a system in which the planets were essentially maleficent in their influence in opposition to the beneficent stars. Thus in the Greater Bundahishn 57.7.12, we are told that Tīr ast Apōš dēw, Tīštar mad 'Mercury, which is the demon Apōš, came to (oppose) Sirius.'

Several lines later, Tir is described as doing good to the good and bad to the bad, since his power is equal to that of Sirius (Tīštar, i.e., Tīštrya). In another Pahlavi text, Șahristānīhā i Frām, which enumerates the provincial capitals of the Iranian empire, Babylon is mentioned as having been built by Bēbēl during the reign of Yima, u-š Tīr abēxtar ĕy be bast 'and by him the planet Tīr was bound.' Zoroastrians perhaps drew a distinction between Tīr the planet and Tīr the yazata in this case, but the association of Tīr with Babylon suggests some recognition of his place of origin.

Armenian Tir, Tiwr

Agathangelos gives his name in the genitive singular, Tri dīc, from *Tīr dīc 'the god Tir'. In the Venice 1835 and Tiflis 1883 editions of Arm. Agathangelos is found another form, Tiwr, which is not attested in MSS, however, according to Thomson. It seems that Tir is the more common form and the primary one, Tiwr being a variant. As a possible analogy one might adduce the names of the Arm. province of Siwnik (POswstos Buzand, Elisē, Lazar POarpeci) and of the dynastic house that ruled it, Sisakan. The Pth. form of the name Siwnik is SYKNI (SKZ, line 2), and Lagarde suggested a base si- with Ir. endings -k-ān. But there is also a mountain, Siws, near Artašat, which suggests the possibility of a base Sis-/Siws- in Arm. producing *Siwenik Siwnik and Sis-a-kan. This suggestion is supported also by the existence of the Arm. proper names Siws and Sis; the former being the name of a Bishop of the Mamikonian dynastic house ordained by
St. Gregory the Illuminator, the latter found in the forms Sisis, Sisak and Bahram-Sis. The latter was an eighth-century marzbān of Xurāsān, while the first two are names of Armenians attested by Strabo and Movses Xorenac'i respectively. It is likely that the form Siws is an expansion of an Iranian name, Sis, and the form Tiwr may have developed in a similar way. The meaning of sīs seems to be '(noble) lineage, seed', from OP. cīga-, Av. cīthra-, e.g. Sisaphernēs, OIr. *cīthrafarman-. Sisakan would then mean something like 'noble domain', cf. Arm. Vaspurakan. This would explain also the name of St Sisinnius as a Hellenisation of MP. *Sīs-in 'noble'; the saint was reputed by tradition to have been a Parthian knight. Even if, as has been suggested recently, the name as used in amulets was in fact derived from a different, Aramaic appellation, it could have served well as a generic name for any brave Iranian demon-slayer (a Parthian, one adds, from Western Iran). (The name Sisinnius is known, of course, as that of a princely Parthian disciple of Mani in the third century; the fame of this missionary perhaps influenced the development of the Christian figure.)

The name of Tir is attested also in the name of the fourth month of the Armenian calendar—-as in the Zoroastrian—-Trē. The fourth month is called Teirei in the Cappadocian calendar (written in Greek letters). The form Teirei has been analysed as derived from Tīstrya-, the genitive of Tīstrya- in Avestan, but this is unlikely to be true, as the Zoroastrian and Armenian names are both clearly derived from Tīr, not from Tīstrya. The ending -ē in Trē may be Iranian, the oblique form of an old ending *-akaI, with the loss of -I- in Tir. It is also proposed that Arm. Trē derives from Achaemenian Tirāya. Less likely is the Classical Arm. dative ending -ē, as in ī tuē 'by day, in the daytime', or -ē as a shortening of gen. sing. -eāy, as in the modern Arm. dialect of Meāri, māhrōrē 'Day of death' (gen. sg.); the gen. of Trē is in fact attested as Treay. A folk etymology provided by Grigor Tat'evac'i (fourteenth century) in his Girk karosat'een, or koc'i Jmečan hator, published at Constantinople in 1740, confuses the proper name Tir with Arm. tēr 'Lord': Trē ztērmanān xorhrunān asē, yorēm tireq' Astuac i veray araracoc, 'Trē means the mystery of the Lord, when God ruled over the creatures.' Although the error of the
mediaeval Christian scholar is clear, it is often less apparent when one is dealing with proper names whether the theophoric element is Tir or tēr, i.e., Zoroastrian or Christian. In the case of Tiruk, an Armenian priest of Zarišat in Vanand mentioned by Movsēs Xorenac'i III.65, for instance, it is not clear whether his name contains Tir or not, although he lived fairly early, in the first half of the fifth century.

A case where no doubt exists is that of Tiribazos, one of the two satraps of Armenia to whom Xenophon refers in his Anabasis, ca. 401 B.C. The other satrap was Orontes, father of the Orontid dynasty of Armenia and Commagene. Tiribazus, we are told, helped the Persian King of Kings Artaxerxes Mnemon to mount his horse, and was later made commander of the royal forces. 31 It was the same Tiribazos who caused to be minted a number of silver coins in Cilicia bearing the characteristic Assyrian/Achaemenian winged figure surmounted by the upper part of a man's body, naked and Hellenic in appearance. 32

The Elamite form Tiridad(d)a was cited above; the same name occurs as Tiridatēs in the Greek inscription at Garni of Trdat I, the first Arsacid king of Armenia, ca. A.D. 65-70. 33 About two centuries later, Trdat III led the Armenian people to embrace the faith of Christ. His name is found in the Greek variants Tiridatēs, Tērdatēs, Tēridatēs, Tēridatos, Tiridatos, Syriac Turadatis and Latin Tiridates. 34

Tīrit, son of Artašēs, son of Tiran II, loved Pēranjam, wife of Gnel, whom he accused falsely before King Aršak in a romantic legend preserved by Pēawstos Buzand IV.5. 35 The other theophoric names with Tir are Tir Sagratuni (fifth century); Tiran (comp. King Teiranēs of the Bosporus, A.D. 276-9), a royal name of the Artaxiads and Arsacids (MX I.31, II.54; PēB III.5,12); Tiroc Gucuni, tenth century 36 and Tiroc Arcruni, a companion of St. Gregory the Illuminator (TēA I.9,10); Tīrikēs, son of a kūrm 'Zoroastrian priest' taught by Gregory the Illuminator and made a Bishop (Agath. 845); Tiranam, a deacon, companion of Catholicos Hērsēs the Great, fourth century (PēB IV.6); Tirik, Bishop of Basean, late fourth century; Tīričan, mentioned by Stepēanos of Siwnik, eighth century, occurs also in a Georgian martyrology; 37 Tiraxosrov, mentioned by Stepēanos of Siwnik; 38 Tirot, Abbot of Śaḵat, fifth century; 39 Varaz-tiroc and Varaz-trdat. 40

Several toponyms are known which probably contain the name Tir. The Milky Way is called the Tirkan or Tirakan gōti 'Tir's belt'; Ališan
and Hübschmann mention a village called Tirafie in Bagrewand, with the common Pth. toponymical suffix -afie (see AON, Arm. ed., 274 and our Ch. on Mithra for Baga-(y)a afie); in the Ch. on Anahit is discussed the temple on the mountain of Tirinkatar at which she was worshipped, and it is likely that the word may be analyzed as Tirin 'belonging to Tir' (adj., also as a proper name in the Aramaic letter from Avroman, *TPRYN*) and katar 'pinnacle, summit'; there was a village of Trētuk in SiitCkC, SiwnikC, the name of which probably is formed of Trē- and a suffix from Arm. tu- 'give'.

Agathangelos tells us of the decision of King Trdat III of Armenia to destroy the Zoroastrian temples of the city of Artaxata (Arm. *Artasat*):

> isk andēn vaľaľaľi tćagaworn inkćnišxan hramanaw, ew amonecćun hawanućamb, gore i jeň tayr eranelwoyn Grigori, zį zyaľaľajagoyn zhayrensken hnamećn naxmećn ew zjiv karceal astuacs ĉastuacs anuaneal afnel, ĵnįel i mįjow. Apa inkćn isk tćagaworn xalayr gmyr amenayn zawrawkćn handerj i Vaľaršapat kćalakć ēertćal yArtasat kćalakć, awerel and zbagins Anahtakan dicćn, ew or zĘrazamoyn telisn anuaneal kayr. Mex dipeal i ĺanapari erazacćoyć ěrazahan pastaman Trć dic, dpri gitućean kćrmecć, anuaneal Diwan grćći Ormzdī, usman ĺartarūćean mehean: nax i na jeň arkeal kćakeal ayreal awereal kćandeććin (Agath. 778). 'At that the king, by his autocratic command and with the consent of all, placed the work in the hands of the blessed Gregory swiftly, that the latter might erase utterly and consign to oblivion (those whom) his native ancestors of ancient days and he himself had thought gods, calling them false gods. And he, the king himself, moved out with all his armies from Vaľaršapat to go to the city of Artasat, in order to destroy there the bagins (i.e., image shrines) of the god Anahit, and also that one which stood in the place called Erazamoyn. On the road they first came upon the temple (mehean, see Ch. on Mithra) of learning and eloquence, of the dream-displaying (erazacćoyć), dream-interpreting (erazahan) worship of the god Tir, the scribe (dpri, gen of dpir) of the wisdom of the priests, called the Archive of the writer (grćć) of Ormzdī. First they set to work, smashed it, burned it, ruined it and destroyed it. MSS of the text have variants erazanacćoyć and erazandhan for erazacćoyć and erazahan; as was noted above, two printed editions have the variant tiwr dicć.
with the former word apparently in the nominative, but this form is not attested by MSS.

This is the only explicit mention of the temple of Tir in Armenian literature, but Movses Horenac'i (II.12,49) refers to a statue of Apollōn transferred from the Eruandid (Orontid) capital, Armawir, to the newly-built city of Artasat. This is probably a reference to Tir, and suggests that the cult existed in the Eruandid period. Horenac'i also mentions a certain magus in the time of Artasēs who was a erazahan 'dream interpreter' and may therefore have had some connection to the cult of Tir: Artasēs had Eruz, high priest and brother of Eruan, put to death, and in the place of Eruz i veray bagmac'o kac'uc'canē zentani Artasēsi, ašakert mogi orum erwazhanāni, or yawn saks ev Mogpāštē anum kardayin 'over the image-shrines he appointed a relative of Artasēs, the pupil of a certain magus who was an interpreter of dreams; they called the name (of that pupil) for that reason also Mogpāštē' (MX II.48). The word erazahan is attested in Gen. 41.8,24 and Deut. 13.1,3,5 in the Armenian translation of the Bible. The meaning of erazamoyn has never been fully explained, however. In the Greek version of Agathangelos, where the temple of Trīdis (sic., Tri dic) is explained in an interpolation as bōmos Apollōnos 'the altar of Apollōn', erazamoyn is rendered as oneiromousos, translating eraz 'dream' and interpreting the second part of the word, -moyn, as having something to do with a Muse, perhaps because of the slight similarity of the sound of the two words -moyn and musos. Eraz is probably an Iranian loan-word, as suggested by Patkanean a century ago, from OIr. rāz-, which occurs in Biblical Aramaic with the meaning 'secret'. The word can be analyzed by analogy to Arm. erāni 'blessed' from OIr. *rānya-; 47 Arm. erak 'vein', Phl. rag; 48 Arm. erāx 'guarantee', from OIr. *raxi-, comp. Skt. rakṣa 'guarantee'; 49 and the proper name Erazmēk (PēB IV.15), from Phl. rezam 'war'. 50 There is an Arm. toponym, Erazgawork- Sirakwan, 51 and an unexplained hapax legomenon, (y)erazgay(ic) (abl. pl.) which may contain the element eraz 'dream', in the writings of the tenth-century mystic Gregory of Narek. 52 Strabo mentions a city in Armenia called Anarīkē where prophecies were made for sleepers, presumably by interpretation of their dreams; Marquart connected the name of the city with Arm. anur ̣ 'dream'. The city was
apparently located near the country of the Mardoi, i.e., near the Median frontier. Its name almost certainly means 'non-Iranian'.

The suffix -moyn is found in Classical and Modern Armenian in the compound covamoyyn 'drowned' with cov 'sea'. In Classical Armenian is found hawramoyn 'eupator' (Agath. 13, ew kam vasp hawramoyn ka'yut ensan Trdatay 'or also about the bravery of Trdat like his father's'; I Macc. 6.17, II Macc. 10.10 hawramoyn Antioch). Moyn alone is translated as 'beauty, floridity, grace', while tmoyn with negating prefix t- and cCaramoyn with cCar 'evil' mean 'discolored' and 'unhappy' respectively. The basic meaning appears to be 'like', the concepts of 'like' and 'color' being closely allied, comp. Arm. pês 'like', connected to Av. pâsa- 'leprous', and Arm. pês-pês 'multicolored'. The toponym Erazamoyn probably means something like 'Dream-like' or 'Belonging to Dream'. In numerous cultures, dreams are regarded as messages from God or as signs of one's destiny, and to this day many Armenians consult erazahans, books which interpret the symbols of dreams and assist the reader to interpret the intimations of his fate that he has been granted in his sleep. The interpretation of dreams would have been an activity appropriate to Tir, the scribe of destiny.

In Ch. 5 it was noted that most Armenian writers draw a careful distinction between the Pth. or Middle Atropatenian, NW Middle Iranian form of the name of the Creator, Ahura Mazda, Aramazd, and the Middle Persian formOrmizd (Phl. Ohrmazd). The former is the name of the Zoroastrian God whom their ancestors worshipped; the latter is the God of the militant, iconoclastic Sasanian church. Agathangelos uses the name Ormizd once only, in the case of Tir; when writing of the other Zoroastrian shrines, he uses the name Aramazd. It is unlikely that he uses the form, then, because he lived in Sasanian times, or because he was unaware of the difference between the two forms. Iranian and Zoroastrian tradition stressed oral recitation and memorization rather than written records, particularly in the case of sacred texts, and medieval records indicate that the Arewordix, a surviving remnant of the Armenian Zoroastrian community, did indeed transmit religious learning orally from father to son. But Momses Korenac i refers to temple records in various meheans across Armenia, and in matters concerning ancient tradition of this kind, the much maligned patmahayr 'Father of
History' may well be right, even as archaeological finds of the past two decades have proven the existence of the inscribed boundary-markers set up by Artases (in Aramaic with Iranian or Armenian names and words, as it happens) to which he refers. Thus we must probably eliminate another possible explanation for the use ofOrmizd, namely, that the institution of a temple archive was an innovation introduced to Armenia by the Sasanians.

Yet it is well known that Zoroastrian shrines established by the Achaemenian Persians in Asia Minor continued to be maintained by the Iranian faithful long after Iranian power had receded from the area; in the Christian centuries, the rites of these magusaioi were described with disapproval by Byzantine writers. Evidence of a southwestern Iranian presence in Armenia exists in political chronicles, and, what is perhaps more important to the subject of the present investigation, in religious vocabulary and in a toponym: the word sandaramet and proper name Spandaramet have long been recognized as loan-words from SW and NW Iranian respectively, and the geography of Claudius Ptolemaeus (second century A.D.) cites the name of an Armenian town called Magoustana. The introduction of the word sandaramet into Armenian cannot be dated with precision, and may go back to the Achaemenians. We have referred to the boundary-markers inscribed in Aramaic which were erected by Artases in the mid-second century B.C. On the boundary-stone found at Zangesur in Siunik, the king's name is rendered as ['Irth[eys], a form corresponding to Lydian Artakṣasa, Gk. Artaxessēs, Artaxias, Artaxas, Artaxēs, and, indeed, to the Armenian form itself. Another boundary stone found at Telaut on the river Akstev north of Erevan has the name of the king in the forms 'Irtrksrk[s]s, 'irtsrkssy, apparently a transliteration of the oldest Gk. form of OP. Artaksāthra-: Artaxerxes. Whether this is a conscious archaism on the part of the scribe, or whether it is the survival of a Greco-Achaemenid form, cannot be determined on existing evidence. But it may indicate the persistence of such Achaemenian Persian tradition in the Armenia of the second century before Christ. This hypothesis may seem less farfetched if one considers the pride taken by the Orontids in their Persian ancestry. One recalls the boast of Mithridates Kallinikos, an Orontid king of Commagene, which was a small state to
southwest of Greater Armenia. In his great inscription at Arsameia on
the river Nymphaios, he calls upon patrícious hapantas theous ek
Persídos te kai Maketídos 'all (my) paternal gods, from Persia and from
Macedon. Artaxias, too, must have been proud of his Achaemenian
heritage; it seems likely that the descendants of Persian colonists
would have been welcome to reside in his kingdom and to follow the ways
of their ancestors, even as he exalted his own.

Movses Xorenac'i refers to Mogpastē, a relative of Artasēs whom
the king made high priest and who had been apprenticed to a certain mog
'Magus' who was a erazahan 'interpreter of dreams'. The common Arm.
word for a priest of the pre-Christian religion of the country was
kurm 'priest'; mrunpet 'high priest' (with Mr. suffix -pet). The
terms mog and mogpet are used often with reference to the Persians and
to the Sasanian mogutCwn 'priesthood of Magi'. Although recording a
tradition attributed to Artasēs, Movses may be using the terminology of
the Arsacid period, for the word mog is used by Elīše to refer to the
Sasanian clergy of the fifth century A.D., and erazahan in Agathangelos
must also be the usage of that century, the earliest time at which the
Arm. text of his history could have been written, for it was early in
that century that Mastoc C invented the Armenian script.

It is possible that the temple of Tir at Artasat, the place where
dreams were interpreted by Magi, was a sanctuary of the Persians, re-
ferred to, therefore, with the name Ormizd instead of Aramazd, where
Armenian kurms, however, were trained in the scribal art. It was a
logical place for them to learn it; until the Christian Mastoc C, Armenia
had no script of its own save the Aramaic inherited from the chancel-
leries of the Achaemenian empire. In the inscriptions cited above,
Aram. trb may render Mr. nēv, Arm. kāj as an ideogram, and qirbr is
probably an ideogram of Mr. tàga-bāra-, Arm. tagwor 'king', lit.
crown-bearing'. But the Armenian-Aramaic system is attested only to
date in a number of boundary steles, the texts of which are all short
and fairly similar in content, an inscription in Aramaic from Garni,
and a brief inscription incised on the rim of a silver bowl giving the
name of the owner, Irhstšt *Ararzst, and rmk, perhaps a Mr. word mean-
ing 'bowl'.

There is no evidence to indicate that the use of this Aramaic de-
veloped further in Armenia; it seems to have been confined to brief
inscriptions of a practical or administrative type. But the Armenians did use Pahlavi, according to Movses Xorenaci, and it is reasonable to assume that their kurms went to the academy attached to the temple of Tir at Artasat to learn dprutaw, the scribal art. Movses Xorenaci at the beginning of his history refutes the argument that the Armenians had few books because they had no writing and constant wars made literary activity impossible: Ayl oc arderew aysokik karcecal linen: kenzigtnin ew mjoc leal paterazmacn, ew gir Parsic ew Yunac, orovk ay zm giwic ew gawarc, ews ew iwrak encivr tanc. aramjnakunc eanc, ew hanurc haka rakuteanc ew dasanc ay zm ar mez gtanin anbaw zrac mateank, manawand or i sep haken azatuteann e payazutaw. 'But they do not think this with justification, because there were intervals between the wars, and (there are) the script(s) of the Persians and the Greeks, in which there are found now amongst us innumerable books of tales of villages, provinces, private families and public controversies and treaties, and particularly the succession of the nobility.' Later Movses relates that Mastoc in the early fifth century was unable to find a skilled secretary from amongst the scribes (i dprac, abl. pl. of dpir) of the Armenian King Vramsapuh, kenziparskakanawm var sin grov 'because they used the Persian script' (MX III:52). Although Pahlavi and Greek were used extensively in Armenia, together with Syriac in the century or so between the conversion of the nation to Christianity and the invention by Mastoc of the Arm. alphabet, most of the letters devised by Mastoc seem to be based on forms of the Aramaic scripts used at Hatra, Palmyra and Armazi in Northern Mesopotamia and Georgia and at Gafni and Seven in Armenia (Arm. a,b,g,d,x,o,em,t,k,l,m,n,p,k,c,r,š,tc), while a number for which Aramaic equivalents do not exist were derived from Pahlavi (Arm. š,š,š,š,c from Phl. ĽĽ; Arm. Ľ from Phl. ž ž y; and Arm. v,w from Phl. ĽĽ t v). The vowels probably derived from Greek. 76

The Grok 'writer'

In Classical Armenian, the word for writer is either the Ir. loanword dpir or the native Armenian gric, (as in Agath. 778, supra), which is formed from the native Armenian stem gir 'write' with the suffix -ic denoting an agent. The form grok, 'writer' formed with the agent suffix -aw, is not found in Classical Armenian texts, and the suffix
itself is rare in early texts; the earliest attestation of the word grok is in the early mediaeval Girkæk Vastakoc: Șoyt pakea ew cepcaea, or șd șcmtan, zi iwr grok șdn ș 'Quickly close and seal it lest the air enter, for its grok is in the air'.77 In modern Arm. -ok is the ending of the present participle active, and the word grok is the common noun 'writer'; the use of the (now) participial form in this way may be influenced by Turkish, in which the participial ending -er/-ar forms agent nouns: yaz-ar 'writer', yaz-ar-lar 'writers', comp. Arm. grok, nom. pl. groâner.

In mediaeval and modern Arm. texts is encountered a supernatural being called the Grok. A mediaeval interpreter of Gregory the Theologian wrote, Sovorut șiwm ș ax tac șloc or am bastanen zmahn, zhrestaņ or Gröņ asen: Anirew ș datastand, bûnut șsâmb tanik 'It is customary for the sick to rebuke death, the angel they call Gröņ, (saying): "Your judgement is unjust. You bear (me) away by force."' And in the mediaeval Ahtark, an astrological book, we receive this helpful advice: Ov or zGröņ teni, ov zir hogin arnul lini, ew inkên i hegovar șlini i yerazin, yağnâm meley asel piti 'He who sees in a dream that the Grok is come to take his soul away and he himself is about to expire, must say the "I have sinned" (prayer)' .78 M. Emin, G. Lapcanc and other Armenian scholars long ago perceived the identity of the Grok with the ancient dpir 'scribe' and yazata of destiny, Tir, the messenger of heaven.79

In the region of Mus it was believed that the Grok is blind, and that he puts a piece of bread on one's mouth to lure the soul away, hence the curse zGrokî brduc șnim berand 'I would put the Grok's crust on your mouth!' .80 In the Vaspurakan region, there were clairvoyants called Grok âgir 81 who could predict their own deaths and those of others; the late nineteenth-century Armenian ethnographer E. Lalayan was told of Yoro of Narek, who was working in his field one day when the Grok arrived and told him his time was up. He said farewell to his friends, went home, and died an hour later.82

The Grok âgir may have also incorporated some of the functions of the ancient erazahan, since the citation from the Ahtark above mentions the Grok in connection with dreams. A modern Armenian idiom, grok șapcêl, lit. 'to measure the grok', is explained as stretching
out the palm of one's hand towards the face of another to curse him. Father Xažak Barsamean, who was born at Arapkir, Turkey (Western Armenia) in 1951, told this writer of a man of Arapkir named Nsan Tascean who was a clairvoyant and who once caused faces to appear on the palm of the hand of Fr. Xažak's mother as though on a screen; he was reputed to be in possession of a manuscript of the esoteric Vec'hazareak 'Book of Six Thousand', a magical text containing sections on angelology, astrology and other subjects.

In Armenian tradition, the role of the Grož has been assumed by the Angel Gabriel, who is called the Grož outright by the inhabitants of Xotorjur. As such, the Grož is regarded as a benevolent being; according to one tradition recorded by Armenian ethnographers late in the nineteenth century, the Grož is an angel who sits on one's right shoulder and inscribes one's good deeds; another angel seated on the left shoulder records transgressions. One of these protects the grave; the other conveys the soul to Heaven. Because the Grož is an angel, it is considered a sin to curse him. The manuscript illuminator Cerun shows an angel labelled Gabriel removing the soul of the Holy Mother of God from her dead body and carrying it off to Heaven, in a Gospel from Ostan, Armenia dated A.D. 1391. Implicit in the prohibition against cursing the Grož, and in his identification with one of the most prominent archangels of Christianity (an equation made also, incidentally, with Vahagu), is the conviction that the Grož is not a personification of death, but rather the servant of God's judgement and the being who guides the souls of the newly deceased to Heaven.

The play between Gabriel of the Annunciation and Gabriel the Grož becomes the subject of discourse between the rose and nightingale of medieval Armenian minstrel poetry. In the poem Tağ yArak'el vardepeti esac'el i veray vardi ev kiwlpiali 'Song said by the priest Arak'el of Balâş, modern Bitlis, fifteenth century] about the rose and nightingale', the nightingale is Gabriel come to proclaim the coming of Christ to Mary, who is the rose. But in the Tal vasn vardi ev bbuli 'Song about the rose and nightingale' of Mrtiç'el Nelâş (fifteenth century), where the roles are reversed, Bbuli'n i varn asac', xist anôkorn es, Or zim arun k'ez halal ku dnes, Or hanc'c pêkuman du Gabriël es, Na arek sa zhogis, k'ani du tanjes 'The nightingale said to the rose, "You are
quite merciless, for you make my blood your own (halal, from Arabic halāl ‘permissible (i.e., to shed or to consume)’, hence in medieval Arm. ‘correct’, hence ‘one’s own’); Undoubtedly you are Gabriel. /Come on, take my soul then. How much longer will you torment me?" 90 The sixteenth-century minstrel Nahapet Kəucəsk wrote a number of short poems called hayrəns in which he complains of the Grok, who will separate him from his beloved: Ays astenoris vera erku ban oğorm u lali: /Mek or siro ter lini, mek or ga grohn u tani. /Məxan gən nəgən lali, or uni zuur xoc’n alani, /Ekəc, zəkərmus tesək, ocə mefəc ə, ocə kendani. 'In this world two things are lamentable and to be pitied: /One is when one is a lover (lit. 'master of love'); the other is that the Grok comes and takes one away. /I do not bewail one dead, whose wound is readily seen. /Come, behold me, the wretched one, neither dead nor quick.' Həokeg, te’s təyir test‘ur, or zəcəcıkəd i yet banayi:/zəcəcıkəd palıcə anei, test‘urov i ners mənei:/Erdəvi, erdəm təyəi, ayn test‘uricə durs əcəgəyi:/Ayn incəc anəvət grok, zis i kəcəc ud ga tani. 'Little soul, if you let me open up your breast/I should make a garden of it, I should enter if you let me./I would swear not to depart from that liberty./Faithless is the Grok, who would come and from your breast remove me!' Kəcəc gunovn gini piter, xmei u harbenayi:/Kəcəc dəkə Adama drəxt, /Mtnei xnjor kəcəxəeit. /Kəcəc erku ćcam’ve joyi u kəcəun linei:/Ayn ʒəmən es həpət ńa grolin, luk təcəl ga tani. 'Would there were wine of your color; I should drink and get drunk./Your breast is Adam's paradise; I would enter there and apples resp./Between your nipples I would lie and sleep./And at that hour consign my soul to the Grok, would he only come and take it away.' 91

The Grok, even if he interrupts our earthly pleasures, is essentially a protector of man; it is believed by Armenians that during the seven-day-long journey of the soul to Heaven, a good angel with a fiery sword, presumably the Grok, defends it from evil angels so that on the dawn of the seventh day it may be judged. 92 In the Zoroastrian religion, death is an evil and is attributable to the Evil Spirit, Angra Mainyu, never to Ahura Mazda, so the yazata which removes the soul from the body and transports it to Heaven cannot be regarded as responsible for or connected to death itself. Christians regard death as dependent on the judgement of God, and again do not therefore rebuke the angel which executes judgement.
The yazata Sraosā (Phl. Srōs, NP Saroš), whose name seems to mean 'hearkening' or 'obedience', is praised in the Gāthās and is regarded by Zoroastrians as guardian of prayer, the regent of Ahura Mazdā on earth and as protector of man.93 The meaning of his name and the character of the above functions indicate also that Sraosā records—presumably in memory—the deeds of men and reports them to Ahura Mazdā. Sraosā is also the guardian of the hours between midnight and dawn, the time when demonic darkness is deepest and the forces of death are therefore strongest, requiring a powerful adversary to protect the creatures of Ahura Mazdā from them. Sraosā is very prominent in Zoroastrian funerary rites. In the Zoroastrian communities near Yazd, the priest performs a service in the name of Sroš to invoke the protection of the yazata upon a newly-deceased member of the community, and when the corpse bearers deposit the body at the dakhma, they commit it to the protection of the yazatas with these words in archaic NP:

'O Mihr Ized, Sroš Ized, Rašn Ized, the pure and just! we have withdrawn our hands from him, do you take him by the hand...'.95 These rites indicate that Sraosā, who with Mithra and Raśnu is one of the three judges of the soul after death,96 has the particular responsibility of guarding the soul before its journey to Heaven, having also observed and recalled the acts and prayers of the believer in life. These roles are similar to some of those of the Groḵ in Armenia, who, as we have seen, is to be identified with Tīr/Nabū.

We have noted above that Zoroastrianism has tended to assimilate new divinities to the accepted yazatas of the Good Religion, as appears to be the case with Tīr and Tištrya. Perhaps certain functions of Tīr which Tištrya did not assimilate were attributed to Sraosā. If this is so, it is not surprising that Sorūš is equated in Islamic Iran with Gabriel, even as the Groḵ is Gabriel to Christian Armenians. And even as Tīr was pre-eminently the scribe of Ormizd, the yazata of learning in the Religion, so we find Sorūš/Gabriel in the works of the twelfth-century Iranian Muslim mystic philosopher Sohravardī as the Angel of initiation, who imparts gnosis to men.97

Before proceeding further, one may summarize the complex career of this divinity, the Scribe of Heaven and planetary deity Mercury whom we first meet in Babylonia as Nabū: the Achaemenians are probably the
first Iranians to adopt his cult, during their campaigns in Mesopotamia. He is given an Iranian name, Tir, and is equated with Tistrya. In Armenia is found a temple of Tir where the original characteristics of Nabû are clearly discernible. The temple appears to be a Persian foundation: the scriptorium and academy attached to it, and the tradition of Achaemenian chancellery Aramaic as the lingua franca of the area, suggest that it may be an Achaemenian foundation. Armenian sources attest to the widespread use of Pahlavi in Armenia, and certain letters of the alphabet devised by Maštoc indeed seem to have been based on Pahlavi forms, as well as on letters adapted from Greek and Northern Mesopotamian Aramaic. When Armenia became Christian, the word dpir 'scribe' came to be used as a bureaucratic and ecclesiastical title, although echoes of Tir's book of destiny may be heard perhaps in the šarakan 'hymn' said by the dpirk 'clerks' at the nawakatik 'Dedication' of a Church: I patraštal ko yot'evans srboč k'oč nkal ev zmez p'rkic yordegrut' i w dprut'ean kenač 'Into thy resting-places prepared for thy Saints receive us also, O Redeemer, for adoption in the Book (dprut'ean) of Life.' Tir came to be called the Groč, 'writer', a native term of mediaeval origin, and was identified with the angel Gabriel, who carries the soul protectively to Heaven after death. In Islamic Iran we find the yazata Šroš identified with Gabriel, and an examination of the character of this yazata, Avestan Sraosha, suggests that he may have absorbed many of the functions of Tir that the cult of Tistrya did not or could not absorb.

The Crown of the Artaxiads

It was noted above that the motif of two eagles in side view flanking a nimbus-crowned god may be seen in a relief from the temple of Nabû at Palmyra; a very similar image, of two eagles flanking a star or rayed sun, is the characteristic adornment of the tiaras of the Artaxiad kings on their coins. At Hatra, an Arabo-Parthian city immediately south of Armenia, there are shown on the lintel from the South liwān two eagles in side view, with rings about their heads, flanking the bust of a god with a rayed nimbus. At Dura Europos, a fresco shows a god with rayed nimbus; he stands on a pedestal, and to either side of his head are figures bearing rings: an eagle on his right, and a winged humanoid being on his left. We propose to
analyse this image with relation to that at Palmyra, where the central figure may represent Nabû; in Armenia, the star or sun would represent Tir; the eagles flanking Tir appear to represent the royal xaran- 'glory', Arm. pašk. Tir would personify the baxt 'fortune, fate' of the king; the symbol taken as a whole, then, could represent the two concepts, which are frequently paired and seem to complement one another in meaning, if indeed they are not regarded as identical. Eznik translates MP. Zurvan as baxt kam pašk. 'fortune or glory'; we find xwarrah and baxt perhaps associated also in the Denkard: zīwīn ud xwarrah az ēnōh baxt ēstād 'life and glory were distributed from there', but in the Phl. passage baxt is merely a participial form. Still, glory is an attribute which is apportioned. The Sasanians are depicted by P'awstos Buzand (IV.24) as raiding the necropolis of the Armenian Arsacids, zi pašk t'agaworac ew baxtken ew kajut iwm aškarhis asti gneceal end oskers t'agaworacn yēxarhn mer ekescen 'so that the glory of the kings and (their) fortunes and the valor of this country here, departing with the bones of the kings may come to our country [i.e., Iran].'

Interpreters of the carvings and frescoes from Dura Europos, Palmyra and Hatra described above have generally assigned to the central figure, the god with rayed nimbus, the identity of Šamaš, the sun-god, equated with Greek Apollon. Yet in Palmyra, we find the figure in the temple of Nabû, and it is recalled that Agathanghelos identifies Tir with Apollon, as probably does Xorenaci as well. In Armenia, as we have seen, Tir is equated also with Hermès, probably because of the role of Tir as psychopomp and messenger. At Arsameia an inscription in Greek refers to Apollon-Mithra and to Hēlios-Hermès as separate deities, but they are also mentioned together at Nemrut Dağ as Apollon-Mithras-Hēlios-Hermès. The Armenian Mihr is not generally identified with the Sun, however; he is equated rather with Greek Hephaistos, in accordance with the earliest Zoroastrian concepts of Mithra. It seems, therefore, that the central star or Sun on the Armenian crown represents Tir, as the yazata of baxt 'destiny' (an Old Iranian p.part. as Mihr. loan-word in Arm. from the same root as bag- 'god', bagin 'image altar', etc.). The idea of fate as represented by a star comes down to us in the Armenian Alt'ark ('Stars'), a generic title
for works on astrology. What of the eagles that flank the star of fate, though?

**Eagles**

The eagle is regarded in nearly every culture where it is found as a royal and noble creature representing power and dominion. Bronze statuettes of eagles perched on pyramidal pedestals or on the heads of antelopes have been found at Artašat from the Armenian Arsacid period (A.D. 66-428) and on the slopes of nearby Mt. Aragac; a figure of an eagle perched on the head of an antelope was found also in Iran from the second-third century A.D.; a partially gilded Sasanian silver vase of the fifth-sixth century shows a large eagle with its wings partially spread, standing on a kneeling goat or deer; and numerous figurines similar to the Armenian examples have been found in Anatolia, particularly Cappadocia, and have been dated as early as the late second millennium B.C.

Armenian arciw/arcui, gen. arcovox 'eagle' may be a native word, but if so it is closely cognate to Av. ērēzifya- in ērēzifyōparēna- 'with eagle feathers', and recent studies suggest that arciw/arcui is a loan-word from Iranian, probably borrowed at a very early date. The word in Iranian was used as a proper name; an Aramaic inscription from Lycia informs us that 'Artim son of Arzify ('rzpy) made this ossuary (astodāna). Artim was probably the Artimas who was made Persian governor of Lycia in 401 B.C., and because he had his remains interred in an ossuary it is assumed that he was a Zoroastrian. In Armenian, the word arciw used as a proper name is found only rarely, amongst the modern inhabitants of the Caucasus. In ancient times, however, the eagle appeared on the standard carried into battle by Armenian armies (arcuēnšen'k' 'eagle-standard(s)', FCB IV.2), and in a fragment of a pre-Christian epic preserved by Movsēs Xorenac'i, becw ari ark'eyn Artasēs i seaw gelsec'ik/ Bw haneal zoskeaw ſikap'ok parem/ Bw anc'egal orpēs zarcui strat'ew ēnd getn/, Bw jgeal zoskeaw ſikap'ok parem/ čnkēc'i mēj'c arvirōdīn Alanaç 'The manly king Artasēs spurred his comely black (steed),/ took out his red leather lasso adorned with golden rings,/ and, crossing the river like a swift-winged eagle/ he cast the red leather lasso adorned with golden rings/ About the waist of the mistress [Sat'enik] of the Alans' (MX II.50). It is
probably out of desire to flatter his Bagratid patron that Xorenacci describes the latter's (probably mythical) ancestor, Smbat Bagratuni, as defeating Ervan on behalf of Arsēs at a battle in which the brave commander ibrew zarciw yerams kaz'avuc Xoyanayr 'swooped down like an eagle upon a flock of partridges' (MX II.46). Smbat was not the only naxarar to be linked with the eagle. Xorenacci (MX II.7) cites an ancient legend containing a popular etymology of the name of the Arcruni dynastic family from arciv 'eagle'. That it is in fact not a true derivation is proven by the attestation of a pre-Armenian form of the family name, Urartean Arcuniuni. The legend related by Mowsēs is probably of Iranian origin, for even from his sketchy reference the basic elements of the story are seen of the rescue of the abandoned Zāl, son of Sām, by the miraculous simurgh-bird in the Šahnāme. Aelianus, De hist. anim. 12.21, reports the tradition that the Persian Achaemenes was reared by an eagle. Xorenacci relates: Ew zArcrunisd gitem: Oc Arcrunis ayl arciv unis, ork arcuis ariji noru krēsin. T'ōkum zaspeleacn balaçans or i Hadamakertin patmin: mankan nirheloy anjrew ew arew hakafakeal, ew hovani t'Cōmoy patanwoyn t'alkacSeloy. 'And I know those Arcrunis are not Arcrunis but arciv unis ['he has an eagle'], who carried eagles before him. I leave aside the nonsense of those fables told in Hadamakert of a sleeping boy whom rain and sun oppressed and a bird shielded the youth as he lay swooning.' Hadamakert or Adamakert was the capital of the Arcrunis, now called Baş-qal'a, southeast of Lake Van.

The simurgh, Phl. sēn murv, is probably to be identified with Av. saēna-, comp. Skt. syena- 'eagle, falcon', Arm. c'ìn 'kite', plus OIr mēγhha-, MF mwrv, Myth mwr, Ossetic margh 'bird'. In MS illuminations of the Šahnāme the simurgh is shown with the bright and multi-colored plumage that one might associate with that of a peacock, not an eagle. In Arm. is found siramarg 'peacock', with modern dialect forms containing also the element sin-, sim- and sometimes substituting Arm. haw 'bird' for Iranian marg-. These variants make the suggestion by Bailey of a base *se- with -na or -ra suffixes preferable to Greppin's repetition of the folk etymology of sir- from Arm. sēr 'love' with Ir. marg- 'bird' (comp. lor-a-marg 'quail'). The peacock-like image of the NP simurgh may have resulted from the widespread
attribution of magical powers or supernatural qualities to the peacock. Most notable is the reverence shown by the Yezidi Kurds to Malak Tā'us, 'the Peacock Angel', and angels are described in NP as tā'us parānī 'peacock-winged'. In Pahlavi, the peacock is called fraš(a)murw, possibly containing Av. fraš- 'wonderful', comp. Arm. hraš-k 'wonder, miracle', which indicates that in Sasanian times marvellous properties may have been ascribed to it. The Armenian saint Nersēs Klayeci (called Šnorhali 'the Graceful', died 1173) wrote, Siramarg osketip nkar hōgi, / Tatrak oł jaxoh makur əlawni 'The peacock, golden image (of the) soul,/ Turtle-dove, pigeon clean and whole in thought', yet Eznik repeats a legend which he attributes to the Zoroastrian Persians: that Ahriman created the peacock (sirimarg) in order to show that he was unwilling to create other beautiful creatures, rather than unable to do so. The Armenians of mediaeval times often painted peacocks in MS illuminations, and a bas-relief of a peacock from the fifth-sixth century was found at Duin.

It is likely that the form of the legend of the origin of the Arcrunis preserved by Xorenaci is the original form of the Iranian tale we have in the Šahnāme, and that the simurgh was originally an eagle. The eagle thus appears in Iranian and Armenian tradition as a noble bird, the standard of royalty, which rescues children destined for lordship and greatness; it is possible to see in these functions the Av. xVarenah, Arm. p'ark of Zoroastrianism. In Yt. XIX,34, the xVarenah flies from Yima after his sin, in the form (Av. kēhrpa, Arm. loan-word kerp) of a bird (Av. mērga-). In verses 35-8 of the same hymn, a composition in the younger Avestan dialect devoted largely to xVarenah, the bird is identified as a vārēghna-, which was probably a falcon. A MTr. form of the latter (cf. NP warāgh 'crow') may be the origin of the Arm. toponym Varag; the mountain of that name was once the site of an important monastery, and towers to the south of Van. In the valley of Varag stand the ruins of Astākan berd 'the fortress of Astlik', which, according to local tradition, was a temple of the goddess, consort of Vahagn, in the centuries before Christianity; it is conceivable that the lofty mountain nearby may have acquired its name in those remote ages, and that the name may have had religious significance, if the proposed derivation of Varag from a form of vārēghna- is
true, for the feathers of the latter bird are said to have magical powers in Yt. XIV.35.

Eagles and falcons are birds of prey, similar in appearance, and both seem fit symbols of the royal x VARNAH-. The falcon, called šahin 'kingly' in NP. for its long association with the royal hunt, was indeed well suited to share with the eagle the honour of embodying x VARNAH. In a Sogdian fresco from Panjikant, a bird is shown with a ring in its beak; it flies to the side of a king seated at a banquet under a canopy. This bird has been compared to the bas-e dovlat of Central Asian folklore, which alights on the head of a man destined to be king (on Arm. baz, see n. 132), and .seq 'a red eagle' in the KARNAMAG saves Ardešir from an attempt to poison him. In the same fresco, an animal with a similar ring in its mouth flies to the side of another king or hero. The latter may be the ram whose form the x VARNAH- takes in the Pahlavi romance KARNAMAG I ARDEŠIR I PAPAKAN when it leaves the doomed Parthian King Ardewān V. The x VARNAH of Tigran II deserted him, too. The scornful Strabo remarked that Tigran tykhais d' ekhrēsato poikilais 'enjoyed chequered fortunes'; Gk. tykhē may be a translation of the Iranian term x VARNAH.

On the Artaxiad crowns we find not one eagle, but two, as indeed on the northern Mesopotamian and Syrian monuments. At the east Terrace of Nemrut Dağ, the row of colossal statues representing the Iranian divinities worshipped by the Orontid kings was flanked at its northern and southern ends by a group of eagle and lion. Such symbolism was perhaps an attempt to represent the encircling, protective quality of x VARNAH: in the Armenian case, the watchful and powerful glory (p cark) guarding the bright fortune (baxt) of the king, represented by the luminary of Tir.

In our day, the Groh's name is a curse on the lips of Armenian Christians, and expressions of ill will often include his name: Groh u mah 'The Groh and death (upon you)', Groh u caw 'The Groh and pain (upon you)', Groh bazin/pāy dānas/lines 'May you come to the Groh', Groh coc mtnes 'May you enter the Groh's breast', Groh utes 'May you eat the Groh', and Groh k'ez/nra het 'The Groh be with you/him'. One recalls the threat on an Assyrian tablet: 'whosoever steal this tablet, may the god Nabû pour out his soul like water.' In Armenia, even outbursts of temper may have archaic forebears.
The legend of the eagle and child survives in the Armenian folktales and in modern tradition, too, albeit in very different form. In a folktale, a youth slays a višap ('dragon') with his t'ur kecakē ('sword of lightning', wielded by the heroes of the national epic of Sasun) and saves the young of an eagle. The eagle shelters the youth out of gratitude and returns him from the mut cāšxarn ('world of darkness') to the lus cāšxarn ('world of light'). The modern Armenian writer Vaxt'ang Ananyan wrote down a tale told him by an aged schoolmaster who had lived before the first World War in a little Armenian village near Bin golu, Turkey. Most of the villagers were shepherds, and their yaylaq, the cool upland meadow where they pitched their summer tents, lay below a cliff called Arcuak'ar, 'Eagle's Rock'. A great eagle would swoop down from there sometimes to steal a sheep for her young (one recalls the statuettes mentioned above of an eagle perched on another animal). Once, the eagle took a child, but the mighty bird had no time to clarify its motive, for an intrepid shepherd, fearing the worst, ascended to the nest and slew the eagle after a fierce battle. He was about to kill the eagle's young, too, but the mother of the rescued child implored him to spare them. 'The poor chicks... they are orphans.' Had the child been lost, and not merely left out to bask in the summer sun, perhaps this episode might have been cast in the terms of the ancient epic, preserved by Xorenac'i and the Šāhnāme and the child regarded as the object of divine intervention, protected from exposure to the elements by the winged embodiment of x'arēnāh/park]. Aspects of the tale indicate deep layers of tradition: the name Arcuak'ar and the mother's protest on behalf of the eagle's young. They had dwelt there since time immemorial, and were not to be exterminated.

The various threads of the cult of Tīr amongst the Armenians stretch far into antiquity, past the presence of the Armenians as a unified or even identifiable nation and far beyond the confines of their land. Both the cultic and iconographical features of Tīr were adapted to Zoroastrian beliefs, although their origin lay elsewhere, and entered the Christian sphere in different garb still. Similar processes of assimilation, adaptation and transmission are seen to have taken place also in Iran.
Notes - Chapter 9


2. Ibid., 80; W. Eilers, Sinn und Herkunft der Planetennamen, München, 1976, 49; and Pomponio, op. cit., 158.


8-a. MX II.27, tr. Thomson, 165 and n. 5; Zerubna Edesiac, Tçukt Abgaru ..., Jerusalem, 1868, 23.


11. A list of these is provided by W. Eilers, Sinn und Herkunft der Planetennamen, op. cit., 47.


30. Loc. cit.


33. See our Ch. on Mithra.

35. The name appears to contain the suffix -it of Haldi-ta, mentioned by Darius at Behistun (see Ch. 1); cf. Manit⁵ (Acaanean, op. cit. n. 34, III. 200), Gnit⁶ (IOB III.12).

36. See M. Rostovtsev, 'Aparanskeya grecheskaya nadpis' tsarya Tiridata,' Aniiskaya Seriya 6, SPb. 1911, App. 2 (30-31). This Tiridat⁶ Gntcuni was probably a descendant of Gnit⁶ in n. 35; the family received the province of Nig from Tiridates I.

37. H. Acaanean, op. cit. n. 34, V, 168.

38. Ibid., V, 155.

39. Ibid., V, 168.

40. Hähnschmann, Arm. Gr., 82. On the varaz 'wild boar' in Arm., see Ch. 6.

41. AHH, 131.

42. Ibid., 309-14; AON, 380.

42-a. See H. S. Nyberg in Le Monde Oriental 17, 1923, 187, text line 1, read as *Tirën.

43. AON (Arm. ed.), 417.

44. MS variants cited are from the critical edition of Agat'angelos, Patmut'ivn Hayoc⁶, G. Tër-Mkrtc'ean and St. Kanayeanc⁶, ed., Tiflis, 1909, 778, p. 404. With regard to Gcastuac 'false god', lit. 'non-god', it is interesting to note the scribal convention whereby the pativ superscript of abbreviation is placed beneath terms like 'Satan' or '(false) god'; in Yovhannes Erznkae'i, Mskut'ivn surb Avetaranin or est Matt'ecosi, Constantinople, 1825, 380 սատանական 'satanic' (acc.): 347, կուռտանք այսեղ 'from the dead gods', cf. հու 'God'. This can be compared to the Zor. practice of writing the name of Ahriman upside-down in MSS. In Zor. MSS. from India, ritual instructions in the Gujarati vernacular are customarily written upside-down in an Avesta-Pahlavi text.

45. Cited by W. Filers, Semiramis, op. cit., 43. H. W. Bailey (written communication) suggests a development of Ir. *mauna- ?o mën, Arm. voyn, from a base man- 'to speak', cf. Khotan Saka mura- 'speech', so erazamoyyn would mean 'dream-speaker'. The Gk. oneirousos appears then to be a homophonic translation, to which one might perhaps compare Ctesiphon, introducing the Gk. base 'build' to render Ir. dēz-.


48. Hübschmann, op. cit. n. 40, 147; Hübschmann rejects a derivation of 
eraz from NP. rēz, loc. cit.

49. E. Benveniste, 'Études Iraniennes,' TFS, 1945, 71.


51. AON (Arm. ed.), 250.

52. See Acařan, Hayeren armatakan baṙaran, refuting Sargsean in Bazmavep, 1927 and the Arjern baṙaran, op. cit., 265, where the word is starred as of doubtful meaning and interpreted as 'thrice holy', which would, however, require the word to be emended to err- or eř-; J. Marquart, 'Armenische Streifen,' Yušarjan-Festschrift, Vienna, 1911, 296.


54. Bedrossian, op. cit., 484.

55. Ibid., 705, 583.

56. Bartholomae, Air Wb., 818.


58. See Ch. 16.

59. At Ani/Kamax in the NW, for instance, see MX II.48.

60. See Ch. 3.

61. See Ch. 16.

62. For instance, in the administration of Tiribazus, referred to above.

63. See Ch. 10; Magoustana is in Arsia Regio, south of Artaxata near the Median border (see HZP, I, map).

64. See Ch. 3.


67. Haykakan sovetakan hanragitaran, IV, 164.


70. Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 195. According to a popular etymology in the Geography of Vardan (thirteenth century), the Arm. province of Mok-kč is named after a mog buried there, one of the three who attended the Holy Nativity (cited by M. Thierry, 'Monastères arméniens du Vaspurakan, IV,' REArm, N.S. 7, 1970, 159.

71. On this supposed ideogram, see our Ch. on Artaxiad Armenia.


74. A. Perikhanian, 'Inscription arameene gravée sur une coupe d'argent trouvée à Sissian (Arménie),' REArm, N.S. 8, 1971, 5-11 and Pls. I-II. The inscription reads: rmbk zih 'rbszt mtql ksp m z 'this rmbk (belongs to) Araxszat, weight (in) silver 40 [ml] z(uzim).' See discussion in Ch. 3 with n. 98, 99.

75. MX I.3.

76. A. G. Perikhanyan, 'K voprosu o proiskhozhdenii armianskoi pis mennosti,' Peredneaziatskii Sbornik, 2, Moscow, 1966, 103-133, esp. Figs. 2 & 3.

77. Ačaean, Hayeren armatakan bałaran, op. cit., I, 562 and Godel, op. cit., n. 72, 3.2n.

78. AHH, 245.

79. Cf. for example V. M. Mancyan, 'Elementy predstavlenii o vnutiennom stroenii zemli u obitatelii armianskogo nagor'ya (po materialam fol.'klora),' Lraber, 1, 1974, 68; Ananikian, 31.

80. S. Sahnazarean, Mšcy barbaré ov žokovurdin dimastuere, Beirut, 1972, 88.

81. Gzir means 'deputy' (of a higher official, the latter usually the head of an extended family, in this case, however, the angel of death), from NP. jázir, E. Alayan, ed., Aknarkner mjîjn grakan hayerenî patmut'yan, I, Erevan, 1972, 277; see also discussion of vazîr by W. Ellers, 'Iranisches Lehngut im arabischen Lexikon,' 110 5, 1961-2, 207.

82. E. Lalayan, 'Vaspurakani hawatk,' AHE, 1917, 207.

84. On the Zoroastrian source claimed for the book in one MS, see our Ch. on Aramazd.


86. MA 7,21, citing AH I, 318; II, 186.

87. AHH, 227.


89. See Ch. 6.


92. MA 7,23.


95. Ibid., 149, 152.

96. Boyce, Zoroastrians, op. cit., 27.

97. Henri Corbin, The Man of Light in Iranian Sufism, Boulder, Colorado, 1978, 55; A. Schimmel, Mystical Dimensions of Islam, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1975, 200. Sraoša does not appear to have been mentioned in Arm. texts, although he is the most important divinity in Zor. worship after Ahura Mazda. But Classical writers do not mention him, either, in their descriptions of Iranian religion, perhaps because he is prominent more in spoken prayers and theology than in visible acts of cult (the Parsi Srosas patru being an exception). Any possible mention of the Ir. base srav- in a religious context in Arm. is therefore worth examination. In Le Monde Oriental, 1923, Zanoli proposed a derivation from Ir. menah- 'mind' and sravha- 'hearing' for manasruankc. This hapax appears in an apocryphal text, HarccakemnutCiwun Ezi margareCin 'The Questions of Ezra the Prophet' (pub. by Fr. S. YovsepSeanc, Ankanon girkC hin ktakaranacC, Venice, 1896, 302; this writer was informed by Prof. R. Thomson that Issaverdens in his Eng. tr. of the text did not know the meaning of the word, and Prof. L. XacCeresan also does not know it, though it seems to
him to be Iranian; it is not found in any of the Arm. dictionaries), and is found in a list of paghank are "guardians" of the fiery Divine Presence. It is found amongst recognizable words for the other guardians: kayank are "stations", manasruank are "fiery (angels)", xofock are "caverns", hre±ertk are "fiery artgels", ~amarazgestk are "girded in belts", laperk are "lighthouses". This seems to be a mixture of divine mansions and burning, martial angels in them. A spirit of hearkening, even of obedience, seems out of place. A form with Ir. man- 'house' could be proposed as part of the architecture, recalling the menistans 'monasteries' of the Manichaean Paradise, but, until a better explanation may be proposed, the term seems to this writer Arm., referring to the 'sharp and twisting' (man-em, sru-cal?), burning sword of the angelic dvārapāla of Eden. The word d-srov-em 'to place/be in disrepute' is found in fifth-century Arm., with Ir. sru- 'hear' (cf. Arm. Xosrov, Av. Hōsravah-); contrast to h-lu 'submissive' lit. 'well-listening' with native base ls-em 'hear'.

98. See A. Perikhanyan, 'K voprosu o proiskhozhdenii armianskoi pis'mennosti,' Perepeziatskii Sbornik, 2, Moscow, 1966, 103-133 & Fig. 3.

99. On the Iranian origin of this technical term for the dedication of a Christian house of worship, which may therefore be a word used previously by Armenian Zoroastrians, see Hübschmann, Arm. Cr., 202, and Ch. 10 for its connection with the fravashi-cult.

100. Karg nawakateac ekelcwoy, Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, New York, 1971, 1. This service is performed on Saturday evening, on the eve of the opening of the church.


103. For references in Iranian literature to baxt and farrah as analogous or paired concepts, see N. G. Garsoian, 'Prolegomena,' 225-9, n. 65-71; and H. W. Bailey, Zoroastrian Problems, 38, citing D&M. 688.13f. The Sasanian Mihrnarseh attacks the Armenian Christians for scorning baxt 'fate' and pCaraworutCwms 'gloriousness'.


105. HZS I, 677, citing K. Humann, O. Puchstein, Reisen in Kleinasien und Nordsyrien, Berlin, 1890, 232-52; Dörner, Goell, op. cit., 56

106. See Ch. 8.


108. B. N. Afak'elyan, Akmarner hin Hayastani arvesti patmut'yan, Erevan, 1976, Pl. 93 and p. 80; Pl. 95 eagle on antelope from the Louvre found at Aragac, see Reinach, Repertoire de la Statuaire Grecque et Romaine, T.II, Vol. II, Paris, 1898, 756, 5B. There is no mystery in the association of eagles and mountains; it is reflected in Av. Upairi.sàêng, Phl. Abarsân (see C. J. Brunner, 'Abarsân,' Encyclopædia Iranica, Vol. I). In Phl. Yasna 10.11 the hôm is carried there by bird-shaped absoniğan, 'bounteous ones' (Ameša Spentas?); cf. the transport by birds of the white hôm in the legend of the birth of Zoroaster in Dēnkārān 7.

109. V. G. Lukonin, Persia II, New York, 1967, Fig. 12.

110. Ibid., fig. 194.


113. Bartholomae, AiWb, 354 cites Hesychios's translation: ὁ ἄρχηφος ἀετός καὶ πέταλος 'archiphos: "eagle" in Persian'; on a proposed Iranian etymology, see C. d'Aubert, 'Armeniacs I-VIII: études lexicales,' BSIF 73, 1978, 251-262. It would have to be a very early loan indeed, if Urartean argibi means 'eagle' (see E. A. Grantovskii, 'O rasprostranenii iranskikh plemen na territorii Iran,' in B. G. Gafurov, ed., Istoriya iranskogo gosudarstva i kul'tury: k 2500-letiyu iranskogo gosudarstva, Moscow, 1971, 322 n. 18).


118. Açağan, Hayeren armatakan bararan, IV, 219.

120. Greppin, op. cit. n. 117, 89.


123. Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 183; H. W. Bailey, op. cit. n. 97, xiii.


125. Eznik, E'o ašandoc'c, II.8.


129. See Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 67.

130. Cf. Sgd. w'rhgn'y 'falcon'; E. Benveniste, 'Les noms de l"oiseau" en Iranien,' Festgabe für Herman Lommel, Wiesbaden, 1960, 16 analyses varen- from the bases varen- 'lamb' and gen- 'strike.' The NP form wåragh 'crow' is also cited as a late form.

131. A. Lalenanyan, Avandapatum, Erevan, 1969, 211.

132. The Phl. word for falcon is báz, Arm. loan-word bazë or bazay (MacKenzie, op. cit., 18; Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 114). The Arm. form probably reflects an older Iranian ending analogous to that of margarë 'Prophet' and the month-name Trë discussed above.

133. A. M. Belenitskii, B. B. Piotrovskii, op. cit., n. 102, Pl. VIII.


135. T. Goell, op. cit. n. 109, 11.

136. ZHLBB, I, 452.


Avestan Spēnta Armitai and Pahlavi Spandarmad

Spēnta Ārmaiti, whose name may be translated as 'Bounteous Devotion',\(^1\), is the Amesā Spēnta who presides over the earth, and forms a pair with Xvēthra Vairya, 'Desirable Kingdom', who rules the sky. She, Haurvatat 'Wholeness', and Amerētāt 'Immortality', are the only female Amesā Spēntas, although by no means the only female yazatas, in the Avesta. In later times, Hordād (Av. Haurvatat) and Amurdād (Av. Amerētāt) were regarded as male, but Spandarmad (Av. Spēnta Ārmaiti) remained female.\(^2\) Ārmaiti’s hamkārs, or supernatural collaborators, are yazatas connected with water,\(^3\) the creation with which the earth is fertilised, and which rains down from the sky of Xvēthra Vairya. Ārmaiti was since early times regarded as the guardian of virtuous women,\(^4\) perhaps because of a pre-Zoroastrian cult of Mother Earth, the bearer of all things; as we have noted, she was in later times the only female Amesā Spēnta. Because of her association with the earth, her yearly feast celebrated on Rōz Spandarmad of Māh Spandarmad (the fifth day of the twelfth month of the Zoroastrian calendar) was particularly popular amongst tillers of the soil and women, and was called Īasn-i barzīgarān 'the feast of husbandmen'.\(^5\) In the Av. and Phī. books, Ārmaiti is described as a bountiful divinity; in Yt. 17.16, she is called the mother of Āsi, the yazata whose name means 'fortune', and in Khotan Saka Buddhist texts Sandrāmata ‘Spēnta Ārmaiti’ renders Sanskrit īrī- 'prosperity and fortune'.\(^6\)

Zoroastrians consider death an unqualified evil, and inhumation of a dead body in a grave must therefore defile Ārmaiti, who is both identical with and guardian over the earth; according to the Vīdēvdāt, 3.8-9, graves and daxmas grieve the divinity. Zoroastrianism did not conceive of Ārmaiti as ruler of the underworld, for the proper place for the departed soul was either heaven in the sky, purgatory, or hell. Ārmaiti, being wholly good, cannot have had any association with hell, but we do find the grave referred to as 'the darkness of Spēnta.
Yet it seems that most classes of society in both Armenia and Iran practised both burial and the theologically sanctioned method of exposure of a corpse until the end of the Sasanian period. It seems that there was connected with the practice of burial also the belief that Armaiti was indeed the guardian and ruler of the dead; this idea may have originated as a fusion of Zoroastrian belief in Spēnta Armaiti as guardian of the earth with ancient beliefs according to which earth was the entrance-way to the underworld.

**Armenian Sandaramet**

In the Armenian translation of the Bible is attested the word *sandaramet-k*<sup>c</sup>, meaning 'Hades or the underworld (Gk. Ἅδης, ἑ̱δ kato)', and a derivative adjective, *sandarametakan*. Agathangelos refers to the dead as *sandarametakan mnjeczalk*<sup>c</sup> 'those asleep in the underworld'. But *sandaramet* originally meant, presumably, the earth, in which men's remains lie, rather than the spaces below the earth in which their souls were believed to sleep or wander. The Arm. word also appears to render the neutral *gē kato* more often than Hades. Grigor Magistros wrote of a wind called Liparean which *hur inc*<sup>c</sup> *ē i Sandaramet* 'is a sort of fire from the underworld'. St. Nersēs Šnorhali wrote: *Sandaramet*<sup>c</sup> *sarsec/in/zKapeal ogisi arjakec*<sup>c</sup> 'The underworld trembled/(and) released the spirits bound'; *Jaync*<sup>c</sup> *hnc ec*<sup>c</sup> *Sandaramet*<sup>c</sup> *andndoc*<sup>c</sup> 'Voices sounded: the underworld of the abysses.' These abysses can be also the depths of the sea: in a mediaeval commentary on Matthew 8.27, Jesus quieting the sea is said to have *sasteal išxanin sandarametac*<sup>c</sup> 'stilled the prince of the sandaramet<sup>c</sup>'. St. Grigor Narekac'i in his Matean Gbergut<sup>c</sup> can 'Book of Lamentations', Ch. 65, refers to *sandarametakanac mafeloc* 'the dead (abl. pl.) of the underworld', and Ališan cited a mediaeval word *sandar-k*<sup>c</sup> meaning 'pit, hell, abyss, sometimes also a grave'. Why was the ending -amet lost? Perhaps it had come to be understood as Mr. mād 'mother' in its older form māt, the distinction between short and long a not being observed in Arm.; Spēnta Armaiti is called the mother of mankind in the Phl. Pand-namag 1 Zardušti. Mvses Korenac'i uses a form *sandarametapet* 'ruler of the underworld', explained by H. W. Bailey as Demeter, the Gk. goddess of the earth; the need to use a suffix -pet 'ruler' to define a personality shows that sandaramet was a common
noun in its common Arm. usage, not always the proper name of a divinity.

Xorenac, in praising Christians, declares: *Ew oc zohel c'ar divin Serapeay, ayl zk'ristosi zariwn matuc'anel patarag: ew oc xndrel hraman patasxanwoy i sandarametapet'en Prodeia day ayl usan mel szawrut'iwms pës pës imasticc i nor Platonën 'Neither (do they) sacrifice to the evil demon Sarapis, but offer the liturgy of Christ's blood; nor (do they) seek oracles from Proteus, ruler of the underworld, but study the powers of various sciences from the new Plato.'

In the Arm. translation of II Macc. 6.7 are the expressions spandarametin kak'avel and spandarametakakan pastamuns, rendering Greek pompeuein t6i Dionysøi and Dionysi6n heortøs. The mediaeval historian *Covma Arcruni identifies Spandaramet as a specific divinity; erkir pandoki spandaramet astucoy 'the earth, inn of the goddess' Spandaramet'. Meillet long ago suggested that Spandaramet must be a NW Mr. form of the name Spenta Armaiti, while sandaramet-k is a loan-word from SW Ir., possibly Old Persian, Arm. - reflecting an initial *sv-. M. Schwartz now suggests that the Arm. form derives from an older *santa-, while Cappadocian Sondara reflects an original *svanta-. The use of sandaramet-k as a common noun meaning 'underworld' indicates that the earth was regarded as the abode of the dead at the time when this form was introduced into Arm. Although such a belief was undoubtedly persistent in later ages, such an explicit statement of it argues an archaic date, and we note that the Arm. does not have the neutral meaning of 'earth' which is found in the Phl. literature, where, besides, a derivative of the Av. is used and not a SW Ir. form: spandarmad zamig 'Spandarmad, the earth'. It is likely that Sandaramet was seen as a divinity of the underworld, ruler of the kingdom of the dead, through a fusion of Zoroastrian and archaic beliefs as suggested above, and that the name came later to mean 'the underworld' generally, without referring to a supernatural being.

According to *Covma Arcruni, Artasës II built in Lesser Abak, Vaspurakan, meheans zHerakleay ew zDioniseay 'temples of Heraklës and Dionysos'; Heraklës is undoubtedly Vahagn here, and Dionysos is probably Spandaramet. M. Abekyan considered the temple of Gisanë and Demeter at Innaknean also to be a shrine of Vahagn and Sandaramet. Gisanë is to be derived from Phl. gës 'curls, locks', hence 'the hairy
one', perhaps an epithet of Vahagn, who had flaming hair' in the epic song of his birth cited by Xorenacak. Mount K'arkce of the Innaknean range, upon whose southern slope the monastery of St. Karapet stood until its destruction by the Turks in 1915, is called by the Armenians N'om-cam, 'the long hair of Muš', and this popular toponym may preserve the memory of Gisanč. Demeter is identified as an earth-goddess in the martyrology of St. Ignatios: ... (nom. pl) Demeter', but this identification may not refer to practices in Armenia. One recalls that at Astišat, Vahagn shared his temple with a female consort, Astičik. In the case of Lesser Albak, it seems from the text of Arcruni he is referring to two different temples. As to the temple at Innakean, Zenob Glak claims that Demeter and Gisanč were two brothers from India, not gods. This seems to be an euhemeristic interpretation of the origins of their cult, for Yovhan Memikonean, in his History of Tarawn (seventh century) refers to both as gods, Demeter being the son or brother of Gisanč. The historian refers to huge bronze statues of both divinities which were destroyed by St. Gregory the Illuminator. Even if Gisanč may be considered Vahagn, the identity of Demeter is uncertain.

The identification of Spandaramet as Dionysos is also puzzling, for the former is female, the latter male. Armenian, like Pahlavi, does not have grammatical gender, and the change of gender in translation is no more unlikely than a similar alteration within the same body of tradition as with female Haurvatāt and Gemētāt to male Hurdād and Amurdād above. Dionysos was a god of fertility, and his cult was therefore connected with the earth. The particulars of his worship were well known to both Parthians and Armenians. Some of the forty rhytons found in the so-called 'square room' of Mihrdatkirt (Nisa, the early Arsacid capital of Parthia) depict scenes of bacchantic revelry; it is perhaps significant that this particular hall seems to have been devoted to the cult of the ancestors of the Arsacid kings, for the cult of Spandaramet may have been associated with funerary observances. One recalls also the dramatic tale related by Plutarch in his life of Crassus. In 53 B.C., the latter's forces were slaughtered at Carrhae (Harrān) by the Parthians under the command of the young nobleman
Sûren. The Armenian Artaxiad king Artawazd had decided before this that the tide of power in the region favored the Parthians for the moment, and had arranged accordingly to wed his daughter to Pacorus, son of the Parthian king of kings, Orodes. The royal wedding party was enjoying a performance of the Bacchae of Euripides, we are told, when messengers burst in with the head and hand of Crassus, which were tossed on to the stage and unhesitatingly raised aloft as the head of Pentheus by a resourceful actor. Both the Parthian and Armenian kings would have been familiar with the appearance of Bacchus/Dionysus. A bronze fragment of a drooping panther skin resembling that seen in Greek depictions of Dionysus, was found in the ruins of the Parthian temple at Shami. A bronze mask with a ring at the top was found in the mediaeval Armenian city of Ani, but it is probably very much older. It shows a rather pie-eyed, shaggy, bearded and moustached Bacchus with a wreath of grapes and vine-leaves on his head. The mask probably adorned the neck or handle of a metal drinking vessel, and a similar mask was found at Begram, Afghanistan.

Our two Biblical references to Spandaramet are from the Book of Maccabees. It has been observed that 'of all the Biblical writings, the books of Maccabees have left the greatest unacknowledged imprint on Moses (Xorenacci's) History, and it was common for other historians as well to compare the Jewish war against the pagan Seleucids to the struggle waged by Armenian Christians against the Zoroastrian Sasanian Empire in the fifth century. Indeed, the Maccabees fought Hebrew hellenisers as well as foreign oppressors, and in fifth-century Armenia there were still numerous followers of the Zoroastrian faith, who sided with the Iranians against their own countrymen. The reference in II Maccabees to spandaramet in kakawel is echoed by Elišé in his description of the various ways Vasak Siwni employed to win Armenians back to their former faith: 'and he increased melodies of joy, spending all night long in drunken song and lowd dance (kakaws, loc. pl.: lit. "partridge"); for some he sweetened the musical scales and the heathen songs'. It would seem, from the Biblical passage and the citation from Elišé, that the
kak'aw-dance had some religious significance, perhaps as a celebration of the fecundity of the earth. To the Christians of that era, such earthy levity must have seemed lewd and unseemly, but to Zoroastrians it is proper to rejoice in the good creation of Ahura Mazdā, and for them the abstemious and melancholy behavior of some Christian priests was demonic; Ešišē's Letter of Mihmerseh to the Armenian nobles (Ešišē, II) pours scorn upon Christian asceticism, poverty and celibacy.

The Christian Church seems to have succeeded in eradicating the cult of Spandaramet, but the kak'aw-dance was still performed, and depictions of Armenian dances in mediaeval manuscript illuminations depict the dancer baring his genitals, which would have seemed lewd indeed to Christians. Modern Armenians perform the kak'aw dance with more modesty than their forebears. And an Armenian folk tradition of Mazi'ewan recorded by a Dominican monk travelling through the area in the fifteenth century may be a survival of beliefs concerning Spēnta Ārmaiti. According to the tradition, the Armenians of old called the sky Noy, and his wife the earth they called Aretia. Noy impregnated Aretia, who gave birth to all creatures. This is the only mention of the name Aretia, but Noy is the Armenian form of Noah, who is a popular figure in Armenian folklore because of the Biblical story of the Flood, which ends with the mooring of the Ark somewhere 'in the mountains of Ararat'. One recalls that the first plant Noah cultivated when he descended from the Ark was a grape vine, a potent symbol of the earth's bounty and of the cult of Dionysos depicted on the Parthian rhytons from Nīsā mentioned above. Armenian tradition also mentions vineyards in connection with Dionysos. As for Aretia, it may be possible to see in her name a very debased form of Ārmaiti alone without the epithet Spēnta-. The Armenians probably recognised Spēnta-, MR. spand, as a separate word. It has been suggested that Arm. spand 'rue', NP sipand, isfand, Phl. spandān derives from MR. (It is possible that Arm. span-anen 'I kill' is related to Av. špēnta-, but this derivation has been disputed. Arm. spand 'sacrifice', with spand-aran 'sacrificial altar' and spand-anoc 'slaughter-house' may be either a derivative of span- 'kill', in which case the etymology is uncertain, or a MR. loan-word.) There are found in Armenian also two forms of the Iranian name *spēntadāta- (Gk. Sphendadatēs, Phl. Spandiyēd), which contains
the element OIr. spēnta-, MIr. spand-: Spandarat and Spandiat; the first is the name of a member of the Armenian Kamsarakan naxarardom and is a loan from NW MIr., with the change of intervocalic -i- to -ë-, while the second is cited by Sebēos as the name of a Persian hero and shows the SW MIr. change of intervocalic -d- to -v-.

The union of Xsathra Vairya and Spenta Ārmaiti is not sexual, so Noy may not represent Xsathra Vairya; on Ascension Day, when Armenian girls gather in silence bunches of the hawrot-mawrot flower, named after Haurvatät and Amrētāt, the sky is said to kiss the earth merely. The importance of Noy, who is not regarded generally in Armenia as either a supernatural figure or as one connected with the sky, may lie in the background of the Biblical tale: his vine-planting.

The earth, Ārmaiti, is fertilised with water, and Zoroastrians pour libations on the ground at their religious ceremonies as an offering to her. Arm. Christians do not offer such libations, but they refrain pointedly from pouring water on the ground at night, in the belief that the dews 'demons' are disturbed by it, the night being the time which belongs to the dead. For Zoroastrians, the watch of Aivisrūthra, the period between sunset and midnight, belongs to the fravēs, the spirits of the departed, and water may not be drawn during this time. Both peoples thus preserve an archaic belief that the souls of the dead reside beneath the earth, in the darkness of Spenta Ārmaiti. The fravēs may have been replaced by dews in Armenian tradition, perhaps because of fear of the soul of the dead (MIr. urvan 'soul' becomes Arm. uru 'ghost'). In Arm. tradition, it seems that there was a supernatural being regarded as the lord of graves and tombs who was probably Spandaramet. We shall consider below this divinity, the funerary practices of the ancient Armenians, and their beliefs concerning spirits and the afterlife.

Arm. Šahapet, švod

A thirteenth-century Arm. miscellany, the Oskiberan, contains this note in a commentary on Isaiah: 'Of Dionysos they say that he is the Šahapet of vineyards; and of Athena that she is the Šahapet of olive trees; and Maireknas is called by them the Šahapet of all the trees.' In Trapezus, on the Pontic coast north of the Armenian provinces of Ekeleac and Mekanač, Dionysos was worshipped as the protector of
Hübschmann derived șahap from Av. *șōithrapaiti- 'ruler of a homestead', a word which is unattested, while noting that it is used as an explanation of Arm. șahap 'satrap' in the Armenian translation of St. Ephrem Syrus. Hübschmann derives șahap from OIr. *xāthra- 'kingdom'. (A NW MIR. form of xāthra- is found in Arm. șēxarh 'country, world', with metathesis of MIR. xē- and -hr and addition of an initial a-; added initial vowels are a regular feature in Arm. loan-words from Ir., e.g., Arm. īśxan 'prince', from Ir. īśa(y)- 'to rule', Pth. īśynd 'prince'; Arm. erani 'blessed' from Ir. *rānya- 'happy'; Arm. āzn 'race' and āzn-iw 'noble' from Ir. zā- 'to give birth', MIR. șāzād 'free'). If indeed șahapet is a synonym of șahap, we should derive the former from OIr. *xāthrapaite- 'lord of a kingdom'.

The office of the satrap, Gk. sadrapēs, was an important feature of Achaemenian administration. S. T. Eremyan noted the element șahap- in the toponym șahapiwan, the summer residence of the Armenian Orontids, and according to the late thirteenth-century historian Stepānos ūrbelean, șahapwinc ī șahapay parske sineal 'the fortress of șahapwnc [in Śiwinkc] (was) built by șahap the Persian.' The form sadrapēsin (dat. pl.) is found in a Gk. inscription of the two Persian satraps Oromanēs and Ariosēs from Agatcha Kale, 41 km. SW of Divrīği (Tephrirē), on the Western extremity of Armenia. The institution of the satrap continued into Parthian times: the Arsacid King Mithridates II had a bas-relief and Greek inscription carved at Behistun shortly before his death in 87 B.C., which mentions 'Gotarzes, Satrap of Satraps'. Another official mentioned in the inscription is called pep[isteumenos] 'entrusted', which may be the Greek translation of an Iranian title ostikan, found in Armenian as ostikan.

The office of the satrap commanded great respect, and the title came to be applied to divinity, much as Jews call their god Adonai 'Lord' and Armenian Christians call their God Tēr(Astuac) 'Lord(God)'. It is noteworthy that the Armenian Arewordikc 'Children of the Sun' called their religious leaders by the ancient secular title hazarapet 'chiliarch', another office dating back to Achaemenian times. Thus, we find an inscription dedicated Satrapēi theoi 'to the god Satrapēs' at Maćad, Phoenicia, in A.D. 8; similar steles devoted to the god have
been found dating back to the fourth and fifth centuries B.C. A god called Ḫērēptā (=Gk. Apollōn) is invoked in the Aramaic part of trilingual inscription dated 358 B.C. from Letoon at Xanthos in Lycia, a province of Asia Minor which was a part of the Achaemenian Empire. There is little doubt that the Aramaic name is a rendering of OIr. form *xāṣathrapati. This word is a divine name in Manichaean Sogdian, where zēysptbīy is used to translate the name of the Splenditenens; Ḧr is a generic word for 'god'. A Gnostic text in Coptic from before or during the latter part of the fourth century, found at Nag Hammadi, Egypt, called 'The Concept of Our Great Power' describes how Christ was seized by the Archons and delivered to Hell, after which Christ revealed His nature in glory and destroyed the dominion of the ruler of Hades: 'And they delivered him up to the ruler of Hades. And they handed him over to Sasabed for nine bronze coins.' In this passage, the ruler of the underworld seems to be identified with Sasabed, whose name has not been explained. But it could be a loan-word from a SW Ir. form of *xāṣathrapati, cf. the change of -thr? in xāṣatra- to -ār in Arm. Artašēs, etc. Arm. šahapēt denoted a class of supernatural beings: there were šahapēts of various creations (olive trees, vineyards, and trees in general in the citation from the Oskiberan above). There were also šahapēts of different loci; Eznik refers in his fifth-century Ebd. Azandoc to šahapētk: Ew synpēs ḷanay satanay zi zamenayn ok i barwok⁵⁸ akknašenē vripec'uscäs, ew i nonti yōys kapičē. Mēsac'uc anē yachs xamēkən zvišaps, zi yor'äm shagink' erewesc in omanc' aīnuv' un znosa i pastawn. Karcecc'uc anē t'e ew nhangk' inc' ic' en getoc'c, ew šahapētk' vayrac'c. Ew yet karcecc'uc' aneloy ink' n kerparani kam i višapi kerparans kam i nhangi imn ew i šahapēti, zi sīnu zmardn yiwrūmē arar'c' en t'iwresc'cē. 'And that way Satan tries to divert every man from concentrated attention through good (thoughts) and to bind him in false hope. In the eyes of men he makes serpents (Arm. višaps) great, so that when they appear awesome to some (men), those (men) will make them an object of worship. He causes (men) to think also that there are crocodiles of the rivers and šahapēts of the (cultivated) lands.' And after making (them) think (thus), he himself takes the form of a serpent, crocodile or šahapēt, so that thereby he may cause man to go
astray from his Creator.' A medieval MS lists "sidark ew šahapetk ew višapk ew kaįk 'Ugars and šahapets and serpents and titans', a veritable catalogue of monsters. During his interrogation of St. Gregory the Illuminator on the nature of the Christian faith, King Tiridates III asks: 'Kam ov ayn K'ristosn ic's: c'oyc' inj, zi gitac'ic: o ayn ok ic's hatuc'anok vastakoc k'oc, zor koc'es du araric': mitcē na ok ic's šahapet gerezmanac', orum dun c'ankas hasanel, kam bandakal kapanac k'oc na ic'ē arjakoc'? And who might this Christ be? Show me, that I may know, the one who might be the recompenser of your labours, whom you call Creator. Might he be a šahapet of the tombs whom you desire to reach, or is he the releaser of your imprisoning bonds?' In the dramatic exchange presented by Agathangelos, the Illuminator replies to this sarcastic challenge by replying that Christ is indeed the šahapet and pahapan 'guardian' of the tombs, to which He descended voluntarily. In the Gnostic narrative cited above, Christ was delivered into the hands of Sasabed, who can be identified with the ruler of Hades. The šahapet of tombs, the ruler of the underworld, would be that divinity identified with and dwelling in the earth, with its darkness as well as its bounty, at once funereal and Dionysian: Spandaramet. This is not to suggest that the word šahapet was used in Arm. exclusively to refer to Spandaramet, but only in the context of funerary rituals and beliefs. In the passage of Movsēs Xorenac cited above, the Sandarametapet 'ruler of the underworld' is placed in rhetorical apposition to Sarapis, a chthonic deity often shown on gravestones found along the northern coast of the Black Sea. The name of Sarapis sounds very similar indeed to the god whose name is attested in Gk. as Satrapēs, and we recall that Arm. šahapet, possibly the equivalent of Coptic Sasabed, was used as a synonym of Arm. šahap 'satrap', Gk. satrapēs. The worship of Sarapis was certainly known through the Iranian world as well as in Armenia in the Hellenistic period, for although the cult centre of the divinity was the famed Serapeum of Alexandria, his image and Bactrian name Sarapo appear on several Kusan coins, on the eastern edge of Iran. The Iranians and Armenians would have regarded the šahapet of tombs, Spandaramet, as female, however. Pre-Christian funerary monuments have been found at Duin in Armenia, many of which depict women,
and glazed ceramic sarcophagi, similar in design to those found in Armenia, have been excavated at Parthian cemeteries. These were often decorated with the figure of a native goddess in relief. Fragments of a round ceramic ossuary excavated at Mumon Depe, in the southern Turkmen S.S.R. (ancient Margiana) show figures of women in bas-relief in various positions which have been interpreted as movements of a funerary dance of Dionysian character. Depictions of Pan and satyrs (the companions of Dionysus) are common from Central Asia in the Parthian period, and funerary dances of the type shown on the ossuary, which has been dated to the Parthian period, are still performed in Soviet Central Asia. R. Ghirshman's suggestion that the woman on the Parthian coffins is the Goddess Anāhitā cannot be supported, for the yazata, for all her connection with fertility and thus the earth in Armenian tradition, was not connected with death or the underworld. The images in both countries, if indeed they represent divinities, are more likely of Arm. Spandaramet, Mr. Spandarmad, than of Anāhitā.

In modern Armenian folklore, belief persists in a supernatural being called the švod (another, less common form is švaz, perhaps a development analogous to the shift in pronunciation of NP. dh to z) a shortened form of šahapet. Eznik noted that the šahapets mert c mard erewër ew mert c awj, orov ew zawjasptut c ivnn hnarec c sw yasxarh mucanel 'appeared sometimes as a man, sometimes as a serpent; because of which it was made possible for serpent-worship to be introduced into the country', and the modern Armenian belief in lucky snakes which come to dwell in houses may be a survival of the snake-worship Eznik described. The modern švod is an invisible being, however, who lives in the walls of houses during the winter. On the last day of February, Armenians strike the walls and shout švod durs, Adar ners.'Out with the švod and in which Adar [=March]!' The evening before this, they leave a dish of water on the threshold, presumably to tempt the švod outdoors. The door is slammed, and the sign of the Cross is made. The švod dislikes having to leave its comfortable winter home, and has been heard to complain. Not all švods lived in houses, it seems, for a rock in the western Armenian province of Dersim near a grove of oak trees was called švodi k'ar 'Švod's rock'. One recalls the reference of the Oskiberan cited above to šahapets of trees, and it is likely that the
continued to be considered in Dersim a being connected with vegetation and fertility therefore. One recalls the custom cited above of refraining from spilling water on the earth during the night; perhaps the water which is set out to lure the švod and then spilled onto the ground may symbolise the švod's return to a home beneath the earth. The winter months are those of death and cold, but with the coming of spring these forces must retreat to their own domain, vanquished by the light and warmth of the Sun, which is believed to be strengthened by the fires kindled by men, when it is at its lowest. The month of Adar is that of fire, corresponding to Arm. Ahekan, when Zoroastrians and Christian Armenians light bonfires to banish winter from the world, and it is appropriate that the švod be driven from its winter quarters then. Originally Ātar/Ādur was a winter month, corresponding to Armenian Ahekan (see Ch. 15).

Spandarmad and Hro(tic)

The ancient Armenians accorded veneration to the spirits of their ancestors, for Agathangelos refers with scorn to uruapast t'ınbrut'ınw'n anžgayun'anc 'uru-worshipping insensate stupefactions'. A mediaeval Armenian poet wrote, probably with reference to his own ancestors, Het'ancsk' var'gin/l je'n uruín 'The heathens are honoured/through the uru. The word uru, which now has degenerated in meaning to 'ghost', is a loan-word from Ir. urvan- 'soul', and appears to have been used with the latter meaning by Classical Armenian writers and translators. To the east of Armenia, the twelfth month was called in Mīr. Spandarmad, as noted above, at the end of which falls the festival of Fravardīgān, Av. Hamaspathmaēdaya-, which is dedicated to the fravāšis, the spirits of the dead. To the west of Armenia, in Cappadocia, the name of the twelfth month was Sondara, a word which appears to derive from a SW Ir. form of the name of Spēna Ārmaiti, like Sandaramet. We have noted the close connection between Spandaramet and the underworld above, and in Armenia the festival of the fravāšis was of such importance that it gave its name to the entire twelfth month, Hro(r)tic, the gen. pl. of hro(r)t(-i-) 'fravāši', a loan-word from Mīr. In Chorasmian, the festival seems to have given its name to the month following it, Rū'ān', instead of to the month at the end of which it occurred. The
distinction between Ir. urvan- and fraveši-is a fine one drawn mainly in theological texts with which most members of the Armenian Zoroastrian community probably were not familiar, so both Arm. uru and *hro(r)t(-i-) probably refer to the same concept.74

The Armenians erected monuments to the souls of the dead, particularly if the deceased was related to a common royal ancestor. King Tiridates alludes clearly to the cult of the ancestors of the Arsacid house in his famous edict invoking Aramazd, Anahit and Vahagn (Agath. 127) at the end of which he asks that "i mer divč'axain Partc'swac' hasčč āyččelutc'iw, i pč'arac' tč'agaworac' ew i kč'cjanmneac' 'visitation reach us from our Parthians of divine birth (Arm. divč'axain, lit. "mingled of the gods"), from the glory (pč'arac') of kings and from our brave ancestors.' Artašēs had mah-arjans 'death-statues) raised over the grave of Eruand, who was of 'Arsacid' blood, and Tiridates I built maharjans at Gašni.75 The tradition of erecting huge steles as monuments to the departed survived in Christian Armenia and continues to this day in the art of the elaborately-carven xacčcar 'Cross-stone'.76 One notable example of such steles is the monument at Șjun of the sixth century: a double-arch on a stepped base enclosing two tall, narrow steles decorated with bas-reliefs depicting Biblical scenes.77 Although the monument is undoubtedly Christian, the dual columns call to mind the pair of Sasanian fire-altars that stand together on an outdoor pedestal at Naqš-i Rustam,78 or the two columns, each on its own stepped pedestal, that stand behind another pedestal at Bishapur; the latter ensemble has been interpreted as a votive monument.79

Excavations of Parthian sites have uncovered numbers of statues and figurines of men and women, of various sizes and of various materials (marble, metal and clay); these figures have been explained as connected with the fraveši- cult, and two rooms excavated at the old Arsacid capital, Nisa, appear to have contained numerous figurines of royal ancestors of the Arsacid house.80 Near these structures stood the buildings where Arsacid kings and noblemen were buried.81 It appears the Armenians, too, had images of their ancestors; Agathangelos wrote: Ew t'c' ziard norum astuacasirut'cemb ew kč'rístosi zwrut'cemb nma tuelov, ankan pč'srec'c an unaynut'c'ean pástamunk'c'n, ew astuacpástut'c'iwn taraceč'c'aw ěnd ameneyn erkirs Hayoc'. Ew kām orpěš šineč'c' an ekeč'č'ik'c
By the love of the God of the same (i.e., St. Gregory) and through the granting of the power of Christ to him, the cults of insensibility fell and were shattered, and the worship of God spread throughout the land of Armenia. And they will read of how churches were built in this country of Armenia, and the cults of insensibility were smashed, those which were of the customary confusion of our ancestors: idiotic things made for no purpose and deceptive, of stone and wood, and uru-worshipping fantasies of insensibility. The Armenian images must have been as varied in material and size as the Parthian examples, but the few figures we possess are all of stone and rather crude in execution. Most were found at the pre-Christian cemetery of Duin and vary in height from ca. 0.1 to 1 metre. With the exception of a statuette of a man from Savarsavan, they show a man’s head, usually with the characteristic conical or square headdress familiar to us from Armenian coins and from Iranian coins and sculpture. Since most of these statuettes were found in a cemetery, it is likely that they are to be connected with the travasi- cult.

Tombs

Armenia was created the tenth best (of the countries), and in opposition to it came much burial of corpses, that is, they practice it much there.'

(GEd. 31.23-4 = MS TD2 f.105 b)
Isidore of Charax, writing in the last decade of the first century B.C., describes in his Parthian Stations the city of Asaak, where the pyr athanaton 'immortal fire' of the Arsacids burned, and continues: Enteuthen Parthyene, skhoinoi 25, hēs aulōn: Parthaunisa hē polis apo skhoiōnōn 6: entha basilikai taphai 'thence to Parthyene it is 25 skhoinoi [50 parasangs], with its defile. After six skhoinoi is Parthaunisa, the city; in it are the royal graves.85 The third-century Latin writer Justin, citing Pompeius Trogus, a historian who flourished ca. A.D. 5, write that the Persians (i.e., probably the Iranians generally) exposed their dead to be devoured by birds or dogs, the bare bones then being covered with earth.86 Ossuaries of the late Parthian period have been found in Nisa and Sogdia,87 and glazed ceramic sarcophagi have been excavated;88 a form of burial in communal tombs were hypogean rooms reached by staircases.89 Both Achaemenian and Sasanian monarchs were buried in tombs, although no archaeological evidence of such tombs for the latter period has yet come to light, and Sasanian laws of the fifth century prescribed severe penalties for interment of corpses in the earth.90

In Armenia, there is archaeological evidence for the burial of the dead in sarcophagi, in hypogean tombs and in funerary towers. Literary sources refer to several royal necropoli, and a mediaeval polemicist attacked the Arewordik 'Children of the Sun' for exposing their dead on rooftops.91 The scant evidence for exposure, which is the preeminently Zoroastrian method of disposal of corpses, need not provoke scepticism as to the orthodoxy of the Armenians, Parthians, or, indeed, the Achaemenians. Exposure by its very nature is not intended to leave any traces, except where the remains are placed in astōdāns, as in Central Asia or Sasanian Fars, and at a time when Zoroastrianism was the state religion there was no need to build enclosures to protect the creation of Ahura Mazda from defilement by infidels who might move or bury the corpses; the erection of dakhmas, and the exposure of corpses on Armenian rooftops rather than stony mountainsides, should be viewed as responses to persecution rather than as the recrudescence of a faith mysteriously absent in the pre-Sasanian centuries.

Coffins of glazed ceramic, shaped like an elongated tub, plates fitted side by side over the top, have been found at a graveyard of the
Hellenistic period northeast of Va máršapat (Ējmiacín). Similar graves have been found at Ēšakan from the seventh-sixth centuries B.C.; one grave excavated at Aygešt, near Va máršapat, of a cromlech type characteristic of the Bronze Age, was found to contain a Hellenistic belt-buckle. Various objects were buried with the dead, perhaps for their use in the next world. At one site near Duin cathedral dated to the latter half of the first century B.C., a body was found interred in a ceramic vessel with beads of glass, bronze, stone and gold, various ceramic pots and two seals, one showing a battle between a horseman and a man on foot, the other depicting a fight between two hoplites.

Mass sacrifices were carried out at the funerals of great men, presumably in accordance with a belief that dead slaves and animals continued to serve their master in the next world. Korenacci relates that at the funeral of Artašēs I bazum kotorack linēin ēst awrini het anosac 'there were many killings, according to the custom of the heathens'. (In the fifth century B.C., on a few, perhaps exceptional, occasions, the Achaemenians had buried alive or sacrificed youths and maidens, perhaps to propitiate the lord of the underworld according to pagan custom.) The grave at Duin reflects the same hope of comfort in the afterlife, on a more modest scale, and both funerals were probably accompanied by much wailing and lamentation.

The Arm. practice of burying dead bodies in coffins to protect the surrounding elements from pollution may have been introduced by Zoroastrians from Iran, for the Arm. word for a sarcophagus is tapan, a loan-word from Mēr., and a possible Chorasmian form meaning 'ossuary', tənkwk, is found on an ossuary from Toq-Qal'a dated A.D. 616-711. The two common Arm. words for a grave or tomb, gerezman and širim, may also be loan-words of Mēr. origin. The former, from a Mēr. form of the term conceived by Zarathushtra himself for paradise, garōčēmāna 'House of Song', is found in the description provided by Agathangelos of the Armenian Arsacid royal necropolis at Ani in Daranaki, where there was a temple to Aramazd: təgaworabnak kayeansn hangstoc gerezmanac təgaworanč Hayoc 'St. Gregory went to the fortress of Ani, to the royally-inhabited abodes of the resting places, of the tombs of the kings of Armenia'. Although Gregory destroyed the temple of Aramazd, he dared not touch the tombs of the Arsacids, for
they still stood when Meružan Arcruni led the Sasanian king Šabūhr II
to despoil them after an unsuccessful raid on the Orontid necropolis at
Angl. The tombs at Ani must have been strongly built and still ac­
corded great reverence, for the Persians were unable to pry open that
of Sanatruk, and the Armenians hastened to ransom back those bones
which the Persians had taken away, in the apparent belief that the
paarkc 'glory' of the nation still inhere in them. The invocation
of King Tiridates I cited above draws a clear connection between paarkc
and the ancestors, and, according to Pawstos Buzand, it had been in­
deed the stated intention of the Persians to rob the Armenians of their
xArnah-(Av. 'glory') by absconding with the bones of their kings.

Christianity, so often implacably hostile to the manifestations of
Zoroastrian piety, cannot have objected on principle to the veneration
of human relics, in view of its own cultic practices involving reli­
quaries, which were conveniently produced and installed by the Illumi­
nator in various newly-consecrated sanctuaries; the most prominent
example is the provision of relics of St. John the Baptist and
St. Athenogenes to the Christian sanctuary established on the site of
the temple of Vahagn and Astlik at Aštisat. And indeed in Christian
times the Arsacid kings continued to be buried at Ani, whilst
St. Gregory and his descendants were buried at nearby Tòrdan in
Daranak, the former site of the temple of Baršamin; others were
interred at Tòl in Ekeleac a short distance to the east, the former
site of the temple of Nane.

The bones of the kings from Ani recovered by the Arm. naxarars
were re-interred in A.D. 364 at Alo, on the slopes of Mount Aragac in
the present-day Arm. S.S.R. It is recalled that a figurine of an eagle
was found on this mountain, and this indicates that some form of
worship may have been offered on the mountain in pre-Christian times.
The Yazidi Kurds also have tombs there. Mountains such as Azat Masik (modern Ararat, Tk. Ağrı dağ), which faces Aragac over the plain of
Ararat, were sacred to the Armenians, and one remembers also the
assertion of Herodotus that the Persians of Achaemenian times wor­
shipped Zeus (i.e., Ahura Mazda) on the tops of mountains. The
highest peak of the Bargusat chain in the district of Zangezur, Arm.
S.S.R., still bears the name Aramazd. It is possible that Aramazd
had been worshipped on lofty Aragac as at Ani, and the memory of such cultic similarities influenced the naxarars in choosing a new site for a royal tomb.

The tomb at McC is a hypogeum, similar in plan to another tomb of the fourth century A.D. at Mijleysa, Syria, and to the Parthian tombs mentioned above. A crudely executed bas-relief in the tomb depicts a naked man spearing a boar. A hunting scene is shown also on a pre-Christian funerary monument from Duin, and scenes of two animals fighting, or of an armed man, probably a hunter, on horseback, are shown with other scenes from everyday life on tombstones of the sixteenth century from the Sisian region in Armenia. The boar was a symbol of the yazata Verethraghna, Arm. Vahagn, and was represented on the royal seal of the Arm. Arsacids; the hunt was the chief joy of Ir. and Arm. kings, and its depiction on the grave monuments of king and commoner down the long centuries probably expresses hope in the pleasures of the afterlife.

At Parakar, a village on the road from Erevan to Ejmiacin, two funerary structures, called 'towers' by the archaeologist who excavated them, were found within 1.5 km of one another. They are of hard, un-mortared tufa blocks, and consist of two parts: a ten-sided, convex platform about 10.5 m in diameter, with the base of what seems to have been a tower, about 6.5 m in diameter, at its centre. One of the structures contained Parthian, Armenian and Roman coins of the first century B.C., and there is a fragmentary inscription in Aramaic. There is a grave in the earth itself, at the bottom of the 'tower', which appears to have been destroyed in ancient times and clumsily rebuilt. The original purpose of the structure is not certain, although the building may be compared to the tower tombs of Palmyra, nor is it known when the Aramaic inscription was made. But the grave seems to be from the first century B.C., and it is unlikely that another grave was desecrated in the process, for as we have seen, the Armenians of that period would have been loath to incur the wrath of the fravasis.

Draxt and dzoxx: The Next World

The Christian Arm. words for Heaven and Hell; draxt and dzoxx, are both loan-words from Mfr.: draxt comes from Mfr. draxt 'tree' and means 'garden, Paradise', while dzoxx 'hell', with the plural
tantum — k, 119 comes from Mrt. ēusax 'the worst existence, hell'. 120
In Arm. popular belief, hell is a pit of seven levels where the damned soul is whipped by Satan with a leaden scourge, worms crawl in and out of his mouth, and he is roasted on spits. He clomps about from one torture to the next in shoes of iron. 121

The Zoroastrian Ardāy Wirāz Nāmag divides hell into four levels; Dante's Inferno has nine, and both offer a rich variety of torments, each of the latter corresponding to the sins for which the soul has been condemned. In Ch. 19 of the Ardāy Wirāz Nāmag, a sodomite is shown with a snake plunging between his bowels and emerging from his mouth. In an Arm. MS illumination of A.D. 1601, Dives, the rich man, is shown with serpents entwined about his naked body in hell while Lazarus lies at Abraham's bosom in Paradise, 123 and in another MS of the sixteenth century the same proverbial rich man is shown with two snakes entwined about his legs, rising with their jaws wide open and their backs arched at his shoulders, to either side of his head. 124

The latter image is reminiscent of the depiction of Nergal at Hatra and of Zahhāk in mediaeval Persian MSS of the Šāhnāme, and may go back to early iconographic conceptions of the ruler of the underworld in Armenia. 125 In other Arm. MSS, hell is shown as a serpent encircling darkness, and the personification of hell is a serpent which an angel stabs with a spear on Judgement Day. 126

Demons were believed to take the form of serpents in Armenia; the Arsacid king Pāp (mid-fourth century) is described by Pausanias Buzand as having serpents sprouting from his shoulders, and this image of demonis possession accords well with both the Nergal and Zahhāk figures described above and with the Zoroastrian condemnation and punishment in hell of sodomy, for Pāp is referred to several times as a homosexual, first in his youth and later as king of Armenia: Snaw ew acac6, ew gorgēr znels, zpornuk6 iwm, zplcut6 iwm aruagitut6 iwm ew zanasagität6 iwm, ew zazrali gargut6 iwm: bayc6 kari zaruagitut6 iwm . . . Isk mayrn nayec6 al tesanēr ac6 aawk6 ivrovk6 avjk6 spitakk6, zi patealk6 ūin zgahoyic6 n otambk6, ew čapatēin i veray patanekin Pāpy, min6 deŕ ēngo İnmanac anā na 'Pāp was suckled and weaned, and he committed sins, whoring and the filth of homosexuality, and bestiality, and repulsive obscenity, but especially homosexuality . . . [His mother, Pāranjem, entered his room once whilst he was
engaged in sodomy, and his mother beheld and saw with her own eyes that white snakes had entwined themselves about the feet of the chairs, and were crawling over the youth Pap as he lay in bed. Ay t̓agaworn Pap, zi mĩnc de̓ tlayik, ayn inc̓ cneal ėr i mawre iwrm̓ , yawnzam jawneac̓ zna divac̓ anavr̓ en mayrn ṁa̓ ranjem, ew vasn aynorik li ėr divawk̓ i tlayut̓ en̓ iwrm̓ . Vasn zi hanapaz zkams divac̓ ain̓ ėr, vasn aynorik ew zb̓ škut̓ ̓ iwm isk oc̓ kam̓ er t̓ tanel: zi hanapaz varer zanji uiv divawk̓ , ew kaxardanawk̓ erew̓ en dewk̓ en i nme; ew amenayn mard zdawen i nme ac̓ ayv̓ bac̓ aw̓ tesan̓ en. Zi yorzam mardik hanapazawr yaygorel eleal mtaen̓ en, tesan̓ en zi yawjic̓ kerparans elan̓ en i cóc̓ oyn Papay t̓ agaworin, ew pat̓ en zusaw̓ norâ: ew amenek̓ ean coky̓ tesan̓ en zna, erknc̓ ėin i nman̓ ėv hup ertc̓ al. Isk na patasxani teyr mardkann aselov, t̓ e mi erknc̓ ik̓ , zi sok̓ ėa im en: ew amenayn mard yamenayn ŵəm tesan̓ en zayspisi inc̓ kerparans i nme. "But [as for] the king, Pap, when he was still a child, that is, when he was born of his mother, his lawless mother P̓ airanjem dedicated him to the demons, and because of that he was full of demons from his childhood. Because he did the will of the demons every day, because of that he did not even desire to find a cure, for daily he guided his soul by the demons, and the demons appeared in him by witchcraft, and every man saw with open eyes the demons in him. For when each day men came in to greet him in the morning, they saw that the demons in the form of snakes came from the breast of king Pap and curled about his shoulders. And all those who saw him, feared to approach him. But he used to give answer to those men, saying "Do not be afraid, for these are mine." And all men at all hours saw such forms in him." For all the chilling forms of the demons on earth and the similar forms they assume in hell, the Armenian conception of Heaven, or at least of the afterlife, does not seem to have been very much brighter in many cases, and reflects the archaic belief in a dim, chthonian place of shades. Down to the end of the nineteenth century, Armenians put lighted candles in the hands of the newly departed, for the next world was dark; if one over the age of ten died, a candle would be left to burn at the spot of the washing of the corpse for eight days to light the soul's path to the next world. It was believed that the dead lived beneath the earth, and on the seventh and fortieth days...
after death, as well as on other mešeloc\(^6\) ('of the dead', gen. pl.) days at regular intervals, cakes and drinks called hogsahac\(^6\) ‘bread of the soul’ and hoget\(^6\) as 'goblet of the soul' would be distributed to various members of the community, particularly priests and the poor, and also placed on the grave. These meals combined the fulfillment of religious obligations with charity towards needy members of the community and may be compared to the gahəmbär\(\)s celebrated for the dead, and to the rož and sāl observances, in Zoroastrian communities\(\). The six gahəmbär\(\)s (or seven, including New Year's Day) are festivals celebrating the chief creations of Ahura Mazdā, and Zoroastrians established pious foundations to celebrate at a gahəmbār service rituals in memory of an ancestor, the offerings of food made during the religious ceremony to be distributed later to members of the community.\(\) It was probably under the influence of the older Zoroastrian practice that Arm. Christians developed the belief that the spirits of the dead return to earth five times yearly, on the eve of the nawakatik\(^c\) festivals of the Church\(\) and must be given offerings of candles and incense;\(\) the candle is called mešli črag 'lamp of the deceased'.\(\)

The souls of their ancestors, the Armenians believed, participated in the affairs of the living, and could take on visible form, like the serpent-demons of hell mentioned above. The soul was seen as a human form smaller than a living body but the same size regardless of the age at which a corporeal owner had died. The soul could also appear as a ball of light, or an inanimate object, or as the swaddling clothes of an infant. It could assume a variety of animal forms, appearing as a cat, wolf, bear, donkey, naked man or black dog.\(\) Before entering the Crow's Rock at Lake Van, the Armenian epic hero Mher offered a patareg 'Divine Liturgy'\(\) to his ancestors.\(\) Ancestors warn the heroes of Sasun in their dreams of events to come.\(\)

Armenian concepts of the next world for all but royalty, who would, presumably, have been assured of good hunting, seem so bleak that it is little wonder the ancestors required the continuous attentions of the living and enjoyed interfering in the affairs of the world they had left. Offerings placed upon graves, restrictions against spilling water on the ground at night, and, of course, burial itself indicate that the belief in a subterranean kingdom of the dead persisted through
Zoroastrian times into the Christian era, despite the teachings of both religions concerning Heaven. Yet certain traditions indicate also that Christian Armenians saw Heaven much as the Zoroastrians did, that is, as a place of pleasure and repose for the soul before the Last Judgment, when corporeal life on earth would resume (a belief in which Christianity is in convenient accord with Zoroastrianism). Heaven is seen as an angin k'alač 'city without price' where the cef xaleni 'incense tree' flowers, the kat'nažbiwr 'spring of milk' flows and the departed eat anušak kerakur 'immortal food'. But in Armenia as in Iran, archaic, pre-Zoroastrian beliefs and practices concerning death and burial persisted. One of these was the legendary surrounding the dog.

In Zoroastrianism to this day, the dog is regarded as an intermediary between the living and the dead, possessing the power to protect the soul from evil, and the presence of a dog is necessary at Zoroastrian funerary rites. It appears that this belief did not originate with the prophet Zarathushtra, however, but goes back to Indo-Iranian times. In Armenian legend, the dead king Ara is licked back to life by creatures called aralez-k; the etymology and meaning of this word are unknown, but Eznik explains that the fictional creature called aralez is a dog which can cure a man wounded in battle by licking him. The legend of Ara and Šamiram is of the same type as the ancient Asianic myths of Attis, the dying and rising young god, and must be extremely old. The antiquity of the tale is shown also in the appearance in it of the Assyrian queen Semiramis (Arm. Šamiram), who orders her 'gods' (astuacoc, according to Movses Korenac'i), i.e., the aralezk, to heal Ara. Noting the Mesopotamian associations of the myth, K. Y. Basmacean suggested that the belief in aralezk may be of Assyrian origin, for at Harran the god Marḏuk was called mry dklbwv 'lord of dogs', and was regarded as resuscitator of the dead.

In later centuries, both Byzantine and Armenian clerics castigated the Armenians for worshipping a dog who had been the herald and companion of a priest named Sargs, and a modern Armenian legend from Bukovina repeats the legend of the birth of Vahagn that we find in Korenac'i, adding that the fiery-haired 'man' is accompanied by two dogs of fire. The Armenians of Nor-Bayazit believed in the existence of a race of dog-headed men equal to humans.
In Armenia and the Caucasus, oaths of denial involved the dog. The mediaeval Armenian writer Mxitʿar Goš in his Datastanagirk noted various ways in which ӕylazgik 'other peoples' made such oaths, including ʔsan ʔjetoy unel 'taking a dog by the tail'; the modern Ossetes swear by killing a cat or dog over the graves of the dead, and the Ingush swear over the bones of a dog brought to a sacred spot. The rituals of oath-taking described above seem to have in common the implied sense that the dog represents the powers of the next world and will take away the soul of the swearer if he tell a lie, or else that the dog is an intermediary through which the souls of the dead may be called as witnesses to the oath taken.

Tork and Spandaramet

In Armenia many of the funerary practices we have described are identical to those documented in Zoroastrian Iran, and post similar problems. Some seem to predate Zoroastrianism in both countries, and are to be viewed as originating from the distinct heritages of the two peoples rather than reflecting historical ties: the significance of the dog in both cultures is an example of such a case, traceable in Armenia apparently to a Mesopotamian cultural milieu before the Median conquest, and in Iran to the remote Indo-Iranian past. In other cases, practices which seem but uneasily reconcilable with Zoroastrian orthopraxy, such as burial, may nonetheless be part of a common culture, for we have noted the fact that the Armenians use an Iranian word, tapan 'sarcophagus', and the tomb at Aկc bears resemblance to a type found in Parthian Iran. In other cases, the threads of a common Zoroastrian faith are more evident, as in Arm. hro(r)ত-ic 'of the fravashi', and on the strength of such evidence we have sought to establish further details of the fravasi-cult in Armenia which could otherwise be dismissed as coincidental.

Problems found in interpretation of Greek equivalents of Iranian yazatas, and of the gender ascribed to the yazatas by Zoroastrians themselves, are encountered in similar form in both Iran and Armenia. Spandaramet was not, one thinks, considered male, although the name in the Arm.:Bible renders Greek Dionysos in Maccabees. The Demeter of ancient Armenian temples was perhaps another yazata, yet the possibility of confusion or error on the part of an ancient writer must be kept in
mind. After all, Herodotus identifies the male Mithra with the unquestionably feminine Aphrodite in a passage on Persian religion which is otherwise considered a reliable description of Achaemenian beliefs and practices.151

Because of such problems, both of archaic survivals and of uncertainty in the precise identification of a given divinity, it is hard to tell whether the cult of Torkć Angešeay as the divinity connected with death and the underworld was displaced or otherwise affected by the Zoroastrian yazata Spandaramet. There is no evidence of the expansion of the cult of Torkć beyond its ancient centre at Angeš Tun at the remote western edge of Armenia, although the Armenian translators of the Bible knew enough of Torkć to equate Nergal with him. We have noted also the similarity of the image of King Pap in Pćawstos Buzand, cited above, to the bas-relief of Nergal at Hatra, and Pćawstos remarks that Pap had been dedicated at birth to the 'demons' by his mother, Pćaranjem. It is unlikely that this baleful, hateful image, connected besides to sodomy, an activity considered a serious sin in Zoroastrianism,152 can have been assimilated into the Good Religion. It would appear that the concept of sandaramet-kć, the personification of the underworld, was introduced into Armenia from southwestern Iranian usage in Achaemenian times, when the cult of Torkć was prominent—for it was at his cult centre that the Orontid necropolis was founded—and that the yazata Spandaramet was arrived separately, the name coming from NW Mr. or even Av. directly. No attempt was made to suppress the cult of Torkć, though, as it seems, and it probably survived in Angeš, whilst his temple itself would presumably have been dedicated to the cult of the fravāšis of the Orontid kings, whom the Arsacids appropriated as their own ancestors. In Iran, too, cults varying from the heterodox to the demonic (from a Zoroastrian point of view) flourished through Sasanian times, despite the periodic persecution of their followers by Kartīr and others. One recalls that the naxarar structure of Armenian and Parthian society, a flexible and often volatile alliance of local dynasts, was ill-suited to a centralised religious bureaucracy capable of such inquisitions, and greater accommodation of the heterodox was necessary.
The Winged Figure

The winged ring symbol encircling a human figure is shown on coins of the Persian satrap Tiribazos. The torso is Greek in inspiration, naked and muscular, unlike the forms of the symbol found at Persepolis or Assyria. Opinions are divided as to the meaning of the winged figure in Iran, where scholars have argued variously that it may have represented xVarənah-, Ahura Mazda, or the fravashi-. The symbol is found in Armenia also on a fragmentary bronze throne-leg from Van, probably from the Achaemenian period; in this case, the human head and torso are clothed and the posture is stiff, as in the examples from Persepolis and Assyria.

The coins of an Achaemenian satrap and the throne leg are the sole attestations of this puzzling symbol in the Armenian area. We have argued that the two eagles and star on the royal crown of the Artaxiads represent p'ark 'glory, xVarənah-' and baxt 'fortune', and the portrait-like quality of the coin of Tiribazos would indicate that the figure is meant to represent either Zeus/Ahura Mazda or the fravashi of Tiribazos himself. We have seen the centrality of the fravashi-cult in the references by the king of Armenia to his naxnik 'ancestors' and in the apparent continuation of the Zoroastrian gaḥambārs through the Christian nawakatik feasts and their rites and offerings to the departed. The daimon of the Persian king is referred to by Classical writers, and by a Parthian king, Phraates (V?), in a Greek inscription at Susa in which he invokes his own daimon; this may be a Gk. translation of Ir. fravashi-. Kinship and patrimony were crucial to concepts of social status and right in Iran and Armenia, and the establishment of genealogy, whether real or spurious, is a continuous theme in epigraphy and other sources from the Achaemenian era down to the early Christian Armenian historians, who were burdened with the task of establishing the antiquity and descent of the particular naxarar under whose patronage they worked.

It seems, therefore, logical to expect that such claims of lineage were to be reflected in iconography, for the temporal and social prestige of one's ancestors blended well with the supernatural power and religiously ceremonial significance of the fravashi. Depiction of one's fravashi or xVarənah on a coin or bas-relief would more directly
serve the interests of hereditary kingship than an image of Ahura Mazda. The latter is often invoked by Darius at Behistun, and the Armenian Arsacid necropolis was located at Ani, cult centre of Aramazd. Yet He is the creator of all things and god of all the world, perhaps too general in His influence and state to represent a ruler, albeit the King of Kings, whose primary claim to power was that he was an Achaemenian, or an Orontid, or an Arsacid. It was, rather, the family daimōns or personal fravashi that such a ruler might be expected to invoke in assertion of his right to rule.

The coin of Tiribazus, if indeed it represents his fravashi, presents us yet again with the curious blend of Hellenic and Iranian tradition which pervades our sources on ancient Armenian culture: Spandaramet and the Bacchae of Euripides, and the Hellenistic mask of Bacchus. The naked, muscular figure rises from the archaic symbol in an unexpected harmony of Greek art and Iranian religious iconography. As Hellenistic art forms went East, the Oriental god Dionysos, Spandaramet to the Armenians, went West with his kak'aw 'partridge' dance:

From the fields of Lydia and Phrygia, fertile in gold,
I travelled first to the sun-smitten Persian plains,
The walled cities of Bactria, the harsh Median country,
Wealthy Arabia, and the whole tract of the Asian coast
Where mingled swarms of Greeks and Orientals live
In vast magnificent cities; and before reaching this,
The first city of Hellas I have visited,
I had already, in all those regions of the east,
Performed my dances . . .

---Euripides, Bacchae, 13-21
Notes – Chapter 10

2. Ibid., 204-5.
3. Ibid., 267.
4. Sāyast nē Šayast, 15. 5-6, 30.
8. Eze. 31.16:MXitCaresc'enco zm a i sandarametsn 'they will console him in Hades'; Phil. 2.10: erkaworac'ew erkaworac'ew sendarametakanac" 'of those of Heaven, earth and Hades'.
9. Agath. 735, 743.
11. Ibid., 333; Yovhannēs Erznkac'i, Meknut'ıwn Matt'ısi, Constantinople, 1825, I, 198; A. Zanolli, 'La pena escatologica del gelo in documenti della letteratura armena,' Le Monde Oriental 17, Uppsala, 1923, 246-7.
12. AHH, 334.
14. On Arm. -pet, see Benveniste, Titres et noms propres, 68-69.
15. MX III. 62.
18. A. Meillet, 'Sur les terms religieux iraniens en arméniens,' RDEA, 1920, 234; R. Schmitt, 'Iranisches Lehngut in Armenischen,' REArm, N.S. 17, 1903, 95 & n. 32; M. Schwartz, CHiran, 2, 1985, 693.
19. Examples of this usage are cited by Bailey, op. cit.
21. MA 3, 450.
23. Vhayut'c'wn S. Ignatiyosi, in Sop'rerk Haykakan¹c, XXII, Venice, 1861, 144, lines 16-21.
24. AHH, 321; Yovhan Mamikonean, Patmut'c'wn Tar'ony, Erevan, 1941, 79.
28. E. Têr-Minasean, ed., Ekisêj Vasn Vardanay ew Hayoc² Paterazmin, Erevan, 1957, 64. By scales are meant, most likely, musical dastgâhs, some of which in Iran are attributed to Sasanian and Arsacid times.
30. AHH, 25.
33. Ananikian, 19.
34. H. Akafean, Hayeren armatakan hataran, Erevan, 1979, IV, 259-60.
35. Ibid., 260.
37. MA 7, 54; See Ch. 12.
38. Boyce, Stronghold, 44.
39. Ananikian, 49; MA 7, 33.
40. Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 124.
41. Cited by J. Karst, Mythologie Armeno-Caucasienne, Strasbourg, 1948, 55 n.1; on Maireknas see Ch. 5; on Dionysos at Trapezus, see F. & E. Cumont, Studia Pontica, II, 1906, 357.
42. Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 208.
43. Loc. cit.
47. E. Herzfeld, Am Tor von Asien, Berlin, 1920, 39; Debevoise, op. cit., n. 26, 44; Arm. ostikan is attested in the fifth-century translation of the Bible (cf. Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 215), but became an important administrative office in Armenia only after the mid-seventh century, during the rule of the Arab Caliphate (cf. A. N. Ter-Gevondyan, Armeniya i arabskii khalifat, Erevan, 1977, 155 ff.).
49. Dupont-Sommer, op. cit., 137, line 25.
50. Ibid., 146.
51. Henning, op. cit., n. 17, 312, line 75.
53. The form of the name Artasēs is discussed in Ch. 9.
54. Arm. nhang-k'c: cf. Acaean, op. cit. n. 34, III, 458 and Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 205. Eznik may be referring to a mythical aquatic creature here rather than to the crocodile, since one would not expect to find crocodiles in the rivers of Armenia.
55. Arm. տահապետ եայրեադ: L. Mariès and C. Mercier, Ezniš de Koğb: De Deo (Patrologia Orientalis, Vol. 28, fasc. 4), Paris, 1959, 594, translate the phrase as 'génies tutélaires de lieux', while A. Abrahamyan, Ezniš Koğbaci: Ec ašandac, Erevan, 1970, 81, translates it into Modern Arm. as ašteri šahapetner 'šahapets of the plains'. The Arjern Bararan haykazean lezui, Venice, 1865, 747, defines եայր as either 'place' (տեղ) or 'an open place, a plain, cultivated land' (դուրս տեղ, դաստ, վարկանդ՝ տեղ). Ezniš seems to be refuting the existence of imaginary creatures in the waters on one hand, and on land on the other, so Mariès's translation as 'lieux' is perhaps insufficient to convey the author's intended meaning. Since our Oskiberan passage mentions šahapets of growing things, we take եայր in the sense of cultivated lands.


57. Ejmiacin Matenadaran MS 582, fol. 125a. On վիսապ, see Ch. 6; on Ասխան, see Ch. 13; on the կոջկ, see Ch. 14.

58. Agath. 61.

59. Ibid., 64.

60. M. M. Kobylina, Izobrazheniya vostochnykh bozhestv v severnom Prichervomor'e v pervye veka n.e., Moscow, 1978, 112.


64. On snakes in Arm., see Ch. 14.


66. On Ahekan, see our Ch. on Mihr.

67. Agath. 16; cited differently by AHH, 215.

68. Loc. cit.

69. H. Aca'rean, op. cit., n. 34, III, 617; in Mediaeval and Modern Arm., the յուր is regarded as an evil spirit, for we find the
expression uruakan pēcut'iw 'nocturnal pollution' (Bedrossian),
which indicates an uru could be an incubus, and the Armenian
Canons condemn the heresiarch Nestor as uruzeal i satanaye 'uru-
born of Satan' (AHH, 215).


71. L. H. Gray, 'The foundations of the Iranian Religions,' JCOI 15,
1929, 49.

72. AHH, 156, 363; Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 184; Acréan, op. cit.,
n. 69, III, 137-8.

73. J. Marquart, 'Armenische Streifen,' Yusarjan-Festschrift, Vienna,
1911, 295-6.

74. On urvan and fravashi, see Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 117-19.

75. MX II.46, 90; the name Arsacid is obviously anachronistic here,
and must be interpreted to mean 'royal' merely. Artašēs, one re-
calls, identified himself in Aramaic inscriptions as an Orontid,
so that both he and Eruand, whose power he usurped, had the same
royal ancestry.

76. Cf. A. Khatchatrian, 'Les monuments funéraires arméniens des
IVe-VIIe siècles et leur analogies syriennes,' Byzantinische
Forschungen, I, 1966, 179-192. On the art of the xamčkar, see
L. Azarian, A. Manoukian, Khatchkar (Documenti di Architettura
Armeni, 2), Milan, 1977. The cross is seen sometimes atop a
stepped pyramid, replacing the ancient eagle of Anatolian figur-
ines. Or, it is flanked from below by a symmetrical pair of wing-
like fronds. But a cross seen by this writer on a fifth-century
capital from Duin in the Erevan Historical Museum is framed by an
unambiguous pair of curling wings, thus:

The convention of flanking a sacred or otherwise honored object
with such wings is widespread and important in Sasanian art; R. N.
Frye, Sasanian Remains from Qasr-i Abu Nasr, Cambridge, Mass.,
1973, 69, even suggests that the symbol is not found before the
Sasanian period. The pair of wings appears to be simplified and
stylized in Sasanian monograms, thus: 2£ (see the plates to
J. M. Unvala, 'Sasanian Seals and Sasanian Monograms,'
Khureghat Memorial Volume, I, Bombay, 1953, A. D. H. Bivar, Cata-
logue of the Western Asiatic Seals in the British Museum, Stamp
Seals, II, The Sassanian Dynasty, London, 1969, 75 and 113-4 de-
scribes the symbol as having the shape of 'the inverted letter
pi'), or on seals (see, e.g., C. J. Brunner, Sasanian Stamp Seals
a silver-gilt plate from McCxetc'a in Georgia the wings appear to have been replaced by acanthus leaves which taper towards the top and curl like the wings shown elsewhere (see P. Harper, Silver Vessels of the Sasanian Period, 1, New York, 1981, pl. on 202). D. Talbot Rice, 'The Leaved Cross,' Byzantinoslavica 11, 1, Prague, 1950, proposed a Sasanian origin for the wings or leaves beneath the cross; the capital from Duin, which he did not see, vindicates his hypothesis. It is neither surprising nor unique that such a convention of iconography be borrowed from the earlier religion of a place or from the faith of a powerful neighbor: on eighth-century Christian monuments of China, carved crosses in relief rise from the lotus used in Buddhist art as 'a pedestal to call attention to a Buddha or Bodhisattva' (J. Foster, 'Crosses from the Walls of Zaitun,' JRAS, 1954, 9 and pls. I-XVII). The use of wings in Armenia may be compared to another Sasanian convention, the ribbed and creased ribbon with flying ends, which is used to frame a cross on a sixth-century Georgian relief from Sesashveli (V. Beridze, Jveli kcartuli xurotcmojghvelba, Tbilisi, 1974, pl. 19).

78. J. R. Hinnells, Persian Mythology, New York, 1973, 126 (Pl.).
82. Agath. 16. The critical edition ed. by G. T'er-Mart'yan and S. Kanayeanc, Tiflis, 1909, 13, does not have Alisan's variant t'embrut'c'wnek 'errors', only various spellings of t'embrut'c'wnek (cf. line 16 & n.). R. W. Thomson (Agethangelos: History of the Armenians, Albany, N. Y., 1976, 31) translates uruapast as 'idolatrous', which is obviously inaccurate and misleading.
83. Agath. 71.
84. B. N. Arakelyan, Aknarkner hin Hayastani arvesti patmut'yan, Erevan, 1976, 16-17 & Pls. 11-18.
87. Ibid., 109. On Soviet excavations and studies of this and other sites, see T. N. Zadneprovskaya, 'Bibliographie de travaux soviétiques sur les Parthes,' Studia Iranica, Tome 4, 1975, Fasc. 2, 244-55.
88. R. Ghirshman, op. cit., 270-1.

89. Loc. cit.

90. Boyce, Zoroastrians, 121; on dakhmas, burial and entombment in Iranian history and Zoroastrian tradition, see Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 109, 111, 114, 325-8.

91. See Ch. 16.


94. MX II.62; Herodotus VII.114, cited by Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 112; see Ch. 14.

95. MX II.60.

96. W. B. Henning, 'The Ch'eshmian Documents,' Asia Major, 1965, 170, 177; St. Nerses Snorhali (d. 1177) wrote in a hymn to Christ, yasn mez ez'ar i _i ew njec'er i tapani 'for our sake you were in the pit and slept in a sarcophagus.' (Zamagirkc, Jerusalem, 1955, 602). In the Bible, however, Arm. tapan is used exclusively to refer to the ark of Noah (LXX kib6tos). The Gk. means 'wooden box, chest, coffer' in Aristophanes (Liddell & Scott, An Intermediate Gk. Lexicon, Oxford, 1889, 432), so the Arm. translator need not have had a word for a ship in mind.

97. Gerezman may be related to Phl. garasman, an alternate form of garodman from Av. gar6 demana- 'the house of song', i.e., Paradise (D. N. MacKenzie, A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary, Oxford, 1971, 35; Acarean, op. cit., I, 542-3); a derivation of Sirim has been proposed from an Av. form *sairima- with the base *ay- 'to dwell' (Acarean, III, 521, citing Pedersen). W. B. Henning, 'Two Central Asian Words,' TPS, 1945, 157-62 (=AI, 15, 266-71), proposes a derivation of Arm. gerezman from another Ir. form, Median *gärzm-en and rejects a direct etymology from Av.

98. Agath. 785; on Ani see also MX II. 53 and Ch. 5.

99. On Angl, see Ch. 11.

100. PÇB IV, 24; on Sanatruk, see also H. Manandyan, Erker, II, Erevan, 1978, 22.

101. MX III, 27.

103. See Ch. 6.

104. P^6 B III, 11.

105. MX III, 11, 14; on Barsamin, see Ch. 5.

106. MX II, 1, III, 38; P^6 B V, 24; on Manâ, see Ch. 7.

107. See Ch. 9.

108. See Ch. 13 for traditions concerning Mt. Ararat.


110. See Ch. 5.


114. G. Karaxanyan, 'Aškarhik kyânc^c k^c argorç vartneri stełcagorçuc^çyunnerum,' Sovetakan Arvest, 1976, 10, 54-5.

115. On the boar, Arm. varaz, see Ch. 6.

116. On the emblematic significance of the royal hunt and the numerous references to it in Armenian texts and in pre-Islamic Iranian art, see N. G. Garsolian, 'Prolegomena,' Handeš Amsöres, 1976, 183-4 & 216-7, n. 50-52 ff.

117. G. Tirac^çyan, 'P^ç arak^çari âstârakâjev dambaranâ ev nman husarjâner Hayastanum ev Arâjewor Asisýum,' Banber Erevani Hamalsarani, 1970, 1, 229-39. The contents of the Aramaic inscription have not yet been published, but Çağnik Asatryan, a student of Dr. A. Perikhanian, informed me by letter in 1979 that Perikhanian finds the Aramaic script of the P^ç arak^çar inscription to differ considerably from the specimens found elsewhere in Armenia. C. Hopkins, The Discovery of Dura-Europos, New Haven, 1979, 233, suggests vaguely that the tomb-towers of Palmyra might have had a significance similar to that of the 'Parsee towers of silence'. Unless Palmyrene corpses were placed in an upper chamber for their souls to ascend from thence, it is hard to see how these sealed, roofed buildings could resemble the open amphitheatres in which the bodies of Parsis are eaten by birds.


120. Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 142.

121. MA 7, 31; AH, I, 317.


125. See Ch. 11.

126. H. Hakobyan, op. cit., n. 124, figs. 2, 32, 49, 76.

127. PCB IV, 44.

128. On the MIr. derivation of kaxard 'witch' and on beliefs concerning serpents generally, see Ch. 14.

129. PCB V, 22.

130. MA 7, 26, citing AH, II, 179.


132. Boyce, Stronghold, 204-6.

133. Ibid., 31-51.

134. Arm. nawakatik C derives from OP navas- 'new' and an OIr. form *kati- 'house', comp. Av. katu-, Phl. kadag, NP kad-s, and translates LXX, N. T. enkainismos 'a feast of renovation' (cf. Hübschmann, Arm. Gr., 202). The nawakatik C festivals were originally connected with xac C verac C, the feast of the rededication (hence the name nawakatik C) of Christian sanctuaries at Jerusalem in the fourth century, but the name was later given to the Saturdays preceding Vardavar, Easter, Christmas and the Feast of Assumption (Arm. Verap oxum, see Abp. Toğmaq, Patriarch of Jerusalem, Surbc C ew tönk C Hayastancayc c Eklec wc voy, Jerusalem, 1957, 268 n.). Arm. zetik, from MIr., comp. Choresmian z'ýlk 'son', pl. z'ýlc in W. B. Henning, 'The Khwarezmian Language,' Z. V. Toğan'a Armagan, Istanbul, 1956, 429; the Arm. word is clearly a derivative of Ir. za- 'to be born', and the various possibilities listed by Acañan, op. cit., II, 83 seem unlikely folk etymologies.
135. MA 7, 27, citing AH, II, 185.
136. Ibid., citing AH, I, 318.
137. MA 7, 18, citing AH, I, 317.
138. Acaean, op. cit., IV, 37, derives Arm. patarag, the original meaning of which is 'gift, offering', from Phl. *patarag 'gift', Av. *pātī-fragavāni 'I give, offer'. Patarag may be related to Arm. e-rag, e-rag, e-rag, 'swift, fast', Av. rang- (pres. ranja-) 'to quicken' (AirWb, 1511), Phl. ranj 'trouble' (MacKenzie, op. cit., 70) (Acaean, I, 291); the Arm. forms arag and erag are to be analysed analogically to Arm. e-rani, e-rašx et al., with their Iranian origins (see Benveniste, TPS, 1945, 71 and BSLP, 53, 1957-8, 55, 71; FRA, 10, 1930, 81 ff.). Patarag would thus have the meaning of something hastened or propelled towards someone, hence a gift, offering; for other possible derivations, see Ch. 15, n. 81.
139. MA I, 434.
140. Ibid., 441.
141. MA 7, 29. Anušak kerakur=Gk. ambrosia in the fifth-century Arm. translation of the Wisdom of Solomon; Anušak is a loan-word from Mīr. anōsak 'immortal' (Hubschmann, Arm. Gr., 100).
142. Boyce, Stronghold, 139-147.
143. For a detailed treatment of the legend of Ara and Šamiram, see Ch. 13.
144. K. Y. Basmačean, 'Yaralēzk', Bazmavēp, 1897, 525-31.
146. See Ch. 13 on Captive Powers; in Qur'ān 18.18, 22, a dog who shares somehow in the miracle of longevity is reverentially numbered among the seven sleepers of Ephesus.
147. See Ch. 6.
148. See Ch. 13.
150. See also Ibid., 236 on the significance of these rituals.
151. Herodotus, Hist., I.131; I. Gershevitch suggested that Herodotus might have heard the compound Ahura-Mithra and erroneously assumed that Mithra was the consort of Ahura, i.e., Ahura Mazda, not Mithra-the-Ahura (M. Schwartz in CHIran 2, 1985, 694).
For references to condemnation of sodomy in Zoroastrian texts see Ch. 14. Herodotus reports, however, that the Persians were avid pederasts. Later Iranian poets, including Ḥāfiz, Sa'dī, Khayyām, and Rūmī, were avowedly homosexual in their writings; this cannot have been wholly a cultural phenomenon of Islām (see J. Boswell, Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality, Chicago, 1980, 18, who seems to regard the Iranian poets simply as 'Muslims').

On Tīribazos, see our Chs. on Armenia from the Median Conquest to the rise of the Artaxiads and on Tīr; the coins are discussed by P. Calmeyer, 'Fortuna-Tyche-Khwarrah,' Jahrbuch der Deutschen archäologischen Instituts, 94, 1979, 352 Pl. 4 and by A. S. Shahbazi, 'An Achaemenid Symbol,' AMI, NF. 7, 1974, 136 & n. 9. They were published first by G. E. Hill, Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Lycaonia, Isauria and Cilicia, 1900, pls. 26.2 and 39.1.

E. Herzfeld, Iran in the Ancient East, 1941, 263 and fig. 364, cited by Shahbazi, op. cit.

See Ch. 9. The 'sun of righteousness' (Arm. aregakn ardarutכנ), a popular image of Christ in the Arm. Sarakans, has in Malachi 4.2 'wings' or 'arms' (Arm.  ePub) of healing, but it is unlikely that the early Christian Armenians recognised the image of the winged disk in the prophetic vision (see G. d'Alviella, The Migration of Symbols, London, 1894, repr. N. Y., 1956, xiii), for by the Sasanian period the symbol was no longer used in Iran.


CHAPTER 11

Nergal

The Babylonians worshipped a god named Ne-iri-gal (Sumerian 'Power of the great house'); his was the planet Mars, and he was the ruler of the underworld (Babyl. Arallû) together with his consort Nin-ki-gal (pronounced also Eresh-ki-gal), whose name means Lady of Kigallu ('the great earth'). Ne-iri-gal (Nergal) appears to have been at first a Sun-god; perhaps because the Sun was seen to enter the West and pass beneath the earth in the evening, or else because of the deadly power of the Sun's burning rays, Nergal came to be regarded as the ruler of Hell. He was also a figure of strength and power, hence his association with warlike Mars and his later equation with the Greek god Heraklès.

Nergal was the patron-deity of the city of Cuthah, called in Babylonian magical texts 'the assembly-place of ghosts', presumably because of Nergal's association with the world of the dead. In the second book of Kings Ch. 17 is recorded the conquest of the Hebrew kingdom of Samaria by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, who brought settlers from Mesopotamia and Syria to displace the Israelites from their cities; amongst them were the men of Cuth or Cuthah, who worshipped Nergal (2 Kings 17.30): Heb. we-anšeš-kûth ġěšû eth-nērgal; LXX ἐν οἷς δὲ ὁ Κουθαῖος ἔστη ἔργηλ; Arm. 4 Kings 17.30 ἀρχὲ Κουθαῖος ἐποίησαν τὸν ἔργηλ. In the early centuries of the Christian era, Nergal was worshipped at Palmyra, Dura Europos and Hatra. A relief of Nergal and his consort Atargatis from Hatra of the mid-second century A.D. shows a fearsome and warlike bearded man in Parthian belted tunic and trousers. In his right hand he grasps a double-headed axe, and snakes spring from his shoulders. He has a beard and moustache, and there is a scorpion over his left shoulder. On an altar of a man named KNYYW from Hatra, possibly an Iranian, there is shown a figure who clutches several serpents in his left hand and a double-headed axe in his right. It has been suggested that this is a depiction of Nergal, lord of the
underworld, who is bidden to remember the soul of KNZYW. On a Sogdian ossuary from Biya-Naiman is depicted a figure of a moustached and bearded man holding a sword in his left hand and an axe in his right, corresponding closely to a similar figure in a graffito from Dura Europos. Both fit the description of the figure of a Harranian idol identified as Saturn by the fourteenth-century Arab writer ad-Dimisî. The double-headed axe wielded by the figures described above appears to have been a constant iconographic attribute of Nergal in all the various cultures where he was known, although Nergal is not the only divinity known to have been depicted holding an axe. The figure described as Saturn probably represents Nergal, although the axe in the representations from Sogdia and Dura has only one cutting edge. It may represent the destructive power of time and age (hence Saturn, the symbol of the two latter concepts) and the ultimate dominion of the kingdom of death over all that is mortal. In Harrân, indeed, Nergal, the god of the underworld, pestilence, plague and war, ruler of the utukkî lîmmûti (the seven evil winds), was regarded as the twin and adversary of the good moon-god, Sin. Any figure thus regarded as associated with destruction and death would be considered demonic by Zoroastrians even more than by adherents of other faiths, for the cosmic dualism that is central to Zoroastrian thought rejects utterly all that is not good and life-giving as serving Angra Mainyu rather than Ahura Mazda. It is possible, therefore, that the image of Zahhûk (Av. Aûzi Daháka) in medieval Persian MSS of the Šáhname and the terra cotta figurine from Sogdia we have discussed with snakes sprouting from their shoulders, was adopted from Mesopotamian images of Nergal.

Angéla

One of the chief divinities of the Urarteans was the Hurrian god Tešub, whom the Urarteans called Teišeba, and after whom were named the capital city of Tušpa (modern Van, after Biaina, the Urarteans' name for their country; the district of Van is still called Tosp by the Armenians, however) and the eastern town of Teišebaini (Karmir Blur, near Erevan). Teišeba was a weather god, mighty and heroic, like the North Syrian (H)adad or the Asianic storm god Tarûnûda to be discussed below. Zoroastrian Armenians equated Teišeba with their yazata Vahagn, symbolic of might and victory, and the exploits of Teišeba were attributed to
14 By the late ninth century B.C., Urartu's cultic observances were under the strong influence of the country's chief political adversary, Assyria, and it is likely that the cult of Nergal was introduced into the Arm. highlands then, for a bronze statuette of Teiseba shows the god clutching a two-headed ax, symbol of the Mesopotamian god. In Hellenistic times, the two-headed axe is a constant feature in images of Jupiter Dolichenus, whose cult spread westwards from the city of Dolikhe in Commagene, a kingdom on Armenia's southwestern border.

It was noted above that the Arm. translators of the Septuagint rendered Greek Ange, Heb. Nergal as Arm. Ange. Heb. Nergal and Arm. Ange may be connected, through the loss of initial N- as in the Greek, and the substitution of -r- by -n- in the Arm. form. But the development of Arm. *Ange is not certain. The latter name is found in the Arm. province of Ange Tun, identified by Adonc with the Hittite Ingalawa. The name of the province means 'House of Ange', Ange being the gen. sing. (comp. ast 'star', gen. sing. astc, etc.). Aside from the Biblical acc. sing. zAnge, which would imply a nom. sing. Ange, the name is attested in the nominative in the so-called 'Primary History' attributed to the seventh-century Arm. historian Sebós: "Bw ordik'c Bagaratay ŋarangec'c in ŋarangut'c ina iweanc'c i kołmans arewmt'c, eysink'c 5 Ange tun: vasn zî koç'c'c'ew Bagarat ev Ange, zor i ŋamanakin yawnmk azg barbarosac'c astuac koç'c'c'c in 'And the sons of Bagarat inherited their inheritances in the regions of the West, that is, Ange Tun: for Bagarat was also called Ange, whom at that time the nation of the barbarians called a god (astuac). The author of the 'Primary History' claims to have got his information from a Syrian writer, Mar Abbas of Mourn. and we find in Syriac two names for the province, Ingilia and Beth Aggela, the latter corresponding closely to the Arm. with Syr. beth=Arm. tun 'house'. The identification of Ange as a god is significant, for it links the Biblical reference to Ange Tun. The genealogy, through which the author seeks to connect the Bagratid house with the line of King Zariadres (Arm. Zareh) of Sophene (Arm. Cop'c), is probably as spurious as Movsès Xorenac'i's attempt to trace the descent of his Bagratid patron to King David of Israel. But the Bagratids were a dynasty of enormous power and importance, and their
presumed association with Angeл Tun indicates that a memory of great
prestige and importance still lingered about the place.

The fortress of Angeл, centre of the province of Angeл Tun in
Sophene, lies on the upper reaches of the Western Tigris, north of Amida
and south of Arsamosata; it has been identified with Carcathiocerta
(Arm. Arkat'iakert), capital of the Orontids of Sophene. If indeed we
may identify Angeл with Nergal, the presence of whose cult on the Arm.
plateau appears to be attested from Urartean times, as seen above, and
if further Angeл Tun was a centre of that cult, it seems logical to ex­
pect that the Orontid royal necropolis would have been located there,
for Nergal was a god of power and also the ruler of the underworld.

Pawstos Buzand, writing probably in the mid-fifth century A.D., tells
us that Angeл Tun had been a *ostan ark uni* ... vaש vaש 'royal capital...
very long ago' (P'B V.16), and relates how the Arm. traitor Meruzan
Arcruni guided the Sasanian King Šabuhr II to the city: ...ew ink_eank_c
i Cop'_s mec arşawec'in. Ew and ēin berđk_c zor arin: ew ēr zor oכ_c
karac'in aĩnul. Ew gayin pah arkanēin șurj zAngeл zamur bardawn, or ș
yAngeл tann gawařin: zi and ēin bazum Hayoc_c t'agavorac'_n gerezmank_c
širmanc'_n aranc_c Aršakunec': bazum ganjk_c mt'ereal mac'_eal kayin i
naxneac'_n i hnoc'_ žamanakac'_ hetē. Oc'un pah arkin zberdawn: apa ibrew
oכ_c karēin aĩnul vasn amrut_c'ean tekwoc', t'oc'uun ew gnyain. 'And they
[the Persians] invaded Greater Cop'_k_c. And there were fortresses there
which they took, and there was [one] which they were unable to take.
And they came and laid siege about the strong fortress of Angeл, which is
in the province of Angeл Tun, for there were the tombs of the graves of
many Arm. kings, Arsacid men; there were many treasures stored up re­
maining there from the ancestors, since ancient times. They went and
besieged the fortress. Then, when they were unable to take it because
of the impregnability of the place, they left it and departed. The
Persians continued, according to Pawstos, to the province of Daranaži
north of Cop'_k_c, where they sacked the Arsacid necropolis at Ani, site
of the sanctuary of Aramazd; his reference to the Arsacids in the pas­
sage cited above is undoubtedly an anachronism, perhaps fostered by the
Arsacids themselves. In Arsacid times, we find a high official with the
Iranian name of Drastamat as prince of Angeл Tun and treasurer of
Cop'_k_c; his seat at the royal banqueting table of King Aršak II was
above that of all the other naxarars: an indication that although Ande Tun was no longer a royal capital, it still enjoyed considerable prestige under the Orontids' successors, the Arsacids.

The ruins of the Arm. monastery of Angay-Vank lie 2 km east of the present-day village of Engil (recently renamed Dünemeş), Turkey, on the Engil or Hogap Su (Th. 'River'). According to a legend recorded by Yovhamnès Altiparmakean in 1814 and cited by M. Miraxorean in a travelogue published in 1884-5, the apostle Thaddeus went to Ang in his mission to Hayoc Jor, and found a pagan temple there with idols in it. He tried to build a church on the spot, but the demons destroyed whatever the saint wrought by day. The Virgin Mary then appeared and advised him to set up a xac'kar ('Cross-stone'). He did so, and the stone with its holy sign banished the demons. There is an old xac'kar in the ruins which is reputed by local tradition to be that of St Thaddeus. A MS of the Gospel from the fourteenth century bears a dedication to St Georg of Ang, so perhaps the church was dedicated to that saint.  

A bas-relief found at the site shows Daniel amongst the lions, and is similar in style and theme to the fourth-century Christian Arsacid tomb at Ać on the slopes of Mt. Aragac, where the ransomed bones of the Arm. kings that Šābuhr II had taken from Ani in Daranali were re-interred (cf. PÇB IV.24 above, and MX III.27).

It seems likely, then, that the cult of Nergal had been adopted by the Urartians from their Mesopotamian neighbors, and had been assimilated into the cult of the prominent divinity, Tāšeba, whose worship was second only to that of the supreme god, Ĥaldi. The cult of the latter may have survived down to Achaemenian times; King Darius the Great in his inscription at Behistun mentions an Armenian with the theophoric name of Ĥaldīta, and the cult of Ĥaldi was probably absorbed gradually into that of Aramazd in Achaemenian times as the Persians and other Iranians colonised Armenia and the Armenians themselves adopted Iranian beliefs and ways. But the shrine of Ange stood through Orontid times, and it is probable that the tradition concerning St Thaddeus contains at least the grain of truth that the Christian church—apparently very ancient, to judge from the similarity of its decoration to that of Ać—was built on the site of an older pagan temple to Nergal, called in Arm. Ange. Our investigation does not end here, though, for the divinity worshipped at Ange Tun had another name, too: Tork.
In the same chapter where Movses Khorenac presents his spurious Israelite genealogy of the Bagratids referred to above, King Vałarsak, progenitor of the Armenian Arsaciads, is depicted anachronistically as establishing the naxerardoms of the various regions of Armenia.29 Movses was a scholar of the euhemerist school, and believed that the gods were in fact historical personages of the past whom later generations had deified. Thus, he refers to the 'sons' of Vahagn as being named Vahuni by Vałarsak after their father and entrusted with the care of the temples (Arm. zmehenicn). Movses relates also: isk zayr xoçoğeç ev barjr ev tap'am'it, xorakn ev dûnahayeac, i zawakè Pask'amsay, i Haykakay t'ornè, Tork enum kóc'ec'sal: or vasn âravel zahadimuc'ann jeynèn Ângeleay, vit'xari hasakaw ev uyov, hastatè kusakal arwmnitc: ev yeresac'n apitanuc'enê kóc'è zaman âzìn Ângle-tum. Bayc' et'ê kâmès, stem ev es yâlaks norã, any'êw p'êc'un, orpês Parsikk' vasn .simpsay Sagcki, harëwr er k'san p'êloc' oyêv assen unel. K'anzi kari imm anyarmar t'uçin nma erg banic' vasn uželut'c'evn en orum lineolyn: orum o'c' Erakley ev o'c' Sagcki yâmar en ayv zroc'k's. K'anzi ergèin nma buûm harkanel zorjak'ar vimac' jefawk', ur o'c' goyr gezut'în, ev âkk'el st kamaç'mec ev p'êk't: ev k'erelëšen-gambk' ev kazeml orpês taxtak, ev grel noyupšëlen-gambk' ivrovk' arcuïs ev ayls ayspisïs. Ëw yezers'covun Pondosi dipel nawac't'snameac', dimê i verey: ev i xalâln noc'a i xorn ibreaw asparea'z ut', ev sa o'c' zâmeneac noc'a: ânu, âsen, vëns blrajëvs, ev jëg'zkni; ev i sastik pêtaîmënê jurc'n ènkàtn nawk'o'c' sakawk', ev ambarjum aleac'n, or i pêtaîmënê jurc'n, vârë zmeneac'sal nawsn bazum mûns. Ohî kari ê araspels, ayl ev araspelac aɾaspel. Bayc' k'ez zi? K'anzi êr ardarew sastik hzwâr, ev ayspiseac' zruç'ac' arzâni. 'And he [Vałarsak] appointed as ruler [Kusakal30] of the West a man of deformed appearance, tall, crude and flat-nosed, with deep-set eyes and a fierce expression, of the offspring of Pask'âm, grandson of Haykak LMX 1.23: Bayc' Ângek tumn asê noyn patmagir i Pask'amsay umëmmê i Haykakay t'ornè line1 'But the same historian (i.e., Mar Abas, see above) says that the house of Ângk comes from a certain Pask'am, grandson of Haykak', called Tork' by name, who on account of his extreme hideousness they called Ângeleay, mighty in stature and strength, and by reason of the ugliness of his
face (Valaršak) called the name of that people the house of Angl. But if you will, I too, lie concerning him, inappropriately and uselessly, as the Persians say about Rostom Sagcik that he had the strength of 120 elephants. For the songs of words to him seemed very awkward concerning his strength and courage, and these tales [zroyc k's] to him are not comparable to (those) of Samson, Heraklēs or Sagcik. For they sang of him that with his hands he grasped boulders of granite in which there was no fissure, and he would crack them into small and large pieces according to his desire. And he scraped them with his nails and formed them into tablets, and in the same way with his nails he wrote (i.e., sketched) eagles and similar things. And when enemy ships came to the shores of the sea of Pontus he turned on them, and when they had moved about eight stadia out to the depths he could not reach them. He took, they say, boulders shaped like hills and threw them after (the ships), and not a few ships sank because of the cleft of the waters, and the waves rising from the splash carried the other ships many miles. Oh, this is a fable indeed, but a fable of fables. But what is it to you, for in truth he was very powerful, and was worthy of such tales' (MX II.8).

Xorenac'ı resorts to a folk etymology, angeł 'ugly' (privative an- and gêl 'beauty'), in order to explain why Tork'c should be the progenitor of the people of Angeł Tun; as we have seen, the etymology is certainly spurious, for Angeł was a god in his own right, and probably Nergal. Tork'c is also linked to the eponymous ancestor of the Armenians, Hayk, through Haykak, and it is clear that Xorenac'ı is relating fragments of an epic narrative about Tork'c which mentions his ugliness, ferocity and strength. It is unlikely that Xorenac'ı has derived his story from the Homeric legend of Polyphemus, as Thomson suggests, for the historian speaks of his account as an ârospel 'legend', a word he uses frequently elsewhere in citing native Arm. traditions and epic tales. Xorenac'ı also contrasts the song (Arm. erg) of Tork'c to the legends of the Hebrews, Greeks and Persians (Samson, Heraklēs and Rustam, the latter properly called by Xorenac'ı Sagcik 'Saka') as though to stress its Arm. origin. The ugliness of Tork'c would be apparent to any who beheld the horrid images of Nergal described above; Tork'c shares also Nergal's strength and bellicosities.
Adonic recognised Torkc (in some MSS, Turkc)32 as the Arm. form related to the name of the Asianic Tahrunda, weather god of the Luwians, whose name comes from a root tarh- meaning 'to be able (intrans.); to conquer; to dominate.'33 The epithet derived from this base, tarhulili 'heroic', is found applied to the storm god of the north Syrians, (H)adad, in a hymn addressed to his sister, Istar.34 The name of a king of Melitene (modern Malatya, west of Angel Tun), Tarhunazi, contains the base tarh-, as does Tarhuna- / Tarhunabe- the name of a mountain in Nairi (i.e., the southern part of Urartu),35 so we find forms of the base tarh- used in the region of Armenia and in application to a non-Asianic civinity as an epithet. The word survives into the Christian period in the form Trokondes, the name of a general of the Byzantine forces under the emperor Zenon.36

In the chapter on the ethnogenesis of the Armenians was discussed the likelihood that the ancestors of the nation were a people of Thraco-Phrygian background who crossed the lands of the Hittites on their long migration to the Arm. plateau, perhaps adopting even their ethnic name, hay 'Armenian' from an older form *hatiyos- 'Hittite'. Contemporary records called the invaders Muski. The Chronicle of Eusebius Pamphili (early fourth century) mentions a young wrestler named Moskhos Kolophonios; in the Armenian translation of the work, which was probably completed in the fifth century, the same passage has Torkcos substituted for Moskhos: i manktwoy bimartik kruin Torkcos Kołopcoonac' in miyn i mankut'ean i srjanakaw martin yałtesac' 'of the boys in the wrestling flight, only Torkcos of Kołop on in his boyhood was victorious in the battle with the belt [srjanak].37 Wrestling is one of the most ancient athletic arts in Armenia, and to this day in Armenia and Iran it is through wrestling that the pahlavän ('athlete', pahlav= 'Parthian') displays his strength.38 The Arm. translator may have seen in the archaic figure of the powerful athlete the image of Torkc Angeksey, the legendary god or hero of strength and victory, for it is unlikely that such a change was a mere scribal error.

The ancestors of the Armenians probably adopted the cult of Torkc from the Asianic peoples through whose lands they passed, and applied it, either as epithet or equation, to that of Nergal; the prominence of the cult of Angel Tun indicates the central importance of Torkc as late as
Orontid times. It is unsafe to suggest but nonetheless tempting to imagine that the fifth-century Arm. translator remembered in Gk. Moskhos a form of the name *Muški* by which his ancestors had been called, they who brought the cult of Tork⁰ to Angel Tun. One recalls also that the name of the *Muški* is probably preserved in the Moschyian mountains of Kotarzene mentioned by Claudius Ptolemy, a writer of the second century A.D., in his Geography (V.12).

Aside from the folk legend of St Thaddeus mentioned above, there is no record of any temple at Angel Tun. In Agathangelos, the ruler of Angel Tun is twice referred to, as *jêxan* 'prince' or *mêc jêxan* 'great prince',³⁹ but there is no expedition by St Gregory or by King Tirdates III to the province to destroy temples and altars, although all the major cultic shrines of the country seem to have been visited and pillaged. Perhaps the reason for this otherwise inexplicable exception was that the cult of Tork⁰ Angelēy, unlike those of Barsamin and Astēk, had not been assimilated into Armenian Zoroastrianism. The funerary aspect of Nergal was probably appropriated at an early date, perhaps in the Achaemenid period, by Sandaramet, for the name of the latter divinity is SW Ir. in form and probably therefore antedates the NW Ir. influences which began in the Artaxiad period. Sandaramet was the yazata of the earth and thus associated with burial.

As for the aspect of Tork⁰ Angelēy as a weather god and a symbol of power and victory, it appears that these various functions proper to Nergal, Tešeba and Tarhunda were appropriated by the yazata Vahagn, whose cult seems to have grown to overshadow even that of Mihr.⁴¹ The shift of the centre of power in Armenia to the northeast in the Artaxiad period must have hastened further the eclipse of the cult of Tork⁰ Angelēy, and his hideous and sinister appearance, as described in the tradition related by Xorenacci and as depicted at Hatra, would have been considered by Zoroastrians as demonic and antithetical to the Good Religion. The temple at Angel probably was allowed by the Arsacids to function, but it is likely that it was maintained out of Zoroastrian reverence for the souls of departed kings merely, Orontids who appear to have been claimed as ancestors by the Arsacids in Armenia, much as the Iranian Arsacids falsely claimed Achaemenian ancestry (see Pawstos Buzand above). It did not become a major centre of Zoroastrian worship, it
seems, and did not merit a visit from St Gregory on his mission of destruction described by Agathangelos.

Arm. popular tradition appears to have preserved the memory of Tork Anjeley, however. Step'an Malxaseanc, in a note on Tork in his translation into modern Armenian of Xorenac'i, relates a legend of Axalcxa (Akhaltsikhe, an Armeno-Georgian town in the far northern province of Gugark, not far from the Pontic coast, now in the Georgian SSR) told him by his father: there was a man who was a captive in the island cave of a giant who had an eye on his forehead that was cap'agvoz (we interpret this word as 'sunken-eyed', from Arm. cap- 'fall' and Tk. goz 'eye', compare Xorenac'i, xorakn lit. 'deep-eyed' above). The man escaped by covering himself with a sheepskin and passing between the giant's legs, after which he made a boat and fled to shore. The wood of that island was precious, and a Jewish merchant bought the planks of the boat for a fortune.

Even had Xorenac'i been familiar with the Homeric story of Polyphemus, as Thomson suggests, it is unlikely that the Armenians of Axalcxa were, and one notes the persistence in the tale of the epithet 'sunken-eyed'--an appropriate feature for a god who ruled the underworld and may thus have had a corpse-like appearance. It is likely that the fragment in Xorenac'i and the modernised tale told to Malxaseanc by his father (the epithet cap'agvoz with Tk. goz, the Jewish merchant, and the Turkish kurus coins he has, are all modern features) are probably parts of the same epic.

Xorenac'i relates how Tork flung boulders in the sea, and how he scratched pictures of eagles on rock with his fingernails. In the Arm. national epic of Sasun which describes events of the ninth-tenth centuries but contains elements of great antiquity, the hero Mher casts huge boulders into the river Zaire, while the mighty Dawit...elungner...karin u krak tvec 'scratched a stone with his (finger) nail and made a fire'. Soviet Arm. scholars have suggested that their ancestors saw the petroglyphs of the Stone Age and the scratches left on rock-faces by the retreating glaciers of the Ice Age and believed that these mysterious symbols and marks had been made by Tork Anjeley's sharp fingernails; it seems fitting that such relics from the dawn of human culture may have been attributed to a god worshipped at the dawn of Arm. culture.


13. A. D. H. Bivar, 'Mithra and Mesopotamia,' Mithraic Studies, II (op. cit., n. 7), 286, suggests that the cult of Nergal was introduced to Iran by the Median king Astyages, and that Astyages practiced human sacrifice. If this is so, then the depiction of Žaŋŋak may reflect Zoroastrian revulsion at this evil heresy; the Sogdian figurine is probably apotropaic.

14. See Ch. 6.


16. Ibid., Pl. 15.

18. N. Adonč, Hayastani patmut'yun, Erevan, 1972, 44. See R. Godel, An Introduction to the Study of Classical Armenian, Wiesbaden, 1975, Para. 3.14. G. Lešanc'yan, 'Asura-babelakan bafer hayerenum', Izvestiya AN Arm. SSR, 1945, 3-4, derived the name of the god Anqel from Akkadian anqullu 'hot wind' and the place name Ang'el, which he took to mean 'fortress', from the Sumerian toponym Ēgal, Akkad. egallu. These suggestions are cited by G. B. Dzhaukyan (Jahukyan), 'Ob akkadskikh zaimstvovaniyakh v armianskom yazyke', P-BH, 1980, 3, who notes that Lešanc'yan's etymologies are generally unreliable.


22. HēB, I, 826 & n.15, 16. See also Ch. 3.

23. PÖB IV.24.

24. See F. Justi, Iranisches Namenbuch, Marburg, 1895, 87, s.v. Durust-ānpād (lit. 'welcome').

25. PÖB V.7: Isk Drastamatn nerk'inin, or yams Tiranay t'agavorin Hayoc'e leal Ār isxan tan gawarin ew hawatarim ganj'el Ahel berdin, ew amensyn berdāc'n ark'tuni or i kolkmans yays: soynps ew yerkrin Cop'ac i Bnabel berdin ganj'ela leal ēn end novaw, ew barj norā i ver k'ān zamenayn naxararsac'n. 'And Drastamat (was the eunuch, who in the years of Tiran king of Armenia had been the prince of the House of the province and trustee of the treasures of the fortress of Ang'el and of all the fortresses of the king which were in those parts: likewise the treasures of the land of Cop'ac in the fortress of Bnabel were under him, and his pillow was higher than (those) of all the naxarars.'


27. Ibid., 226; on Aēc'c end on burial in pre-Christian Armenia see Ch. 10; on rites of exposure, see Ch. 16.

28. See Ch. 2; on the ending -ita, Arm. -itC in theophoric names, see the n. on TiritC in our Ch. on Tir.

29. MX II.8.

30. Lit. 'holder of a side, religion'; on Arm. koys 'side', see our Ch. on the k'ustik and other vestments.


34. Laroche, op. cit., 91.

35. Adonc, op. cit., n. 33, 393.

36. Loc. cit.


38. See Ch. 15.


40. See Ch. 10.

41. See Ch. 8.


43. The eagle was a symbol of royal dominion in ancient Asia Minor, where numerous figurines of the bird have been found dating back to the second millennium B.C.; on the crowns on the Artaxiad kings of Armenia the eagle seems to have symbolised the xVarenah 'glory', see Ch. 9.

44. Cited by MA I, 303-4.

CHAPTER 12

HAWROT AND MAWROT

Amongst the Amēsa Spēntas of Zoroastrianism (on these seven, see Ch. 5) there are two who are constantly paired: Haurvatât 'Wholeness, Health', the guardian of the waters; and Amerētat 'Life, Immortality', the guardian of plants.1 Dumézil identified the names of the two in Armenian hawrot-mawrot, a flower used in popular rites on Ascension Day.2 These rites involve the reading of quatrains called vicaks, which are meant to foretell one's fortunes in love. Fr. Erevan verdapet Pēłosean of the Armenian Mxitarist congregation of Vienna wrote a study of these in connection with the Ascension Day holiday.3 We shall examine in this chapter both flower and ritual, drawing attention to those aspects which appear to retain Zoroastrian features.

The cults of certain trees and plants amongst the Armenians may be traced to pre-Christian times, and frequently again reflect Zoroastrian beliefs. We have noted above the practice of divination through the rustling of the leaves of the saws-i 'Eastern plane tree', and have seen that reverence for this tree lasted well into the mediæval period;4 in Ch. 16 we shall have occasion to discuss the cults of various heliotropic plants and of the poplar tree (Arm. barti) amongst the Arewordikc 'Children of the Sun', non-Christian Armenians who preserved a multitude of Zoroastrian beliefs and customs, down to recent times.5 Here will be noted certain trees and plants of particular interest from the point of view of Zoroastrianism; a prodigious amount of material concerning Armenian folk beliefs and uses of plants has been collected by botanists, both in ethnographical studies of their native regions and by consultation of mediæval medical texts, herbals and astrological or magical works, where numerous plants are described and recommended in the preparation of medicines or potions—indeed, these were often one and the same.6

Many observers have recorded the rites of Ascension Day. According to M. Abelyan, who observed the ritual in his native village of Astapat, the feast is called also Całkamōr tōn 'holiday of the Mother of Flowers',
on which girls go out to gather bunches of the flower called hawrot-
mawrot (see below). Other girls go to 'steal' water from seven springs.
This must be done in silence, and they must neither turn back nor let
their buckets touch the ground. The girls of the ğri goh 'water thief'
and cakkahavak 'flower-gathering' parties meet at evening in a garden
and put the water in a vessel called a havgir. They then throw in seven
stones, and petals of flowers. Over the top of the havgir they place a
decorated cross called a vičak (see below). They guard this under the
stars, all night long. The village boys come and try to steal it, but
never succeed. (Mr Edward Tejirian of New York, whose father is from
Diyarbakir, told me that the tcas 'bucket' was kept on a rooftop on the
eve of Ascension Day. Although in Xarberd the rites of Tairnenaž were
removed to the roof to protect the participants from Muslim molesta-
tion in recent years [see Ch. 15], here the intention may have been,
rather, to have the tcas directly under the stars.) The girls sing this
song as they stand guard: Gac'ek mem varpet beręk/ Alvorin xabadan
jevac'ek/ Aregakn eres arek'/ Lusnakn astar jevac'ek'/ Amperov bolor
naxbek/ Covën abrešum t'el k'asec'ek/ Astler kočak šašek/ inc'ek sēr
key mēje karec'ek. 'Come, bring a great craftsman,/ Design a beautiful
dress,/ Make its front the Sun;/ And its lining of the Moon./ Decorate
it all in clouds,/ Draw thread of silk from the sea,/ Make its buttons
of stars/ And sew all the love there is inside it.' On the next, the
seventh, or the fourteenth day after this, men and women gather together,
a seven-year-old girl wearing a red mask holds the vičak-Cross, and
flowers are poured into the water. Various individuals before this
place personal amulets or other objects in the havgir; these are now
removed, and a quatrain—also called a vičak—telling each person's for-
tune is read as the objects are extracted. A similar practice is found
amongst the Zoroastrians of Yazd, called moradūla 'bead-pot' or čokadūla
'fate-pot'. In this game, girls gather water at sunset in a pot, put a
token in it, cover it with a Khordeh Avesta overnight, and then on the
morn draw out the objects and sing songs which foretell the 'fate' (pre-
sumably in love) of the owners. Because of the use of water, this prac-
tice was connected with the rain festival of Tiragan. It seems that
the Arm. ritual is of great antiquity, with wide and ancient associa-
tions, but that it was in ancient times invested with certain Zor.
features. Modern Greeks in June celebrate the nearly identical rite of klēdonas (from klēdon 'an omen contained in a word', cf. Arm. vičak), with items dropped in water, flowers, covering of the bucket, which is kept under the stars, a maiden, silence, and the removal of the objects with recitation of fortunes in couplets.7

In the calendar of the Armenian Church, the holiday of Ascension (Arm. Hambarkman tōn) falls on the fortieth day of the Yinanc (lit. 'of the Fifty'), the fifty days which follow Easter, the Feast of the Resurrection of Christ. Ascension is mentioned twice in Scripture (Mark xvi.19, Luke xxiv.49-51), and in Acts I.15-26 it is recorded that after the Ascension of Christ the eleven Apostles met to consider supplementing their number with a twelfth. There were two candidates, Joseph and Mattathias, so lots were drawn and Mattathias was chosen—the word used for 'lot' in the Arm. translation of the Bible is vičak.8 The holiday of the Mother of Flowers mentioned above takes place on Holy Thursday, which is Ascension Day, and it is customary to eat a pudding made with milk, called katnapur, on that day. On the Wednesday before Holy Thursday, flowers are collected by parties of girls; other girls bring water from seven sources at eventide, in silence, and without turning around or letting their buckets touch the ground. If they meet a man, they must pour out the water and start all over again. Then in each bucket of 'stolen' water is dropped a stone or some sand, and seven types of grass found growing on a rooftop (Karin/Erzurum) or seven types of flowers or twigs (Xarberd). Then some distinctive personal belonging is put in, and the tub containing the water is placed in an open place under the stars (the location is called astunk, 'stars') and guarded all night long from the boys. Before noon the next day, the vičak-Cross, adorned with flowers, is paraded about and vičaki erger 'vičak songs' are sung. Then a little girl, called a hars 'bride' is appointed and veiled: she removes the objects one by one from the tub and fortunes are told, in the form of quatrains as above. These are sometimes called ḣan-gülũm (Tk. from NP., 'flower of my heart'), and are all about love and marriage. On the night before Ascension Day, it is believed that all the waters cease to move for an instant and receive great powers of fertility. Many bathe then, and a bath in water to which seven flowers or green plants have been added on that day is believed to cure illness
and banish sleep, and to make one's desires come true. In the Armenian epic of Sasun, the lady Covinar becomes miraculously pregnant on Ascension Day.

Easter is a movable feast and can occur on different Sundays from year to year, so the holiday of Ascension on the 40th day after Easter—Holy Thursday—is also movable, and can occur between 30 April and 3 June. In some parts of Armenia, the ritual described above is performed also on Vardavar, the Feast of the Transfiguration. This feast, which celebrates the appearance of Jesus as a shining figure before Peter, James and John (Matt. xxi, Mark ix; this is usually believed to have occurred on Mount Tabor), comes on 6 August in the calendars of the Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches, but according to Arm. tradition St Gregory the Illuminator established it on 11 August, corresponding to the first day of the month of Nawasard. In 551, Catholicos Moysēs II Edvardēcī reformed the Arm. calendar, changing also the date of the Feast of the Transfiguration in order to separate it from the Feast of the Assumption of the Holy Mother of God (Arm. Verap'coxum), which had begun to be celebrated in August. He fixed the Transfiguration on the 14th Sunday after Easter, which is the 7th after Pentecost.

Both water and plants play an important role in the rituals of Ascension Day, and we have seen that the popular name of this day is Cäkkamör tōn, 'holiday of the Mother of Flowers'. Vardavar is a festival of the waters. People drench each other with water outdoors, and the ecclesiastical procession sprinkles the congregation with rose water in church. Al-Birūnī noted that the Persians, too, splashed each other with water on Nō hōz, and the sabze (fresh green shoots) grown for the Persian holiday are later cast into water, another aspect recalling the Armenian practice of putting plants in a tub of water. Three doves were released on Vardavar, according to Step'anos Asołik (late tenth century).

Down to the end of the last century, Nawasard was still celebrated as their Christian New Year instead of 1 January by the Armenians of Sisian and Zangezur (mountainous, sparsely populated regions in the southern part of the present-day Armenian SSR), so it may be that certain customs of the New Year are connected with those of Nawasard.
first two centuries of Christian Armenia, and Vardavar and Ascension were celebrated in similar ways. It is important to note at this point that the No Roz on which water was splashed was the Greater No Roz, celebrated on Roz Hordād; customs associated with water may have become blended with the rites of No Roz, although they had originally been proper to the cult of Hordād. On New Year's Day in Armenia, it is customary for newlyweds to go to a spring in silence and to say Įri barin, Įri morin/ Anāndayin t'agaworin:/ Jur kažender es? 'Good one of the water, mother of the water,/ Of the king in the abyss,/ Will you give a New Year's gift of water?'18 We shall discuss the significance of silence in the ritual presently; it is sufficient at this point to note that it is important also in the Ascension Day ritual, which also involves a spring and at which the vicākahān, the girl who takes out of the tub the various objects and reads fortunes, is called a hars 'bride'. One recalls also that the fortunes all involve love and marriage.

Near the village of Xērt6 in the region of Knus, which lies south of Karin/Erzurum and a few miles east of Bingöl Dağı19 there was a spring which flowed only three months of the year, from May to July. Ascension Day falls within this time, and it was the custom of the Armenian inhabitants of the village to sacrifice a lamb at the spring on the holiday. Anquetil du Perron recorded in the eighteenth century the Zor. practice of sacrificing a sheep on Mihragan; this ritual survives amongst the Irani Zoroastrians, who thread pieces of six different organs of the slaughtered animal on a piece of the gut, which is tied with seven knots.20 The Armenians, too, tie seven knots in a string to ward off evil (there is a Zor.  ni ra ng ['spell', in this instance] to be recited when tying seven threads, knotted eight times, around the body of a pregnant woman to protect her from black magic),21 and the Armenian terminology of sacrifice is rich in Mir. loan-words (e.g., zo h 'sacrifice', patr ŭ ca k 'sacrificial animal').22 It is possible that the Armenian sacrifice is a survival of Zor. ritual. The Zoroastrian libation to the waters (Phl. Āb-zōhr) is still practised in Iran: a priest pours into a stream milk mixed with rose petals and marjoram or oleaster. This rite, with the appropriate recitations of Avestan, is performed on various occasions, including weddings.23 In the Armenian case, water is drawn from seven springs (the number seven perhaps refers to the Amēša
Spēntas), and mixed with plants, rather than milk being poured into a spring, but the custom of eating katānapur ('milk soup', see above) may go back to a time when milk was used. We have noted that Vardavar was a festival of the waters, and have cited a popular invocation to the Īrīmorīn 'mother of the water(s)', so it may be that a libation to the waters was offered in ancient times. The precise meaning and derivation of Arm. Vardāvar (attested as a loan-word in the vernacular Greek of Asia Minor as Vartouvaria, Vartouvar and Vertou24) are not known, but the word appears to contain Arm. vär̄d 'rose', a loan-word from Iranian;25 roses are used as part of the Arm. church ritual, and they may have been at an earlier time, as in the Iranian Āb-zōhr. An ancient Indo-European practice may underlie Vardāvar, like the Ascension Day vičakahanut, for in late May the pagan Romans celebrated a holiday called Rosalia.

The connections proposed above between the rituals of Ascension Day and Zoroastrianism exist, it seems because of Zor. influence on an ancient ritual practiced by Greeks, Armenians, and Iranians alike. One might doubt the Zor. content of the Arm. ritual, indeed, but for the flower hawrot-mawrot itself, which bears the names of two Zoroastrian divinities, the Bounteous Immortals Haurvatāt and Ameretat (Phl. Hordād and Amurdād). The two are female in Avestan, but with the loss of grammatical gender in Pahlavi they appear to have been thought of later as male. In the so-called Younger Avestan dialect their names are virtually synonymous with the creations over which they preside, waters and plants, and these continued to be regarded as female in the Pahlavi literature, for according to the Bundehišn the sky, metals, wind and fire are male, whilst water, earth, plants and fish are female. In Armenia, as we have seen, both flowers and water are spoken of as having mothers. We have also seen how silence is considered vital to the Ascension Day ritual; according to both the Denkārd and the Menōg Š Xrad, Hordād and Amurdād are offended by improper talk and by violation of the rule of silence during meals. Such silence is regarded as an expression of reverence for the two yazatas.27 It would seem that an ancient rite requiring silence was dedicated in Armenia to the two Zor. yazatas most honoured by silence.

In Sogdian, the names of Hordād and Amurdād are found as hrwwt mrvwr in a glossary, where they are paired thus opposite MP. ']-'
hrwd'd; in Enochic writings, Arioch and Marioch are considered the guardians of the earth; and in a fourteenth-century anti-Muslim treatise of John VI Cantacouzenus there is cited the legend of Arót and Marót, sent to earth by God ḥōste kalōs arkhein kai dikaiōs krinein 'in order to rule well and judge justly'. The names are found in the form *hrw't W *mrw't, Hurwād ud Murwād, in the ninth-century Dēnkard (DkM. 607.6). In Islamic tradition, the devils are said to have revealed sorcery to two angels in Babylon, Hārūt and Mārūt (Qur'ān, Sūra 2.96); according to another tradition, the two are imprisoned and chained in a well in Mount Damāvand. In the latter case, the two divinities, transformed by Islam into demons, are cast in the role of a sort of dual Ažī Dāhāka--so closely linked were they, it seems, that both could be substituted for a single fiend in the legend, as though they were one person.

Henning recognised in the text of Agathangelos the names of Hordād and Amurdād in 'the Armenian flower-names Hauraut Mauraut'. The two are found in a list of flowers in a passage about how the flowers of spring prefigure the resurrection of men at the end of days: Soynpēs ew gunak gunak ew erp∔ erp∔ caļkanc∔: orpēs manragorn ew varcn ew āuqmewn ew apazawn ew yasmīkn ew aniarn ew smnakn ew nergsēn ew šampkitakn ew mārūkn, hōrūtn ew mōrūtn ew manisakn: ew sylē amēnayn hāmasprām caļkanc∔ ew caʃoc∔ boʃk∔ bolboʃoc∔ garmawoyn erewesc∔ in yet jmerawoyn. R. W. Thomson translated the above as follows: 'Likewise the various kinds and colours of flowers, like the mandrake and rose, and lily and soldanel, and jasmin and lotus, and sumach and narcissus, and arum and lungwort, AND HYACINTH AND POPPY [emphasis ours] and violet. And of all the other fragrant flowers and trees, the budding shoots will appear in spring after the winter.' The Arjēn bārārān translates hōrūt as Tk. tutya čiçeği, and the NBHL translates it as Italian ginecinto tuberoso; Kouyoumdjian translates mōrūt as 'rose campion', while Bedrossian has 'tuberose'. Thomson does not cite the source of his translation of mavrot as 'poppy'. It would appear that originally these were two separate flowers, and one recalls that in Zoroastrianism each of the 33 yazatas has his own flower. Two MSS. of Agathangelos omit the word ew 'and' between the two names, and the earlier of the two texts dates from the beginning of the thirteenth century.
It appears that by that time the hawrot mawrot was therefore already considered a single flower.

In modern Armenian dialects, the name of the flower is pronounced horot-morot or xorot-morot, and is attested also in Kurdish as xorud-mordud. The flower is a tuberous hyacinth, Latin amomum xanthorriza, according to Karst and Malkasean. It is not the only flower that can be used in the Ascension Day ritual—in Arakpir, for instance, the Armenians used dandelions—but its connection with plants and waters through its name accords well with the ritual in which it is used. One notes also that this same flower, the sumbul 'hyacinth' is one of the haft Sinai 'seven (objects whose names begin with the Arabic letter) Sinai' which adorn every Nor Ruz table. In Armenian folklore, Hawrot and Mawrot are two lovers, and one recalls that the vïçaks read on Ascension Day all have to do with love and marriage. Poems have been written on the couple, and in Erzurum when two people fell in love the Armenians used to say Xorote morot e gter 'Hawrot has found his Mawrot.' A proper name probably to be read as Hortik is attested from the twelfth century, and the word xorotik means 'beautiful' in fourteenth-century Arm. poetry (in modern Arm. dialects, xorotik-morotik), all with the affectionate diminutive ending -ik which we have encountered elsewhere.

Armenian mediaeval poets mention the flower hawrot-mawrot in poems where the various flowers of spring are allegorical representations of Christ and the Apostles; we have already seen how St Gregory the Illuminator compared the season to the coming resurrection of the dead. In a poem called by its first line Aysor eziw pajcar garun 'Today it was a glowing spring' (attributed variously to the two fourteenth-century poets Yovhannes Tëlkurac'i or Kostandin Erzrakac'i; one MS. of 1336 bears the epigraph Yovanac' Tërguranc'o asac'eal vash yarut'eam Këristosi 'Spoken by Yovanac' Tërguranc'o Tëlkuranc'i on the Resurrection of Christ'), the flowers go out in search of Christ, the Rose: Ahay genan xëndir hörōt mörōt u juncaçkin/ u lërken t'ëza ev jëna zëwënn or i mëy daçtìn. 'Now hyacinth and sunflower depart for the search/ And despatch the fig and summon the lily in the meadow.' In a mediaeval poem quoted by Cabikean, the flower is compared to the apostles: En Xorawt Mòrawt caçkin/ Or gelec'i en ev sirun,/ Nman é surb Arak'eloc'n,/ Erkotasan noc'a dasun 'That flower hawrot mawrot/ which is beautiful
and comely, / Is like the holy Apostles / In their rank of twelve.\

My teacher Miss Vartarpi Tarpinian was born in Karin/Erzurum at the time of the 1915 Genocide. Her family were sent by the Turks in the death marches to Rakkah, in Syria, and the survivors eventually found their way to a refugee camp in Aleppo. Miss Tarpinian's mother and sisters settled in Istanbul, but she herself was sent to France, first to Marseilles and then to Paris, where she was educated at the Dprocuasër boarding school, an institution founded for Armenian refugee children whose staff included many of the finest Armenian intellectuals who had managed to escape the general slaughter by the Turks. In addition to providing a liberal education, the teachers sought to instil in their charges a love of the joyful customs of their native land, of the childhood that had been so cruelly darkened for them. Thus, on the eve of Ascension Day, parties of girls scattered through the woods on the outskirts of the French capital, gathering water from seven streams and picking seven kinds of flowers in the school's gardens. The youngest girl at the school served as the hars 'bride' in the assembly hall, and the včaks were read after church services the next day as the personal object cast in by every girl was removed from the tub. Miss Tarpinian recalls that fifty to a hundred of the quatrains might be read each Ascension Day. She recalled a few of them for me: Arewēdr or aires ear,/ Arewē sat mi ellar:/ Šukćid getin jynalun/ İm sirtesć i dimenar. 'If you love your sun [i.e., life], love,/ Do not go out often in the sun;/ My heart cannot bear/ Your shadow falling on the ground.' Otkćęd
kanancć c̣ er ğ̣ ear,/ Kanancć artemen ekar;/ Sırts otkći id tak ėllar,/ Koxēlr ěr kanańc ēnar. 'Your feet have become green, love;/ You have come from the green meadows./ Were my heart beneath your feet/
You would trample it and it would become green [i.e., young, joyful].' Hefu teler
m'ertČ ēar ġar, ĥ ěi koris, mec ğ āxarh,/ Yctov kč ez gtnokin ēs/Axarh
al tam et ġi tār. 'Do not go to faraway places, love;/ Do not get lost.
The world is wide./ Even if I gave the world to the one who found you
then,/ He would not give you back.' Ver pč exć ć oţ āmpere ć ear,/ Anjrew
kč ėllan ku gan var,/ Dn al ğ ėr mi pč axir,/ Ku ġas vān ěr hars ětar.
'The upward fleeing clouds, love,/ Become rain and come down./ Flee not
in vain;/ Tomorrow you will come and be a bride.' Other včaks are
given by Lazer Ćarēg in his huge memoir of the martyred Armenian city,
The word **vicak** is attested in the fifth-century Arm. translation of the Bible: Arm. **arkin vicak** = LXX Gk. **ebalosan klerous 'they cast lots'** (Nehemiah XI.1); from **vicak** is formed the verb **vicak-im**, as in Arm. Orov **ew vicakecc vicakec c yaqajagoyn hrawirealk c est yaqajadruceann Astuccoy = NT Gk. en hoi kai eklërosthëmen prooristhentes kata prothesein [tou theou 'in whom also we were chosen as an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of God' (Ephesians I.11). The expression **vicak arkanel 'to cast lot(s)'** is used in both of the passages referred to above relating to the election of a new twelfth Apostle. In a panegyric of Grigor T‘acwac‘i (fourteenth century), ßnddem Taśkac 'Against the Muslims', we read: .... čartakc i sovorut sën næna č ew šarzmen, isk vicakk c karceok c ew t‘eakanut c‘eamb, ayl čšmartut c‘eamb miłyn Astuccoy '... skilled in the study of signs and movements [are they], and lots through suggestion and hypothesis [seem to explain the future], but in truth it is to God alone [to see the future].'

The etymology of Arm. **vicak** remains a problem. Ačaraic based his suggestion that it be derived from a Phl. form **vaičak** on the emendation of a word which is found in a passage of the Pahlavi *Ardäy Wiräz Nämag* ('Book of the Righteous Wiräz'). The book is very popular amongst Zoroastrians, and its subject matter is probably very old, although the text we now possess was probably written in the ninth-tenth century A.D. The Book describes how a pious man named Wiräz is chosen by lot to drug himself in order to release his spirit and discover for the faithful the nature of heaven and hell. He returns to the world of the living after seven days and relates all he has seen to those who have kept watch over his body during his absence. These descriptions take up most of the Book. The theme of travel between the lands of the living and the dead is found in Armenian tradition in the legend of Ara, and the source of Plato's tale of Er in the tenth book of the Republic is Armenian. The Armenian legend is therefore of considerable antiquity, and in later Greek and Latin sources the character of Zoroaster, a priest, becomes involved in the story. Armenian and Iranian conceptions of the next world accord closely, indicating Zoroastrian influence upon the beliefs of the Armenians concerning the matters treated in the Book. It is
likely, then, that the Zoroastrian tradition of Wiraz, with its similarity to their national legend of Ara, became known to the Armenians, and the two tales were blended together in the accounts of later Classical writers. The Armenians would have been aware, then, of the casting of the lots in the Iranian legend. The passage in which Wiraz is chosen for his momentous journey reads as follows: (Ch. I.33-43)

(transcription) W 'HL C'Lhs'n hpt GBR' BR' YTYBWnt ntwd (34) W M't hpt 3 W M'N TLT'k 'ywky' wyl'c SM BR' wcyt (35) W 'YT M'nw u'z'Spwl SM YMRRnd.

(36) W 'HL C'Lh wyl'c cygwn' ZK s'xw[n] s'wnt MDM c'L LGLH YKcYMWN't (37) W YDH FWN k's krt W gwypt (38) 'YK Htt'n MDMMHyt c'YDMn 'k'mk'wmd mg 'L YHBMWyt (39) 'D LKWM m'zdsn'n W L 'n'yck LMYWnyt (40) W HT n'yck c'L L YHMIMWyty k'mk'wmdyn' cZLWNm c'L ZK gy'y k T'i hltb'n W dlwmd'n (41) W ZNH pyt'g'm dwrstyht YBLWNm W l'styht YHYTYWNm. (42) W 'HL C'Lhs'n m'zdsn'n W L n'yck YHYTYWNT (43) pltwn b'l FWN hwntr W dtylk b'l FWN hwxt W stykl b'l FWN hwlst KR' TLT'k c'L wyl'c Y'TWNT.

(transliteration) Ud pas awesan haft mard nisast hnd (34) ud az haft 3 ud az se ewag Wiraz nam be wizId (35) ud ast k't Nws'rbhr nam gownd. (36) Ud pas gy Wiraz c'lyh'ni'sin sexwn a'snd abar s pay estt (37) ud dast pad k's kard ud gft (38) k' agar-t'an sah'd eg-em akamagomand mang ma dah'd (39) t' a'sm'a mzd'sn'n ud man 'nayizag abgeen'd (40) ud agar'nayizag o man ras'd k'amagomandih'a saw'm 5 an gy'g i shlavn'i ud druwardan (41) ud n payg'an drustih'a bar'em ud rastih'a aswer'em. (42) Ud pas awe'san mzd'sn'n ud man 'nayizag awur'd (43) fradom b'ar pad humat ud dudig'ar b'ar pad hurt ud sidig'ar b'ar pad huvarst har se 5 Wiraz amah.

(translation) 'And afterwards the seven men sat down, (34) and from the seven, three were chosen, and from the three, one by the name of Wiraz was chosen, (35) and some call him by the name of Nisapur. (36) And afterwards, when he had heard those words, Wiraz rose to his feet (37) and placed his hands across his breast and said: (38) "If it seem proper to you, then do not give me mang$ against (my) will, (39) until a lot is cast by you, O Mazdâ-worshippers, and by me. (40) And if the lot comes to me I shall go willingly to that place of the righteous and the sinful, (41) and shall bear this message rightly and bring (it) truthfully." (42) And afterwards a lot was brought to them, the Mazdâ-worshippers, and to me. (43) All three came to Wiraz--the first time for good thoughts, the second time for good words, and the third time for good deeds.'
As is seen from the above passage, the lot cast was a **šēr**₁, transliterated by Jamaspji Asa as **nahīchak** and translated by Haug as 'lots'; Mackenzie renders it as **nāyīzag** 'small reed, straw', comparing MP. **nāyīze**. **Açārean's reading,** **vāčak**, accepted by Meillet with emendation of the text (perhaps to **šēr**₁ večak; Açārean does not specify this), is accepted by R. Abrahamyan in his Pahlavi dictionary and in his Armenian translation of the **Ardāy Wīrāz Nāmag**, where he translates the Pahlavi word in question as Arm. **vičak** 'lot' without comment. Prof. Bailey explained Zor. Phl. **vāčak** 'lot' as containing the adjectival increment -ā-, with base več- 'throw'. Açārean noted also the use of the verb abgandan 'throw' in the Pahlavi text, corresponding to Arm. **vičak arkanel** 'to cast lots', an expression found several times in the Bible. The argument here is one of sense: lots are cast; straws, however, are not—they are drawn. It is unlikely that the Pahlavi writer used the verb 'to throw' meaning as the object 'lots' but using a word meaning 'straw', for **nāyīzag** is not an obscure word, but a common diminutive (cf. MP. **kan-īzag** 'girl') of the word for a reed, **nāy**, also one of the most popular musical instruments in Iran. In the Pahlavi Psalter, the term **več**(-īh) is used in a sacerdotal sense parallel to Arm. **vičak**, the latter term used to mean an area under one's control (mainly as a term of ecclesiastical jurisdiction).

Various trees and plants were and are still venerated by Zoroastrians as creations of Amurdād, and in this chapter it may be appropriate to discuss certain Armenian practices which present interesting parallels. The veneration of trees in Armenia is attested in the writings of the fourth-century Syrian monk **Mār Aḥā**, who found the people of a place called **CWC** (**Cūsūs**) on the river Arsenios devoted to the cult of a tree. He converted the people to Christianity and built a church and monastery in the village. **Mār Qūriaqs**, the Metropolitan of Melitene, consecrated the church, and four priests were appointed to serve there.

The cypress and other evergreens are respected in many countries because they do not shed their leaves as deciduous trees do. Because of this they are seen to represent immortality, and are often associated with the immortal spirits of the dead. Horace wrote in his **Odes** (Book II.14) that all is lost with death and the cypress alone attends; in Book X of the **Metamorphoses** of Ovid, the cypress is represented as
the tree of mourning and the companion of those in distress. In China, the pine and cypress were seen to represent constancy, for they are always green, while other trees change with the seasons. A proverb quoted by Confucius says that only when the year grows cold do we see that the pine and cypress are the last to fade.

In Iran, the cypress has since ancient times been the object of veneration. Yet it is not associated with death or mourning, as these are contrary to the spirit of Zoroastrianism. According to the Šāh-nāme, Zoroaster brought a cypress from Paradise to the land of Iran; Gustāsp planted it at the gate of the fire-temple of Burzēn Mīhr in Parthia. The great cypress which stood at the village of Kišmar was identified with this sacred tree, and one of the heroes of the Parthian epic Vis u Rūmēn (which survives only in a NP. version) is named K."myr-yāl or K."myr, presumably after the village where the cypress of Zoroaster flourished still. It was cut down by the Abbasid Caliph Mutawwakil in A.D. 861. This was a deed of great wickedness, for Zoroastrians hold cypresses and evergreens generally to be sacred as representative above other growing things of the immortality Amurdād represents; Plutarch in his Life of Artaxerxes mentions that the Persian satrap Teribazus allowed his soldiers to cut down even the pine and cypress for fuel during a particularly cold winter. The nineteenth-century American writer Henry David Thoreau was moved to quote in Walden the Golestan of the Persian poet Sa'dī, who explained that the cypress bore the epithet āzād ('noble, free') because it was ever-blooming and not seasonally transitory, even as the religious recluses called āzādān who lived in unchanging solitude, their hearts never led astray by the transitory aspects of life.

In Armenian, the cypress is called noc-i or saroy, both Iranian loan-words. A copper coin of the Arm. Artaxiad king Tigran IV, who is best known for the jugate issues struck with his sister-queen Erato towards the end of his reign, depicts clearly a graceful, slender cypress, perhaps the holy cypress of Kismar revered by the contemporary Parthians.

Another evergreen, the juniper (Arm. gihi) is revered by the Armenians. It was often planted near chapels, even as the Irani Zoroastrians still plant evergreens—cypress, myrtle and pine—around their
There is a legend that St Gregory the Illuminator once slept in a hole in the trunk of a juniper, and it was believed that eating its needles would relieve those cured of demonic possession of the memory of their ordeal. Zoroastrians, according to Al-Biruni, fumigated their houses with juniper during Fravardinigan, in order to please the spirits of the righteous departed. Christ is said to have blessed the juniper and saws-i with eternal green (a puzzling legend in the case of the plane tree, which is deciduous) because they sheltered him and hid him when the Jews were pursuing him. Not all Armenians regarded evergreens with such reverence; in one mediaeval MS. we are bidden to regard references to them in Scripture as metaphors of barrenness, for they bear no fruit.

Another tree accorded great reverence amongst the Armenians was the oak. There was a sacred grove of these near the village of Xac'anesh in Vaspurakan before the first World War. A person who left some possession there was not allowed to touch it again for 24 hours, and no other person could ever touch it. It is not explained why this particular prohibition was observed, but one recalls that personal belongings are left in the haygir before Ascension Day and are extracted the next day—or later—so that a vicak may be read for each. The plane grove of Armawir was used also for mantic purposes, as we have seen, so perhaps personal belongings left in the sacred grove for a time were used later for the divination of a particular person's fate. Other sacred groves (Arm. mayri 'grove, fir tree', antar 'forest') existed in ancient times. A mediaeval text refers to mairakan Aramazd 'Aramazd of the grove(s)', indicating that groves were sacred to him (cf. the oak of Dodona in Greece, which was sacred to Zeus and was used for divination). A forest of firs (Arm. mayri) called Cundoc antar (lit. 'forest of generations') was planted by the Orontid king Erand near the newly-founded holy city of Bagaran; firs are evergreens, and the grove may therefore have been planted in accord with the Zoroastrian custom discussed above. The Armenian Arsacid king Xosrov II Kotak (A.D. 330-8) over five centuries later planted a grove of oaks (Arm. kałin, kałni) called Tacar mayri 'Palace grove' and another of firs called Xosrovakert 'Made by Xosrov', both kings used the forests they had planted as game preserves for the royal hunt.
Certain plants, creations of Amurdād, are revered by Armenians and Zoroastrians alike for their properties. Irani Zoroastrians employ frequently as a ritual food sīr-o-seḏōw 'garlic and rue', a pungent broth. Rue is also used separately, being scattered at shrines, and is much revered also by Muslim Iranians, who call it sipand. The Arm. word for rue, spand, is a loan-word from MIr., and the Armenians use the plant as a talisman against evil spirits and the evil eye. Garlic (Arm. sxtor, xstor, from *IE.) is also used as a talisman against evil spirits by the Armenians; it is also threaded with blue beads and an eggshell and left on the balcony of the house against the evil eye, and is believed to protect newlyweds or those with new garments against malign powers. Garlic was regarded as efficacious against demons in Sasanian Iran, too, where, according to Bīrūnī, the sīr-sūr 'Garlic-feast' was celebrated yearly on the 14th day of the month Dai.

Various other plants are believed by the Armenians to counteract the powers of evil. A medical MS. advises one to smoke the arju vard (lit. 'bear's rose', Latin Peonia officinalis) or brew it as a tea against witches, demons and demonic possession. The bīrī/brāni (dog elder or water elder) is believed to turn away the evil eye, and the sew sonic/arjndež (black rose campion) is sprinkled on bread eaten by a pregnant woman to keep Satan from her. Xorenaci cites a fragment of the ancient epic of Artaxēs about the Alan princess Satanik which was thought by M. Abelyan to refer to a magical plant: Ayl ew tencay, asen, Satanik tikin tencans, zartaxur xawart ew stic xawaci i barjicn Argawanay. (MX I.30). "Also," they say, "the lady Satanik had a desire for a crown of greens and the rhubarb plant from the feast of Argawan." The lostak 'mandrake (root)', called by Armenians the 'king of plants', is held to be a cure for every illness, and it is used also as a love potion. But it is dangerous to tear the root out of the ground, for it will cry out, and its cry kills men. So the Armenians dig carefully around it while reciting a prayer against hearing its voice, and then bring a chicken or the kid of a goat to pull it out. Most often, however, a dog is used. The animals, it is said, often die, yet as we shall see in the next chapter, dogs are believed to possess supernatural powers most efficacious against death, and it is
perhaps for that reason that men used them in order not to die when extracting the mandrake, the voluble creation of a yazata venerated by silence.
Notes - Chapter 12


4. See Chs. 1 and 2.

5. See Ch. 16.

6. For his compendious botanical catalogue, Hay busašxarh (written in 1912, published at Jerusalem, 1968), Karapet Gabikean drew upon the traditions of his native Sebastia (Tr. Sivas), various medical MSS. (Arm. džskaran), the medical text Angitac anpet 'Useless to the Ignorant' of Amirđovlat c Amasacî (fifteenth century), and books of magic and astrology called Artcark c (lit. 'Stars') (Gabikean, viii-vii, xxi-xxvi). In Greek, the verb pharmakeuo means both 'to administer a drug' and 'to use enchantments'; Arm. dari 'drug' and dešatu 'sorcerer' (lit. 'drug-giver') reflects the same double meaning.

7. MA7 56; see also Dumézil, op. cit., 44. Another description of the festival is provided by G. Žeorgean, Čnkçasapatum, I, Jerusalem, 1970, 440. At Čnכם, a village on the Euphrates south of the bend of the river at Piran Dağ south of Xarberd, flowers and water were collected in the gardens and springs of Čovař, a mountain west of the town. On cokadUla/moradUla, see M. Boyce, A Persian Stronghold of Zoroastrianism, Oxford, 1977, 206 n. 28.


9. Ibid., 5, 10-14, 17, 54. According to Gabikean, op. cit., xvii, the hars can be either a girl or a boy, but must be the first-born (Arm. andranîk) child of the family.

10. See Ch. 13.


13. T. Gušakean, Surbk c ew tönk c Hayastaneayc Ekelec cwoy, Jerusalem, 1957, 240-2. The tradition of the original celebration of the
festival on Nawasard was preserved by Grigoris, bishop of Aršarunik, in his Meknut'cim Entcercuacoc 'Interpretation of the Lectionary': 'Sahmi 7 darjeal Yovhannu ew At'cangineay ew ztön Vardavarin zerewm FCerkćin i Tcabor lerinn Črinnarē. 'On 7 Sahmi again [St Gregory the Illuminator established the holiday] of John [the Baptist] and Athenogenēs, and he established the ap­parition of the Saviour on Mount Tabor on Vardavar' (cit. by E. Durean, Heyoc ğhin krôn, Jerusalem, 1933, 48 n.).


18. A. A. Ōdabašyan, 'Amanori cisakan ergeric," Lraber, 1974, 4, 52. In another context, 'king of the abysses' means Satan (see Ch. 14); here, such a meaning is impossible, and the title must refer to the source of the water underground. Arm. kalend-el 'to give as a New Year's present' is to be derived from Latin Calendae (HAB, II, 494). On Greater Nő Rōz and Rōz Hordād, see M. Boyce, 'On the calendar of Zoroastrian feasts,' BSOAS, 33, 3, 1970, 533 n. 83.

19. The beauty of the region, with its springs and flowers, was immortalised by the Arm. poet Awetik Isahakean in his poem 'Bingyol' (Erevan, 1941, trans. by M. Kudian, Soviet Armenian Poetry, London, 1974, 6).


21. See Ch. 14; the nirang, in MS T3 of the Dastur Meherji Rana Library, Navsari, India, is described in the Catalogue by B. N. Dhabhar, Bombay, 1923, 108.


23. Boyce, op. cit. n. 20, 111.

24. Dumezil, op. cit., 44.

25. See Arm. Gr., 244; the oft and anciently attested Iranian and Armenian proper name Vardan also contains vard- 'rose' (ibid., 82-3). The ending of Vardavar, it has been suggested, may be Arm. var 'burning' (see, e.g., Durean, op. cit., 48 n.), but the variant Arm. form Vardawor, with the adjectival ending of possession -(a)vor (see R. Godel, An Introduction to the Study of Classical
Armenian, Wiesbaden, 1975, 55, 71 (para. 3.312, 4.323) on this ending) and the Gk. form Bardou cited indicate that the first element of the name, var-, was of primary importance, while the original form of the ending is dubious.


27. Cited by Gray, loco cit. Before various acts, including the partaking of food, it is customary for Zoroastrians to utter certain ritual words. This is called 'taking the bāj' (NP., 'word', cf. Phl. wē, pronounced waz or wāj). During a meal they must remain silent after the bāj, out of reverence for Hordād and Amurād (M. Boyce and F. Kotwal, 'Zoroastrian bāj and drōn-I,' BSOAS, 34, 1, 1971, 56 and Boyce, Stronghold, op. cit., 46). One recalls that an Armenian village headman refused to eat with Xenophon and his officers, partly perhaps because of the Zoroastrian injunction not to sup with the infidel, and partly also because his silence would have offended the Greeks, for whom dinner was an occasion for lively discussion (cf. Plato, Symposium). The body of one who speaks while eating is cursed by Hordād and Amurād, according to a Pahlavi wisdom text (see K. J. Jamasp-Asa, 'Andarz-I Dastōbarān val Vēh-Dinān,' in J. J. Modi, ed., Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy Madressa Jubilee Volume, Bombay, 1914, 84 line 7).


35. *HAB*, III, 139-40.


40. *HANJ*, III, 111.

41. See for example E. Pivazyan, ed., Hovahannes T'lkuranc'i, *Taier*, Erevan, 1960, XII.1, *Acçerd ë t'au u pët, du xorotik ës 'Your eyes are dark and huge, you are beautiful,' and XII.31, *Yaşxarhs xorotik pëm du minak ës es 'Are you really the only beauty in this world?'* (fourteenth century). In an Arm. folksong recorded at the end of the nineteenth century, we find the lines *im xorotik, pëztik yar, gyulum jän 'My lovely little beloved, my beloved flower!'' (Komitas Vardapet, M. Abelyan, *Hazar u mi xaève, VaÃrsapet*, 1903-5, repr. Erevan, 1969, 16). There is another song, still popular today, which may be very old, for it has an ancient theme: a kid is eaten by a wolf, which is eaten in turn by a still bigger animal, and so on, and the vain cruelty of the age is lamented. We find the same theme in a Jewish song in Aramaic, *Hed gadyâ 'One kid!', sung at the end of the Passover feast. The song dates back to the first centuries of the Christian era, and later commentators have compared the rapacious animals to various enemies of Israel. The greatest of them, the Angel of Death, is finally vanquished by the Holy One. No such moral turnabout occurs in the Armenian song, whose dog-eat-dog burden is relieved only by choruses of love duets, in one of which the girl declares, *xorotik, xorotik, xorotik-morotik im yarne ës 'Beautiful, beautiful, comely is my beloved'* (P. Mikayelyan, ed., *Ergaran*, Erevan, 1966, 159).

42. See, e.g., the invocation Arewik, lusik ... 'Little Sun, little light ... ' discussed in Ch. 16.

43. H. M. Poturean, ed., Kostandin Erznkaç'i, XIV *baru zoඅkovrdakan banasteıc*, Venice, 1905, XI.5. Erznkaç'i wrote another poem with the epigraph Ben vardi ŏrinakaw akÇristos patmê 'These words tell of Christ through the example of the rose' (*ibid.*, XII). The fifteenth-century poet Mktıç Naâs ('the Painter', Arm. archbishop of Amida) wrote a poem comparing the flowers to the Prophets, Christ and St Gregory the Illuminator, warning his readers not to take the images literally, as the Armenians, with their ancient reverence for the creations, might well have done (Ed. Xondkaryan, ed., *Mktıç Naâs*, Erevan, 1965, II). On the application by the Armenians of the Oriental symbolism of the rose and
nightingale to Christianity, see the discussion of the Groβ in Ch. 9.

44. The text reads en 'are'; we emend to Clos. Arm. an 'it is', since the sense of the subject in the latter part of the sentence is in the singular.

45. Gabikean, op. cit., 133 (no. 954).

45-a. See this writer's review-article 'The Persistence of Memory', Ararat Quarterly (in publication) on Arm. memorial books as a source of linguistic and ethnographic information about the Arm. communities systematically eradicated by Turkey.

46. Cited and interpolated by E. Durean, op. cit., 151.


48. On Ara, see the following Ch.


50. Opinions differ about what Pahlavi mang was. W. B. Henning, Zoro­aster, Oxford, 1951, 31-2, suggests it was a deadly poison, probably henbane. M. Boyce in a written communication disagrees, arguing that henbane would have killed Wirāz.


52. HAH, IV, 340.


56. On the nay in Phl., see our note on Arm. awrēn 'custom' in Ch. 13.

57. See A. Perikhanian, 'Notes sur le lexique Iranien en Arménien,' REArm, N.S. 5, 1968, 10: Middle Persian vēč(-1h) in the Phl. Psalter has the same sacerdotal connotation as Arm. vēčak, and corresponds to Syriac kāhnā and kumrā.
58. The Arjern bararan, 765, lists among the meanings of vicak, 'išxarutan' 'tešē, t'āem' ('place of sovereignty, diocese'). Should a word whose base appears to be connected with conquest seem inappropriate as an ecclesiastical term, it may be recalled that ancient Armenian temples and the lands they held—all of which became later Church estates—were defended by armed forces led by the priests themselves. Zoroastrian fire-temples are dedicated by priests carrying weapons which are later hung on the walls of the sanctuary (see 53, cited in our Ch. on Vahagn, on the defence of Astišat by the k'ṛmapet Arjan and his forces; and M. Boyce, 'On the Sacred Fires of the Zoroastrians,' BSOAS, 31, i, 1968, 53).


61. See Šāh-nāme, VI, 1498-9; A. V. W. Jackson, Zoroaster, the Prophet of Ancient Iran, New York, 1899, repr. 1965, 80; V. Minorsky, 'Wis u Rāmīn, BSOAS, 11, 1943-46, 759-60.

62. See Ch. 9.


66. See Ch. 3.


69. Gabikeah, op. cit., 41; Boyce, Sources, 68.

70. Avandapatum, 115 (no. 321 a, 322 a).

71. Isk aygestankē ew jiteastankē ew armawenkē etēlē lses zmardkan baregorcut iwn gites, isk seps ew nočis, gis ew savas, kainis ew kalamaxis zanptlābers imascēs. 'If you hear of orchards and olive groves and date palms, you know the beneficence of men, but you should understand crags (?) and cypresses, junipers and plane

73. See Ch. 2.

74. See Ch. 5.

75. MX II, 41.

76. PEB III.7; on Arm. tacar 'palace, temple' see Ch. 15.

77. On ancient forestation in Arm., see T. X. Hakobyan, Hayastani patmakan a sxarhagrutc'yun (urvgucer), Erevan, 1968, 55.

78. Boyce, op. cit. n. 63, 42. Amongst the ingredients of this preparation is coriander, the Arm. word for which (ginj) is a loan-word from Mbr. (see W. B. Henning, 'Coriander,' Asia Major, 1963, 195-9 (= Acta Iranica, 15, 583-7).

79. Ibid., 246.


81. HAB, IV, 260.

82. Gabikean, op. cit., 176.

83. HAB, II, 428.

84. Gabikean, op. cit., 218.

85. Lalayean, op. cit. n. 72, 201.

86. Gabikean, op. cit., xix.

87. Cited by Christensen, op. cit. n. 14, 175. The suggestion advanced by Justi and others, that the OP. month name Thaigracis means 'garlic-gathering', seems unlikely.


89. MA 7, 54.

90. Lalayean, op. cit., 203. On demons which afflict women with child, see Ch. 14.

91. See MA 1, 174 and Thomson, MX, 122 n. 23.
92. The word artaxur may be a form of artaxoyr, artaxurak 'tiara', a Mir. loan-word (see Arm. Gr., 160 s.v. xoyr and H. W. Bailey, 'Västa,' in J. P. Asmussen, ed., Iranian Studies presented to Kay Barr, Copenhagen, 1966, 36 on Arm. arta-, Georgian artag-i 'covering'). We take xawart as a loan-word from a Mir. p. part. xvart 'eaten' of xvar- 'eat', with Arm. intrusive -a- (cf. Arm. xoraset, caxarak, discussed in Ch. 10), cf. Arm. xortik 'good' (Arm. Gr., 161), probably borrowed at a later stage, when Mir. xvar- came to be pronounced as xor-. The word tic is obscure, and we have followed the Arm. lexicographers in translating it as 'plant' or 'food'. Arm. xawarci may be analysed as xawar-ci(l) (?) with cil 'plant' as suffix, i.e., 'edible plant'. Such a name could be applied to a variety of vegetables, and is, for Gabikean (op. cit., 83) lists three different plants called xawarcil, all of them edible. The most widely accepted meaning is 'rhubarb' (loc. cit., no. 526; see also G. Ter-Mkrtçyan, Hayagitakan usumnasirtyunner, I, Erevan, 1979, 470).

93. MA 7, 34.

94. Avandapatum, 118-9 (no. 331); G. Srvanjtyanc (Erker, I, Erevan, 1978, 43) reports the more modest claim that the mandrake cures 14 different illnesses.

95. Ter-Mkrtçyan, op. cit., 468.

96. Srvanjtyanc, op. cit., 285-6, cites the text of the prayer, which invokes God and the Christian saints.

97. Ter-Mkrtçyan, op. cit., 470; Avandapatum, 119.
CHAPTER 13
CAPTIVE POWERS: APOCALYPTIC AND
ESCHATOLOGICAL LEGENDS

The legend exists in various cultures around the world of a king or hero confined to a cave or mountain until an apocalyptic event when he is released. In western Europe, for example, there is the legend of Frederick Barbarossa, the German king who was drowned in Cilician Armenia during the Third Crusade, late in the twelfth century, but who is believed to be waiting in a cave in the Kyffhäuser mountain in Thuringia for the reunification of Germany. There is a popular Greek superstition that Alexander the Great still 'lives and reigns' (see Ch. 14). We have already discussed the Iranian legend of the imprisonment of Aži Dahaka in Mount Damavand by the hero Thrašthaona and its treatment in Armenian epic tradition, where the monster of the Avesta is variously identified as foreign tyrant or heresiarch.¹ It was seen also how in Armenian folklore the Zoroastrian yazata Mithra is led by a crow to a cave at Van where he waits for the restoration of justice to the world: an apocalyptic vision in which Mithra (Arm. Mher) is an epic historical figure, the leader of the Armenians of Sasun in their rebellion against foreign oppressors.² It is believed that on Ascension Day the cave of Mher yawns open and the hero (as the Epic regards him) may be seen astride his steed.³

The various legends cited above seem to have a single common feature, in that at the centre of each stands a hero or villain whose powers are seen to be so great that they would effect a complete transformation of the world—either destruction or redemption—were they to run their full course. But the world is as it was before: the world conqueror's lands have fallen away; the evil demon has not succeeded in corrupting all of the creations; the liberating hero has not procured everlasting freedom for his nation. Yet the central figure retains the awe still of those who hoped in him or feared him, and he is granted immortality, the completion of his works postponed until the end of days. Neither wholly god nor wholly mortal, he is consigned for the
intervening ages to an earthly place of seclusion endowed with supernatural features: mighty Damāvand, or the rocky heights of Van fortress with its blind portals and mysterious cuneiform inscriptions. We shall discuss in this chapter two epic figures of power made correspondingly captive in Mount Ararat, Artawazd and Šidar, and various legends connected with them.

Another general theme in the history of human religion and thought is the relationship of men to animals. Some of the latter were considered noxious, creatures of evil, and in both Iran and Armenia there is evidence that certain classes of beasts and insects were regarded thus. Animals such as cows and horses were useful, friendly to man, and often considered sacred; birds like the eagle were endowed with supernatural powers, and it seems that these miraculous properties caused the real eagle to be transmuted into a fantastic creature in Iranian legen

The name Artawazd is a western Mir. form of the name attested in Av. as Āsavazdah, coming probably from an old western Iranian form represented in Elamite as Irdumasda. If Benveniste's interpretation of the Elamite form is correct, the name would be thus attested in Iran from the earliest times that the Armenians were in contact with Zoroastrians. The name is compared by Jackson to the Gāthic Av. phrase əsənyə važdrəŋ (Ya. 64.4), which he translates as 'furtherers of righteousness' and which Insler renders with the word ga following as 'the draft oxen of truth', which he explains as 'the earthly community of the faithful'. It is more likely that Āsavazdah means 'constant in righteousness', with Av. važdah- 'constant', as befits one who is to assist the Saviour at the Renovation of the world together with other heroes including one Gəw son of Gudarz, who is obviously a Parthian (GBd. 29.7). The imprisonment in Mt. Damāvand of Aži. Dahāka is described in the same chapter. One of Āsavazdah's seven companions at
Frašegird is Fradaxšti, Phl. Fradaxšt.i Xumbīgan, who is to withstand the demon of wrath, Aēšma, then, but for fear of whom, according to the Phl. explanation of his name, he was raised in a jar (kē bīm az Xēšm rāy andar xumb parwarīhist, Zsp. 35.4). As will be seen, the Arm. Artawazd was a contemporary of the Parthian Arsacids; he is depicted as an eschatological figure; he is imprisoned in a mountain and compared to or even equated with Azi Dahēka; and other eschatological heroes confined in bottles are likened to him. The name is found in various Greek forms (Artaouasōs, Artabasōs, Artabasdos, Artabazos, Artabazēs) in Iran and Asia Minor from the Parthian period. The name Artawazd is found with some frequency in Armenian history down to the twelfth century. Three kings by the name of Artawazd reigned over Armenia in the Artaxiad period: Artawazd I, son of Artaxias I; Artawazd II, son of Tigran II; and Artawazd III, son of Artawazd II. Artawazd II is well known as the Armenian king taken captive in 33 B.C. by Mark Antony and killed two years later by Cleopatra VII of Egypt after the battle of Actium; and it was at the wedding feast of the sister of Artawazd and Pacorus, son of the Parthian king Orodes, that the head of the defeated Crassus was brought in during a recitation from the Bacchae of Euripides, according to Plutarch. The actor Jason took up the head of Crassus and sang the lyric passage of the bacchante rejoicing at the murder of Pentheus.

Movses Xorenac in his History writes that at the death of Artases (Artaxias I) 'much slaughter took place according to the custom of the heathens' (bazum kotorack linēin ēst avrinī het anosac). Movses adds that Artawazd was displeased and, according to the singers of Godtān, said to his father (presumably before the death of the latter), Minc du gnac ēr, ew zerkirs amenayn ēnd kōez tarar, es awerakac's orpēs t' agaworem 'Since you have departed and taken all the country with you, how shall I be king of these ruins?'. Whereupon his father cursed him and said Etōs du yors heccīs yazat i ver i Masis, zkōez kalēc in kājīk, tarcīn yazat i ver i Masis, and kācīc es, ew zloys mi tescīes 'If you ride to the hunt on Azat Masik [i.e., Greater Ararat] the kājīk will take you and carry you up on Azat Masik: may you remain there and not see the light!' (MX II.61). The kājīk, lit. 'brave ones', were regarded in mediaeval times as supernatural creatures who lived in the mountains; it has also been suggested that they were the spirits of the Artaxiad...
royal ancestors. According to Persian literary tradition, the Sasanian king Bahram V (called Gōr 'onager'), a famed hunter, died during the chase when he fell into a hole (NP. gōr); such a death seems to be a topos of Iranian epic. Xorenac continues: Zrūc en zemanē ew pāravunk, etē argeal kay yayri mium kapeal erkat i šāt ayivk: ev erku šuńk hanapaz krcelov zēt ayan, Žanay elanel ev aınel vaxčan aşzarhi: ayl i jaynē kranarkut cēan darbcē zawranan, ašen, kapank n. Vasn oroy ev aır merov isk zamanakav bazumk i darbcē, zhet ert c alov aţaspelin, yawur mīsābat c woJ eric s kam Žoric s baxen zsaln, zī zawrasćin, ašen, Žat ayk n Artawazday. 'The old women also tell this tale of him [i.e., Artawazd I]: He is confined in a cave and bound with iron chains, and two dogs daily gnaw at the chains. He tries to go out and make an end of the country, but the bonds, they say, are strengthened by the sound of the striking of hammers of blacksmiths. Because of this even in our own time many smiths, following the fable, strike their anvils three or four times on the first day of the week, so that, they say, the bonds of Artawazd may be strengthened' (MX II.61).

Another version of the above legend is found in the Patmut'ičan 'Universal History', a work of the thirteenth century attributed to Vardan Barjberdeć i. Molorut'ičan diwać xabesc zkıpastsn Hayoc i jen Krmac n, ork aśēn tē a Artawazd omn višapk argeal en kendani i Masis leafn: ew na elaneloc ē ew začarhs uneloc: ew omn ayl mtac unér zišxanut'ičan Hayoc: zarhureal harc anēr zājays diwać ew zkazaršen, tē erb lini Artawazday elanen i kapanac n. Ew nok ē asen c na: tē oć kamis zelenen nora i kapanac, hraman tur ēnd amenayn aşzarhs darbcē n, or i Nawasardi ūrn amenayn darbin kop ē kranaw i veray sali ivroy: ev erkat C n Artawazday andrēn hastati: ev kateren zncyn hramen aym amenayn darbin, or i Nawasardi kranaw harkanen zsaln minc ēw c essōr: 'At the hands of the kCurms [priests] the idolaters of Armenia were led astray in the confusion of the dews. (The kCurms) said that the višapk [dragons] had imprisoned a certain Artawazd alive in the mountain Masīk, and he will come out and will have the country. And someone else thought "(he will have) dominion over Armenia (also)." And frightened, he asked also the witches about the desires of the dews: "When will be the escape of Artawazd from his bonds?" They said to him, "If you do not desire his escape from his
bonds, command all the smiths of the country that on the day of Nawasard [i.e., on New Year's Day21] every smith strike his anvil with his hammer; the irons of Artawazd will be strengthened by it." And every blacksmith fulfills the command now; they strike their anvils with a hammer on the day of Nawasard, to this day.' Eznik Koebaci compared the legend of Artawazd and the belief in his release to the messianic hopes of the Jews:  

Ew oc′ zok i t′ agaworagec oc′ ew i diwc″ azanc″ unin kapeal ar  
ivreans kendani: zi kendanik″ i marmaworac″ erkun evet″ kan, Enoc″ ew  
Elija. Ayl orpes zaAek″ sandre xabein dewk° t″ kendani kayc″, oroc e′ est  
egiptakan hnrholut″ eann kapeal arkeal kaxardanakc° zde w i sir,  
karce″ c″ aneain t′e Akek″ sandros kendani ic″ ekew mah xndric″ e: ew  
galustn KKristosi xaytaiakeac c xabec″ imvn, ew ebarj i mijoy  
zgart″ aklut″ imwn, noypons ew molorut″ imvn diwac c xabeac″ zdwic″ apas tas  
Hayoc″, etc° zomn Artawazd unm angelac ic″ c diwac, c c ayzm kendani  
key, ew na elaneloc 5° ew unloc″ zasxars: ew i snoli yoys kapeal kan  
anhawatk, orpesc ew Hreayk″ orc° etc in zr aknkalut″ imvn kapeal kan, etc c  
Dewt c galoc 5° e sinel zErusa±em ew zo±ovel zHreays, ew etc t′ agaworel  
una noc 5° a. 'Nor have [the visapk c] taken to themselves alive and in  
bondage anyone of royal lineage or of the heroes, 23 for of corporeal  
beings only two remain alive, Enoch and Elijah. But just as the jews  
deceive concerning Alexander, that he is alive—according to the Egyptian art they bound and cast a jew by witchcraft into a bottle and  
caused one to think it was Alexander, alive and asking for death, 24 but  
the advent of Christ disgraced deception and banished scandal—so also  
did the confusion of the dews deceive the worshippers of the gods of Armenia: that someone by the name of Artawazd is imprisoned by the jews,  
that he is alive until now and will come out and will have the country.  
And those without faith are bound by vain hope, even as the jews, who  
are bound by the vain expectation that David will come to Jerusalem and  
to gather the jews and to be their king there.'  
The two dogs that gnaw at the chains of Artawazd may represent day  
and night, for according to the mediaeval writer Vanakan vardaper 25 they  
are Seaw ew Spitak, or yar lezun zkapsas nora 'Black and White, which  
eternally lick (yar lezum) his bonds.' We shall find Arm. yar "eter-  
nally' and lez- 'lick' presented often as a folk etymology of the  
name of the mythical creature called the (y)aralez; to the black
and white dogs may be compared the figure of Žamanak 'Time' in Armenian folklore, who sits on a high mountain and rolls alternately a white and a black ball of thread down the mountainside. Vanakan wrote of the legend of Artawazd, Ays ē yaralēz ārāspeln 'This is the fable of the (y)aralez.' It may be recalled that in the Šah-nāme Kāvā, the man who raised the banner of revolt against the tyrant Zahāk was a blacksmith, and in both Iran and Armenia objects of iron (particularly shears) were considered potent talismans against evil. Blacksmiths seem to have played a role of religious significance in pre-Christian Armenia. According to a mediaeval Armenian letter (attributed to Xorenacśi, probably inaccurately) to the nobleman Sahak Arcruni in which is described the mission of the Apostle Bartholomew to the province of Anjewacśik in Armenia, the Hogecś or Hogwocś Vankś ('Monastery of All Souls') was originally sacred to Anahit and was called Darbnacś Koar 'Rock of the Smiths'; Dewkō bezumkō bnaoke śin in Kōarn yewn, ev patrēin zmardik tēwown, tūal yewn tēwokē deś āxtnaks ār i katarēl zpēcutśiwns axticś, kērājāyyns darbnacś ahawor hrasivkś arhawirs gōrcēn: yors zmardik aśkarhin sovorealkś, an ē rēyin dēgerēin, afeal i cēastuacōcś crars tēaraxacors i patir axticśn, orpēs zcrarsn Kiprianosi ār i patir Jestīnē kusin: ev amuānēin zanun tēwown synorik Darbnacś Kōar. Haseal ē surf Arakūealn balaceacś zdarbinsn zgorcēnys cērin, ev zkuśēn pēšreyōcś or yanun Anahāy ār. 'Many dews lived in that Rock and seduced the men of that place, giving [them] there potions of passion for the fulfillment of the corruption of their passions. They made blows of the hammer, terrors by dread wonders. The men of the country became learned in these and lingered by the crucible, taking from the non-gods talismans dripping with corruption for seduction to the passions, like the talismans of Cyprian for the seduction of Justine, and they named the place Rock of the Smiths. The Holy Apostle arrived, drove out the smiths—the ministers of evil—and smashed the idols, which were in the name of Anahit.'

The eleventh-century Armenian nobleman and scholar Grigor Magistros Pahlawuni wrote a letter on the occasion of the consecration of a priest named Grigor Hnjacśi at the monastery of Varag, which stands on the slopes of a mountain of the same name near Van. Grigor Magistros begins his letter Astuac bnaekēcśācānē zmiakrawns i ten ev hanē zkapealsn
"God causes the faithful to dwell in a house and with valour
removes those who are bound." Later, he discusses mountains, because
Varag is a mountain. Apparently in recollection of his first theme,
that of dwelling within a house and of release from bondage, he adds (in
the midst of various references to Scripture and to classical mythology):
Gitem ew Biwraspi i leam Dabawand, or e Kentorosom Priwdeay. Oc
moÀracayoc zSpandiar sa Sabalanin kalov lerin, kam zmer Artawaz i cayra
Ayraseay i Masikocoh. 'I know also Biwraspi [Azdahak] in the mountain
Dabawand, who is the Centaur Piwrid. 36 I will not forget Spandiar who
is in the mountain of Sabalan, 37 or our Artawaz [sic] in the region of
Ayrarat in Ararat. 38. It appears that in Armenian epic Artawaz was
connected to Azdahak, perhaps because of the similarity of the two tales.
In the Georgian Visramiani, a version of the Parthian romance preserved
in New Persian as VIs Æ Bæmûn, there is the name Artavaz where the
Persian has Žahhâk. Movses Xorenac'i writes, Ayl omanc' asen ew i
cnaneln zsa Æple pataharac' imm: zor hamarec' an kaxardeal zsa kamanoc
zartic' n Azdahakay: "vasn oroy znosa bazum Æarc' areac' ArtaÁes. Ew
zays noyn ergic' k'n yaraspelin asen ayspÁs: et'c viÁapazunk' goÁac' an
zmanuku Artawaz, ew Æev p'oxenak edin. Byc' inj ardarac' eal t'ni lurn
yn, t'c' i cnundenÁn ewt'c molorut'camb leal, min'c novimb ew vanÁanc'aw.
'But some say that at his birth certain misfortunes befell him, which
were considered to be the bewitching of him by women of the race of
Azdahak. For this reason Artavaz oppressed them greatly. And the same
singers [of GoÁtn] say thus in fable: "The spawn of the viÁap stole
the child Artawaz, and put a dew in his place." But the rumour seems
justified to me, that he was insane from birth and finally died because
of it. (MX II.61).

It is noteworthy that the Arsacid king Pap, described by Pawstos
Buzand as having snakes springing from his breasts similarly to Žahhâk
in the ŽaÁ-name or Nergal at Hatra, was said to have been devoted to the
dews at birth and driven insane by them. 39 The belief that a child may
be kidnapped and a dew changeling put in his place survives in modern
Armenian folklore. Patriarch EÁiÁe Durean of Jerusalem writes: 'A
child who has not been christened with miÁron [holy oil] is never sepa­
rated from his mother; that is, he is never left alone. It is thought
that the dews (would) change him. That is why they sometimes say to a
If Artawazd was believed to have been a dew, the legend of his imprisonment in lofty, snow-capped Ararat may be regarded as parallel to Iranian legends about the imprisonment of Aži Dahaka in Damavand.

For many centuries, Armenians have regarded Ararat with awe. This attitude is illustrated by the reaction of the Armenian clergy to the first recorded ascent of the mountain, in which the pioneer modern Armenian novelist took part. Xacatur Abovean, a native of K'anakačir (a village on the outskirts of Erevan) and one of the first graduates of the Nersisean School at Tiflis—the earliest Armenian European-style gymnasium—intended upon his graduation in 1826 to attend classes at the Armenian Catholic monastery of the Mešikarists on the island of San Lazzaro, Venice. Detained by the Russo-Persian War, Abovean took employment as a clerk at Ejmiacin monastery, the Mother See of the Armenian Church. After the Russian victory and the annexation of Erevan and its environs to the Russian Empire in 1828, Professor Friedrich Parrot of Dorpat University (now Tartu, in the Estonian SSR) led an expedition to Mount Ararat. Abovean, as the only Russian-speaking cleric at Ejmiacin, was given the reluctant permission of the Catholicos to accompany the Western scholar and his party. On 28 September 1829 Parrot and his associates, including Abovean, reached the summit of Greater Ararat. Abovean was regarded with deep hostility from then on by the Armenian clergy, who considered him guilty of desecration of the sacred mountain. When St. James of Nisibis had attempted to scale Mt Sararad in Gordyene in the fourth century, an angel of the Lord had prevented him from reaching the top, but gave him a relic of the ark of Noah. This tradition, preserved by P'awostos Buzand for the Armenians, had been transferred with the legend of the ark itself to Azat Masik as the Armenians sought to adorn the mountain—already sanctified in pre-Christian belief—with added Biblical prestige, to strengthen the legitimacy and holiness of Vaštarsapat-Ejmiacin, which stands in the shadow of the massive peak. Abovean's ascent was a rejection of Armenian religious tradition which marked his decisive break with the clerical leadership; hounded and persecuted thereafter, he disappeared from his home in K'anakačir nineteen years later and was never heard from again. For the
Later Soviet Armenian poet Echë Cărenč, Abovean's journey, no less than his pioneering novel in the vernacular language Yerk Hayastani 'The Wounds of Armenia' (1848), marked the beginning of Armenian modernism. He called his poem to Abovean Depi lyārın Masis 'Towards Mount Ararat' (1933), yet even Cărenč seems to have retained some of the traditional regard for the mountain, for he calls Masis anhas park cı čamp a 'a road to unattainable glory' in a tał ('song', a medieval verse form) written in 1920.44

Other Armenians held resolutely to their ancient beliefs. A British traveller in World War I expressed to Armenian friends at Iğdir, at the foot of the northern slopes of Ararat, his desire to climb the mountain. Their reaction was to urge him to abandon his foolhardy plan. They cried, '"The mountain is sacred. It is inhabited by evil spirits, so no one has ever reached the summit—we shall never see you again."45

This writer was assured by villagers of Ararat, Armenian SSR in August 1973 that Artawazd waits within Mount Ararat and will rise again to liberate western Armenia from the Turks. The legend of Artawazd was kept alive in popular memory, it seems, through dramatic presentations in mediaeval times which depicted his imprisonment; except for the epic fragments from Goktın preserved byMovses Xorenacı and references in other literary sources, these have not survived. The villagers of Ararat, though, probably learnt the legend of Artawazd at school in their Armenian history classes.

It is possible that Artawazd was regarded by Zoroastrian Armenians as a hero of Frasegird, and that Christians transformed him into a demon. Or, Artawazd may have been equated already with Azdahak in pre-Christian legend for various reasons: his disrespect towards his dying father could have cast him as a sinner in the popular imagination; perhaps he became demented at an early age and, like the later king Pap, came to be regarded as a demon. Certainly no recorded notice of the historical deeds of Artawazd I suggests that he was either a great national hero or a particularly vile tyrant, but one recalls the tendency of Armenian epic to telescope several historical figures with the same name into a single epic hero, as appears to have been the case in the legend of the struggle of Tigran with Azdahak, in which an Orontid Tigran fights the king of the Medes and is credited with the conquests of the much later
Artaxiad Tigran II. Artawazd II was a historical figure of some importance. His imprisonment and banishment to Egypt by Mark Anthony may have found an echo in Armenian folklore, but then the place of his captivity is not in distant Egypt—sharing perhaps pseudo-Alexander’s unpleasant little ampule—but in the very heart of Armenia. The scene of the performance of the Bacchae recorded by Plutarch is not implausible a priori, and its coincidence with the victory over Crassus would have etched the drama—both play and feast—indelibly upon the minds of all who heard of it at the time. One recalls that Dionysos, the god who takes human form, is imprisoned by Pentheus, who orders him to be left 'staring at darkness' (line 542); Dionysos warns him that 'Dionysos, who you say is dead,/ will come in swift pursuit to avenge this sacrilege' (548-9). Shortly thereafter the prison of the god crumbles away and Dionysos is liberated in earthquake, panic, fire and destruction. The scene is apocalyptic; for the worshippers of the god it is salvation, but for Pentheus and the settled order he represents it is death. The parallel, even to the ambiguity of the central figure as saviour or destroyer, is there, but one might well ask whether the singers of Goš't would have been likely to cast their king in an Iranian epic mold because of the events of a Greek play allegedly performed at the moment of a victory.

It is more likely that Artawazd was an apocalyptic hero of Zoroastrianism whom Christian writers sought to discredit by comparing him to Azdahak, even as they scorned the Jewish hope in a coming Messiah. Zor. elements remain in the legend which indicate that Artawazd was seen originally as a redeemer in whose liberation the Zoroastrian Armenians hoped. For the dog in Zoroastrianism is considered a holy creature, as we shall see, and unlikely to gnaw the chains of a demon in an attempt to free him. The Arm. word ǰidar means 'crazy, possessed' as an adjective; as a substantive, it is a kind of evil spirit. Derivations have been suggested from a Semitic root șTR 'to be crazy' attested in Arabic and Syriac, but it is not explained how Semitic -t- became Armenian -d-. Originally, the word was a proper name, ǰidar, and it is attested as such in a Yavnasawurc (Menologium) of Grigor Cerencc XIatc̄ec̄i (A.D. 1441): Tagawor mi kayr Hayocc Artawazd anun, aw unér ordi mi xelagar, orcy anun ĕr ǰidar. Êw elew xorxam meşaw arkc̄ayn Artawazd,
There was a king of Armenia named Artawazd, and he had a demented son whose name was Gidar. And when king Artawazd, the father of Gidar, died, he did not give his kingdom to Gidar, for the latter was insane. Therefore there was strife in the land, and no little destruction. One day Gidar mounted his horse and had the trumpets blown, (saying) "I will be king." He arose and went with picked horsemen to take diversion, and went up on a bridge over a river to cross it. A filthy wind-demon pushed him from there and he fell into the river and was lost. His horsemen spread the rumour that the non-gods of Gidar had seized him and put him in the black mountain, which is Greater Ararat, and he stands there chained. Two dogs, one white and one black, daily lick the chains of Gidar, and at the fullness of a year these are thick as a hair; if they break, he will come out and cause the world to pass away.

The story of the ays thrusting Gidar from the bridge is an adaptation of a frequent device in Armenian epic literature. Anak the Parthian, murderer of the Armenian king Xosrov, is thrown from the bridge called Tap'Erakan to his death in the river Araxes; later, Tiridates the Great is cast from...
his carriage by an aya for his punishment of St Gregory—he goes insane
and becomes a boar until the holy man is released from the pit of Xor
Virap.53 There are evil spirits in Arm. folklore whose particular pur-
pose is to drown people who fall from bridges.54

In Zoroastrian doctrine, the bridge is of particular importance.
In Avestan it is the Činvatō:perētu-, 'Bridge of the Separator', which a
man's soul must cross after death. The soul of a sinner will find the
bridge exceedingly narrow, and will fall from it to hell, in the company
of his evil conscience (Av. daēnā-), immediately after judgement by
Mithra, Rašnu and Sraoša. For a righteous man, the bridge is wide and
the way to heaven easy in the company of the beautiful maiden who is his
good conscience.55 To fall from a bridge—or to be pushed, as Anah was—
may have the symbolic meaning of damnation. In Armenian folk belief,
Christ passes judgement on the soul of one newly dead, at dawn; the soul
must then cross a bridge made out of one hair (Arm. mazē kamar). If it
is righteous, the crossing is easy; if it is evil, the hair breaks and
it plunges into the river of fire which separates Heaven and hell.56 In
Zoroastrian belief, the rays of the rising sun draw up the soul to
Mithra's judgement seat at dawn. The Manicheans of Sogdia, who be-
lieved, it seems, in the daēnā- which meets the soul after death,57 pre-
served also a scene of the goddess Nanai mourning on a bridge with her
ladies, probably over the slain Adonis/Attis.58 Perhaps here the bridge
is an Iranian symbol of transition between life and death, or simply of
death—for the mortal one crossing it has already died and it is the
soul which crosses over from the world of the living. It is important
to note also that, according to the Vidēvdāt, two dogs await the spirits
of the dead at the Bridge of the Separator,59 and of course two dogs are
found in the Arm. legend which struggle to free Šidar—to restore him,
that is, to life.

In order to explain those aspects of the Armenian myth which have
to do with hope in some sort of redemption, it is necessary to seek a
connection with some eschatological figure. Manandyan identified Šidar
with Aššadar, son of the Parthian king Pacorus II (77-110 A.D.), who
reigned over Armenia for three years, from 110 to 113, and was deposed
by his father's successor, Xosrov, who installed Aššadar's younger
brother, Parthamasiris, on the Armenian throne; this was done without
consulting Trajan, who reacted by invading Armenia in 113. There seems to be scant justification for such an equation. Asxadar was not the son of Artawazd, or even of an Armenian; as a historical figure, he is unimportant; and the transformation of Asxadar to Šidar is not easily explained in Armenian, which usually preserves the Iranian consonantal cluster -x- as -sx-.

It is more likely that the name Šidar comes from Phl. Ušēdar (Av. Uxšyät.Čēta-), the first Sōsyant (Phl., 'Saviour') of three, born of the seed of Zarathustra, who will battle evil in the final centuries before Frasegird. In the age of the second Sōsyant, Ušēdarmah (Av. Uxšyät.nēmah-), Az Dahāq (Av. Aži Dahāka) will burst free of his fetters and leave his mountain prison, to be defeated once and for all by the hero Karšasp (Av. Kēresešpa-) and his comrades.

It is possible that the Armenians, recognising a common element *sidar in the names of the first and second Sōsyants, proceeded to confuse the second with the arch-fiend whose terrible liberation is the most important event of his reign. Or, Christian writers might have sought to discredit Ušēdar, even as they had defamed Ohrmazd. The myth then was explained by making Šidar the 'son' of Artawazd, while Artawazd (like Artaxias) was presented as displeased with his son, who is depicted as insane and accursed (he is thrust from the bridge, perhaps believed to stretch between the two peaks of Ararat—this is probably a symbol of damnation, as we have seen above). Šidar merely takes the place of Artawazd in the legend of Artawazd recorded by Movses Xorenac'i; while Artawazd in the Šidar myth takes on the role of Artasēs. It has been seen that Mihr (Arm. Mher), confined to his cave at Van, represented for Armenians the hope of redemption at the end of the world. A similar belief must have attached to Mount Ararat with its majestic beauty, yet it was also the prison of a demented king of the kāraj 'brave' dynasty of the Artaxiads, who was equated by the weavers of epic song with Azdahak. The myth of redemption and the vision of the release of the dragon and the destruction of much of the world preceding its renovation were fused together in a single legend.

The association of apocalyptic events with both destruction and rebirth lends to other traditions as well as the Armenian an ambiguous apprehension that is felt, for instance, in the poem 'The Second Coming'
by William Butler Yeats, in which 'a shape with lion body and the head of a man'—more like the leontocephalous Deus Areimanius of the western Mithraists than the scion of the House of David—'slouches towards Bethlehem to be born'. Which is the Antichrist, and which the Christ?

It is a feature of Zoroastrianism that various place-names mentioned in the Avesta which may or may not have been actual places on earth originally, later came to be associated with various locations in Iran. We shall have occasion shortly to discuss, for instance, Av. Lake Kasaoya—(Phl. Kayansih), which was later identified by Zoroastrians with Lake Hāmūn in Seistān, on a hill near which called Kūh-i Khwāja there stood an important Zoroastrian shrine built in the Arsacid period. 65 According to the Pahlavi texts, the three yazatas Mîhr, Rašn and Srsē pass judgement on the soul on the 'Peak of Judgement'; the Bridge of the Separator stretches from Harū Barzaiṭi (cf. the cult epithet barzokhara, Ch. 7) to the Čagād i Dādū (Phl. Vd. 19.30, cf. AWF 53; compare Arm. loan-word from Iranian ākāt 'brow, forehead'), which has been identified by some scholars with Damavand on the evidence of Phl. tradition, which places the mountain in western Iran. The same mountain, if the above identification is correct, was also believed to be the place of confinement of Aši Dāhāka. Here, too, one may perceive a parallelism with Mount Ararat and the Arm. story of the bridge. It is not possible to say which cave on the mountain is the place of Artawazd’s imprisonment. Caves were often regarded in the Iranian world as the abode of demons; in Vīs o Rāmīn, king Mēbad locks up Vīs in a place called Aškāft-i Dēvān, 'Grotto of Devas', identified by Minorsky with one or another of the artificial grottoes in the hills of the Murghāb, which are still called dēy-kan 'carved out by dēy'. Yet one of the striking features of Mount Ararat is its terrible chasm, the Ahora Gorge (Arm. Akoři), on the northeast face of the mountain. The bridge of a hair might well have been believed to stretch across this abyss, and the testimony of Movses Korenac66 indicates that Artawazd fell into it, although passage over a bridge is mentioned separately:

"After but a few days of his reign,"
[Artawazd] passed over the bridge at Artaṣat to hunt wild boar and wild ass at the springs of Gen. Startled by some phantom of insanity he whirled his horse round and fell into some great abyss; he plunged to the bottom and vanished. Why does Xorenac'i inform us that Artawazd crossed a bridge? It is self-evident that one must cross the Araxes to reach the slopes of Mount Ararat from Artaṣat, so it is at least a possibility that Xorenac'i, in an effort to rationalise the narrative he had received, separated two incidents which were originally one: the passage over a bridge and the fall into an abyss (the 'nork' 'phantom' is to be equated with the 'aγε of the Šidar legend). Xorenac'i knew that there had never been any bridge over the chasm of Mount Ararat, so if such a bridge had been referred to, he would not have understood its symbolic meaning as the Armenian Bridge of the Separator, the maẕ kamurj discussed above, and would have taken it to be a bridge such as the Tap̱erakan from which the accursed murderer Anak was cast, at Artaṣat.

It seems likely, therefore, that an Armenian legend about Fras̱egird (Arm. hra̱šakert) was connected with Mt Ararat as the place of the Bridge of the Separator, like Damāvand. But the mountain was also the prison of Azdahak (here equated with the mad king Artawazd), whose release from his captivity is one of the great events immediately preceding Fras̱egird. The legend of Artawazd was re-worked for Šidar, the first of the two Sōsyants, probably the second, for it is in the time of the second that the dragon is released. The Sōsyant was then equated with the fiend whose release would coincide with his reign. This could have been a mistake of ignorance— we have seen how eschatological events may be viewed as either good or evil, destructive or renewing—or an alteration by conscious design. In the latter case, one might attribute it to the Christians, for whom the old gods were demons and the old heroes, villains.

The third and final Sōsyant, Astrap.črečta-, is referred to by Eznik, along with his two brothers before him, in the refutation of the 'sect of the Persians': Darjeal miwa ews imm asen, or amenewin čće hawatali, tće ibrev mefanér or (di Or) mzdi zsermn ivr yakhivr mi ark: ev mwat i vaxcn yavn sermané koys mi cnaneloc čće, ev i nmané ordi eżal harkané zbasums i zawrac čn Arheni: ev erku ews noynpisik noynγunak ežalekč.
'Again they say yet something else which is completely unbelievable: when the son of Ormizd was dying he cast his seed into a fountain, and close to the end a virgin will give birth by that seed, and a son arising from the same (will) strike many of the forces of Arhm. And two more of the same type born the same way (will) strike his forces and exhaust (them).’ Ušedar is the first of the three Saviours to come and is accorded the most attention by those now alive, the other two being merely thrown together as 'two more', when in Zoroastrian doctrine the last is the most important. Such emphasis would explain why Šidar figures in the Armenian legend, rather than another with a name derived from Astvat.čereta. 

The seed of the Šošyants comes not from any son of Ahura Mazdā, but from Zarathustra; one may compare the pseudo-Platonic Alcibiades I.121, in which reference is made to 'the Magian lore of Zoroaster son of Horomazes' (i.e., Horomazes in the genitive). The tradition of the preservation of the seed is substantially the same as in the Pahlavi texts, according to which it is preserved in Lake Kayānsih, identified with Hāmn-i Seistān. The fertilisation of a virgin by seed preserved in a lake is a theme found in the Armenian epic of Sasun. The daughter of king Gagik (Acruni, of Vaspurakan) is married to the 'idolatrous' (krapast) Khalifa of Baghdad. On the eve of the holiday of the Ascension (Arm. Hambarjum) the daughter, Covinar, asks her husband to go on an outing with some other women at the Milky Spring (Katnov ašbiwr). Later they come to the Blue Sea (Kapot coy). Covinar is thirsty, but the water is too salty to drink. Covinar asks God to cause a fountain to well up so she can drink; then, Astcu hramanov covn bacvay, Mi šat hames jur durs ēkav./ Nayec, tesay mek joj kar ka covu pruk, /Siptak (sic) ašbur mi ēd k̄aric ke t̄ali

'By God's command the sea opened,/ And very delicious water came out./ She looked and saw a great stone at the shore of the sea,/ And a white spring flowed out of that rock.' Covinar strips off her clothes, goes into the sea to the place where the fountain flows, and drinks one and one half handfuls of water. Later, Covinar imacv, or ēreexov ē:/ Akhay, or ēn covic ē 'Covinar discovered she was with child;/ She figured out it was from that sea.' She gives birth to two heroes, Sanasar and Bałdasar. The latter is smaller than the former, for he was conceived
with only half a handful of the liquid of the fountain. The two brothers, who are traditionally regarded as the progenitors of the Arcrunid house, go on to perform heroic deeds in driving the Arab infidels from Sasun. 76

Although the basis of the historical events in the epic is the anti-Arab rebellion in Sasun and Xoyt 77 which occurred in A.D. 851, the motifs and characters (e.g., Mher, who figures towards the end) are much more ancient: the saviours of Armenia from a foreign infidel are conceived by a virgin impregnated in a fountain by the will of God. One recalls Eznik’s statement that the seed was of the son of Ormid, and that the evil to be opposed by the Sosyant is often seen as foreign tyranny (Zahhbāk the Arab in the Sāh-nāme; Aždahak the Mede in Armenian tradition).

We shall now examine another legend of life, death and resurrection, in which a prominent part is played by the dog, a creature holy to Zoroastrians. This is the myth of Ara and Šamiram, preserved by Movsēs Xorenacō. According to Xorenacō, Ara the Beautiful (Arm. gelec̣ik) was the king of Armenia, a descendant of Hayk—the eponymous ancestor of the nation—who was a descendant of Japheth. 78 He was granted his kingdom, like Aram his father, by Ninos, the king of Assyria, whose queen was Šamiram (Semiramis). At the death or flight of Ninos, Šamiram desired Ara, but he refused her advances. She determined to seize him, and invaded dašt Arayi, or ew yanun nora anuaneal Ayrarat ‘the plain of Ara, which is called by his name Ayrarat.’ 79 The queen gave orders that Ara be captured alive and brought to her unharmed, but in the battle he was killed, so she sent despoilers to find his corpse and bring it to her. It was placed in an upper chamber (Arm. vernatun) of her palace. When the Armenians prepared to fight to avenge their fallen king, Šamiram forestalled them: Hremayec̣i astuacoc̣n imoc̣ lezul zvērs nora, ew kendanasc̣i ‘I commanded my gods to lick his wounds, and he will come to life’ (MX I.15). According to Xorenac̣i, Ara did not come to life, but Šamiram deceived the Armenians by dressing up one of her lovers to look like the Armenian king and announced that the gods had licked Ara and brought him back to life. She then caused to be erected a statue (Arm. patker) in their honour, and convinced the Armenians that it was all true.
It is unlikely that Ara died in the original version of the story; Xorenac’s introduction of the pseudo-Ara to explain the tale in historically credible terms. Ara was known to Plato as Er the Pamphylian, identified by Classical writers as Zoroaster and called an Armenian, a figure of supernatural power who visits the kingdom of the dead and returns to the world of the living. The legend is probably a variant of the passion of Cybele and the beautiful youth Attis, who is both her lover and son; this myth goes back to prehistoric Asia Minor, and is attested in Armenia also by mother-and-child figurines from Artašat and elsewhere which probably represent Nene (= Šamiram, the Magna Mater) with the boy Ara (= Attis).

According to an account of the legend preserved by the so-called Anonymous Historian (whose brief account of ancient Armenia was incorrectly attributed to the seventh-century writer Seběos, of whom he appears to have been a contemporary), the ‘gods’ of Šamiram were aralez-k: ayspēs hanē hambaw aralezac tikim Šamiram ‘thus did the lady Šamiram acquire the fame of the aralez’. It is not apparent that Xorenac’s work was one of the sources used by the Anonymous Historian, so the identification is probably part of tradition rather than an embroidering of Xorenac’s narrative. The aralez is described in any case by fifth-century writers, although they do not make specific reference to the legend of Ara. Eznik argues, oč i šanē inc eəşal, et e end anerowyt c zawrut ḍima inc kec, ew yorzan virawor ok ankeal i paterazmi dhic i tכ lizic e ew objac uc anic e ‘nothing has come from the dog which might live with invisible powers and lick and make healthy someone wounded when he falls in battle and is laid out,’ and he ridicules those who think zařlez i šanē ‘(that) the ařlez [is] from a dog’. The fifth-century historian Elisē, in a commentary on the book of Genesis, speaks of a creature which yar lizu zmėalsn ‘continually licks the dead’ and revives them, and is called a yaralez. The analysis of the word as yar ‘continually’ and les- 'lick' is a folk etymology, yet none of the other explanations of the word which have been proposed are conclusive or convincing. The late fifth-century philosopher Dawit is supposed to have written, K’anzi yirožut eənc n omank angoyt en, oprēs ekjeruk aśin ew aralezn, ew orc sp e inc mers verasteicē mtacl ‘For certain circumstances are nonexistent, such
as the chimaera and the aralez, and such other things as our cogitation synthesizes.' The structure of Dawit's proposition seems to derive from a citation of Aristotle by Dionysios Thrax (whose works were translated into Armenian), but the aralez is Dawit's own addition. The tenth-century historian Covma Arcruni refers to the 'village of Lezk', where they recite the legend of the healing of the wounds of the dead Ara, i.e., where the Ara-lezk licked him back to health.

Mention of belief in rescue or resuscitation by aralez is found in legends about other heroes, as well. Xorenac seeks rational explanation for the following Armenian tale concerning the infant prince Sanatruk, who was caught in a snowstorm in the mountains of Korduk with his nurse Sanot: Zorme araspelabanen, et kendani imn norahras spitak yastuacoc arakael paher zmanukn. Beyc orc ap etak verahasu, cyspes e: sun spitak end nadraks leal, patahec makan ew dayekin. Ard ko aw Sanatruk, i dayekin sananakoc utc iwnn aresal, orpes t turc Sanotay. 'They make a fable about it: a miraculous white animal sent by the gods guarded the child. But as we have understood it, it is thus: a white dog was in search and came upon the child and (his) nurse. Now [the former] was called Sanatruk, taking the name from the nurse, as "gift of Sanot".

It was apparently believed by Christians in the fourth century that the aralez would descend to revive dead heroes. The sparapet of the Armenians, Musel Mamikonean (died ca. 375), appears as the principal secular hero of Pawstos Buzand. At his death, ibrew taran zmarmin sparapetin Musel tun ivr ar entanis ivr, oc hawatayan entanik nora mahun nor, t ephet ew tesanin zglux normat i marmoyn. Zi asain: Dora yantcaw cakat mteal er, ew vcr erbek cer areal: oc net mi dipecaw erbek, ew oc ayloc zimu xoceleal e zda. Isk kesk yarmeloy akn uncin nma: minc ew zglux anden i kocein kareal kc ecin, ew hanin edin i tanin astarak miy: asain t evasn zi ayr k aj er, arlezc ijanen ew yacanen zda. Pahapan kayin, ew akn uncin yarmeloy, minc ew nesecaw marminn. Apa ijcicin yastarak anti, ew laccin tc adec in zna orpes awren er (Pc B V.36). 'When they took the body of the commander Musel to his house, to his household, the family did not believe in his death, although they saw the head separated from the body. For they said, "He has gone into battle innumerable times, and has never been
wounded: no arrow has ever touched him, nor has the weapon of others ever pierced him." And half of them expected him to rise; as they sewed the head to the trunk, took and placed it on the roof of a tower, they said, "Because he was a brave man \(^{90}\) the aralezk \(^{c}\) (will) descend and resurrect him." They stood guard and expected his resurrection, until the body decayed. Then they took it down from the tower, and cried, and buried it as was fitting.\(^{91}\) It has been suggested that tower-type structures found in Armenia and Asia Minor may have been connected with belief in the aralezk \(^{c}\), for one recalls that Ara, too, was placed in an upper room (vernatun) of the palace of Samiram.\(^{92}\) We have noted that the tower excavated at P\(^{C}\)arak\(^{c}\), near Ejmiacin, was also a burial site of the pre-Christian period, and perhaps Musel's body was first exposed, then buried.\(^{93}\)

An Armenian Christian polemicist attacked the 'Paulicians' for their practice of various pagan customs, amongst which was the exposure of the dead on rooftops.\(^{94}\) The exposure of the dead is an important aspect of Zoroastrian ritual, and it may be assumed that corpses were placed in high and rocky places where they would not pollute the earth and their presence would not impede traffic, or in enclosed places of exposure, such as the stone daxmas 'towers of silence' of the Parsi and Irani Zoroastrians. It is noteworthy, too, that the Zoroastrians attribute to certain dogs the power to banish the corpse-demon,\(^{95}\) and a dog is brought to the side of the newly-deceased to determine whether a man is truly dead. The dog is for preference either yellow, with a spot over each eye, or white with yellow ears (it is recalled that the dog which saved Samatruk was white). In Armenia, too, dogs were believed to be able to sense the approach of death. Sruanjtcanc\(^{c}\) recorded in the mid-nineteenth century one villager's testimony: Nargiz xat\(^{c}\)un hiwand ėr, groč ěk ēr deh inor ěrew, šnerac\(^{c}\) ofnaluc\(^{c}\) ımec\(^c\)ank\(^{c}\) 'The lady Nargiz was ill and the gro ě [writer', i.e., the Angel of Death] had come to (take away) her sun [i.e., life]; we learned it from the barking of the dogs.'\(^{96}\) It may be that dogs on occasion found people asleep or comatose and saved them from interment or exposure; they would thus have been regarded as having rescued the body from death. It is also possible that the Armenian aralezk \(^{c}\) belong to a tradition which predated Zoroastrianism but survived with that tenacity which is seen to
characterise archaic funerary beliefs and practices in various cultures. It has been suggested that the Arm. tradition may be traced to Assyria, where the god Marduk, called 'resuscitator of the dead', is found still at Harrān in the first centuries of the Christian era as mry gklbwv 'lord of the dogs'. Thus, while it may be that the aralesk are not creatures of Zoroastrian belief, and the resuscitation of the dead by them certainly has no direct parallel in Zoroastrianism, the belief in the supernatural qualities of the dog and the exposure of a corpse are Zoroastrian practices. Indeed, it is interesting that while Ara was placed merely in an upper room, Musēk was placed on a rooftop; an old Armenian practice may have undergone changes introduced by Zoroastrianism, much as the Achaemenian kings seem to have adapted the pagan rite of burial to conform with Zoroastrian laws of purity, by entombing the corpse in such a manner that it did not pollute by contact the earth of Spēnta Ārmaiti.

We possess other evidence for the reverence of the dog by the Armenians. The fourteenth-century Byzantine ecclesiastical historian Nikēphoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos wrote: 'Now if one asks about the Artzibour fast, some say it is for Adam's disobedience or for the repentance of Nineveh. Some say it is because the Armenians fasted as they were about to be baptised by St Gregory. Sometimes they say also that it is for somebody named Sargis who died a martyr's death amongst them. There are yet others who tell the true story of its origin, which is the following: There was once a priest amongst them named Sargis who had a dog which, at Satan's instigation, he often made a herald of his arrival, and gave it the name Artzibour, which in Armenian means "herald" or "messenger". Thus whenever his students and disciples living in towns and villages saw his dog preceding him, they came up before their teacher and guided him. Now this dog was eaten by wolves. One day, Sargis sent his dog ahead of him and then went out himself, but was very angry when he found no one waiting to meet him on the road. When he discovered that his dog had been eaten by wolves, he commanded the Armenians to fast, mourn and lament every year at that time because of the dog's death, as they had lost such a great boon thereby. The Armenian chronicler Mattos Urhayoc (Matthew of Edessa), who lived in the late eleventh–early twelfth century, recognised the existence of the cult of
the dog of Sargis amongst the Armenians, so one cannot dismiss the testi-
mony of Nikēphoros as merely another example of Byzantine anti-Armenian
calamity. Mattēos wrote, 'As far as St Sargis the General, whose holi-
day we celebrate, is concerned, then we have in mind the true martyr,
who in the days of the emperor Teodos was martyred in the province of
Bagrewand at the hands of the sons of Hagar--the sons of Mahmed--and not
the apostate assherd Sargis, who made people worship a dog.' In
Romania, where there is a large Armenian community, the Romanians speak
of a dog named Artsivurtsi which belonged to an Armenian priest. The
priest was once lost in a forest and the dog guided him out of it; the
Armenians considered the dog holy and kept a fast on the day of St
Sargis in its honour. The latter tale, of popular origin and there-
fore probably not filtered through the mind of a hostile theologian, is
similar to the others above with one significant difference: the dog
does not merely accompany the priest; it guides him when he is lost.
This detail recalls the legend of the rescue of Sanatruk and his nurse
when they were lost in a snowstorm, and suggests that the popular ob-
servance may have been connected to the ancient cult of the aralezk.

It was believed by Armenians in Nor Bayazit (modern Kamo, northeast
of Erevan near the shore of Lake Sevan) around the beginning of this
century that there was a race of dog-headed men who, of all God's crea-
tures, were the only ones equal to human beings. Dog-headed men are
regularly shown in mediaeval Armenian miniature paintings amongst the
representatives of the various nations in whose languages the Apostles
began to speak at Pentecost. In the Armenian Life of St Eustathius,
the fleeing holy man pays one of the šanaglux-k 'dog-headed ones', i.e.,
worshippers of the dog-headed god Anubis, to ferry him and his family
across the sea to Egypt. In Christian art until recent times, a
cynocephalic man seems to have been used to represent the Nile; it is
likely therefore that in the Armenian MS illuminations the dog-headed
figure represents the Egyptians.

There are a number of modern Armenian legends which preserve many
essential details of the Šamiram story. E. Lalayeanc published a vari-
ant related to him by a centenarian from Erzurum, Mr Sahak Safarean.
Many centuries ago in Nineveh, which is Mosul, there lived the aged king
Aram. He became blind, and was advised to send one of his three sons to
Šamiram for medicine. He declined to do this, fearing that she desired his youngest boy, Ara, but the latter persuaded his father to let him go. Ara, together with his two elder brothers, set off for Šamiram's capital, Van. On the way, they conquered three fortresses of dews and freed maidens from each; Ara married the third maiden, Zuart, who knew that Šamiram would not release him. But Ara forged ahead. He met an old man, who made him pluck forty leaves from a great tree. Ara ate one and beheld the whole world, his home, and his ailing father. He took another leaf, became invisible, and slipped past Šamiram's four formidable guards. Once inside her chamber, Ara took the medicine needed by Aram, but he saw Šamiram's beauty and slipped a ring with his name on it on her finger as she slept. Then he hastened home. When Šamiram awoke the next morning, she saw Ara's ring, called her army and went after him, furious that he had escaped her. Meanwhile, Ara arrived home, cured Aram, and told him that Šamiram would soon be upon them. He added that there was no time to prepare to fight her, and asked that he be allowed to go out with thirty men to meet her. Aram grudgingly agreed to this plan. Šamiram seized Ara with little difficulty, and kept him by her for three years. At the end of that time, Ara escaped. The army was sent in hot pursuit, but killed him by accident. Lamenting, Šamiram buried him. Although Ara and Šamiram figure in this legend, it resembles more closely the Greek song of a young man held against his will away from his wife by a beautiful Armenian witch.

The above legend has no mention of the resurrection of the dead, but a reference to that aspect of the tale is found in a Kurdish legend cited by X. Lewonean: A king in Pêl [Arm. Heyoc] Jor, the valley of the Hosap, southwest of Van] wished to marry the queen of Van. A widow, she was afraid to refuse his offer outright, but neither did she wish to lose her lands, so she promised to marry him if he would bring the water of the Spring of Šamiram on the Hosap to her palace. He constructed a canal as far as Artamet, seeing that he would succeed, the queen hurled herself from her tower and died. The king ordered his magicians to resurrect her with talismans, but they were unable to do so. The king of Pêl thereupon seized her lands. One notes in this story the tower, the talismans mentioned by Xorenac, as belonging to Šamiram, and the vain attempt to raise the dead.
In Artamet there is a pit with a boulder at the bottom, about which this legend is told: some boys found the beads which Šamiram used to enthrall men. Šamiram recognised the beads and took them away from the boys. An old man snatched them from her and ran off. She made a sling of her long hair and with it hurled a huge boulder at him. He escaped and cast the enchanted necklace into Lake Van; the boulder fell at Artamet. 113

According to another legend, 114 there was an azdahar (NP., 'dragon' 115) called Šahmaran (NP. šah-i mārān 'king of the snakes', probably a folk etymology of the similar sounding name Šamiram) which threatened some villagers and was killed by a hero. Years later, a witch had a daughter who was ugly and unmarried but skilled in magic. This girl went into the fields to find betony root. The root was entwined about a bone and she could not extract it, so she smashed the bone. Sparks flew, and she fell asleep. In her dream, she saw a dragon (Arm. visap) with a shining gem on its head. Then she awoke and saw the gem lying before her. She began to polish it and was granted her wish: that she and her mother might have a palace on the spot where the dragon had died. The witch gave her daughter the name Šahmaran. Now a lovely youth lived in Artamet, and Šahmaran wished to marry him; she forced him to come to her with her dragon-gem, but he escaped. She ascended to the top of Mount Nemrut 116 [a mountain of this name is found north-northeast of Datvan, with a lake in the extinguished volcanic crater at its summit; Nemrut Dağ in Commagene is not meant here], made a sling of her hair, and cast a great boulder at Artamet out of spite. Then she built the aqueduct at Van, dropped her stone into it by accident, and died. Some boys later found the stone at Ostan [southwest of Artamet, on the shore of Lake Van], but a priest of their religion took it and threw it into Lake Van so that no man might take possession of it and misuse it. The old man is the cause of the disappearance of the stone (or beads) in several legends, and appears as 'a priest of their (the boys') religion' above. One recalls that in the narrative of Xorenaci Šamiram casts her beads—used as talismans—into the sea whilst fleeing Zradast, i.e., Zarathustra, who was indeed a priest. 116

Finally, there is a legend of Xotjr 117 which unites various themes of the legends of captive heroes: the hero captured and bound,
dogs (in this case, they are undoubtedly aralezk) which gnaw at his bonds, his release, and his revenge. From the legend, it will become apparent that the myth of Artawazd, with its theme of apocalyptic renewal, and the myth of Ara, with its theme of renewal of a different kind—resurrection from the dead—share common details, particularly the aralezk. It is probable that a cult of Ara/Attis preceded by many centuries the introduction to Armenia of Zoroastrian eschatological conceptions; the goddess called the Great Mother, with her divine Son, is attested in Asia Minor from the Palaeolithic Age. The images common to both groups of legends would have been borrowed from the legend of Ara. Here, then, is the tale from Xotrjur. A king had three sons, and the youngest of them one day saw a crowd of gypsies outside the walls of the palace. Amongst them he espied a lovely girl, and asked his mother to have her brought to the palace. He decided to marry the girl, and asked for his inheritance then and there, that he might take her to a faraway country. His mother went to the treasury, which was guarded by a lion, and fetched lordly garments for the young couple, who set off and arrived at the seashore. The waters churned, and a huge creature with sunlike eyes, laughing like a man, swam towards them. It came on shore, and resembled a winged lion. It asked them to mount it, and bore them across the sea. On the far shore, it asked the youth to kill it, dismember it, bury the parts separately and exhume them a week later. Reluctantly, the boy performed the task. A week later, he exhumed the lion's trunk. A horse of fire leapt up, knelt before him, and, flapping great wings, took him for a flight through the air. Then he exhumed the head: four fire-eyed dogs jumped up and flew about on their wings. He then exhumed the intestines, which became weapons of fire. The youth built a palace in a leafy forest on the seashore and often went hunting. One day, while he was away, a p'eri in the form of a black man swam towards the shore. The gypsy girl, who had become bored during the continual absences of her husband, was persuaded to extend a stick to the evil p'eri and pull him ashore, despite her fright. Without very much trouble the p'eri convinced the girl that her husband intended to kill her, and that she should therefore slay him first. The girl feigned sickness and asked her husband upon his return to go to fetch her a lyre from an enchanted garden where musical instruments grew on trees. The
youth set off and arrived at a palace near the garden, where a girl asked him what he wanted. Shen he told her, she replied that his wife obviously intended to kill him, because the garden was surrounded by pšeris, and a bear and a bull guarded the gates. She gave him meat for the bear and grass for the bull. He passed through the gates unharmed, seized the lyre, and was gone on his winged steed before the pšeris could grab him. He played the lyre for his wife, and she pretended to get better. Then she feigned illness once more, and sent him off for a special black ram. Again, the girl at the distant palace advised the youth, telling him how to avoid the lions that guarded the ram, and he brought it back to his wife. She sent him on a final quest for some golden water. The pšeri had nearly exhausted his tricks, and confessed to the wicked girl that if this one did not work, he would not know what to do next. Yet again the girl in the faraway palace counselled the tired youth, warning him of two mountains that closed on anyone who ventured out upon the lake, and imprisoned him. The young man escaped the clashing walls of rock, but his four dogs were trapped between them. Saddened but still faithful, he returned to his wife with the golden water. Amazed, she asked the youth what could bind him. Nothing, he replied, but the hairs of a pig. She bound him with these, and at that moment the foul pšeri burst forth from his hiding place and cast the young man into a pit. The hairs cut into him, his life's blood trickled away, and he cried out. The fiery, winged dogs came, severed his bonds, and licked his wounds. He emerged from the pit, forced the pšeri to kill his evil wife, and married the good princess.

The above tale bears some resemblance to the Georgian story of Gvtisavari (the name means 'I am of God'), who is tricked and sent on dangerous errands. This hero, it is of interest to note, was born of an apple his mother found in the sea and ate (cf. Covinar above). He has eight dogs, who send a griffin (Geor. p'askundzi) to save him when he is in mortal peril.121

In the land of Armenia, where the earth's crust is in continual travail, the ragged cliffs must have seemed to the ancients fully capable of giving birth to stony monsters,122 and the restless mountains, rent by earthquake and landslide, were likely gateways from which the world's end might someday emerge. Surely the stories about the Magi were meant
to encourage the followers of ancient faiths in the East to embrace the Saviour born at Bethlehem; how much more impressive their journey would have seemed to the Armenians, when the latter were told that the three sages departed to follow the star from a cave, in the Mons Victorialis. Jesus did not go to the mountain, but its denizens went to him.
Notes - Chapter 13

1. See Ch. 2.

2. See Ch. 8.

3. On Ascension Day, see Ch. 12; on Mithra, see Ch. 8.

4. See Ch. 14 on these 'noxious creatures' (Phl. xrafstarän) in Iran and their Arm. parallels.

5. See the discussion of the eagle as a symbol of xVarənəh in our Ch. on Tir.


8. A. V. W. Jackson, Zoroastrian Studies, New York, 1928, 43 (n. 18)-44.


9-a. The correct interpretation of vazdah was pointed out by Prof. H. W. Bailey. On Āsavazdah at Fraségird, see also J. Darmesteter, Études Iraniennes, II, Paris, 1883, 207.


11. HAnjB, I, 310-16.


15. MX II.61.

16. On the singers of the Arm. epics from this province, see our discussion of the birth of Vahagn (Ch. 6) and Aždahak (Ch. 2).

17. See the following Ch. on the kCajk, and Ch. 3.

18. Cited in Avandapatum, 362 (no. 805 b); on Vardan, see HAnjB, V, 87-90, 92.
19. On vişapk<sup>c</sup>, see Ch. 6.

20. On Arm. kaxard 'witch' see Ch. 14.


23. Arm. divc<sup>c</sup>azanc<sup>c</sup>, lit. 'of the race of the gods', from di-<sup>k</sup> 'gods' and azn 'race Family' (cf. Av. ā-sna- 'well-born', from bā- 'to give birth'; see also Arm. Gr., 149).


25. Cit. by AHH, 194.


27. Cit. by T<sup>c</sup>. Avdalbekyan, Hayagitakan hetazotut<sup>c</sup>yunner, Erevan, 1969, 40.

28. On iron shears, see the following Ch.

29. See AON, 445; the monastery is located due south of Van on the Mircen cey, near the springs of the Bohtan su (see also Garsolan/Adontz, 436 n. 23a).

30. On Anahit, see Ch. 7.

31. Avandapatum, 72 (no. 192); AHH, 42; Ananikian, 27; Avdalbekyan, op. cit., 48.

32. The primary meaning of axt is 'disease' (cf. Av. axti-); in this case the reference is to sexual passion, the potions being aphrodisiacs. Cyprian, mentioned in the passage, was a sorcerer before his conversion to Christianity, and attempted to seduce the holy virgin Justine with a love potion (see Ch. 14).

33. On Arm. hraş-<sup>c</sup>k<sup>c</sup> and arhawirk<sup>c</sup>, see Ch. 14.

34. Arm. crar, lit. 'bundle'; is also used in the sense of a talisman. The k<sup>c</sup>ray 'crucible' was used presumably for melting metal, as the place was a smithy; the crars could have been either metal objects--perhaps statuettes of Anahit--or edible potions concocted in the crucibles. Crars could also have been, perhaps, bundles of herbs wrapped in a bag. A sermon of Vardan Aygeka<sup>c</sup>i (thirteenth
cent.), Vasn krapastuc'ean 'On Idolatry' (Erevan Matenadaran MS 8030, fol. 209a) condemns usuman crragoc'tean ew ayl p'atc'etkc satanayakank'c 'the study of bundle-making and other satanic wrappings'. Crucibles could have been used to make lead statuettes such as that of a male deity found at a Hittite site (K. Bittel, Hattusha, New York, 1970, 45 and pl. 8a). The journal Soviet Life, Jan., 1982, 31, reported briefly the excavation of a Scythian tomb in the Ukraine in which were found the fully-armed corpse of a warrior and various objects including 'a little pile of slag with traces of melted bronze and a vessel resembling a crucible for pouring metal.' But it is possible that the Arm. text deprecates some contemporary superstitious rite rather than a genuinely ancient practice: in modern Greece, for instance, a form of divination involves dropping molten lead into water (G. F. Abbott, Macedonian Folklore, 1903, repr. Chicago, 1969, 51-2).

35. K. KostaneaneC, Grigor Magistrosi tCe.tC erC, Alexandropol, 1910, 89-91 (letter 36).

36. The source of this identification is the appendix of Movses Xorenac'c'i to the first Book of his History; see R. W. Thomson, MX, 127 n. 7.

37. On Mt. Sabalan or Savalan, see Ch. 6.

38. The form Masik'Coh may be analysed as Arm. Masik'C 'Ararat' and NP. Koh 'mountain'.


39. See our Ch. on Tork'C Angel'cay for Pea and Nergal; on other images with snakes, see Ch. 14.


41. See H. Muradyan, Xacetuc tur Abovyen, Erevan, 1963, 10.

42. P'C B III.10.

43. See Ch. 1 on the name of Ararat and its etymology, also, A. Matikean, 'Sararad t'c' Ararat,' Yusarjan-Festschrift, Vienna, 1911, 432-5. Arm. Masik'C may be a loan-word from OIr. masyah-'greater' (see this writer's art. 'Armeno-Iranica', in the Boyce Festschrift, in press).

44. EhiC Carenc'C, Erker, I, Erevan, 1962, 246-7 (Talaran XX); IV, Erevan, 1968, 214-22 (in Girk'C canaparhi 'Book of the Journey').


47. See Ch. 2.

48. See Ch. 14.


50. Cited in Avandapatum, 363-64 (no. 806a-b).

51. Arm. ays; see Ch. 14.

52. Literally, 'theatres'.

53. Agath. 33, 212; see Ch. 4.

54. See Ch. 14.


56. MA 7, 24-5.

57. See W. B. Henning, 'Sogdian Tales,' BSOAS, 1945, 476-7.

58. See W. B. Henning, 'A Sogdian God,' BSOAS, 1965, 252 n. 67 and idem., 'The Murder of the Magi,' JRAS, 1944, 137, 144; see also our Ch. on Anahit and Namš.


61. On Frašégird, Arm. hrašakert, see Chs. 2 and 14 and discussions of Arm. hraš-k' , hres, hras.


63. See our Ch. on Mihr.


66. See Pavry, op. cit., 80, 82.

67. V. Minorsky, 'Vis u Râmân,' BSOAS, 11, 1943-46, 748.
68. Arm. kinč, išavayri: both are important heraldic animals; the
kinč (‘wild boar’; another word for it, varaz, is a loan from
MTr.) represented the Arsacid house on Arm. seals, and was a sym­
bol of Vahagn (see Ch. 6). It seems that the brother of Tigran II,
Guras, bore the Iranian name of the wild ass (Arm. iša-vayri), cf.
Bahram Gūr (see Ch. 3). Thomson in his translation of MX neglects
to translate kinč.


70. Text restored by Mariès.

71. On Arhmn, see Ch. 14.

72. See Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 282, 285, and above.

73. On the significance of this holiday as containing survivals of
Zoroastrian customs, see Ch. 12.

74. The name appears to contain Arm. cov 'sea', but its derivation is
uncertain. For the most recent discussion of the name see I. M.
D'yakanov, 'K drevnevostochnomu substratu v armyanskom yazyke,'
P-bH, 1961, 1, 69.

75. The kapot cov (i.e., kapoty cov 'blue sea') could be Lake Urmia,
called Kaputan cov by Arm. geographers and identified by the Zoro­
astrians with the Av. lake Caecasta-, or else Lake Van (Arm.
Bznuneac or Vanay cov), which is directly to the east of Sasun--
where the events of the epic take place—and whose water is very
salty.

76. See H. Orbeli, ed., Sasunc'i Davit', haykakan zoővrdakan ėpos,
Erevan, 1961, 8-10.

77. See M. H. Darbinyan-Melikyan, intro. and ed., Patmut'wa mananum

78. See MX I.5.

79. MX I.15; this is a folk etymology, as the toponyms Ayrarat and
Ararat are to be connected rather with the name Urartu (see
Ch. 1).

80. Arnobius, Ad gentes, I, 52 speaks of Armenius, son of Zostrianus;
see also W. Kroll, Oracula Chaldaica, Breslau, 1898, 28, where
Zoroaster Armenius is called familiaris Pamphilus Cyri. On Zoro­
aster and Armenia, see Ch. 2.

81. On the figurines, see our Ch. on Anahit and Nanē. C. Lap'yan's
study of the cult of Ara the Beautiful, Ara geiec'iki akande,
Erevan, 1944, contains much that is unreliable, although the iden­
tification of Ara with the dying and rising god of the ancient
Near East, Adonis/Tammuz/Attis, seems sound. The story of Ara and
Samiram is attested in the writings of Classical and Arab historians. Diodorus Siculus cites the report of Ctesias that king Ninos had attacked an Armenian king named Barzanes; he mentions later that Semiramis had a monument cut from a rock in Armenia and taken to Assyria. Masuada, in the tenth century, notes that Semiramis ruled Armenia, but the Armenians conquered Nineveh after her death (see A. N. Ter-Levondyan, "Ara ev Samiram" araspelani mi arjagank arab patmac Masudu mot; P-bH, 1965, 4, 249-50). The latter seems to us to be a memory of the Median conquest of Nineveh in 612 B.C., in which the Armenians participated, rather than a reference to the story of Ara; Masuada perhaps mixed the two, or received a tradition in which the two events were associated.

82. See L. H. Babayan, Drvagner Hayastani va feodalizmi darašjani patmagrutyun (V-VIII darer), Erevan, 1977, 299.
83. Ananun kam Kele-Sebės, Vienna, 1913, 80-81. For a comparison of the Anonymous History with MX, see A. Matikean, Aray Geleclik, Vienna, 1930.
84. Ezni, op. cit., 454 (para. 122).
86. See Thomson, MX, 98 n. 7 and HAB, I, 260-1.
88. The text is corrupt. It reads: Lezwoy geawjn, or zawracn gelecik araspelabanen spianac versyn spanelocn. The words or zawracn were emended by Patkanean to ur zarayn 'where Ara' (acc. sing.); spianac versyn spanelocn was emended by Abeyan to spianal viracn spaneloyan 'the healing of the wounds of the dead one' (see Matikean, op. cit. n. 83, 68 and V. Vardanyan, ed. & trans., Covma Arcruni ew Ananun, Patmutyun Arcruntyan tan, Erevan, 1978, 225, 366 n. 431-432). A picture of the village of Lezk, with its fortress-crowned central rock, is reproduced in S. Lisitsyan, Starinnye plyaski i teatral'nye predstavleniya armianskogo naroda, I, Erevan, 1958, pl. 64. The connection of Lezk with the Ara-lezk was noted in the nineteenth century by C. Sruanjtcanc (Erker, I, Erevan, 1978, 52).
89. MX II.36. Thomson, MX, 177-8, renders the name of the nurse, which is attested only here, as Sanota, apparently through confusion with the gen. sing. Sanotay; see Hanib, IV, 396. The popular etymology of the name Sanatruk provided is impossible. On the historical king Sanatruk, see Fr. M. Van Esbroeck, 'Le roi Sanatruk et l'apotre Thaddée,' REArm, N.S. 9, 1972, 241-83, and Ch. 4.
90. Arm. ayr k'cağa. K'cağa 'brave' was both the epithet of kings and the name of supernatural creatures who were believed to dwell on Ararat; see above and following Ch.

91. Arm. awren-k'c 'rule; custom' is a loan-word from Mfr. adwên-ak 'manner, way' (HAB, IV, 617-8); the Arm., from an original meaning 'fitting, proper custom' came to mean 'law', and is used in the latter sense in the earliest Arm. literary monument, the fifth century translation of the Bible. Catholicos Yovhannès Mandakuni (fifth century) and later writers used an-awren 'lawless' in the sense of 'heathen'. But the phrase orpës awren ėr is an expression of the pre-Christian epic; it is found in a fragment of the lyric lament of the dying Artases (I) cited by Grigor Magistros (op. cit., letter 33): 0 teyir inj zcux cxani/ ew začawawtn Nawasard/, zvazeln čanc ew zvargeln eičerac/: Mek č ν'c ox harukč ev tčmbki harkaneak/, orpës awren ėr tčgaworac'. 'Who would give me the smoke of the chimney/ And the morning of Nawasard/, The running of the hinds and the skipping of the stags?/ We blew the trumpet and struck the drum,/ As was the custom of kings.' The sense of custom, rather than law, is primary in the above passage. The Ayadgar I Zarērēn 'Memorial of Zarēr', probably a Pahlavi translation of a Parthian narrative poetical work, contains a similar description of a scene at the court of king Vistasp: . . . tumbag zad ud nāy pazdend ud gārdumb wāng kardēnd . . . they struck the drum and played the reed flute and made the trumpet call' (J. M. Jamasp-Asana, Pahlavi Texts, Bombay, 1913, 3, lines 26-7). As we have remarked above, the manners and activities considered proper to the daily lives of Iranian and Armenian kings and noblemen corresponded in many particulars—the above is one example; feasting, hunting and going to war are others—and were described in the epics of both countries. The use of awren by PÇawstos reflects a pre-Christian idiom, but the awren itself is in this case Christianity.


93. On PÇarākçar and other sites, see Ch. 10.

94. See Ch. 16.

95. On this demon, which assumes the shape of a fly, see Ch. 14.


98. In Mediaeval Greek, tz is often used to transcribe the foreign sounds ts, dz, j or ğ (e.g., the name of the Byzantine general John Tzimiskēs, rendering Arm. Çımşik, or Mod. Gk. τζιζερι or τζιζερι, rendering the Th. loan-word from NP. ğığar 'liver', with the neuter Gk. ending -i for Classical Gk. -ion); the letter beta was pronounced v in spoken Greek. It was therefore suggested by N. Akinean, HA., 1904, 313, that the word Aržibour is a rendering of the Arm. araʃaworac fast celebrated since earliest times by the Armenian Church (see e.g., the Canons of St. Epiphanius of Cyprus, in V. Hakobyan, ed., Kanonagirk Heyoc, II, Erevan, 1971, 279). Araʃawor means 'first fruits' or 'predecessor'; the fast celebrates early martyrs of the Christian faith.


100. St. Sargis, a Cappadocian general in the Roman forces, fled Julian the Apostate (ca. A.D. 361), took refuge briefly in Arm. under king Tiran, but was forced to leave there. He fled to Peræa, where he, his son Martiros, and fourteen other Christians refused to offer sacrifices demanded by the Magi, whom they also insulted, whereupon king Šabuhr II ordered that they be executed (Tç. Gusakean, Surbk ew tønk Heyastanesyc Ekeicroy, Jerusalem, 1957, 143-4). Another St Sargis, considerably more obscure and too late to be considered an early martyr of Christianity or of the Arm. Church, is apparently the one referred to by Mattëos, however. He was an Armenian general who died fighting the Arabs at Bagrewand, according to Mattëos, during the reign of the Caesar Tç.ëodos (i.e., Theodosius III, 715-17; see S. Runciman, Byzantine Civilization, Cleveland, Ohio, 1970, 242 and HAnJ, IV, 906). The great and ill-fated revolt of the Armenian naxarars which culminated in the disastrous battle of Bagrewand did not occur, though, until at least a generation later (the battle occurred in 775, according to A. N. Ter-Gevondyan, Armeniya i Arabskii Khalifat, Erevan, 1977, 106-9, or 25 April 772, according to C. Toumanoff, Studies in Christian Caucasian History, George-town University Press, 1963, 154).


102. Cited by HAB, I, 252 s.v. araʃ.

103. Matikean, op. cit., 169; AH, 1908, 93.


105. Ew i giseri edeal ztaysn i maxali gnac’in dimesalk‘ yEgiptos: ew araresalk‘ erkuć s wurc’ canaparhi merjećan i cov ew p‘utćayin navel. Ew steal nawvar yezgên ’Sanaglxac’c, ew nawarkeal gnac’in. 'And at night they put the children in a knapsack and went towards Egypt. And after two days’ journey they arrived by the sea and hastened to set sail. Finding a skipper of the nation of the Dog-heads (’Sanaglxac’c), they boarded ship and departed' (Varkc ew vakayabanut’iwnc’ srboc’ hatendir ke’alealk’ i carêntrac’c, I, Venice, 1874, 427; for an abbreviated Life of the saint, see Gušakean, op. cit., 133).

106. A cynocephalic man astride a flood, with his back to the viewer, represents the Nile in an eighteenth-century engraving by the English poet and artist William Blake after the painter Fuseli for Erasmus Darwin, Botanic Garden, 1791 (see Kathleen Raine, William Blake, London, 1970, 33 & fig. 18).


108. In MX, Šamiram herself is from Nineveh; the construction of Van after the death of Ara is attributed to her.


111. This is the Urartean aqueduct, whose construction is attributed by the Armenians to Šamiram (MX I.16).

112. On Arm. yurut’k, see Ch. 14.

113. H. N. Sargisean, Teğagrut’iwnk’ i p’ok’r ew i Mec Hays, Venice, 1864, cited by Matikean, op. cit., 72.

114. Ibid., 73.

115. See our Ch. on Vahagn for a discussion of the so-called višap steles, which are called aždaха yurts by the Kurds.

116. On the expression ulunkc Šamiramay i cov 'the beads of Šamiram into the sea’, see Ch. 14.

117. Cited by Matikean, op. cit., 32. Xotrijur is a region north of Karin/Erzurum and south of the river Çorox.

118. See M. J. Vermaeren, Cybele and Attis, the Myth and the Cult, London, 1977, 13, and our Ch. on Anahit and Nanê.

119. Presumably this is Ara; cf. the three sons in the tale recited by Mr Safarean of Erzurum, above. It is perhaps noteworthy that
there are also three Sošyants in the Zoroastrian eschatological tradition we have discussed, although three sons are indeed a commonplace in folk-tales.

120. NP. perǐ 'fairy'; on Arm. parì 'an evil spirit), a loan-word from Mkr., see Ch. 14.

121. M. Wardrop, Georgian Folk Tales, London, 1894, 25, 32. Ossetic paskundza 'griffin' appears to have been borrowed from another Iranian language via Georgian. Phl. bskwc and older Ir. pskwc 'griffin) are traced to OIr. *pati-skuvaci- 'swooping down upon' (H. W. Bailey, 'Excursus Iranocaucasius,' Monumentum H. S. Nyberg, I, Acta Iranica, 1975, 34; on the Ossetic form, see also R. Ajello, op. cit., 315). Arm. paskuc is a loan from the older Ir. form cited by Bailey; according to AHK, 181, it and other birds of prey (including the Karkaz, an Ir. loan-word, cf. Av. kahrkasa- 'vulture') were objects of cult. On eagles, which are listed in this category, see n. 5 above.

122. See our discussion of the myth of Kumarbi and Ullikummi in the Ch. on Mithra.

123. Herzfeld identified the Küh-i Khwâja with the Mons Victorialis of the Magi; see K. Schippmann, op. cit., 58 & n. 126 (also n. 65 above). The oldest reference to the mountain, which contained a cave where the Magi kept the gifts that it had been prophesied would one day be presented to the Messiah, is to be found in the Syriac Book of the Cave of Treasures, where it is called tūr Nūd 'Mount Nūd' (probably to be emended to Nūr 'Light', for in later, Western texts it is called the Mountain of Light) or tūr nekšān 'the Mount of Victory'. The scene of the Nativity and the Adoration of the Magi in the earliest Armenian miniature painting, a sixth-century work bound with the Ejmiacin Gospel of A.D. 989, is a sumptuous palace; in later Armenian art, as in other Christian painting, the scene is a grotto (clearly labelled ayrn 'the cave' in Erevan MS. 9423, A.D. 1332, from Van, in Durnovo & Drampyan, op. cit., fig. 65; see ibid., fig. 1, for the Adoration from the Ejmiacin Gospel, Erevan MS. 2374). It has been suggested that this depiction was influenced by the legend of the cave in the Mons Victorialis (see Ugo Monneret de Villard, Le leggende orientali sui Magi evangelici (=Studi e Testi, 163), Vatican, 1952, 9, 18, 62 & n. 1). An Armenian apocryphal text on the Nativity in a MS. copied in A.D. 1700 mentions the nsur 'manager' as within the ayr 'cave' (Fr. Y. Tayec, ed., Ankanon girk Nor Ktakaranac, Venice, 1898, 267-77).
CHAPTER 14

EVIL SPIRITS AND CREATURES

Zoroastrianism differs from the other great monotheistic religions principally in its treatment of the presence of evil in our world. In any system which postulates an omnipotent God, evil cannot logically be explained except as a power either willed or permitted by divinity. Zoroastrians regard the Druj 'Lie' (OP. drauga), the very spirit of all chaos and wickedness, as utterly alien from Aša (OP. arta), the spirit of the right order of the cosmos. According to the Gāthās, Ahura Mazda, 'the Lord Wisdom' and Angra Mainyu 'the Destructive Spirit' were separate and distinct spiritual beings in the beginning, i.e., infinitely into the past. Ahura Mazda chose Aša, while Angra Mainyu chose the Druj. The two spirits are opposed in every way. Ahura Mazda created the universe, which was originally good and pure; Angra Mainyu, unable to create any material being, invaded it and corrupted certain parts of it. All death, disease, hatred and suffering is the result of that invasion, against which the ašavān 'possessor of Aša', i.e., 'righteous man', is bidden to fight. In Zoroastrian theology, Ahura Mazda and the other yazatas he created receive reverence; neither Angra Mainyu nor his daēvas may be worshipped, nor can they be propitiated—they are to be opposed. It should be obvious from the above that Zoroastrian dualism is the opposition not of two gods, but of God and a demon. In that sense it is monotheistic, although Ahura Mazda is not omnipotent. The world is the scene of a cosmic struggle in which the forces of Ahura Mazda, the yazatas, ašavāns and all good creation battle against the powers of darkness. The latter will be vanquished in the end, we are assured, but for now Ahura Mazda has not the power to prevent our death or always to stay other disasters that may befall us; we must be resolute and brave.

The origins of this ethical and cosmological foundation of Zoroastrian thought may perhaps be seen in the early distinction drawn in the Rg Veda between the supernatural beings called asuras (cognate with Av. ahura- 'Lord'), who possessed māyā, a kind of mental power, and the
devas (cf. Av. daēva-), who exerted their will, it is suggested, by pure strength. Zarathustra, who was himself a priest of an old religion which may have paid reverence to both ahuras and daēvas, may have seen in the mental basis of the power of the ahuras the foundation of morality, whereas in the mere force of the daēvas he perceived the amorality that is the basis of evil: the thoughtless exercise of power without regard for the rest of the cosmos as ordered by Aša (Vedic ṛta). It is also possible that the religion Zarathustra professed before his revelation already condemned the daēvas and that the Prophet refined this system. But those who have advanced this theory do not seem to have accounted adequately for the vehemence of the Prophet's condemnation of the daēvas and of his enemies who worshipped them.

From earliest times to the very end of the Sasanian dynasty and later, the worship of the daēvas as gods by non-Zoroastrians, as in Sogdian, together with the propitiation of the dēvah s as demons by nominally Zoroastrian practitioners of black magic, persisted throughout the Iranian world, despite the best efforts of kings and clerics to eradicate it. In the Achaemenian period, Xerxes boasted in an inscription that he had destroyed a daivādāna- 'place of the daēvas' and had established the cult of Ahura Mazdā where previously men had worshipped the daēvas. His own wife, Amestris, is said to have buried alive fourteen Persian boys of distinguished family in order to propitiate the god of the underworld; the Magi buried alive nine boys and nine girls during the Persian invasion of Greece. Although Angra Mainyu receives the epithet khthonios 'of the earth [or, underworld]' in Hippolytus, it is unlikely that Amestris or the Magi were performing black magic in a Zoroastrian context; at this early period, it is probable that they were practising the rituals of the elder gods. Perhaps the Armenians adopted from Old Persian a term sāndaramet meaning 'underworld' generally, without specific reference to the Zoroastrian yazata Spandārmad (Av. Spēta Ārmaiti). It seems that there still existed in Achaemenian times the pre-Zoroastrian conception of an underworld of shades, to be distinguished from the Zoroastrian after-life of rewards and punishments (the place of the righteous being called in Av. garō.đēmāna- 'the house of song', cf. Arm. gerezman 'tomb'). The ruler of the pagan underworld was probably Yima (Skt. Yama), who may be the ādam-e šiw zwiŋ 'person
beneath the earth' to whom certain Zoroastrians of the community of Šarīfābād, near Yazd, offer the propitiatory sacrifice of a black hen—black being the colour of evil.\footnote{11} We have suggested\footnote{12} that the image of Žāḥhāk in the Šāh-nāme may come from an original conception of Yima based upon the Mesopotamian Nergal; one recalls that in the Persian epic youths were sacrificed and their brains devoured by Žāḥhāk.

In the Parthian period, Plutarch states explicitly that the Persians (to be understood as Iranians generally) make apotropaic offerings to both Ėromazēs and Areimanios (i.e., Ahura Mazdā and Angra Mainyu). For the rites of the latter they pound an herb called omomi, invoke Hades and darkness, mix the herb with the blood of a slaughtered wolf and throw it away in a sunless place.\footnote{13} This ritual would seem to be an inversion of the haoma-pounding ceremony. Benveniste identified omomi as Gk. *amōmon*;\footnote{14} according to Pliny, this plant grew in Media, in Pontus, and in Armeniae parte, quae vocatur Otene.\footnote{15} According to Clement of Alexandria, the Magi boasted that they could bring demons under their power and compel evil spirits to serve them.\footnote{16} This may be compared to the boasting of the youthful monster Snāvidhka in Yt. 19.43-4, who promises to harness both Angra Mainyu and Spenta Mainyu to his chariot when he grows up. One ought to regard with caution Classical references to the Magi as practitioners of witchcraft, however, for by Parthian times the term often carried in the West much the same implications as 'magician' and 'magic' do today, and various kinds of sorcery were labelled as Magian which Zoroastrian priests would certainly have shunned. The writer Apuleius, a learned adept of Oriental cults and mysteries, sought to defend himself in A.D. 155-61 against accusations of magic by arguing a literal definition of the term. 'Magician', he insisted, was merely the Persian word for priest, and meant therefore one skilled in the performance of religious rites, 'an art acceptable to the immortal gods, full of all knowledge of worship and prayer, full of piety and wisdom in things divine, full of honour and glory since the day when Zoroaster and Oromazes established it, high-priestess [i.e., magic] of the powers of heaven.'\footnote{17} Despite this clever piece of sophistry, he was forced to acquit himself of specific charges concerning acts of witchcraft.
The Denkard describes rites of praise and propitiation of Ahriman and the demons which were conducted in darkness and secrecy. It would appear that in the Sasanian period and later, there existed both sorcery for the purpose of power or propitiation, based upon a perversion of Zoroastrian doctrine and ritual, and also a form of the older, non-Zoroastrian daeva-worship. Since an amoral desire for power or wealth from the gods would have been a common feature of both paganism and sorcery, and since the rites in honour of some underworld divinity would have involved revolting and dark practices in both cases also, it is difficult to define precisely one from the other, and indeed sorcerers and pagans may have been in contact. For their attitudes would have been simple and materialistic, without the desire for moral rectitude and the readiness to sacrifice oneself for it that characterises the Zoroastrian.

A heresy of Zoroastrianism which was very widespread in Persian from Achaemenian times, Zurvanism, deprived Ahura Mazda of his omniscience—a quality essential to the Zoroastrian belief that Ahura Mazda created the world with the fore-knowledge that Angra Mainyu would be trapped and defeated ultimately in it. This certainty is a great theological consolation, bearing the assurance that the tribulations of the righteous are not in vain; the loss of it seems to have provoked much fatalistic speculation. According to one Zurvanite myth, Ahura Mazda acquired the knowledge of how to create light from a demon named Mahmi, who learned the secret from the Evil Spirit. Syrian and Armenian polemicists of the Sasanian period claimed that 'priests of this sect' (i.e., the Zurvanite Zoroastrians) offered sacrifices annually to Mahmi, and chided Zoroastrians for persecuting worshippers of demons when they were no better themselves. The Manichaens also ridiculed the Zurvanites for this practice. No reference to Mahmi as a being is known in surviving Zoroastrian literature.

Evidence does exist of pagan or geotic practices in relics of material culture, mainly from eastern Iranian lands. A number of small ceramic heads of creatures of demonic appearance of the early post-Sasanian period have been found in Sogdia, i.e., from a time before Islam became firmly established as the principal faith of the region. There is in the Hermitage Museum at Leningrad a terracotta figurine,
possibly of the same period and place of origin as these objects. It is 61 cm in height, and depicts a man on a semi-cylindrical throne which has a low, serrated back. There is a conical hat on his grotesquely oversized head; it is adorned with ridges of bumps, perhaps representing rows of pearls or precious stones. His muscular face has a prominent hooked nose, almond-shaped, narrow eyes, and his mouth is open to reveal clenched teeth. He has heavy brows, a moustache and beard. His left hand is clasped to his breast, while his right, also clenched and directly above, carries to his mouth the remnants of a staff (?). His robe is tied at the waist with a wide belt with round clasp, and he wears soft boots. Two snakes spring out of his shoulders at the base of the neck, curl up and around his ears, and descend down his cheeks, their heads with jaws open turned towards his grinning mouth. The base of the figurine appears to have been damaged by water. The figurine is similar to the bas-relief of Nergal at Hatra, and may be an apotropaic image of the demon Aši Dahāka, Pers. Žaḥāḵ. It is interesting to note that in the Persian dialect of modern Tajikistan, the expression Ašdāhā pēš kardan means 'to ward off death', according to Ms. Isabella Ibragimova, a native of Dushanbe. A statue from the Mediterranean west, made in Roman times and apparently heavily restored in later centuries to resemble a winged, leontocephalous figure on a bas-relief from the same site, shows a man's naked trunk adorned with astrological symbols; a serpent coils around it. The object has been connected by some scholars with the western cult of Mithraism and is considered to represent Zurvān or Ahriman. A similar figure appears on a medallion from Iran which may have been issued at the death of a Būyīd ruler. The figure would, accordingly, represent death or time as destroyer. Gray wrote that, '... analogies from other religions would imply that in Iran as elsewhere maleficent beings received an excess, rather than a deficiency, of cult. The relative paucity of material concerning the powers of wickedness seems due to a determined and systematic endeavor to ignore evil as far as possible, and thus to doom it through oblivion to nothingness.' The Avesta mentions '... thousands and thousands of those daēvas ... their numberless myriads', yet Gray's suggestion seems to reflect the Zoroastrian point of view. In the Denkard it is written that the dwelling of Ahriman is in the body of
men, and when he is chased out of the body of every man, he will be annihilated from the whole world. Thought of Ahriman is to be banished from the mind, and by careful adherence to the laws of purity as defined in the Vīdēvdāt 'Law Against the Demons' all that is demonic may be purged from the physical body. We shall see that many aspects of Zoroastrian demonology, terminology concerning sorcerers, and phenomena and creatures perceived as demonic, are to be found in various periods attested also amongst the Armenians.

The most common Arm. word for a witch or warlock is kaxard, which translates Biblical Gk. ἰαῖσσα, pharmakeus. It is probably to be derived via a MIr. form from Av. kaḵšara- (fem. kaḵšard-, diḵšard-), found in Yasna 61.2. Toyma Mecop (fifteenth century) wrote of kaxardk or varmaats cafrad ev i jays trom noc diwt ēin 'witches who divined by the roots of trees and the voices of birds.' Another more recent clergyman attacked kaxardn or anōt inc tēalē i bozl, kaps kam mom kam erkat, ev pespēs bēznok varmaen (sic!) zarustn 'the witch who buries some vessel in the earth, bonds, or wax, or iron; and with divers talismans practises (his) art.' In his sermon Vasn arbecełac ew gusanc 'On drunkards and minstrels' Simeon the bishop of Aljnik lists various techniques of witchcraft: Darjeal satanay ayl evs ēars tay gorcel, or ē vnasakar hovgy, jernacu, gērēkč, ērēmi, aknaxaž, erzahan, ēr ohrnel (or ē na pič ew hakašak awazanin), čragemehc [?]J, krakahan, aznsgoz, xmorāč, ev ayl ev anhamar bēznom diwakan tay gorcel satanay 'Again Satan gives other evils to perform as (are) harmful to the soul: the witch, the diviner with hops, the pagan, the caster of the evil eye, the interpreter of dreams, the blessing of water (which is filthy and contrary to the [baptismal font]), extinguishing a lamp, the interpreter of fire, the one who steals the reed of a loom, one who buries leaven—and Satan gives yet other, innumerable evils to do.' Another practitioner of the black arts is the vhuk, whose name renders Biblical Gk. engastrimythos 'a diviner of entrails', and in the Book of Kings, thelētēs 'sorcerer, necromancer'. The word is probably to be derived from a MIr. form of OIr. *vithuka- from the base vaeth- 'to ascertain for legal purposes (through divination)' In Arm. we find also ṣatuk 'sorcerer', a loan-word from MIr. Arm. diwt 'witch or warlock, diviner' is a word of uncertain
etymology (note v.t. diwC-tC-sin from diwC-tC-em 'I divine' above);
HwmkC'sarpšyštean suggested a derivation from Arm. ditem 'I observe',44
Arm. ġêt 'seer, witch' is probably to be derived from the native Arm.
ģit- 'know' (cf. dit- 'observe', dēt 'observer'),45 rather than from Av.
kaštā-, MP. kēd.46

The charms or spells cast by sorcerers were called hmay-kC, trans-
slating Biblical Gk. olēnismos; the word may be an Ir. loan-word, cf. NP.
humāy.47 The word used for a talisman or magical instrument was
yurutC-kC, a word of uncertain etymology.48 In MX I.18, the Assyrian
queen Šamiram casts her 'talismans into the sea' (zyurutC-sm i cov),
which Korenac'i considers the origin of the expression ulunkC Šamiramay
i cov 'the beads of Šamiram into the sea'.49 The word is found with the
suffix of agent as yurutC-iC-kC 'witch' in the works of Yovhannes Mandakuni,
a fifth-century Catholicos of the Armenian Church,50 and Eznik Kūbāc'i
(fifth century) writes: Ew ērd et'e het'anos icC-ē or icC-ar inC
bnutC-amb kercicC-ē, yandimanesC-i yivrocC aruṣtakC-ē acC-n yawjaśtacC-n;
or aynC-ē apC zgwnacC-ē anel zawja seten, minC-ē kocC-el yurC-iwC-kC i
tums, ew kerakurs matucC-ē anel, orpēs BabelacC-kC viśapin zor pašteinn:
Ew span zna AstucC-y sīreliC-n ūnvin ēntelakan kerakroC
51 'And now if
there be a heathen who may think a thing evil by nature, let him be op-
posed by the co-practitioners of his own art, the worshippers of ser-
pents, for they know how to tame snakes to such a degree that they can
call them into houses with talismans [yurutC-iwC-kC] and offer them food,
as did the Babylonians with the dragon they worshipped, but the beloved of
God killed it with the same accustomed food.'52 Pēstos Buzand (fifth
century) describes the divination practised by the traitor and apostate
from Christianity Meružan Arcruni as he flees from the Armenian sparspet
('commander-in-chief') Manuēl Mamikonean: Ew inC-kC-n ancC-eal ēst užin
iJenēr i hmays kC-aidēutC-ēan, zkC-uēs harC-ēnēr; ēw C-ē goyr mna yajōlak
yurC-tC kaxardanacC-n yor yusyyn53 'And he went on his way; he descended
to Chaldaean spells, and questioned dice,54 but the talisman of witch-
craft in which he hoped did not come up in his favour.' Meružan, it is
recalled, had accepted Zoroastrianism,55 but PēB portrays him in colours
as dark as possible, and it cannot be inferred that divination necessar-
ily formed a part of his faith. Christian writers stigmatised their op-
ponents as adepts of black magic and other foul practices; we shall see
how they were to scorn the Zoroastrian Armenian Children of the Sun for gathering at night, even as the Đenکard condemns the worshippers of the đêrs—in the case of the Armenian Arewordik, such secrecy might indeed have been the result of fear of persecution by the Christians.

In the several cases we have cited, yûrût are beads or small stones or knuckle-bones. The act of Šamiram which became an idiom, her casting of her beads into the sea, may have been an act of magic. The Dabistân, a pseudo-Zoroastrian work of the seventeenth century, contains a legend according to which Zarathustra, when stricken by his assassin Turabutur(hash), cast his یاى افراز 'rosary' or 'worry beads' at the man; the beads shot forth flame and incinerated the miscreant. While the text is wholly unreliable as a source of orthodox Zoroastrian tradition, the tale cited may reflect popular beliefs in magic which would appear to be similar to the Armenian legend of the yûrût cast by Šamiram into the sea.

The Armenian word for a curse is anē (anē-em 'I curse'), which is related etymologically to Av. naismā; 58 Acarean suggested a direct derivation from IE. *neid-, cf. Gk. onêidos. 59 The sum effect of the various demonic acts, talismans and formulas noted above may be described by Arm. p'eç'ercak 'distress, trial, tragedy' with p'eç'ercakawor 'a magical scroll, talisman' (lit. 'paper', presumably evil) and p'eç'ercak armun 'I am afflicted by the evil eye', from Mir patsærak, a word steeped in meaning for Zoroastrian theologians as describing the adverse actions of Ahriman's evil counter-creation. 60

The name of the Destructive Spirit himself is found in Armenia in three forms. In the province of Dersim there is a village named Ahriman, 61 but this form is not found in the texts. The forms Haramani or Xaramani, meaning 'evil spirit, serpent', 62 and Arhmn (abl. yArhmenay) 'Aŋra Mainyu, Ahriman' are both well attested in the Fir ašāndoc of Eznik Kožbac'i, where the terms are equated: 63 Ayl t' Ahrmn č'ar kercč' noc', vasn xXaramani anunn yanjan kreløy at i yarewē zaregaknaten'iks arkangelay, usti ew zamun isk xXaramany at, noynpes ew satenayn anun oc' bnut'ean inc' anun, ayl baruc', orpēs i barut'enē ok' bari koc'i, ew i car't'enē č'ar, ew ayn oc' et'e bsacin bark' en, ayl ekamuts. 'But if Arhmn be thought by them to be evil, for his bearing the name Xaramani on account of casting away from the Sun those who
desired the Sun, it is because of that he took the name of Xaramani, just as one is called good because of goodness, or evil because of wickedness, and these are not inborn qualities, but are acquired.' Hübschmann suggested that the Armenians adopted the form Arhmm in Sasanian times, while an older form, Haramani, continued to be used. He explained the initial X- as a result of transmission via Syriac Arhmņ, but it may be accounted for as an internal Armenian change; it is in any case unlikely that a Zoroastrian religious term of such importance would have found its way into Armenian through a Semitic intermediary. The intrusive -a- in the first part of the name may be explained by analogy with the Arm. loans xorasêt 'sun' or čaxarak 'wheel' from Mr., or by metathesis of initial a- from a form ahra- (Av. angra-, agra- 'destructive'). It is more likely, however, for metathesis of the two consonants to occur, as in Arhmņ, from a M. form Ahrmn, and the element ahra- is attested in another case also with this change, Arm. arhawir-kc 'terror', explained by Bailey as a loan-word from M. ahrvar, attested in M. Ahwîr and A. hvar, to be connected with Av. agra- var-. The Armenians believed that the devil (Satan, Arm. satanay, from Syriac) had two daughters, Slik and Blik. An Arm. translation of A.D. 1720 of a Uniate Catholic work of the fourteenth century says unterin čagavor ahreš takn andndoc, aysink n zasatenay, or koc ci azgabon, or čargmani korust 'they had as king the angel of the abysses, that is, Satan, who is called azgabon, which is translated as perdition.' The name azgabon is clearly an armenised form of Heb. abaddon 'perdition'. In an Arm. MS. we find: H. Ov să Bahān? P. Čanš圻 Akkaron or să čančkul kam paraš đewn kam glux divac, ays ēr Sodom pasťönm 14. 'Q(uestion). Who is Bahašn [i.e., Belial]? A(answer). The fly of Akkaron [IV Kings 1.2] who is the fly-swallower or the encompassing demon or the head of the demons; that was the worship (at) Sodom.' In the folklore of the Arms. of Jawaxk there is an evil angel called Pešewon or Pešon, obviously the Heb. Bašal-zebub 'Lord (of the) Flies', armenised through contamination by Arm. peć, pić 'filthy'. There existed in Arm. folklore also the Siraki ēw 'Demon of Sirak', which took the shape of a fly and moved in darkness. The latter may be related to the Avestan Nasu, 'the most bold, continuously polluting, and fraudulent' of all the devs, the demon of the Corpse, or Decay, who appears as a fly.
The Armenian representations of Satan as a fly seem to owe more to Biblical tradition, however, than to Zoroastrian demonology, and the various names the arch-fiend is given may be traced, as we have seen, to the Old Testament.

The element -mani (Av. mainyu- 'spirit') in the Arm. Xaramani can be found elsewhere; cf. Arm. tČë-nami 'enemy', with the metathesis of -m- and -n-, Av. duš-mainyu-, Phl. dusmen. 77 The base GIr. mainyu- 'spirit' or manah 'mind' appears also in the proper names Manačirh, Manawaz, Manak, Manēn, Manit and Manēc, and in the toponym Mana(z)-kert. 78 The Amesā Spenta Vohu Manah 'the Good Mind' is not directly attested in Armenian, however. Strabo, writing at the time of the birth of Christ, referred to temples of Anaitis and of Omanos in Cappadocia, just to the west of Armenia; the temples belonged to the Magi, who served in fire-temples with the felt cheek-pieces of their tiaras covering their lips so they might not pollute the sacred fire. They covered their lips also in the temples of Anaitis and Omanos (it is probable, therefore, that a fire burned there, too), and an image of the latter was carried in procession. 79 It has been suggested that Omanos may be Vohu Manah. 80

One Biblical evil spirit of Iranian origin is Heb. Āšmōdāh, Gk. Asmodeus, attested in the Arm. translation of Tobit III.8, 25 as Ašmōdeva, or Ašmod dvana, 'the demon Asmodeus'. This is Av. Ašma-, Phl. xēšmā, the only demon named in the Gāthās, 82 and thus perhaps one of the supernatural figures of pagan Iran, who was the personification of Wrath. Arm. *hešm-ak probably is to be derived from the Iranian rather than the Biblical form of the word; it occurs in the texts only once, in the compound *hešmakapast 'Wrath-worshipping': Ew apysē oc ēl erbek Astuac xēšmāres helaoc vkeyut cean: 84 Orpēs margarēn ahrēr cemmn asēr ibreww yeressac Astucoyt t'cē yamenayn teis arkaneh xunx kew matuc ēnen patarag anuan innm. Zi cC cC tC cē tC yamenayn dar s astucanapāst cētanein, or yandimanein zhešmakapšosn. 87 'And thus God never left the world without witness. As the prophet said to the Jews as from the presence of God, "In all places they scatter incense and render offerings to My Name," [cf. Malachi I.11] to show that in all ages worshippers of God were found who opposed the worshippers of Wrath.'
Numerous other evil spirits of various kinds are found in Armenian texts and folklore, from the fifth century to recent days. The demon Al is believed to be the personification of a disease which strikes a woman at childbirth, the 'red (illness)'; the name of the demon appears to come from an Iranian word al 'red'. Belief in this demon is attested throughout the entire Iranian-speaking world and outside it, from Kurdistan, Armenia and Georgia in the west to the remote Pamir mountains in the east. The demon is called Alk in Kurdish and Ali in Georgian. Amongst the Wakhis and the Kirghiz, Al-masde is the demon of the whirlpool, taking the form of an old woman with streaming hair, living in gardens, canals and rivers. She seizes men's throats at night to produce snores and nightmares. Such manifestations of sleep are treated in both Iranian and Armenian demonology, and are found, of course, in many human cultures. The Šughni Almasti is a demon with one eye and enormous breasts. In Afghanistan, Almasti is a female demon with claws, spiky hair, and long breasts which she tosses over her shoulders; she lives in waste places. In the Kabul area, the Al, xal, hál or mādar-e Al is described as a woman of about twenty with long teeth and nails, eyes curving down the sides of the nose, feet turned heel foremost; she feeds on corpses. The Zoroastrians of Yazd consider Al a demon which attacks women with child and carries away children.

In Armenia, a pair of scissors is placed under a woman's pillow as a talisman against Al, recalling the Zoroastrian belief that iron shears ward off evil. Grigor Tat'evac' wrote that ork i jurs ew i cnund kananc'n alk koc 'ec'an, zi geš xalt'axaktiwn zhogis korusanen, ew i cnunds zmarmins ew zhogis 'those who are in the waters and in the childbirth of women were called als, because through the wet disease they bring the soul to perdition, and in childbirth (they destroy) both body and soul.' Arm. xalt is a loan-word from Ir., cf. Av. axti- 'disease'; the geš xalt is masturbation (cf. Arm. v.i. giš-anam), a sin for which the Vidśvāt (8.5) allows no explanation.

The aid of St Cyprian and St Sisianos was invoked in Armenian talismanic scrolls against Al which contained illustrations of saints and demons, usually rather crude in execution. The amulets are also found as tiny books, the size of one's palm, and were obviously meant to be carried about. A great many are known, and several have been
published, in whole or in part. Ališen recorded a fragment of such a talismanic scroll, with a picture of Al, a thin black imp holding the esophagus and bronchial tubes of his victim: Surbn Sisianos gayr i leĩnĉ i yayr, ev tesaw peć mi ćar, ev unër ac c hreĩen, ev i jeĩi̇n erkat i kroc c, ev handipeć aw i teĩ awazoy: asẽ S. Sisianos, Ur ert c as, nzovac peć? Patasxani et ɱna ev asẽ: Ertam zmankuns kenanc șn t aʃamec uc anem, zkați-packeș uc anem, zac șn zwarec uc anem, zeši̇n csem, ev hanr șnem, ev șnem zțiayn anžȇnanak i yorovayni 'St Sisianos came down from the mountain and saw a filthy evil one who had fiery eyes and iron shears'96 in his hand, and who sat in a sandy spot. St Sisianos said, "Where are you going, accursed filthy one?" He answered him and said, "I am going to wither the babes of women, to dry up their milk, to darken their eyes, to suck out their brains and to make them dumb, and I shall take the child in the womb untimely."98 Another scroll introduces a mayrm Alin 'mother of Al', recalling the mader-e Al of Kabul. The 'father' or 'mother' is usually stronger than the demon itself, and examples abound, for instance the Persian mader-e fulad-zareh 'Mother of the Steel Armored'99. Ališen provides another description of Al from a scroll: Ayr mi nsteal i veray awazu, ev magu nora ibrew zоji, ev eʃunkn nora păńji, ev atamunk șn nora orpës varaz xozi: Nstim i veray tач șkani, zakaʃn xorovec uc anem, shaʃan k'arșen, ev xeʃden zmav év zmanku: mer kerakurk șm șm șm azayoc șm misn ș ev tаč șkani șsaxm, ev eʃt' amsov manukn golamak și mörên, xul ev munć tenikmk șr t'agaworm mer yanduds. Ev mer bnuk'tıvın yankiwms tann ș ev yaxoruns anasnoc c. 'A man sat on the sand, and his hair was like a serpent, his nails were brazen, and his teeth were like those of a boar pig.'101 (He said,) "I sit on children and roast their ears and pull out their livers and strangle both mother and child. Our food is the flesh of mothers' children and their liver, and deaf and dumb we bring them to our king in the abysses.102 And our habitation is in the corners of the house and the stables of animals."104 An entire scroll against Al, who is called in it Abiahu,105 was published in English translation from the Arm. by Wingate; it contains two miniature paintings of Al being subdued by St Peter and St Sisianus, as well as a few lines of magical curlicues and gibberish. The talisman is written on paper, about 3-1/2" wide and over 12 feet long. It contains an invocation also against the t'bla.106
The t⁵�a (or t⁵epa, t⁵epa) is depicted on a talismanic scroll as a hairy humanoid creature with a bushy tail and horns. Ališan declared that the name sounds foreign to the Armenian ear, and no satisfactory derivation of the name has been proposed. The 64th dew of the 72 questioned by Solomon in an Arm. MS. facsimile published by Macler is called T⁵apalay, and has four eyes and four hands; it carries a lance in each hand. The demon may be the Arm. t⁵pta, although the MS., dated A.D. 1616, appears to be a translation from Persian, and deals with a theme popular in Persian literature: Solomon interrogating demons. Another demon in this text, Dzoxk 'Hell', is certainly Armenian, though, and the incantatory scribbles and gibberish contain excerpts of both Armenian Christian prayers and Muslim incantations.

Although the Iranian origin of Al is beyond question, the demon found his way into Armenian Christian folklore. According to one legend, God created Al as the original companion of Adam, but Adam did not like Al; God tried again, and came up with Eve. Al, angry and jealous, has been a misogynist ever since. In most Iranian descriptions, Al is a female. In a primitive, patriarchal society, certain feminine processes such as parturition and menstruation arouse great superstition and fear, and are associated with evil. The menstrual cycle is an object of particular concern to Zoroastrians, as is the delivery of a still-born child; both are ritually unclean and require the careful isolation of the woman from the community until she becomes ritually pure again. Armenian has inherited from Mfr. the word dastan-ik 'menstruant', and although the belief (shared by the Arms.) that a woman in menses is impure exists in other societies remote from any possibility of Iranian influence, the fact that a foreign word is used by Armenians for such a common function suggests that specific Zoroastrian beliefs about it may have entered Armenia.

A number of Zoroastrian demons are female, e.g.: Az, the demon of Greed; and Jeh, the primal Whore; and an entire class of maleficent beings, Av. pairikas (Phl. partk). In certain districts of Armenia, all evil demons are considered female, and Eznik condemns those who believe in the female spirits called hambaru, parik and yuška-parik, of which the latter two are obviously Iranian. The menstrual cycle of a woman was regarded, it seems, as an unclean affliction, and in Armenia
it was believed that any person with a physical deformity is dangerous, as evil has entered him; this belief is in accord with the Zoroastrian doctrine that all pain and injury comes from Ahriman or the demons, but never from God.

Various other demons are attested in Armenian literature, in more or less detail. Some are figures from pre-Christian epic or cult which were taken by Christians later to denote classes of evil beings. Šidar, an epic figure, becomes šidar-k (pl.), a kind of demon or an adjective used meaning 'demented'; he is one of a horde of demons extracted from the exploding womb of a visap 'dragon' by Simon Magus. The word sandaramet-k is similarly found in mediaeval texts as a class of demons, in the plural, although in the old religion the word was a term in the singular meaning 'underworld'. Similarly, the pre-Christian term šahapet is found in the plural, as a kind of evil spirit, shortened also to švod in modern Armenian dialects. We have discussed Arm. hrāš-k, hrāša-kert as loan-words from Iranian, cf. Av. fraśa-. Arm. hrāš or hrāš 'monster' (with hrāšacin 'born with the shape of a hrāš') may also be derived from the Iranian form with the sense of something prodigious made manifest (compare the word monstrum itself, with the literal meaning of 'something shown'); a term associated by Zoroastrians with sacred phenomena is thereby inverted by the adherents of a later, hostile faith.

There is a Zoroastrian yazata, Vata-, who represents the good wind which brings rain and scatters clouds, but there is a more general and more powerful wind-god, Vayu-, who is both good and evil; the evil Vayu- (Phl. Vē) is identified with Astō.vidhotu-, the demon which brings death to men. In the Classical Arm. texts, there are evil wind-demons called ays-k; an ays struck Šidar from his horse and Tirdat III from his chariot and made both mad. In the Arm. translation of the Bible, the ays appears frequently, usually with the epithet piš 'foul, filthy' or čar 'evil'; the forms aysabek linim 'I become broken by an ays', aysakir 'bearing an ays' and aysaharēl 'to be stricken by an ays' are also found in Scripture, rendering Gk. pneuma 'spirit' (with ponēron, 'evil', etc.), which also has the sense of 'wind'. The Mandaeans similarly use ruḥ 'spirit, wind' in the sense of an evil spirit (ziqa). Eznik writes, I mer lezu aysahar asemk.
In our language we say "ays"-stricken, observing the superstition of our fathers that has become established amongst us as well, according to custom. But we know that "ays" means "wind" [hołm] and "wind" means "spirit" [ogi]. When we say "A breeze is blowing," those below [i.e., to the south] say "An ays is blowing." Açaean cites a proposed derivation from NP. säya, 'spirit, demon', but one would expect to find in the fifth century a derivative of the MIR. form säyag ("shade, shadow"). One recalls nonetheless the inaccurate Phil. tr. of Av. dvažak5. Sayane\-
"inhabited by hedgehogs" as 'having evil shadows' (presumably of mountains) in the sand of the first book of the Vīdēvat. In any case, the Iranian word does not mean 'wind', the primary meaning of the Arm. form, so the etymology must be discarded. Arm. ays may be cognate with Skt. asu 'spirit', the source of physical vitality for animals and men. The term ays is used in the Bible with a qualifying adjective meaning 'evil', and the word on its own possessed probably a neutral meaning, even as Av. Vayu-
can be either vohu- 'good' or aka- 'evil', depending on the adjective qualifying it.

Aysk were believed to exist of either sex, and to marry each other or men. They could become beasts to frighten dreamers, and they had a king. In the daytime, they could appear as men or serpents. They could also behave in a kindly manner, we are told by one eleventh-century writer: a woman died, leaving a husband and children. Another woman, an ays, appeared and took care of the family for a time, then disappeared. In order to catch an ays, we are told, one must stick a needle in her clothes (on the talismanic properties of iron, see above).

The Arm. word k\textsuperscript{c}aj means 'brave' and is used only in this sense in the Bible. It was apparently also an epithet applied to the Artaxiad kings of Armenia. The k\textsuperscript{c}aj-k\textsuperscript{c} were also considered in ancient epic a race of supernatural creatures who captured and imprisoned the Artaxiad king Artawazd in Mount Ararat, the place of their dwelling. The legend may have arisen from another belief: that the king at death joined his deified, k\textsuperscript{c}aj ancestors of the royal clan.
The philosopher Dawit called Anyalt ('the Invincible') or Framec ('Trismegistos'), who flourished in the late fifth century and was inclined towards a rationalistic explanation of supernatural phenomena, insisted that $k^c{\text{aj}}$ is a completely earthly and corporeal spirit which is good by nature. Some Armenians believed that $k^c{\text{aj}}$ held Alexander the Great captive in a mountain in 'Rome', but this would seem to be a mere extension of the myth of Artawazd to the numerous legends wrought in the East about Alexander. Grigor of Tat'ew (see above) wrote, 'They who rule in the rocks were called $k^c{\text{aj}}$', also apparently in reference to the legend of Artawazd, in which the $k^c{\text{aj}}$ are said to dwell in Ararat. The $k^c{\text{aj}}$ were thought of as male peri 'fairies' (a loan-word from NP. peri, cf. Phl. peri, Arm. parik above), and in medieval times the word $k^c{\text{aj}}$ 'having the $k^c{\text{aj}}$' was used of lunatics. One medieval writer linked the $k^c{\text{aj}}$ to Biblical tradition: 'Some say that they [the yaverzharsunk, 'nymphs'] are $k^c{\text{aj}}$, and add that after the flood Noah had a son Maniton and a daughter Astik. And when God asked Noah, "Do you have another son or daughter?" and he was ashamed and answered "No," then both son and daughter turned into $k^c{\text{aj}}$ and became invisible. Because of this, they say that they are mortal: they are born, and then they die. And he who sees them sees also that they have weddings and cymbals and gusans ['minstrels', see above] every day.' In another version of the tale, God commanded Noah and his sons to observe marital continence on the Ark, but Ham (Arm. Kcam) had a son and daughter. When the flood abated, these two remained in the Ark, ashamed, and became peri and cark ['evil one'].

$k^c{\text{aj}}$ are reputed to live in taçark 'palaces' in the mountains, or in deep, thickly forested valleys called $k^c{\text{aj}}$ajork 'valleys of the $k^c{\text{aj}}$'. They enjoy roast beef, xavic (hasty pudding), halvah and cakes at their feasts, at which they are entertained by human musicians. Once one of the latter, a sazandar (saz-player) stole a bone of the spitted cow in order to convince himself the morning after that he had not been dreaming. Towards daybreak, the $k^c{\text{aj}}$ put skin over the bones of the cow. It came back to life and returned to its home. But one bone was missing, so it was lame; this is why cows can become lame overnight.
In the Armenian epic of Sasun, the clan of Dawit is called kajanc or jojanc tun ('house'); joj means 'giant'. The fourteenth-century Armenian poet Yovhanannes of T'ilkuran sings to his beloved, kajanc tanen berac du inj xilay es 'You are a kingly robe brought to me from the kajanc tun,' and marvels Hrešen es, hošešen, tš mardadšem kaj 'Are you of fire, or earthly, or a kaj with human face?'.

The kaj was defined by Saba Orbeliani, a Georgian lexicographer of the seventeenth century, as a diabolical creature 'like the čimka [see Arm. cmek, below], the Ali [Arm. Ał, above] and others.' In the twelfth-century Georgian epic 'The Man in the Panther's Skin' of Šot'a Rustaveli, a kaj can raise storms, and one of the creatures holds captive the lady beloved of Tariel, Nestan. The kaj is found apparently also to the west of Armenia; in Cappadocian Greek the word katsóra means 'nightmare, evil spirit'. The name of the Modern Greek supernatural giant, kalekantsaros, kalkatsaros, etc. (sg.), seems to contain katsóra with the euphemistic kalse (f.) 'beautiful, good', cf. the Armenian euphemism for supernatural evil beings, mezme aškenere 'those better [or, more beautiful] than us'). An etymology of kaj was proposed by Szemerényi, who cited Sgd. krj, kš 'miracle' and Ossetic karz 'strong', comparing Arm. kaj and s-kanc-eli 'wonderful' (the latter to be analysed as s-kanc-eli, with the Iranian preverb us-/- us- and Arm. suffix -eli 'able'). If the above suggestion is correct, the forms attested in Arm. as -kanc- and in Ossetic as karz may be compared to the bases *sera- and sëna- with alternation of -n- and -r- in Arm. siramarg 'peacock' (cf. Phl. sënmurw). In Armenian, the alternation of /nɔ/ or /nɾ/ and /ɾ/ or /r/ is observed at an early stage in the pronunciation of the toponymical suffix -arič as /arić/ or /arinći/, so -kanc- and kaj may be variant forms of the same word.

There is a place in the region of Anjewac called But, which was, according to the historian of the mission of the Apostle Bartholomew, tun kraki, anyag hroy, andadar asyrm n 'a house of fire, of insatiable combustion, of unceasing burning for the gods.' The History of the Icon of the Mother of the Lord, another mediaeval Armenian text, explains that tešin But 'isi, kajzi anım karmapetin But kardayr 'the place is known as But because the name of the high priest
was called Butc.157 There is another town to the north, Btc étíc,158 14 km. northeast of Erzinka (Erzincan) in the province of Ekeleac (Gk. Akilisênê); the town had about 150 families at the beginning of this century, of whom about a third were Armenians.159 During the Turkish genocide of 1915 the little community was destroyed. One of the survivors was Leon Serabian Herald, who had left the town in 1912 to join his brother in Detroit, Michigan. Serabian enjoyed a period of considerable popularity as a poet in the late 1920's, and in the 1930's he was active in the Writers' Project of the W.P.A., an important artistic undertaking sponsored by the U.S. Government.160 Serabian spelled the name of his village Put-Aringe in the poem 'Memories From My Village':

'The name of our village was Put-Aringe,/The name of a once mighty god./Put-Aringe has lost a lover,/And somewhere there is a dreamer./God Aringe has lost his power,/And our village has been annihilated./Some day I might be found, still dreaming somewhere;/But who will tell me, tell of your whereabouts?'161 It is apparent that Btc étíc was named after Butc and was still associated in the minds of its Armenian inhabitants on the eve of World War I with a divinity of pre-Christian times. Bailey has suggested that a form of the name of the Buddha, *Buti, was incorporated into the Vidévdât ca. the second century B.C. as the demon Bütî, Phl. But.162 NP. but means 'idol', and perhaps the Armenian Btc and Btc étıc were so named because temples containing images—as well as the fire referred to above—had stood there. In Phl., But is a demon, but it is not possible to determine whether the Arm. word bears any relationship to the Iranian. Arm. butc means 'stupid',163 and perhaps this derogatory epithet was applied by the Christians to a Zoroastrian kCrmapet. In Armenian folklore there was another kCurm called 'Kal' Kudrutc—Kurdütc the Lame—whom St Gregory forced to pour the sacred ash of the fire temple into the Tigris, at the place where the Christian Hogwocc Vankc (Monastery of Souls) was built, in the district of Anjewacck.164 Arm. Kudrutc is probably a Syriac translation of Arm. kal 'lame', from the root KDR 'to become weak, to enfeebles.165 The name may be a tautology; it is unlikely in any case that a historical kCurm bore it, as it is unlikely one was named Butc—demon, idol, or fool. The appellation must be of a later century, when Zoroastrian temples were regarded as the abodes of demons and idols, and those who had served in them were scorned as cripples and idiots.
Another demon whose name is found in the Videvdat is Zemaka-, the personification of the evil power of winter, a spirit whose origin would have been in the demonic north, whence the cold wind and snow came. The primary meaning of Arm. cmak is 'north', and the word may be a loan from Iranian. Eznik wrote, agrawuc  i cmakac važagoyn i Jerin tellis analoy (it is the instinct) of crows to go early from the north to places of warmth.167 Alisán also defines cmak as 'north', and Açaean, proposing the etymology from Iranian, defines cmak further as 'a shaded place in a valley where the sun does not shine', citing the verb cmakeuc ucanel 'to darken'.169 A village in the region of Dersim, south of the Aracani river and southeast of Çapaçjur (Tk. Colik, Cevlik) is called Cmav by the Armenians.170

There is a demon called by the Armenians Sembödik, which dwells in the dark corners of a house. If somebody is found sitting in a corner holding a candle, one asks him Sembödik i, črağn kē wates dēm 'Are you burning the lamp against the Sembödik?',171 The word may be connected with Pth. zamwāyg *zambūdīg 'world' (from Skt. jambudvīpa), with the meaning of 'chthonic (spirit)', or it may be from Ir., cf. Lithuanian Žemininkas, a chthonic spirit;172 both these suggestions are wholly speculative, however.

Large though Armenia's debt to Zoroastrianism in beliefs about evil beings seems to be, there are some which do not appear to have any link with Iran, for instance the Œngāy, čiva wk and xplik. Arm. Œngāy translates Gk. erinys 'Fury' in the Commentary of John Chrysostom on Matthew, II.15, and is explained by Açaean as 'a mythical sea monster'.173 Alisán derived the name from Arm. Œngmm 'I sink (v.t.)'.174 Lāp'ancyan derived the word from Sumerian nin-gal 'great lady',175 but this suggestion is unlikely, for the Armenians worshipped the Sumerian goddess as Nanē and the two forms are not similar. More likely, the Arm. is a calque on a Semitic name for a demon of sinking or drowning. Armenia is not a maritime country, but for millennia it maintained economic and cultural contacts with the seafaring peoples of the north Syrian and Cilician coast, who believed that ships did not sink because a god of floating, Saphōn, supported them. This word became the Hebrew word for 'north', perhaps because the peoples who worshipped the god—and the waters they crossed—were north of the Land of Israel.176 It is
possible that the Armenians knew of a demon opposed to Šaphôn and called him by an Arm. name. In Arm. folklore there are found evil spirits called hnar-k which lie in wait under bridges and pull hapless travellers into the water, while the river gurgles Anlo xe lohanay, lo-worn in xorakna. 'May the one not swimming come and swim; may the swimmer go down in my depths.'

Hredon alıkner 'girls of fire' and Jramardik 'watermen' are believed to dwell underwater, but the former are benevolent: they marry earthborn men and grant sound sleep.

Arm. čiwa-k 'monster(s)' are found in the Bible, in Agathangelos and Korin (fifth century); Tovma Arçuni uses the p. part. čiwa-eal 'old, decrepit', and in Arm. idiom a thin, weak man is called čewčewa. Čapancyan derived the word čiwa from Hittite zawall-is, minor demons who are hideous to behold and who bring evil to men.

The Arm. word was borrowed by the Gypsies, and Dowsett has proposed an etymology on the basis of IE. *gei- 'sing, call, shout', the čiwa being specifically a creature which makes loud noises.

We have referred above (in a note) to Mrap, the demon of sleep. Various other demons may be mentioned which haunt the hours of night. In Muş, it was believed that there was a demon called the Gabos which strangled sleepers. There was also a demon called Xp(i)lik which caused nightmares. Amongst the Kurds of Iran there are believed to be evil spirits which assume at dusk the deceptive appearance of living people and are called xilbiliš (sg.). Safety pins are believed to ward them off; this is the familiar talisman of iron (cf. the Al). The Kurdish name may derive from Armenian; or they may have a common origin in Arabic or Iranian. The name may come from Arm. xabel 'to deceive', for certain plants are called xpilik which are considered deceptively to resemble other plants, while presumably not having the beneficial properties of the latter; the Turkish term used in describing such plants is oynas, from the verb oynamak 'to play'. Amirdovlat Amasiaci, the fifteenth-century author of a medicinal and herbal work entitled Angitac anpest ('Useless to the Ignorant'), explained sút matiteš ('false matiteš', a kind of rhizome) as matitešin xpilik, Ḫynas 'the Ḫynas or xpilik of the matiteš'. A hat which made the man who wore it invisible was the xpeldig külös of Muş. A demon called the Druž—the principle of evil itself, the 'Lie'—is said to reproduce by
tempting men in their dreams. Such temptation was probably seen as the cause of nocturnal emission, which was believed to create female demons and was called satanaxabutcwm ('satanic deception'; cf. xab- 'deceive' and Xpilik above). The antčaram-flower (helichrysum, lit. 'unwilting') can protect one from this sin, however; it was believed to have been brought by the āsman črag 'true lamp' from the Paradise of Elijah.

Certain Armenian beliefs concerning purity of the body and of creation may be cited here, as they seem to bear some resemblance to Zoroastrian practices, the latter founded on the belief that death is evil and dead matter is therefore contaminated by evil. The presence of a corpse is a source of contamination: one does not bathe while a corpse lies in the house unburied, lest one fall ill with a disease called brestakakox, grož zarkac or mereli vaxećac ('angel-trodden', 'grož-stricken', 'frightened by the dead'). Fire is not allowed to burn where a corpse is lying, and water that is used to wash the dead must be heated with a fire kindled with flint, under the sun, but not fire taken from the hearth. The fire thus used is impure, and must be purified. The custom appears to be a curious reversal of Zoroastrian practice, according to which a fire is kept burning near the corpse. The fire is believed by Zoroastrians to protect the soul, which lingers in the vicinity of its earthly home for three days after death. It is noteworthy that the fire must be placed three paces away from the corpse; were it any nearer, it would be polluted. It would seem that amongst the Armenians the danger of pollution of the fire by the corpse outweighed considerations of comfort for the soul of the deceased. Such a calculation would have been influenced no doubt by the Christian belief that the soul does not remain, but leaves the body immediately after death.

Not only the corpse, but also dead matter from the living body such as hair-combings and fingernail-clippings is regarded by Zoroastrians as polluted by evil. Nail-pairings and hair-trimmings are disposed of with care in a special building or in the desert. The Armenians collect parings, trimmings, and teeth which have fallen out, and deposit them in holy spots, such as cracks in the wall of the church. Cracks in walls are remote from the creations sanctified by Zoroastrians (principally
earth and water in this case) and the sullying matter would be thus
safely disposed of. Other beliefs and practices do not seem to be con­
nected with Zoroastrianism, however: it is considered, for instance,
that on Judgement Day all parts of the body will come together, and
nails and hairs, if not originally buried, must be sought the world over.
If one cannot bury nail-clippings, it is therefore best to cast them
over one's shoulder, repeating thrice Ur ēl ēnam, inj hēt ges 'Wherever
I go, come with me.' Sometimes parings, clippings and teeth are buried
in the stove, with an invocation to an ancestor (api): Ār kēez, api
šan atam,/Tu inj ēskē atam 'Api, take this dog's tooth and give me a
golden tooth.' For fingernails, one says ḧung, ḧung, ēdi kec,′/Atēm,
dun ṽkav kec 'Nail, nail, stay there:/Adam, you be a witness.'

It is believed by the Zoroastrians that the world we live in is in
a state of mixture (Phl. ymēziūm) of good and evil. Such demons as
afflict us represent supernatural evil; disease and menstruation are the
onslaught of evil against the living body; corpses and other dead matter
are wholly in the grip of evil. Evil thoughts, words and deeds repres­
ent the surrender by man of his free will to Ahriman. Those creatures
which appear hideous or harmful to man are assigned by Zoroastrians to
a particular class which it is meritorious for men to destroy, as they
represent the perversion by Ahriman of the matter and life made by Ahura
Mazdā. Aspects of this Zoroastrian attitude towards such 'noxious crea­
tures' (Av. xrafstrā-, Phl. xrafstar) are found amongst the Armenians.

The frog is generally considered by Zoroastrians to be the most
evil earthly creature, and in late Zoroastrian texts the Av. word
xrafstrā- was, it seems, 'a narrow specialised term for one subdivision
of fauna, the serpent and scorpion being the chief in the list.' In
Armenia, the frog (got) causes warts (gortnuk) and makes one's teeth
fall out. It also steals them, so upon beholding the frog one must spit
upon the hands and feet (to prevent warts) and then shut one's mouth
tightly (lest the frog steal a fallen tooth). A wedding song laments
the fate of St Gregory, who was cast into the pit of Xor Virap at
Artašat: Ayn ov ēr or dērin horē,/ Vran lec in ējā u ġortē 'Who is he
whom they put in a pit,/over whom snakes and frogs poured?' St
Gregory of Narek wrote, taťkatesak garsūc īm ġortoc ēmelac
awrinakc ēn zis zazrac ēc anen 'disgusting frogs, repellant to behold,
the exemplars of sin, revolt me.'
The snake and scorpion are the chief representatives of the noxious creatures, reptilian and insect, which bite and sting. Both biting and stinging are expressed by the single Iranian base gaz-; from the adjective *gazana* formed therewith may be derived the Arm. generic term for a wild beast, gazari Arm. karič 'scorpion' is to be connected with Zoroastrian Phl. karšang 'crab' as a loan-word from Mir. Another form of the word is Arm. kor 'scorpion'. A talismanic scroll (Arm. erdźmeč uc icč) against 666 kinds of snakes, creeping and crawling things, wasps and bees, karič and kor, declares: Korn or elamē i t'ivnic satanayi, ew ink'n t'agawor ē amenayn piłć zerνοc or zerań i veray erkri ew harkanen zmardik 'The scorpion is he who comes from the poison of Satan, and is himself the king of all the filthy crawlers that creep over the earth and strike men.' Eznik refuted the notion advanced by the Persians that certain gazan-k are evil, and attacked also the idea that one born under the sign karič 'Scorpio' car ew melänc akan lineloc ē 'will become evil and sinful'.

It was believed in mediaeval Europe that Satan occasionally manifested himself as a great cat, and in 1307 the Knights Templars were accused, among other acts of sorcery, of cat-worship (most of them denied the charge). Yovhannēs of Awjun accused the 'Paulicians' of katuapaštut' ivn 'cat-worship', and there is evidence that the Armenians may have revered cats because they killed mice. Catholicos Lazar Jahkeč'i (early eighteenth century) wrote, Anmtagoync omank i tarin mi ör kiraki pahen, ew marmnakan gorc bnavin ooč kataren, aselov: Ayōr Mktōn ē: et ooč marmnakan goric inoo ērnemk gan Mkkunk ew ktraten zhanderjs mer 'Certain of the most mindless keep one Sunday a year and do no physical labour (then), saying: "Today is the Holiday of Mice. If we do any physical labour the Mice will come and cut up our clothes." Such a holiday was probably kept for fear of mice, and Armenian farmers would indeed have prized the cat, called by Yovhannēs of Awjun a mknorsak 'mouse-hunter' in his attack on the Paulicians (mknorsakac linelov peştawnamatoyc 'for they make offerings to mouse-hunters'). In one Iranian land, too, the cat seems to have been prized for its usefulness against rodents, for it was called 'mouse-killer' in Sogdian (as, indeed, in Classical Greek and Sanskrit). According to one modern Armenian superstition, a person who kills a cat must build seven
churches with his little finger (škoyt); otherwise his soul will go to hell. 212 The cats of the Van area do not exhibit the virtues that might make them the object of cult, however. A nineteenth-century English traveller wrote, 'The best cats are Van cats, which are not really Persian; these, if well bred, are deaf, and also have eyes of different colours—a pink and a yellow eye, or a blue on one side and yellow on the other. They will not catch mice, show no affection whatever, their hair sticks to everything in spring, and they are in every way objectionable.' 213 The twentieth-century Armenian poet Gurgen Mahari, a native of Van, addressed a poem to one of the ferocious creatures, a beloved family pet lost during the 1915 Genocide. 214

Zoroastrians regard the cat as a xrafstra-, however, perhaps because it is a nocturnal creature and had not been domesticated in the times when the Iranian nomads first formulated the concept of the pure and noxious creations. 215 Dislike of cats was a conspicuous feature of Zoroastrianism in Muslim Iran. The tenth-century Sāmānīd wazir Abū-ʾC Abdullah Muhammad ibn-Aḥmad Jayhānī was suspected of dualism, and some peculiarities of his personal life were connected, in the minds of the people, with his religious opinions: he would not touch a man otherwise than through cloth or paper, and could not suffer the presence of cats. 216 The Armenians of Vaspurakan told of a demonic spirit called the pšm̄usik (from pšusik 'pussy cat') which grew to giant size and suffocated sleepers, or assumed the form of a cat and strangled them. It also caused nightmares. 217

The wolf, too, is regarded by Zoroastrians as a demonic creature. 218 Armenians believe that the wolf (gayl) eats evil itself, which would otherwise overwhelm the world. 219 It walks on two legs, with its feet turned backwards. Prayers against it, called gaylakap ('wolf-binding') are repeated thrice. A talisman against wolves is made as follows: one hangs a ladle from a house-pillar, on black thread. Then one bends a knife or makes seven knots in a shoestring, and ties these between the teeth of a comb; an axe is placed on top of these things. It is believed that the gaylakap makes the wolf dumb, causes its teeth to fall out, blinds it and confuses it. The power of the spell lasts seven days. 220 One gaylakap reads, 'The Mother of God is in the mountains,/ the Son of God in her embrace,/ a column of light in his heart/and
three nails in his hands: / one for the heart of Satan, / one for the mouth of the wolf-beast / that wanders in the night, / and one for the têzmin-bezmin / that twists over my head. / I bound the wolf to the mountain; / I bound Satan to the rock. / I riveted the bonds with nails. "

God punishes evil women, it is believed, by making them werewolves (mardagayl). The ordeal lasts only seven years, but the woman retains her wolf's tail even after she becomes fully human again.

The snake is considered a xrafstra- by Zoroastrians, and the special stick used by Irani Zoroastrians to smite noxious creatures of various kinds was called a mär-gen 'snake-killer'. In the fifth-century History of P'awstos Buzand, serpents are associated with heresy, sodomy, and madness. The mother of king Pap, P'aranjem, once beheld white snakes entwining themselves about the legs of her son's couch as he engaged in unnatural intercourse.

It would appear, however, that ophiolatry was practised in Kurdistan, Armenia and Iran. The Yezidis revere a carven snake the height of a man, painted black, on the wall to one side of the entrance to their holiest shrine, Sheikh ČAdî, near Mosul in northern Iraq. Ališan lists the following toponyms containing the element awj 'serpent': Awjteb in Baberd, Awjaberd in Gëla(r)kuni, the river Awji near the latter, Awjun in Jorap Cor, Awj in Apahunîk, Awjor in Marand, Awjni in Karin, and Awj-k'âlak or Višap-k'âlak in Tarawn. Ališan identifies the latter with the site of the temple of Vahagn višapak'âl ('dragon-reaper'), and it is possible that the other place names refer to the slaying of a serpent rather than to the worship of one; cf. Kirmân in Iran, where Ardasîr I was reputed to have slain a dragon (Phl. kirm). Yet in both Armenia and Iran, house-snakes are revered. Gurgen Mahari (see above) wrote that a snake with a golden spot on its head lived in a pile of brushwood at his family's home in Van. It was the guardian of their luck, and when his cousin killed it Mahari's sister went insane and other misfortunes as well beset the family. C. J. Wills wrote in the last century, 'The Persians do not like to destroy house-snakes, for two reasons: first, because they say they do no harm; and secondly, because they suppose them to be tenanted by the spirit of the late master of the house.'

Zoroastrian beliefs concerning evil spirits and creatures exerted considerable influence on Armenia, as we have seen, although in the many
centuries that have elapsed since the conversion of the Armenian state to Christianity certain of these traditions were obscured, and others modified; Christ repels the dèws, and the souls of the damned now go down to a Christian hell, although it still bears its Iranian name: dżox-k. Western influences, too, may be perceived in the development of Armenian demonism and witchcraft. It is interesting finally to note a reference to the black arts in Armenia as seen by foreigners.

A Greek folksong from Thrace called 'The Witch' was transcribed and translated by M. Bartikyan:

My black swallows of the desert
And white pigeons of my shores,
Who fly so high to my homeland,
I have an apple tree in my garden-nest there
And tell my good wife
To be a nun if she wishes, or to marry,
Or, if she wishes, to dye her clothes black.
Let her not persevere or wait for me.
Here in Armenia they have married me
To an Armenian girl, daughter of a witch.
She bewitches the stars and the sky;
She bewitches the birds and they cease to fly;
She bewitches the rivers and they flow no more;
She bewitches the sea and it is becalmed;
She bewitches the ships and they do not sail;
She bewitches me and I cannot return.
I set out on the road and snow comes down;
I turn back and the stars shine, the sun rises;
I saddle my horse and the saddle falls down;
I tie my sword and it breaks and falls from my side;
I sit, compose a letter, and the paper turns white.

Two more songs were found from the Greek island of Simi, north of Rhodes. Since Armenia is reached by sea in both, H. Bartikyan has suggested that they were composed in the fourteenth century, when the Armenian maritime kingdom of Cilicia had come to be known as Armenia generally to the Byzantine Greeks. Folk poetry need not observe the rules of physical geography, of course; there were few places in the Greek mind that could not be sailed to, and it may be thought that the place of the Odysseus's last journey, where the use of the oar was not known, lay indeed outside the lands of the living. The two variants from Simi read:

I.
The ship with silver rudder and keys
Is endangered in the deeps.
The gold in the hold lies in heaps.
The helmsman is a prince's son.
Who cares nought for the ship or gold
And is stirred only by his little Clove-tree.
"Who wants to take my wife,
To marry her as his own,
To kiss her sweetly at sunrise,
And to embrace her at midnight?"
A voice called from another ship:
"I wish to take your wife,
To marry her as my own,
To kiss her sweetly at sunrise
And to embrace her at midnight."
He sends her no letter, no news,
A mere two words in his handkerchief:
"Take a man, my girl, if you wish,
Or dress in black and be a nun.
I have gone to Armenia, my lady,
And will take an Armenian girl, a witch-girl
Who bewitches ships and charms the seas,
Who enchants the skies that the stars not rise
And enchants the seas, and no waves vex them.
She hexed me, too, and I cannot come to you."
The girl heard, arose and put on black;
The lovely woman became a nun
And went to Armenia to find him.
"Greetings, Armenian woman. Where is your husband?"
"He has gone to feast with the nobles."
"Greetings, Armenian woman. Tell him
That the vine of his garden is dry and withered,
His arch has cracked and fallen in,
Another picks the apples of his tree,
And the two doves have flown away.
Greetings, Armenian woman. Tell him my words."
"A nun told me to tell you
(Christ God, may you see and not eat;
Christ God, may you see and not drink)
That the vine of your garden is dry and withered,
Your arch has cracked and fallen in,
Another picks the apples of your tree,
And the two doves have flown away."
"The vine of my garden is my mother true,
The arch of my house is my own father
My apple-tree is my gentle wife,
And the two doves are my beloved sons.
Greetings, Armenian woman. I will not return."
Before she bewitched him he flew outside.
Before she charmed him he took horse and sped away.

II.
The seas are calm and peaceful today.
Our sparrow became a wanderer and flew away.
He sends me no letter and does not explain:
Just three letters in a handkerchief.
Read them and lament and cry.
"If you wish, girl, take a man.
If you wish, put on black and become a nun.
They married me off in Armenia
To the daughter of a witch and warlock.
She bewitches ships and seas
And bewitched me; I'll not return."
She put on black, she went down to the shore,
And a ship set sail for Armenia.
She saw the Armenian girl and said to her
"Greetings, Armenian woman. Where is your husband?"
"He has gone to the hunt with the nobles."
"Greetings, Armenian woman. Tell him for sure
What I now will say:
"A good nun came from your land,
From your parents, from your father's house,
And said the pillar of your house has fallen in,
The vine of your garden has withered dry.
Another plucks the apples of your tree
And the two doves have flown away.
Greetings, Armenian woman. Relate it thus
As I have said. Farewell."
When the man came back with the nobles
He went alone into his house;
His wife came to him and told him
All that the nun had said.
"My father is the fallen pillar of my house.
The apple-tree is my gentle wife,
And the two doves are my beloved sons.
You will see me no more. Armenian woman, good-bye."
Before she bewitched him he fled far away.
Before she hexed him, he entered his home.
"Where shall I find a two-bladed scissor
To cut out the tongue of the one who says it to me?"

When Odysseus languished on Circe's enchanted isle, Penelope could but sit and wait for his return. With the coming of Christianity redoubtable Greek nuns in black went to Armenia—to spread the new faith there, like Hripsime and her companions, or to get back their men. It appears they learnt of the scissors that protected Armenians and Zoroastrian Iranians against evil, and found a practical use for them in silencing the spells of a witch.
1. *Druj* is defined thus by L. H. Gray, 'The foundations of the Iranian religions,' JCOI, 15, 1929, 204. On Achaemenian conceptions, see our Ch. 2; on Arm. *Druz*, see below.

2. See Y. 30.1, 45.2; Boyce, *Hist. Zor.*, I, 201.

3. In the present form of the Zoroastrian confession, the Fravarânê (Y. 12.1-9), the worshipper begins with the words *näismê daêvô* 'I curse the demons' (on *näismê* and Arm. *enêc*, *enic-*em see below), professes himself *vidêvô* 'against the demons', and continues with a condemnation of the demons and their servants, the witches (Av. *yâtus*, Y. 12.4; on Phl. *jadûg* and Arm. loan-word *jatuk* see below). In a Zoroastrian catechism of Sasanian times, the *Vidêg andarz* or *pöryötkêårûn* 'Select counsels of the ancient sages' or *Pand-nâmâg I Zarduxêst* 'Book of counsel of Zarathustra' (J. M. Jamasp-Asa, *Pahlavi Texts*, Bombay, 1913, 41-50; trans. by R. C. Zaehner, *The Teachings of the Magi*, New York, 1976, 20-28), the member of the Good Religion is bidden to declare and remember that he belongs to Ohrmazd, not to Ahriman or the demons.


9. See our Ch. 10.

10. Loc. cit.


12. See our Chs. 2, 11, and the discussion below of a terra-cotta figurine from the Hermitage.


17. Apuleius, Apologia, cit. by Charles Williams, Witchcraft, Cleveland, Ohio, 1965, 24-5. Apuleius is best known for his Transformations of Lucius, a novel which depicts the various Oriental cults and rites of sorcery practised in the Roman Empire in the second century A.D. On his trial, see J. Lindsey, tr., Apuleius, The Golden Ass, Bloomington, Ind., 1960, esp. 10 and n. 1.

18. DEM. 182.6 ff., 893.10 and 634.14, discussed with text and trans. by Zaehner, op. cit. n. 4, 14-16, 30-31.

19. See also Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 252.

20. For discussion of this heresy as attested in the works of Eznik and Ehsâ (fifth century), see Ch. 4.


27. Yt. 4.2, trans. by J. Darmesteter, The Zend-Avesta, 2 (= SBE, 23), 49.

This etymology was proposed originally by P. de Lagarde (Beiträge zur baktischen Lexicographie, 1868, 40); it is discussed by M. Schwartz, 'Miscellanea Iranica,' W. B. Henning Memorial Volume, London, 1970, 389-90.

29. AHH, 392.

30. Armenian kap 'bond' can also mean paralysis by magic; see our discussion of the gaylakap below.

31. ARH, 391.

32. Arm. gusan 'minstrel' is a loan-word from Pth. gōsân (see H. W. Bailey, 'Iranica II,' JRAS, July 1934, 514). Mediaeval Armenian clerics frequently and vituperatively attacked minstrels (called in later centuries asuš, from Arabic cāsūq 'lover', Tk. loan-word (ašik), who sang the pre-Christian epics frequently cited by Movses Xorenac'i and others (see our Ch. on Vahagn for instance, and M. Boyce, 'The Parthian gōsân and Iranian minstrel tradition,' JRAS, 1957, 13-15), and who encouraged carnal love, feasting, drinking and other activities considered unseemly by the Church.

33. Suggestions about his dates vary from the seventh to the thirteenth centuries, see AHH, 379 and HAnjB, IV, 496-7.

34. E. Durean, HayocCi hin krōnē, Jerusalem, 1933, 126 s.v. kaxard.

35. Arm. jernacu is explained as kaxard 'witch' (NEHL, 517).

36. Arm. ērami is a hapax. Compare to MMP. ramganig = Gr. ethnikos (cit. in HAB, IV, 140, s.v. ēramik), 'gentile' in the sense here, perhaps of non-Christian. Vardan Aygekc'i, cited by L. Xačikyan in P-bH 4, 1963, 148-9, mentions garēnkecCūtCtw 'casting hops' (Arm. garī) among other techniques of witchcraft.

37. Arm. aknaxa±, literally '(one who) moves (xa±-) the eye (akn)'. According to MX II.42, Eruand had the evil eye (dūney akn hayec'Cuarov 'with the look of the burning eye') and stones were placed before him at daybreak for his glance to shatter—presumably releasing thus the baneful energy accumulated overnight. Armenians still make plaques with a blue eye (xa±-skn) or wear jewellery with a turquoise or other blue stone to ward off evil.

38. E. Durean, HayocCi hin krōnē, Jerusalem, 1933, 126 s.v. kaxard.

39. On Arm. erazahan, see our Ch. on Tir.

40. Perhaps the Zoroastrian ēb zouhr 'libation to the waters' was regarded by Christians as demonic; but it is more likely that the ritual resembled the one described by ŠtepCanos Ērbkeclan (late thirteenth century): kazmeal anōtC inōC li īrov, ew niwtCwael... anCuiCēanē ēbrēn (Ericēak) i versy nora '(the witch) prepares some vessel full of water, and making it ready tor, 'winding' (niwtCwael) or divining' (with emendation to diwtCwael)J passes the Holy (?) [thrice (?)I over it' (cit. by E. Durean, op. cit., 147 s.v. ɪrahmayutCtw).
41. Arm. չարգամահ, apparently composed of չարգ 'lamp' (a Mlr. loan-word, see Arm. Gr., 190) and մահ 'death' (emended by Durean to մահ- 'extinguish'). Armenians still regard fire as holy, and in the last century in parts of Armenia it was customary for one to say when extinguishing a candle, կրակե մարենկա/ կարե խաղանենք 'the fire was extinguished/ and evil was confounded' (E. Lalayean, Պատմություն, Tiflis, 1892, 9). It was also considered a sin to tell someone to extinguish a flame; the euphemism կրակե օրինու 'bless the fire!' was employed (AH, 1897, 194). See also the following Ch.

42. Arm. ասբանգու (from ասբ 'reed, tassel' and գու 'steal') is 'One who performs magic with the reed of a loom' (Այսպյւկ).

43. E. Benveniste, 'Etudes iraniennes,' TPS, 1945, 75. Aş Passive in HAB noted a form վհուկ and suggested a derivation of վհուկ as a euphemism from Av. վհու- 'good', but this seems implausible, as the Ir. word from a Mlr. form—the form we should expect to see for the period when the loan was probably made—is attested in Arm. as վեհ 'good' (Arm. Gr., 246).

44. HAB, I, 671; on the possible Mlr. origin of դի-—see Arm. Gr., 141, s.v. դի. Mlr. դի 'seen' is found in Arm. ցերեկ 'true', lit. 'seen by the eye (Mlr. կարծի)' (with change of intervocalic -d- to -r-; see R. Goede, An Introduction to the Study of Classical Armenian, Wiesbaden, 1975, 3.1).

45. HAB, I, 551-2; compare Russian вед'ma 'witch', from Proto-Slavonic *ведě 'I know' (M. Vasmer, Russisches etymologisches Wörterbuch, Heidelberg, 1953, I, 178).

46. An etymology from Iranian was suggested by Yarut'c'w Tcickecat in his Arm. trans. of the Kārnāmag (cit. by Aş Passive, HAB, I, 551-2), followed by Bailey (TPS, 1955, 64) and Gershevitch (AHM, 156-7). It is not explained how Ir. к- became Arm. գ-.

47. See Arm. Gr., 181, 513; a brother of St Vardan Mamikonean (fifth century) was named Հմայեակ, cf. Av. Hmâyaka- (Yt. 5.113, cit. by ibid., 47).


49. On Ara and Շամիրամ, see our Chs. 7 and 13.

50. See Thomson, MX, 103 n. 2.

51. Eznik, op. cit., 440 (para. 65).

52. Eznik is referring to the apocryphal book of the Old Testament Bel and the Dragon, in which Daniel feeds lumps of pitch, fat and hair to a dragon worshipped at Babylon and causes it to burst. On Arm. վիապ, see Ch. 6.

53. P°B V.43.
54. Arm. k'ue(ay). See HAB, IV, 590 and Bedrossian, 752; in Modern Arm., the word means 'ballot'.

55. See Ch. 4.

56. See Ch. 16.


60. HAB, IV, 469; Jackson, op. cit. n. 57, 76; Arm. Gr., 254.

61. See G. Halajyan, Dersimi Hayeri azagrat'yun (= Hay azagrat'yun ev beahyuast'yun, 5), Erevan, 1973, 87. The village is two hours' journey west of Esrik, on the border of the Carsanok region. It belonged to the asiret of the Baltiyaris and had 240 Armenians and 700 Kurds. It is not explained why the village had been given such a name, nor indeed does Halajyan seem to recognise what the name means.

62. See Bedrossian, s.v. and Durean, op. cit., 121.

63. Eznik, op. cit., 473 (para. 198), in the refutation of the teachings of the Persians.

64. See Arm. Gr., 26-7.

65. The letter x is used frequently instead of h by T'ovma Aroruni (tenth century), e.g., roc (Arm. hoc 'thick'), cax (caxh 'proper'), tanjarxoc (tanjarhoc 'dense', cf.hoc above), anxadêx (anched 'absurd'), Vaxriç (Vahriç, a proper name from MIR., see Arm. Gr., 78), daxlic (dahlic 'hall', from Mir., ibid., 133) and Xraxat (Hrahat, Gk. Aphrastès, ibid., 46), cited by V. Arak'elyan, Grigor Narekac' u lezun ev oce, Erevan, 1975, 16.


67. The form Ahrmèn is found in MMP. texts, see F. C. Andreas, W. B. Henning, 'Mitteliranische Manichäica aus Chinesisch-Turkestan, II,' SPAW, 1933, 307-8, cited by J. P. Asmussen, Manichaean Literature, Delmar, New York, 1975, 10.

68. Arm. arhavir-k is parallel to Gk. orama in the Gk. Agath. (AHH, 342, 343 n. 1), and is analysed by Acaean, HAB, I, 323, with arh- as a variant of Arm. ah 'fear'. One should expect an -r- in the
Ir. base; ah is to be derived from Av. ēthī- (E. Benveniste, op. cit. n. 43, 68). Arm. mah, marh 'death' is an example of -h/-rh- variation with loss of -r- with the proposed OIr. base merethu-containing -r- (see Godel, op. cit., 4.122 and H. W. Bailey, 'A Range of Iranica,' Henning Mem. Vol., 31 n. 50).

69. See H. W. Bailey, 'Spanta-' in Die Diskussion um das 'Heilige', Darmstadt, 1977 (= 'Iranian Studies III,' BSOS, 7, 1933-5, 276-96), 170-1, 176. Arm. z-ārh-urem 'I am terrified' and arh-ur-eli 'frightful' are probably to be derived from a Mir. base ahra- (for alternative forms in Arm. with z-, cf. ermanam/zarmenam 'I am astonished').

70. Arm. Gr., 316.

71. Durean, op. cit., 112, 149.

72. Cited by HAB, I, 85; no explanation of azgabon is offered.

73. Durean, 146, citing Jerusalem Arm. MS. 1288, fol. 134 b.

74. See AH, I, 324.

75. Durean, 143.

76. Vidēvdāt, 7.1-4 (trans. by West, SBE, 4, 74-80); see also Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 86-7.

77. Arm. Gr., 154.


81. Durean, op. cit., 130.

82. Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 87.

83. Hübschmann did not discuss the word. See HAB, III, 79-80, where Georgian hēsmak-ı 'Satan' is cited.
84. On the MIR. etymology of Arm. ṿḳay 'witness', see our Ch. on MIR.

85. Arm. _margarē_ 'prophet' appears to contain MIR. mahr- 'word, manthra-' [i.e., a word possessing spiritual power, cf. Skt. mantral, cf. Pth. m _rygr_ mārāgar, Sgd. m _rḳr_ 'sorcerer' (see H. W. Bailey, Zor. Prob., 162 n. 1). It is interesting to note that in Arm. Christian literature in this case the word 'possessor of the manthra-' retained the positive, holy meaning it had possessed for Zoroastrians, whilst in the non-Zoroastrian writings of the Iranian peoples above the meaning was apparently inverted to refer to sorcery and the recitation of spells.

86. Arm. _patarag_ 'offering' (later, the Divine Liturgy of the Church) appears to be a MIR. loan-word with the pre-verb pat- (OIR. pati-), but a conclusive derivation has not been proposed (see HAB, IV, 37).

87. Eznik, op. cit., 510 (para. 343). Mariēs emends to _zhesmakapatsn_ (acc. pl. of *hesmak-apat 'encompassed by wrath', but explained by the Arm. ֶאֵל, 491, as 'worshipper of demons, idolater'); Acarēsan, op. cit., emends to _zhesmakapatsen_ with -past 'worshipper' (on the MIR. etymology of Arm. past-em 'I worship', see G. Bolognesi, Le fonti dialettali degli imposti iranici in Armeno, Milano, 1960, 35). The form _zhesmakapatsen_ is meaningless and obviously a scribal error—the word is a hapax and was probably obscure to the copyist. A. Abrahamyan in his Modern Arm. translation (Eznik Kołbac'ı, Hac Avgandoc', Erevan, 1970, 146 & n. 422) renders the word as _krapast_ 'idolater', which does not do justice to the meaning of _hesmak_ 'wrath'.

88. E. Benveniste, 'Le dieu Ohrmazd et le démon Albasti,' JA, 248, 1960, 65-74, discusses the etymology of _El_ and its attestation in various Iranian and non-Iranian cultures; all references to the _El_ outside Armenia are cited from this article. Physical functions such as sneezing (Arm. p̣nc̣celn) were attributed by superstitious Armenians, according to Eznik, to the _ays_, a demon to be discussed below; see C. Dowsett, 'Cause, and some Linguistically allied concepts, in Armenian,' BSOAS, 33, 1970, who discusses also yawning (Arm. horenjel). Drowsiness is attributed by Zoroastrians to the demon of Sloth, Av. Būṣyastā—. The Armenians also regard sleep as improper to man, and regard it as the work of a demon called Mrapc (MA 7, 33), cf. Gk. Morpheus, the god of dreams, with which the Arm. is probably cognate. Morpheus is the son of Hypnos, god of sleep and brother of Thanatos—Death—so the Greeks, too, must have looked upon sleep as associated with death and therefore evil (see the New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology, London, 1978, 166). Mrapc is called the _aître paron_ 'master of eyes' (MA 7, 33), presumably because he causes them to close. On other Arm. demons associated with sleep and dreams, see below.

89. Cf. Arm. Haramoni, Xaramani above and Arm. variant forms in -h- and -x-.

90. See Boyce, Stronghold, op. cit., 152. One recalls also the use of iron as a talisman in another context: Arm. blacksmiths strike
their anvils to strengthen the bonds of the imprisoned Artawazd (see Ch. 13). In Akn, Armenia, scissors were placed in the bath of a new-born baby for good luck; see Y. K. Canikean, Hmutciwntc Aknay, Tiflis, 1895, 109). T. H. Gaster, The Holy and the Profane, New York, 1980, 10, suggests that the use of iron or steel as a talisman against the child-stealing witch may go back to a time when primitive people feared the metal, against which they, with their old stone weapons, were defenseless.


92. Cit. by AHH, 240.

93. Arm. Gr., 93.

94. Ajern, 216.

95. One scroll was translated and published by J. S. Wingate, 'The Scroll of Cyprian: An Armenian Family Amulet,' Folk-Lore, 40, 1930; a booklet-talisman from the MS. collection of Columbia University is described with a discussion of legends concerning St Cyprian, in J. R. Russell, 'St. Cyprian in Armenia,' The Armenian Church, Vol. 23, No. 1 (Winter, 1980), 10-11. The medieval Arm. Life of St Cyprian is still popular, and the text of Darj Kiprianos hayrapetin 'The Conversion of Cyprian the Bishop' is published in Girkc ałsticC or koći Kiprianos ('Book of Prayers which is called Cyprian'), Jerusalem, 1966, 56-75. The Life was often read in earlier centuries, and is found in one of the earliest Arm. printed books, the Urbacagirk ('Friday Book', Venice, 1512-13, reprinted in facsimile by the Mxitelyan congregation of San Lazzaro, Venice, 1975), which also contains prayers for one who is awjahar 'stricken by serpents'; on the awj 'serpent', see below.

96. The description of the demon may have been contaminated here by a notice of the talisman most effective against him.

97. Arm. nzov-ac, nzov-em 'anathematise': probably from a MIR. form with preverb ni- 'down' and the base zav- 'call'.

98. AHH, 241. A picture of the Al is reproduced also in Ananikian, pl. V, VI.

99. AHH, 242; see Benveniste, op. cit. n. 88.

100. We emend mazn, a meaningless word, to mazn 'hair (to hair). One recalls that Medusa, the Gorgon killed by Perseus, had snakes for hair.

101. On the boar (Arm. varaz) and its symbolism, see our Ch. on Vahagn.

102. This 'king in the abysses' is presumably Satan, discussed above.
103. These are purified with embers from the bonfire kindled on the Arm.
Christian feast of the Presentation of the Lord to the Temple (Arm.
Teirmanendaraj, pre-Christian Ahekan); see our Ch. on the Fire-cult.

104. AHH, 242.

105. Abiahu is probably a Hebraism, perhaps with אב 'my father' and
the ending הū, cf. אלהי 'Elijah'); see refs. to Belial and
Beelzebub above.

106. See Wingate, op. cit. n. 95.

107. AHH, 239 (pl.).

108. Loc. cit.; Lap'ancryan, op. cit., 303, cites a form têpâ found
in Muš, Adana and Marsovan, and connects it with the name of the
Hittite demon Telipin. Acaian derived the name from NP. tabâ
'maleficent, destructive' (HAB, II, 213); Wingate proposed that
têpâ be connected to English 'devil' (op. cit., 175 n. 5).

109. See F. Macler, L'enluminure arménienne profane, Paris, 1928. A
similar text in which most of the demons are shown with snakes,
resembling somewhat the traditional depiction of ΖῆβΗΑ in Iran,
Arm. MS. 21 of the Biblioteca Marciana, Venice, AD 1616, is to be
published by Henrik Bedrossian in his forthcoming L'arte nel credo
popolare armeno.

110. Christensen, op. cit. n. 5, 73-4. Solomon and his bottled demons
were very popular also in mediaeval Armenia; see J. R. Russell,
'The Tale of the Bronze City in Armenian,' in T. Samuelian and
M. Stone, eds., Medieval Armenian Culture, Univ. of Penn. Arm.

111. On the resemblance of Arm. dzoxk to the Zoroastrian vision in the
Ardēy Wirż Namag, in structure and in the punishments meted out,
see Ch. 10.

112. MA 7, 95; AH I, 344; Avandapatum, 788 a.

113. See Vidēvdāt 5.8, 7.9 and Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 308, on still-born
children; on menstruation, see Boyce, Stronghold, 100-107. If the
Zoroastrian attitude about the impurity of women who have given
birth to dead children seems primitive, one might recall that un-
til recent times Christian Europeans often accused midwives of
using sorcery to kill children in the womb. Where the Zoroas-
trians concern themselves with the ritual purification of the
living, Christians sought to place blame (see C. Williams, op.
cit. n. 17, 134-5).

114. See J. Hambroer, Armenischer Dämonenglaube in religionswissen-
schaftlicher Sicht, Vienna, 1962, 68.


116. MA 7, 35; T. Nawasardean, Hay Žozovrdakan hek\textsuperscript{c}iat\textsuperscript{c}ner (Vols. I-X, Valarsapat & Tiflis, 1882-1903), VII, 25.

117. Eznik, 454 (para. 122); on \textit{yuškaparik}, see Arm. Gr., 199-200.

118. MA 7, 102.

119. See the Ch. Captive Powers.

120. T\textsuperscript{c}. Avdalbekyan, Hayagitakan hetszot\textsuperscript{c}yunner, Erevan, 1969, 54-7, cites Ejmiac\textsuperscript{c}n Matenadaran MS. 582, Fol. 125 a, \textsuperscript{sidark\textsuperscript{c} ew \textit{sašapet\textsuperscript{c} ew \textit{višap\textsuperscript{c} ew k\textsuperscript{c} aj\textsuperscript{c}} and Grigor Magistros, sandaramet\textsuperscript{c}, \textsuperscript{sidark\textsuperscript{c}}: concatenations of demons.

121. Amongst the others are demons with strange names such as Gat\textsuperscript{c}ron, Z\textsuperscript{f}na\textsuperscript{c}an, Zsuik\textsuperscript{c}, Zsbin and Zsurd\textsuperscript{n}; see Durean, op. cit., 143.

122. See n. 120 above and our Ch. 10.

123. Loc. cit.

124. See Ch. 2.

125. The form \textit{hraq} is found in the Arm. version of the Alexander-romance of Pseudo-Callisthenes (HAB, III, 135). A\textsuperscript{ca}f\textsuperscript{e}n suggests (loc. cit.) that \textit{hræs} is to be derived from AV. \textit{fravasi-}, but the Arm. form attested for the latter term, \textit{hror(r)t}, in the name of the month \textit{Hrotic\textsuperscript{c}}, indicates a borrowing from Wir. with \textit{-rt-} rather than Wir. \textit{-s-} (cf. OP. \textit{arta-}, AV. \textit{aša-}). It is more likely that \textit{hraq} is a loan-word from a Wir. form \textit{fras}, with the sense of an extraordinary apparition.


127. Christensen, op. cit., 35.


129. On Trdat, see Agath. 212 (\textit{ew hareal at\textsuperscript{c}agawrn aysoyn p\textsuperscript{c}lec\textsuperscript{c}een, i ka\textsuperscript{e}ač\textsuperscript{n i vayr korcan\textsuperscript{e}r 'and an ays of foulness struck the king and hurled him from his chariot') and Ch. 4; on \textit{śid\textsuperscript{e}r}, see the preceding Ch.

130. T\textsuperscript{c}. Astuacaturean, Hamabarbar hin ew nor ktakaranac\textsuperscript{c}, Jerusalem, 1895, s.v. \textit{aws}, e.g., I Kings 16.14; Ps. 1.7; E. Drower, Book of the Zodiac, London, 1949, 12 n. 10.


132. Arm. storne\textsuperscript{c}nak\textsuperscript{c}: presumably inhabitants of 'lower', i.e., southern Armenia (as opposed to the northern district of Bar\textsuperscript{j}r
Hayk<sup>c</sup> 'High Armenia', as the area around Karin/Erzurum and Erznka/Erzincan is called; see E. Çarêg, Karinapatum: yušmatean Bar' Hayk<sup>c</sup>, Beirut, 1957). Acaréan, HAB, I, 171, favors this reading over Têrvisean's emendation to *asorneayk<sup>c</sup> 'Assyrians', i.e., Assyrian Christians or Armenians living in Asorestan/northern Mesopotamia (see also AHH, 233). In either case, the implication is that those who called a wind ays lived to the south. It is noteworthy, therefore, that in Harrân, to the south of Armenia, it was believed that there were evil winds, called utukki limûti, which originated in the underworld and caused sickness—these were probably the scirocco, called in Arabic hamsìn (see H. Lewy, 'Points of comparison between Zoroastrianism and the Moon-cult of Harrân,' in A Locust's Leg: Studies in Honour of S. H. Taqizadeh, London, 1962, 147 & n. 2). If the ays—at least in its evil manifestation—was originally the hot blast of the south, then the cmak (see below) must have been the cold and equally baneful counterpart of it to the north.

133. HAB, I, 171.


135. E. S. Drower, The Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran, Leiden, 1962, 93 n. 1, noted this Skt. word.

136. Ananikian, 86.

137. Astuacaturean, op. cit., 1538.

138. See the preceding Ch.

139. On a proposed identification of the epic Kʿajanc Tun 'House of the Brave Ones' with the Artaxiad dynasty, see Ch. 3. The terms 'giant' and '(royal) hero' seem to have been regarded in Iran, too, as having similar meaning, for in the Sasanian period Greek gigas was used, apparently, to translate the MIr. form(s) of OIr. kari (see J. Harmatta, 'The Parthian Parchment from Dura-Europos,' Acta Antiqua, Budapest, 5 (1957), 275 and n. 23).

140. Cit. by AHH, 207.

141. Ananikian, 83. By Rome is probably meant mediaeval Rûm, i.e., Asia Minor and the lands of Byzantine Christendom. Greeks to this day believe in the return of Alexander, even as Armenians await the liberation of Artawazd, and Greek fishermen declare to mermaids in order not to be drowned by them, O Megalèxandros zê ke vasilêvi (Ho Megalexandros zê kai basileuê) 'Alexander the Great lives and reigns!'

142. MA 1, 153.
143. AHH, 213.

144. On Astēik, see Ch. 6.

145. AH, 1895, 338.

146. Literally չար-կ, 'evil ones' (pl.), but the Classical Arm. pl. -կ was preserved in certain words for which it had originally denoted a dual (e.g., ճեր-կ, գեղ-կ 'hand', 'eye' in the sg., with pl. -եր added in Modern Arm.) or a pluralis tantum (e.g. կամ-կ 'will', cf. Mr. կամ 'will'; ծոց-կ 'hell', see below).

147. AH, 1895, 325. The renovation of the cow recalls a similar miracle performed by the tenth-century mystic St Gregory of Narek. Reminded by priestly guests at supper that the day was a meatless fast, the saint caused the roasted doves he had prepared and served to sprout feathers, rise from the table, and fly off (see J. R. Russell, Grigor Narekats'i: Matean Öhberget'ean [= J. Greppin, ed., Classical Armenian Text Reprint Series, 31, Delmar, New York, 1981, Intro.]).


150. Ibid., 537.

151. HAB, IV, 554-5, citing P. Karolidēs, Glossarion synkritikon hellēnokappadokikon lexeon, Smyrna, 1885, 88. The word written կատսորա would have been pronounced /kacora/; the Armenians of Kayseri in Cappadocia pronounce կատսորա as /kacar/.


153. This word, with etymology proposed by Bailey, is discussed in our Ch. on Tir.

154. See our discussion of the toponym Bəgayařīč in Ch. 8, and below on Btčaric/Put Aringe.

155. AON, 371 n. 5.

156. Cited by AHH, 48.

157. Ibid., 50 n. 1.

158. For Լեպչանց'yan's discussion of this form see Ch. 8.

159. Haykakan Sovetakan Hnragitaren, II, 430.

160. See T. Gloster, intro. to L. S. Herald, A Late Harvest, New York, 1976, i-ii.
161. L. S. Herald, This Waking Hour (Poems), New York, 1925, 4.

162. H. W. Bailey, 'The Word But in Iranian,' BSOS, 6, 1931, 2, 279. The element but is found on Sasanian seals in the names bwtmtry, wyxbwy, and mrt nbwty; R. N. Frye, Sasanian Remains from Qasr-i Abu Nasr, Cambridge, Mass., 1973, 49, suggests but here may be an abbreviation of bwxt ('saved'), but it seems more likely that here it is to be read bud (from bav- 'to be'), cf. Arm. Xoroxbut (MX). On the 'demon' But, see also J. R. Russell, rev. of Bailey, Iran-Nameh, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1983, 278 n. 21-22 and fn.

163. Arm. Gr., 430.


166. Vidvydat 4.49, cit. by Jackson, Zor. Stud., 97.


168. AHH, 150.


170. Halayyan, op. cit., 66, 68.

171. Lalayyan, op. cit., 207.


173. HAB, II, 122.

174. AHH, 66.

175. šapçańyan, op. cit., 309.


177. T. Nawasardine, Hay ẓołovrdačen hek'iat'ner, op. cit., VII, 78.

178. See MA 7, 37, 82-4.


180. AHH, 238.

181. šapçańyan, op. cit., 301.

183. S. Šahnazarean, Mšoy barbare, Beirut, 1972, 88; in a modern Syriac charm to bind false dreams, from the Urmia area, is found the word kpws, which H. Gollancz, The Book of Protection, London, 1912, xlvii n. 3, derives from kpš 'nocturnal emission' (Lev. 12.2, 5, etc.). Arm. ܓ, ܒ are pronounced ܩ, ܦ in Western dialects, so the terms may refer to the same demon.


185. See K. Gabikean, Hay busaţxarh, Jerusalem, 1968, xv, 149.

186. Šahnazarean, op. cit., 88.

187. Ananikian, 87. On Arm. drz-em, dəršank, see Hamboer, op. cit., 55. Other words descriptive of evil which Arm. had adopted from Iranian include, e.g., neng 'fraud' (cf. Phl. nang 'shame') and daw-em 'I plot, deceive' (cf. Av. Dawi-, the demon of Deceit, see Gray, op. cit., 204); Arm. varan 'perplexity, uncertainty' is probably to be derived from Phl. varan, translated by Zaehner as 'heresy' and by other scholars as 'lust'.


189. MA 7, 37.

190. On the groş (lit. 'writer'), which takes the soul away at death, see our Ch. on Tir.


193. Boyce, Stronghold, 149.

194. See ibid., 107-8.

195. Arm. api is probably Tk. գաբեյ, an honorific used in addressing an elder brother and pronounced բի; the Arm. word api would have been pronounced բե by western Armenians.

196. AH, 1895, 362; Allahverdean, op. cit., 102-3. It is worthy of note that, according to Videvdāt 17.10, nails not disposed of properly can become weapons in the hands of demons.


199. MA 7, 32; AH, 1895, 362.

200. MA 7, 32.
201. Matean obergut\textsuperscript{e}an ("Book of Lamentations"), 66.3; on St Gregory of Narek see n. 147 above.


203. \textit{Loc. cit.}

204. The number 666 is found often in western esoterica as the gematric number of the Antichrist (i.e., a number arrived at by assigning numbers to the letters of the alphabet and rendering words as sums), e.g., Gk. Teitan, Antemos (\textit{AHH}, 249 n. 1), and probably came to Armenia from the Greek-speaking world. Another relic of such influence is Arm. \textit{de\text{\textsuperscript{t}}ay}, referred to by Arania of Sanahin, a priest of the eleventh century (cit. by \textit{HAB}, I, 652): Glux \textit{d\text{\textsuperscript{w}t\text{\textsuperscript{c}i}c\text{\textsuperscript{c}n Saday\text{\textsuperscript{e}l... de\text{\textsuperscript{t}ayn glux d\text{\textsuperscript{w}t\text{\textsuperscript{c}i}c\text{\textsuperscript{c}n 'Sa\text{\textsuperscript{c}a}\text{\textsuperscript{e}l the head of sorcerers... the de\text{\textsuperscript{t}ay, head of sorcerers.' A\text{\textsuperscript{c}a\text{\textsuperscript{r}e\text{\textsuperscript{a}n cites the suggestion of the NBHL that the word refers to \textit{de\text{\textsuperscript{t}atu kan t\text{\textsuperscript{a}xtak v\text{\textsuperscript{k}u\text{\textsuperscript{t}u\text{\textsuperscript{c}e}n i jew $\Delta$ de\text{\textsuperscript{t}at\text{\textsuperscript{a}t t\text{\textsuperscript{a}t\text{\textsuperscript{a}t yun\text{\textsuperscript{a}c 'a sorcerer, or a tablet of witchcraft in the shape of the Greek letter delta,' one notes that in the black masses celebrated by Western European witches, a triangular wafer was used in mockery of the Host (see C. Williams, \textit{Witchcraft}, op. cit., 133).

205. \textit{AHH}, 170.


207. C. Williams, op. cit., 86.

208. See Ch. 16.

209. \textit{HAnj\text{\textsuperscript{a}}, III, 127.}


212. Durean, op. cit., 127.

213. C. J. Wills, \textit{In the Land of the Lion and Sun, or Modern Persia}, 2nd ed., London, 1891, 305.


216. V. V. Barthold, preface to V. Minorsky, \textit{Hud\text{\textsuperscript{u}d al-\text{\textsuperscript{c}Alam}, London, 1970, 16.

217. Lalayean, op. cit., 205.
480


220. AH, 1897, 238. Tying seven knots in a thread or cloth is a very common Zoroastrian custom (see Boyce, Stronghold, 137, 199).

221. On mother-and-child figurines from pre-Christian Armenia, see Ch. 7.

222. Arm. těčmin-đěčmin: apparently the onomatopoeic name of some sort of buzzing insect.


224. HA, 1897, 226.

225. Boyce, Hist. Zor., I, 293.

226. PöE 4,44.


228. AHH, 165-6.

229. See our Ch. on Vahagn.


231. Wills, op. cit., 307.

232. For the Ir. derivation of dew see Arm. Gr., 140.

233. Ibid., 142.

234. The Arm. trans. was published in Telekagîr, 1956, 3, 75-86. It was reprinted, together with a study and the two variants which follow, by Hraçö Bartcikyan, 'Huyn panduxtî ev kazard hayuhu erge,' Garun, Erevan, 1980, 7, 95-6. The Greek text of the first poem, entitled Hê Magissa ('The Witch'), was published by N. G. Politou, Dèmotika Tragoudia, eklogai apo ta tragoudia tou hellènikou laou, Athens, 1975, 202. Politou in a note compares the Arm. witch to the Homeric Kalypso.
CHAPTER 15
THE FIRE CULT

In the Zoroastrian faith, reverence is shown to the Creator Ahura Mazda both directly and through veneration of his various creations and their supernatural guardians. Fire, the creation under the protection of the Amesā Spēnta Aša Vahišta, is held to pervade the other six principal creations, and is always present at Zoroastrian rites; the faithful turn during their prayers towards a fire, or else towards the Sun or Moon, which are regarded as heavenly fires, and Ahura Mazda himself dwells in anagā raočah 'endless light'. In the early period of the religion, it seems that the hearth-fire of each family was used for worship; later, probably around the fourth century B.C., temples called *bagīnas were instituted which contained images of the yazatas; a temple-cult of consecrated fires developed in response. In Sasanian times, the cult of images was suppressed, and shrines where images had stood were converted into fire-temples, left empty, or destroyed. Representations of the yazatas continued to be carved and painted, but these, it seems, were not objects of worship, and it appears that at this time also a systematic terminology was developed for fires of varying grades of permanence and sanctity. Fire, a living source of light, warmth and energy, is called 'son of Ahura Mazda', and is the most potent of all the icons of the faith in its opposition to the cold, darkness and death of Angra Mainyu. Although Ferdowsī appealed to his fellow Muslims to call Zoroastrians worshippers of God, not of fire (NP. ātēsparast), fire temples were the most conspicuous centres of Zoroastrian worship, and the term 'fire worshipper' was frequently used. Fire is not regarded as a symbol, but as a holy being who comes to man's assistance in return for nourishment. Fire is a divinity deriving from the essence of the Creator, and is worshipped—following, as always, the primary invocation of Ahura Mazda.

The importance of the cult of fire warrants its careful examination in Armenia. As one might expect, the Iranian loan-words in Arm. relating to the cult are mostly pre-Sasanian, as are the institutions and
offices they describe. There are attested various other terms relating to image-shrines, sacrifices and instruments used in ritual which will also be discussed. The ancient Iranian feast of fire, *Athrakāna-, whose name is found in Arm. as Ahekan, continues to be celebrated as a Christian holiday by the Armenians; their observance parallels in most particulars the feast of Šađe amongst Irani Zoroastrians.

Zoroastrians probably did not have temples until the reign of Artaxerxes II Mnemon (404-359 B.C.), but performed their sacrifices and other rituals as described by Herodotus (1.131): in high places and in the open, or else by their own hearth-fires. The first Persian temples were image-shrines dedicated to Anāhītā. In a famous passage, Strabo describes the shrines of the Magi in Cappadocia in the first century B.C.; these shrines were probably founded, however, under the earlier Achaemenian rulers of the province. The Magi, he says, were also called Pyraithoi; they performed their rites in temples of the Persian gods (tōn persikōn theōn hiera). In sacred enclosures (or buildings, Gk. sēkoi) called pyraithēia were altars (bōmos) heaped with ash (spodos), where the Magi guarded a fire which was never extinguished. They carried bunches of sticks and wore tiaras with chin-pieces that covered their mouths (paragmathidas) (Geog., XV.3.15). In connection with one such Persian shrine, Strabo mentions also a wooden image. 6 There is no doubt that a Zoroastrian temple is described; the bunch of sticks is the barsom used in rituals (on Arm. barsmunk6, see below), and the function of the protective covering worn over the mouth is the same as that of the padām (cf. Arm. pāndam below). 7 The bōmos with its heap of ash is the fire-altar.

In Arsacid times, it has been suggested, the Parthians called fire-temples *ātarōsan 'place of burning fire'; shrines to Yazatas, in which the principal object of worship was an image, would have been called *bagin '(a place) belonging to the gods'. It is noteworthy, though, that Strabo in the passage discussed above stresses that all the rites of the pyraithēia were performed also at the temples of Anaeitis (Anāhītā) and Omanos (probably Vohu Manah). Armenian Zoroastrians probably kept both images and sacred fires in the same buildings. *ātarōsan is attested only in Arm. atrušan, to be discussed below; *bagin is found in the title of the priest of such a shrine, MP būnymyad
In the third century A.D., the Sasanian high priest Kirdēr attempted to suppress worship at image-shrines, called in Phl. uzdasčārs, but references to them are found still in the sixth century Mādiyān i Ḍādīstān 'Book of a Thousand Judgements', a digest of cases of law, so it may be supposed that the reforms of the Sasanians encountered stubborn resistance locally from the devotees of the old 'places of the gods', 9 in Islamic times, the shrines, now empty of images, continued to be revered as pīrs. 10

In Y. 37.11, five 'spiritual' fires are mentioned, whose particular functions are elaborated in the Greater Bundahīšn. They are Bērēzisavah, which burns before Ahura Mazda; Vohurfyāna, which burns in the bodies of men and animals; Urvāzišta, which burns in plants; Vāzišta, which fights the demon Spēnjalghra in the clouds; and Spēnista, 'that in the world is used for work'. 11 The Phl. text continues by listing the Bahram fire—the most sacred grade of temple fire—and three particular fires of the latter type: Ādur Gusnasp, Ādur Farnbāg, and Ādur Burzēn Mihr. The latter, relegated by the Sasanian author to the position of least importance of the three in the list, was the great sacred fire of the Parthian kingdom. 12 Ādur Farnbāg, whose name may mean 'prospering through xVarēnah', was the fire particularly revered in Pārs; 13 and Ādur Gusnasp, enthroned at the site called in Islamic times Takt-i Suleimān, was the fire of Media. 14 The latter is referred to as Vnasp in Arm. texts, and Hūbschmann proposed that Arm. Hurbak, the name of a bagin of pre-Christian Armenia mentioned by the tenth-century writer Anania, may be a form of Farnbāg. Pagliaro repeated the suggestion, but it is also possible that hurbak seems to be a native Arm. word for a fire-temple. 15

The highest grade of sacred fire, requiring elaborate rituals of purification of fires from 16 different sources, lasting 1001 days, is the ātaš-i Bahram 'fire of Verethraghna', which must be kept blazing night and day. This fire is invoked in the name of Ohrmazd, so it is perhaps this grade of fire, probably a royal fire in addition, that is referred to by Arm. writers when they mention the ormzdakan krak 'fire of Ormizd' as well as the vramakan krak 'fire of Vram' (i.e., Bahram). 16 Such an equation is borne out by Korenac, who describes how the Sasanian king Ardešir invaded Armenia and zmehenic paštamsus aňawel
ews yordrû: `ayl ev zhurn ormdakan, i versy bagmn or i Bagawan, anše} hramayê lucanêl. Bayc c zandrisa xor arar Vašarsak patker iwroc c narmenac c handerj aregakamb ew lusniw yArmasir, ew p oxec c aw i Bagaran ev darjeal yArtašat, zynosik p orë 'increased religious services in the temples, but ordered that the fire of Ormizd be kept perpetually burning on the altar at Bagawan. However, he smashed the statues that Vašarsak had made in the image of his ancestors with the Sun and Moon at Armasir, which had been transferred to Bagaran and then to Artašat' (MX II.77).

Bagawan was a site of royal devotions. A more common type of fire, requiring considerably less fuel and attention, is the Ādarān fire, which is made to blaze up for religious services but allowed to smoulder for the rest of the time under its own bed of ashes. When rituals were not being performed, the altar would have appeared to hold merely a mound of ashes. It is perhaps for this reason that uninformed or malicious Arm. writers of the Christian period were to scorn their ancestors as moxrapast 'ash-worshipping', as we shall see presently.

The third and lowest grade of sacred fire is the dādgān type, which similarly is allowed to 'sleep' under its ashes and is re-kindled for prayer. Zoroastrians sometimes have fire altars of this type in their homes; in temples, a 'throne' (Parsi Gujarati mācī) is made for the fire of four pieces of wood upon which two more pieces are placed crosswise. According to Çavstos Buzand, the naxarar Meružen Arcruni after his apostasy from Christianity built an atrusan in his house; this was probably an ātas-i dādgān (see PÇ IV.23, 59, below). Zoroastrian temple fires are installed by priests who carry weapons: swords, maces, shields and daggers. These are symbolic of the militant character of the faith and the victorious aspect of the fire itself, whose most sacred type, it is recalled, is called after the name of the yazata of victory, Verethraghna. The weapons have been used to defend temples from desecration in Armenia and amongst the Parsis of India, as we have seen.

In the pre-Zoroastrian religion of the ancient Iranians, offerings were made to fire and water, and in Zoroastrianism the āb-zohr and ātas-zohr (Arm. loan-word zoh) are still closely associated; the ancient offering of fat to the fire has been replaced by incense, whilst a mixture of milk and two different plants is ceremonially poured into
streams of living water in performance of the āb-zāhr. In ancient times, fire was considered male by the Iranians, whilst water was female. The Arms. and Syrians associated water and fire closely, but regarded fire as the sister and water as the brother. St Mesrop Maštoc attacked 'pagan' Armenians for deifying fire and water together; he argued that neither is immortal, for water trickles away, and fire dies when its fuel is gone. In the Syriac Acts of Mār Ābdā, the Christian convert Hāšū declares to his Sasanian persecutors: 'fire is no daughter of god, but a servant and a handmaid for kings and men of low estate', and calls fire 'a goddess of the Magians'. According to a MS. of the mediaeval History of the Icon of the Mother of the Lord cited by Alisan, there was a place in Armenia called Seaw Kār 'Black Rock' or But where there was a spring, ew zi asēin zkarkn kōyr ew zašbīwn ešbayr, yerkir ūc arkanēin zmoxim, ayl artasūk ešbōrn ţnjēin 'and because they called fire sister and the spring brother, they did not cast the ash upon the earth, but smothered it with the tears of the brother.' According to an Arm. folk-tale, 'once Brother Water came down from the mountain, Sister Fire said to him, "Come and warm yourself a bit." Water answered, "Come and drink a bit, and take a breather."' The Arms. of Akn and Diarbekir used to give the sick water mixed with the ashes of an oak-fire to drink; the ashes were believed to possess curative properties. The belief that fire is the sister of water is attributed by Ḩazar of Pērapi to the Persians; this testimony, together with that of the martyr Hāšū and the Arm. folk tradition cited above, indicates that the identification was not a confusion of Christian writers, but a Zoroastrian popular belief not attested in the written, orthodox teachings of the faith.

The altar on which the fire is enthroned varies according to the grade of fire, in size and shape. The earliest altars were of stone, or of mud brick coated with plaster. One Phl. term for a fire-altar is ādīšt ('tyšt') by MacKenzie; the type of fire-holder now in general use is a metal goblet called an āfrīnagān, whose name appears to derive from the Zor. ceremony of praise. The vessel, probably used in ancient times, seems to have been adapted around the late fifteenth century by the Parsis as a portable receptacle of the sacred fire; Irani Zoroastrians both use this and retain also mud-brick
pillar-altars, called ēdhoḵ or kalak, in the hall of the fire-temple. The chalices containing temple fires stand nearly the height of a man, and are filled with ash. Smaller ēfrřnagāns, about a foot in height and width, are also to be found in Zoroastrian homes. The small goblet itself is sometimes kept empty, and a metal plate on top contains a shallow bed of ash on which fires can be kindled. There is depicted on a terra cotta ossuary of the fifth-seventh centuries from Biya-Naːmān in Sogdia a bare-headed figure holding a small fire-altar about the size of his head. The altar has a large base and smaller top, both rectangular in shape. The top rests on a squat pillar, and flames rise from a pyramidal cone of fuel on the altar. On another Sogdian ossuary are shown two men in padāms (Arm. l-w. pāndam, the face-mask which protects the sacred fire from defilement by human breath) before a blazing fire on a stepped altar two-thirds their height.

The Arm. word for an altar (and, apparently, sanctuary of a particular yazata) in pre-Christian times was bagin, which was used to translate Gk. bōmos. In the religious terminology of the Arm. Church, the pulpit is called bēm and the altar is called sekan; both of these are loan-words from Hebrew or Syriac. Several types of altar are attested in Armenia from the pre-Christian period. Two were unearthed during the archaeological excavations made at the sites of the Christian sanctuaries of Duin and Valarşapat, where meheans are known to have stood; the third is depicted in a medieval manuscript of the Bible.

According to Pawstos Buzand (III.8), 'the Little,' transferred the Arm. capital to Duin, whose name means 'hill' in MP., from Artašat, which had become an unhealthy place in which to live because of the stagnant waters and swamps on the banks of the Araxes. During the reign of Catholicos Gvṭ (461-78), the Mother See of the Church was transferred from Valarşapat to Duin, to the church of St Gregory built by Vardan Mamikonean. According to Yovhannes of Draxnakert, omank c i meroc c naxararac c dawačanealk c i ēcarēn urac c an zhawats k c rřistolōt c ēan hēt c enosakan awrinac c hánazandealk c. Isk swagagycn k c erkuk c i noc c anē Šawasp Aṙcūmī ew Vndoy i Dvin k c ēalk c ē, hramayen ēinel zmeehewn Ormudakan ew ztun hrapaṅtūt ēan. Ew k c rmpet kargēr Vndoyn zordi iwr zērōy, ew dēr swēns i Parsik matēnē bazum 'certain of our naxaras, led astray by evil, apostatised the faith of
Christianity and submitted to heathen ways. And two of the most prominent of them, Šawasp Arcruni and Vndoy from the city of Duin, commanded that the temple of Ormizd and the house of fire-worship be built. And Vndoy ordained as high priest his son Šeroy, and established many laws from the book of the Persians.' This occurred ca. A.D. 572. The 'book' (Arm. matean, from Mr., cf. Phl. mādiyān) is, presumably, the Avesta, which had just been established in its final and largest redaction under Xusrō I Anšarwān. Vardan Mamikonean the Second and his forces conquered the place, seized the miscreants, burned Vndoy yatrusani krakin 'in the fire of the fire temple', hanged Šeroy over the bagin 'altar', and on the site of the latter built a church. Tōvma Arcruni identifies Vndoy as a Persian mogačt 'high priest' and locates the episode in Artašat, before 451, i.e., in the time of the first Vardan Mamikonean, who fought at Avarayr. Remains of two structures were found which have been identified as pagan temples. The first is a three-naved Christian basilica of dressed stone, which, Ḥafadaryan suggests, was a pagan temple converted to Christian use. There is no support for this supposition, though, in either the texts or in architectural tradition. More likely it was a church converted by the Persians to a fire temple, as in the case of Vašarasapat. To the side of the church foundations, however, the excavators discovered a pit full of clean wood-ashes. This find is of interest, because a similar pit was found also on the summit of the fortress-rock of the city, near the ruins of a smaller building of unmortared stone, and a strikingly similar method is employed by Zoroastrians of Yazd to deposit embers from their household fires at fire-temples. Zishe may allude to similar 'donations' of ashes (see below). The building faces east, at an angle of 45° to the rest of the fortress, indicating that it was deliberately positioned towards the place of the rising Sun. Remains of weapons were found in the building, as well as other objects, including a number of clay tablets adorned with sinewy linear decorations incised with cuts. A stone altar was found in Duin which may have been used for sacrifices in a bagin. The altar, of rectangular shape, consists of a base, pillar and top; each side of the middle pillar has a symbol in relief, and the whole is 55 cm. high. The pillar is 17.5 x 17.5 cm on the sides, and the base and top are 25 x 15 cm and 25 x 11 respectively. The symbols
appear to represent a ring, a bird atop the summit of a hill, the head of a bull, and a scorpion (?) with a round object in its pincers. The altar is of a type very common in the Roman period, and it is impossible to determine whether it belonged to the temple on the fortress hill or to the mehean destroyed by Vardan. More likely it belonged to a private individual or to a bagin. The altar was made in Armenia, for a chemical analysis of the granite of which it is carved revealed that it comes from the same local quarry as the granite used in the temple of Garni. In 1980, Soviet Arm. archaeologists discovered a fire-altar in the palace of Dvin. It appears to have been made by Sasanian Persians, but it is very likely that the Arm. apostates of the sixth century worshipped there. The relevant passages of the report of the discovery are here translated:

The excavations of the lower level of the west wing of the palace hall provide very interesting material on the culture of early mediaeval Dvin. The building adjacent to the colonnaded hall is an organic part of the plan of the palace. But a second period of building is clearly observed here, of around A.D. 550-570. During the revolt of 572 this part of the building perished in a conflagration with the rest of the palace. A new floor of hardened clay was made, about 0.7 m above the level of the floor of the colonnaded hall; it differs in composition generally from the floors of the other rooms of the palace. In the central part, a square platform was made of three large pieces of tufa (1.5 x 1.5 x 0.3 m); this was covered with a layer of ash, and the outer surfaces of the stones were cracked by fire. To the side of the platform was placed a great jar full of ash. At the center is a square hollow. A base for a column was found here; it differs from those of the colonnaded hall. Three slabs were found at some distance to the south of it. It must be assumed that the structure was colonnaded, but other bases have been removed. Some may yet be found, since excavations of the structure continue. The study of materials and architectural details shows that the structure discovered is a Zor. temple, and that the platform is a fire altar. The central square hollow indicates that there was erected here a four-sided pillar, upon which the fire was kindled in a special vessel. Thus, the fire altar possessed all the basic elements found in similar Sasanian structures: a lower platform,
pillar, and fire vessel. The fire altars depicted on the reverse of Sasanian coins, while remaining the same in their structure, differ in appearance from one period to another. This characteristic was noted by K. V. Trever in one of her articles on coins ('The artistic significance of Sasanian coins,' Trudy otdela Vostoka Ermitazha, 1, Leningrad, 1938, 274). The fire altar discovered at Dvin in its general outlines is similar in shape to the fire-altars shown on coins. This may be because the small space of a coin did not provide for preservation of scale, so there is therefore some distortion. Unfortunately, we do not at present possess the ground plans of late Sasanian fire temples and excavated fire altars, which might allow us to establish general correspondences. Apparently, the Dvin temple differs in its ground plan from classical Sasanian temples. One must say that a temple was not built here specifically for the worship of fire; rather, one of the areas of the palace was accommodated to the purpose. Further excavations will bring to light particular features specific to such cultic buildings...Stratigraphical study of the palace and careful examination of the sources have led us to the conclusion that the palace was built in the 470's, immediately after the transfer of the residence of the Catholicos to Dvin; it was probably his original residence. The conversion in the sixth century of one part of the palace to a temple, as shown by the stratigraphy, indicates that the palace was converted to the seat of a high Persian official. This could have happened only during the period of the politically and religiously intolerant policies of the marzban Suren (564-72). As was shown, the palace and the temple with it were burnt and ruined during the revolt of 572. It is no coincidence that when the church of St Gregory was rebuilt in the early seventh century, the new palace of the Catholicos was founded north of it, and the defiled building was levelled, to become an open square near the church, until the beginning of the ninth century.

Another fire-altar was found some years earlier in a room with walls of smooth, dressed tufa directly beneath the main altar of Ejmiacin Cathedral, the very heart of the Armenian Church. The room was, it seems, the apse of an earlier Christian basilica on the site. The altar is a cone of cemented rubble. At the top is a circular hole which extends to the base of the altar, which stands about 3-1/2 feet high.
The hole is lined with smooth, grooved ceramic plates. Some ash was found at the site, and the altar could have accommodated amply a sacred fire. The location of the altar indicates that the cult practised there was of very considerable importance, and it is likely that the rude core of rubble was faced with plaster, dressed stone, or the same reddish ceramic shards that were used to line the central hole. The date of the altar has not been conclusively established. It was found with a large, table-like slab of stone on top of it which does not seem to have belonged there originally, and it was suggested that the altar had been constructed by the Persians and their Armenian naxarar allies during their brief occupation of Vaharşapat in 451. The altar appears, indeed, to have been built in some haste, unlike the more elaborate and solid temple of the marzbān at Dvin, in a building converted from church to mehean. When Vardan reconquered the city, he would have caused the slab of stone to be placed on the altar so it could serve temporarily for Christian worship, before a new church was built and properly consecrated. The altar appears not to have been vandalized, perhaps out of fear of later Sasanian retribution. In this circumstance, and in the details of its construction, it bears remarkable resemblance to the fire altar erected—apparently in a niche which had previously held an image of the Buddha—in a vihāra at Kara Tepe, Bactrian Termez. One might date the Termez altar to the time of the eastern campaigns of Yazdagird II mentioned by Khūs, rather than to the earlier periods of Šābuhr II or Kartir.

The third type of altar found in Armenia is shown in a manuscript illumination of the scene of the sacrifice of Isaac from a Bible of A.D. 1305, from the province of Vaspurakan. The Armenian illustrator seems to have followed national traditions as well as canons of painting common to East Christian cultures, for the ram caught in the thicket is shown hanging there, following the Arm. translation, where the ram kaxecaw 'hung' (cf. LXX Gr. katekhomenos 'caught', Gen. XXII.13). Above the altar where Abraham is preparing to sacrifice his son there is shown a fire-goblet strikingly similar to the āfrīnagān. The tongues of flame shooting up out of the bowl leave no doubt as to the function of the object, but one cannot be certain of the source of the artist's inspiration; it is possible that the painter simply combined the images...
of goblet and altar-fire, for fire is shown in most Arm. portrayals of
the sacrifice.

In his 'Paean to the Cross', the tenth-century writer Anania
vardapet praises the korcanıc krapast tačaracn, moxrapast ew moxralicı
atrușanacı sovorutıeancı zancı arnelov normadakan ew zvramakan
hrapastutıeancı, hogekorust tocıormancı hракizıtıeancı, zor i merum
Hayastanesycı azins 'destroyer of the temples of the idolaters, of the
customs of the ash-worshipping and ash-filled fire temples, causing to
pass away the fire worship of Ormizd and Vram, the flaming holocausts of
the perdition of the soul that are in the Armenian nation.'47 St Greg-
ory referred with scorn to the moxrapastıtıeancı naxneacı merocı 'ash-
worship of our ancestors' (Agath. 89), indicating that the worship of
fire in Arm., with its attendant careful reverence for the ashes of the
fire, existed before the Sasanians introduced terms such as the 'Ormizd'
and 'Vram' fires. The Arms. may have had various grades of sacred fire,
as did the Parthians—for the Ādur Bursēn Mihr was presumably kept blaz-
ing continuously, whilst temple fires less illustrious were allowed to
smoulder under a mound of ash. The various types of altar which may be
adduced for Armenia (with the reservations noted above) would be suit-
able for different grades of fire. Different terms for these have not
come down to us, however, only the word atrușan in Armenian, meaning, it
seems, both 'fire temple' and 'fire altar'. The word continued to be
used to refer to fire temples in the Sasanian period, although the Per-
sians themselves did not have a word related to atrușan. The fire
temple was called also moxranoç 'a place (or, receptacle) of ashes'.
The naxarar Varazvałan of Siwnıkı, according to Lazar fıarpeći apostas-
sised the Christian faith thus: mteal i tun moxranocın zkraka asacı
gol astuạc 'entering into the house of moxranocı, he declared the fire
to be god.' Later, bazum tuns moxranocı sımeal yașxarhin Siwnenacı 'he
built many moxranocı-houses in the country of Siwnıkı.'48 The fire-
temples were described as full of ash, although various methods of dis-
posal were employed, as we have seen. Ash was also proof that a fire
had been kindled, and a provision of the decree of Yazdagird II to the
Arms. as reported by Ehišė requires that every household produce a mea-
sure of ash to prove that the hearth-fire had been properly maintained:
Mincıew i nawasardı i nawasard, (ası,) yamenayn telis or icı en ēnd
Between this New Year and the coming one, it says, in all the places that are under the rule of the great king, let the orders of the Church be removed. Let the gates of the holy temples be shut and sealed, and the holy utensils be listed, numbered, and delivered to the court. Let the voices of the Psalms be still, and may they cease the readings from the Prophets. May the believers in Christ, both men and women, who dwell in hermitages, change into secular garments. Also, may the wives of the naxarars learn the teachings of the Magi, and may the sons and daughters of freedmen and peasants be instructed in the learning of the same Magi. May the laws of holy matrimony be severed and restricted, that they had according to the orders of Christianity from their forebears. But instead of one wife, may they take many wives, that the nation of Armenia may be fruitful and multiply. May daughters come to their fathers, and sisters to
their brothers; may mothers depart not from sons, nor grandchildren from the couches of grandparents. May sacrificial beasts [patručak-k<sup>c</sup>, see below] not be killed without prayer,<sup>54</sup> whether it be a sheep, goat, bullock, fowl or swine. May they not knead dough without a face-mask [p<sup>c</sup>andam]. Let no rags or excrement approach the fire.<sup>55</sup> Let them not wash their hands without gumēz.<sup>56</sup> Let them not kill otters, foxes or hares. May snakes, lizards, frogs, ants and other swarms of maggots not be allowed to live, but may they bring them in haste, numbered and listed, according to the royal measure.<sup>57</sup> And whatever other services there be, either sacrifices or slaughters, [let them be performed] according to the order of the number of kapl<sup>c</sup>es and the measure of ash.<sup>58</sup> Let everyone fulfill what we have said, until the beginning of the year, and let them prepare everything else for the future.<sup>59</sup>

In the above passage, it is seen that the Armenians were required to kill a certain number of noxious creatures, in keeping with the custom of Zoroastrianism, and to present them as proof that the command had been carried out; similarly, they had to present a measure of ash from the hearth fires tended at their homes. P<sup>CB</sup>awstos writes of a fourth-century naxarar, Meružan<sup>60</sup> Arcoruni, that xostovan<sup>61</sup> aew vasm anjin iwroy t<sup>c</sup>ē c<sup>c</sup>em k<sup>c</sup>ristonezy: ew kalaw zawrēns mazdezanc<sup>c</sup>n, sysink<sup>c</sup>n zmoguc<sup>c</sup>n: epag erkir aregaken ew kraki, ew xostovan aew t<sup>c</sup>ē astuack<sup>c</sup> ayen en zor t<sup>c</sup>cagaworn Parsic<sup>c</sup>c pātē. Ed uxt<sup>62</sup> ēnd Šaphoy ark<sup>c</sup>cayin Parsic<sup>c</sup>c yawyn hetē: T<sup>c</sup>cē ic<sup>c</sup>cē ew karasc<sup>c</sup>cē vašt<sup>c</sup>c el Šapuh Hayoc<sup>c</sup>c, ew unel zașxarhun, ew inj darj lic<sup>c</sup>c i yim asxarhm ew yim tunn, nax es asē ŝinec<sup>c</sup>cic<sup>c</sup>c atrușan yimum tann sephakanin, ays ink<sup>c</sup>n tun krakin pāteloyn. 'He made confession for his soul: "I am not a Christian." And he adopted the laws of the Mazdeans, i.e., the Magi: He made obeisance to the Sun and fire, and confessed: "The gods are those whom the king of Persia worships." He swore to Šābuhr, the king of Persia, after that: "If it happen that Šābuhr is able to conquer Armenia and to hold the country, and I return to my country and my house, first," he said, "I shall build an atrușan in my private house," i.e., a house of the worship of fire' (P<sup>CB</sup> IV.23). Later, he and another naxarar, Vahan Manikonean, atrușans ŝinšin i bazum tellis, ew zemdirk hnazandōsin swrinac<sup>c</sup>n mazdezanc<sup>c</sup>c: ew bazum yiwreanc<sup>c</sup>c sephakanen ŝinšin atrușans, ew zordis ew zazgayins iyreanc<sup>c</sup>c tayin yusumm mazdezanc<sup>c</sup>n 'built atrușans
in many places, and made men subject to the laws of the Mazdeans; and many built atrusans in their own houses, and gave over their sons and relatives to the learning of the Mazdeans' (P²B IV.59). In addition to the consecration of new fires, many old fire-temples must have been renovated, some in places where churches had since been constructed. There is no reference made to the image-shrines of pre-Christian Armenia, where, as we have seen in preceding chapters, statues of the yazatas had stood.

Although the Sasanians justified their destruction of these shrines by arguing that demons infested graven images, we are not constrained to accept the cherished myths of that bureaucratic state, whose very centralised structure indicates what the actual motive of their campaign may have been. It has been noted above how the position of the Ādur Burzēn Mihr, a much-beloved sacred fire of the Parthians, was degraded on pseudo-theological grounds in order to give first place to the Fires of Persia and Media, the western centres of Sasanian Iran. In the 'Letter of Tansar', a document preserved from the Islamic period in NP. but purporting to be the work of a Sasanian high priest of the third century, a local Iranian king named Gusnasp refuses to submit to Ardešīr, accusing the King of Kings of having 'taken away fires from the fire-temples, extinguished them and blotted them out'. Tansar replies that the fires were not extinguished but removed from the temples 'to their place of origin', and adds that the temples had been built without the authority of the kings of old (by which the Achaemenians are meant). The kindest observation that can be made about this reply is that it is disingenuous. The same Achaemenians who established fire-temples also built image-shrines; their only claim to greater orthodoxy than the Parthians is their Persian origin, which is no claim at all. Combining fires is allowed in Zoroastrianism when necessity dictates it, but it is unlikely that the devotees of a local sacred fire should have regarded with equanimity its removal to a remote province. It is in any case certain that the Sasanian campaign in Armenia did not encourage the re-establishment of the bagins of the country; and it is possible that the atrusans built in the Sasanian period in many respects did not resemble the atrusans of Pth. times—the Sasanian names of the yazatas in the highest grade of fire, noted above, strongly suggest that these new foundations were alien to Armenian tradition.
Two later notices of sites of fire-temples in Armenia may be cited here. The fourteenth-century Persian geographer and historian Ḥamd-Allāh Mustūfī of Qazvīn, in his cosmography Nuzhat al-Quṣūb reports: 'In Little Armenia there is a fire-temple, the roof of which is plastered over with cement, and below the gutter from the roof is a tank in which the water is collected that falls on the roof. The people are wont to drink of this, and if but little rain should fall, then with some of the water that is left they wash the roof of this fire-temple, and forthwith rain again falls, and so the tank is refilled.' By Little Armenia is meant the western part of the country; we have not found any reference to the temple in Armenian sources. The rain-fed well recalls that of Bharucha agiari (The well there is called a laka in Parsi Guj.), from which the faithful draw drinking water (written communication of N. M. Desai and F. Dastoor of Bombay). In the southwest of Armenia, near the Khabur cay and south of Viran Sehir (between Diyarbakir and Urfa), there is a town called Tel Ateshan, i.e., 'Hill of Fires' (NP Āṭaś-ān). The same NP. form is found in the name of the town and district of Āṭā (NP. *Āṭaś-i) Bagawan, Caspiane (Arm. Pāytakaran), in the Āṭāharaco yoc. But the modern form of the name gives no clue as to the age of the atrusan(s) that may have been there.

Before considering modern survivals of the Zoroastrian cult of fire in Christian Armenian ritual, we propose to discuss briefly aspects of the temple cult alluded to or described at length in earlier chapters: temples, priesthood, sacrifices, and ritual implements. Temples were called mehean or tacar generally, whilst the terms bagin and atrusan refer specifically to image-shrines and fire-temples. The most common term for a priest is a Semitic loan-word, kūrm (with Ir. suffix, kūrm-pet 'high-priest'), but other terms are attested: bagnapet, mogpet and aranc c' moguc (gen. pl.), and mit' eresan/mīhrpet, the latter associated with the name of Mihr, from which the word mehean itself is to be derived. Mogpet is a NW Mlr. loan, OIr. *magu-pati-, MP. mowbed; aranc c' moguc appears to be a calque on Sasanian MP. mog mard(ān) 'Magi-men'. The priestly title hērbed, derived from Av. aēthraspaiti-, is not found in Arm.

In the Arm. Church, the Sasanian title vardbad is found as the ecclesiastical rank of vardapet, whilst the parallel form from Pth.,
varząpet, is retained only with the general meaning of 'teacher'. The MP. form indicates that the title was adopted on the model of a Sasanian office, rather than an earlier, pagan Arm. one; in the earliest period of Arm. Christianity, the Syriac loan-word kCahanay was the general word for 'priest'; the word vardapet seems to have been used only later. Now, the kCahanay may be a married priest, subordinate to the vardapet, who is celibate. The Ir. loan-word dpir, which became an ecclesiastical title, has been discussed in connection with Tir, above. (The Arm. word for an Old Testament prophet is margare, a loan-word from pre-Sasanian Mir.)

The names of a number of Arm. ecclesiastical vestments are to be derived from Mir.; some of them are Zoroastrian religious terms. The name of the Zor. sacred undershirt, Phl. šabīg, modern sudra, sedra, are found in Arm. šapik, rendering Gk. khitōn (Matt. V.40) and in sutra 'a kind of clothing' (Grigor Magistros Pahlawuni, eleventh century); the Arm. word for the Christian sacerdotal vestment, petmučan, is derived from Pth. pāmwen 'garment'. The Zor. sudra has a small pouch at the throat, called in NP. gīribān, which symbolically receives one's good deeds; originally, the word meant 'neck-protector', and the term may be regarded as a religious adaptation of a military term. In Arm., the word is attested as grapan. The cincture (Arm. gawti) worn by priests over the šapik as part of their sacred vestments, is called by the fourteenth-century poet Yovhannes TClkurancci kCustik; both the object and the word for it seem to be a direct survival of the Zoroastrian sacred girdle, Phl. kustīg. The tiara worn by Arm. priests is called xoyr, a loan from NW Mir. Other survivals of Zoroastrian terms in the Christian Arm. vocabulary have been noted in this work.

Benveniste observed that the tiaras, desmēn tōn rhabdōn and paragnathīcēs of the Magi of Cappadocia mentioned by Strabo are found in Arm. as xoyr (also arta-xoyr, artamurak and psak), barsmunk and pēndam, cf. Phl. barsom, padām.

The rite of offering was called patarag, now the Arm. Christian Divine Liturgy, and the act of sacrifice was called zoh (cf. Phl. zōhr, Av. zaotra-); the ritual words accompanying the sacrifice formed the yašt, cf. an-yaz in the passage from Eīšē above, and the sacrificial offering was an animal, called patručak, a loan from Pth., cf. Phl.
pādṛōzag; the general word for a temple-offering was ḥōṣik, cf. Phl. ṭōṣīg. The Phl. words mean 'fasting' and 'daily bread' respectively, but the basic element of both words is ṭwč[ṛōz] 'day', which implies that the sacrificial offerings were made on a regular basis. 82 As in Iran, different animals were sacrificed: rams, sheep, horses, pigs and oxen might be slaughtered. 83 According to Strabo (Geog. XV.3.15), the Magi in Armenia stunned the animal with a log before killing it; this was done also by Zoroastrians in the Sasanian period, and in the Denkard it is explained that the procedure spares the animal pain at the moment of death, an attitude in keeping with the kindly and reverential attitude of the religion of Mazda towards ṣōspāndān 'holy creatures'. 84 To this day, Armenian Christians perform blood sacrifices, mainly of chickens, although the slaughter of sheep is not uncommon. The ritual, called matal 'young' after the young animal which is killed, is performed on major festivals of the Church, and when a member of a family is ill. 85 Zoroastrians do not sacrifice immature creatures, so the matal rite probably comes from the Judaean-Christian tradition.

Reverence for fire is another aspect of the ancient religion which has become enshrined in Armenian Christianity. It is considered a sin to tell someone to extinguish a flame; the euphemism krakn ṣōrmir 'Bless the fire!' is used. 86 As in other societies, the hearth fire must not go out at all, however, and a woman who let the smouldering coals die out was regarded by Armenian villagers at the turn of this century as possessed by evil. 87 The hearth is regarded as the centre and life of a household, and is called krak-aran 'place of fire', čōnir 'furnace' or čōjaŋ. 88 Of a good son, the Arms. would say he was hōr krakaranaŋ panoč 'guardian of his father's fire-place', and of one dead it was said nra čuxē maraw 'his smoke was extinguished.' Curses often involved fire: Tōč kō krakarani (kō ertčiki) čuxē ktrui 'Let the smoke of your fire-place (your chimney) be cut off'; tōč kō tanč krak čōgtnui 'may no fire be found in your house'; antčēd jur ktri 'may water put out your lamp'. 89 Sahak of Štunik boasted to a horrified Densapuh in the fifth century of his mistreatment of Sasanian Magi dispatched to Armenia, sakawik mī čārčarelov ganiw noc'īn isk etu zkrakn i jurn ēnkenul 'I tortured them for a while with a whip and made them cast the fire into the water.' 90 But for the countrymen of Sahak, over 1400 years later, such an act was the substance of a curse.
The ninth month of the Zoroastrian year bears the name of the yazata Atar; the ninth month of the ancient Arm. year is called Ahekan, a Mir. derivative of O.P. *Athrakāna-, the feast of Fire. The ancient Iranian celebration survives, as we shall see, amongst Irani Zoroastrians as the feast of Șade, 'the feast of the Hundred Days', and in Armenia as Teʿām ʿend areq, the Presentation of the Lord to the Temple, the Western Christian Candlemas. In Zoroastrianism, it is believed that Rapithwin is the lord or ratu of noonday heat and of the seven months of summer, which begins the first day after the gahāmbār of Hamaspamādīyā and ends on the last day of that of Ayāthrīma, the beginning of the five months of winter. Of those months, the three middle ones, Atar, Dadvah and Vohu Manah (Phl. Ādar, Dai and Bahman), are considered the coldest. The yazatas Aša Yahišta and Ātar—the Amēša Spēnta who is the guardian of fire, and the yazata Fire personified—are both invoked with Rapithwin in the watch of the day (NP. gāh) ruled by him, and in the Yasna when the latter is mentioned. The connection of the ratu of summer with the warmth, heat and light of fire is a logical and natural one, and during the winter the Zoroastrians have since ancient times celebrated a festival of fire, the purpose of which is to drive away darkness and cold, and to assist Rapithwin in his task of warming the roots of plants and the springs of the waters. In the Greater Bundahišn, it is mentioned that fires are lit everywhere on the day Ādar of the month Dai (XXV.14), and Bīrūnī mentioned two feasts of fire in winter, the Ādar Jāšn regularly celebrated on the day and month named after the yazata (Ādar rōz of Ādar māh), and the Jāšn-i șade, 'hundredth-(day) feast', on Ābān rōz of Bahman māh. The latter, still celebrated in this century by the Zoroastrians of Kermān falls exactly 100 days after the beginning of the five-month Zor. winter; in the Zor. villages of Yazd, however, the Jāšn-i șade, called ӽromba (a word whose meaning is no longer remembered), is celebrated instead on Astād rōz of Ādar māh, 100 days before the return of Rapithwin, i.e., Nū Rūz. It is proposed that this date was the original one of the feast. Due to the recession of the Zoroastrian calendar, the feast of Șade was celebrated at Yazd in 1964 in late April, but the rituals themselves reflect the original significance of the holiday. On the eve of the holiday, a great bonfire of bone-dry brushwood is kindled in the court
of the shrine of Mihr, with a torch (although fire from the fire-temple was probably used in ancient times) over an underground irrigation canal (NP. qanāt). As the fire flares up, the names of the great men of the faith—both the fravāzis of ancient heroes and those of the community recently deceased—are recited, and after each name the boys of the community shout 'Hīrombōi!' and 'Xođā be-āmūrzadī!' ('May the Lord have mercy upon him!'—the first expression is the same incomprehensible name of the festival itself). In the morning, the women gather the dying embers of the fire, which are distributed among the households of the faithful, so that other fires may be kindled from them. 95

In Armenian communities around the world, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord to the Temple is celebrated on the night of 13th February, and on the following day; the date is fixed as the fortieth day after Epiphany. On the eve of the feast, all the grooms married during the past year, or, in some communities, since the autumn, gather in the church and put on the šapiks (sacred shirts; see above) of the choir. Their mothers distribute candles, sugar, dates and almonds amongst the congregants. The grooms do not sing, but walk round together in a circle, lighted candles in their hands, during the andastan service, an Armenian Christian rite of invocation of blessing upon the fields. Then they go home and are entertained by relatives. Later, the people reassemble in the courtyard of the church. Branches from trees in the gardens of the families of the grooms, cane, straw and nettles are piled up and ignited with a candle brought from within the church. Of the fire, the Arm. manual of church Festivals ṭonāc 6yrc 6 says: Ḗw zgec 6c 6c c in miaban kawahark n, ew elc c en xac ciw ew awetaranaw ew amenayn zarduk 6 i durs...ew luc c c 6 en zhurn...xoteli ē šrīlın zhrown or i tgitac 6 ē nermucal 'And the priests of the brotherhood shall vest themselves and go out with cross and Gospel and all adornments...and they shall kindle the fire...perambulation about the fire, which has been introduced by the ignorant, is to be deplored.'96 No other fuel may be used, perhaps because dross stuff would be thought to pollute the fire, or might contain moisture. The bonfire is called melet, merelet, or mejeloc 6, the latter meaning 'of the dead' (gen. pl.) 97 and the festival itself is sometimes called by the same name, although terntaz, drđorin d, terntes and terntas are also common; the latter four seem to be
ccruptions of Arm. Te'ain ēnd eṙa[r (lit. 'of the Lord, before'; the three words are often run together, even in canonical calendars, but the Arm. name is probably a calque on the Gk. name of the Church feast, Hypapantē tou Kyriou).98

When the fire is kindled, the men leap over it and women walk round it, singing Oɔc ɔrɔrotim, oc ɔc borotim 'May I not have itches or skin disease.' Sometimes people singe the hems of their garments or cast bits of clothing into the fire; the intention here seems to be to burn away impurity, although one notes that, paradoxically, an effort is made also to keep impure forms of fuel from being used to kindle the fire initially. (This seems like the modern Iranian custom observed on ցահարանբե-ye sūrī, the Wednesday (of feasting) that precedes No Rūz, of kindling a fire, leap ing over it, and chanting zardī o ranjūri-ye man az tō, sorxī o xorramī-ye tō az man, apparently a spell for health and life.98-a) The fire is also considered a source of omens. If it flares up towards the east, this means the coming year will be good. Ashes from the fire are taken home by the celebrants and scattered in the four corners of every house and farm building, or are mixed with the ashes of the hearth fire, or put in the soil of the field, or in the oven where bread is baked (cf. the prohibition mentioned by Elise against baking without wearing a face-mask, above).99 In the district of Moks (Clas. Arm. Mokk c), torches are kindled from the fire and taken to the graveyard to bring light to the souls of family ancestors;100 this custom recalls the reverence paid by the Yazdis to the fravašis at the bonfire of Hiromba.

Such an act of reverence for the dead may explain the word merelet, of which melet appears to be an abbreviated form: the base would be mereal (past part.) 'dead', with the ending -ōd 'from thou' (abl. sing. with pronominal suffix), pronounced -et in Western Arm. The word seems to mean 'from thee, O dead one,' and was perhaps part of an ancient invocation to the souls of the dead, or else a corruption of the form mereloc cited above. The sanctity of the fire is evident, as well as the power attributed to it to purify people and houses, and to give light to the dead; out of the dead winter, fire helped to bring forth life. This symbolism is apparent also in some European popular Lenten rituals, in which an effigy of straw called 'Death' is burnt to signify the defeat of winter.100-a
The Arm. celebration provoked the hostility of Muslim neighbours.

In 1808, Fr. Movses of ԾՀՆԿԴՈՒՐ wrote, ՆԱԵՎ ՅԱՅՏ ԼԻՆԻ ԵՆՏԵՐԵՐՈՒԹՅԱՆ, ԱՀԵԿԱՆ ԴԻԴ ՊԱՐՏԵՆԵՐ ԵՆ ՔԱՂԱՏԱՐՆԵՐ ԵՎ ԴԱՐՔԵՔՆԵՐ: ԽՍԵՐԿԱՅԱՆ ՏԱՐԱՅՆ ՏԵԱՒՆԴԱՐԱՅԻՆ ԱՐՄԵՆԻԱՆ ԵՎ ԶՈՒՆ ՆԵՐՆԱՎԵՐ։

In the town of Arapkir in the 1950's Armenians lit melet-fires on the flat rooftops of their houses; their church, with its yard, had been confiscated by the Turkish authorities, and on the roofs they were relatively safe from harrassment by gangs of troublemakers.

The Arm. feast is calibrated, as we have seen, forty days after Epiphany, i.e., roughly in mid-winter. The ninth month, Ahekan, corresponds to the ninth Iranian month, Ātār, and a feast of fire celebrated in Ahekan—the month named after fire—would fall about 100 days before Nawasard, like the Yazdi Zoroastrian یاپ‌ی‌سی‌ئی. But with Nawasard falling in late summer, Ahekan comes in April, and Adontz noted that Ahekan corresponds to Greek Xanthikos in the Arm. translation of II Maccabees XI.30, 33; and argues that the two would have coincided in the month of April in A.D. 468. But according to ԱՀԻՍԵՙ, the Book of Maccabees was read to the Arm. troops on the eve of the Battle of Avarayr, 17 years earlier, and it is likely that the Biblical tale, of such immense symbolic importance to Arm. Christians in their struggle with the Sasanians, had been one of the first parts of Scripture to be translated into Arm. by the disciples of ՄԱՏՕՀ։ The date 468, therefore, seems to be of no relevance. It is noteworthy that the translators rendered Xanthikos as Ahekan, whilst transliterating the names of other months (e.g., ԼՐԵՐ, ՔԱՍԼԵՐ; Heb. ՏԻՍՔԵՐ, ՔԻՍԼԵՎ); it is likely that the month was one of particular importance to Arm., and such a supposition is borne out by the remarkable survival of the feast of fire. That feast is celebrated in February, however, and the eleventh-century scholar ՅՈՒՀԱՆՆԵՍ ԲԵՐՈՒՄԻՆԵՆՅԱ, the Philosopher (ԱՐՄԻ ԻՄԱՏԱՍԵՐ) in his calendrical tables equated ՀԿՄՆ (Xanthikos) with the Roman February. It is possible that the mediaeval scholar preserved an equation used by
the ancient translators in their reckonings. This equation is not the one that was used when the months were finally fixed, however, in relation to the solar year, for February corresponds to Mehekan, the month of Mahr; it would seem that the Armenians preferred to keep their feast in mid-winter, anchored to its proper season, than in Ahekan, its proper month; the common sense of enshrined popular tradition prevailed in Armenia, and only the hypothetical link between Ahekan, Xanthikos and February proposed above hints at the original correspondence of name to feast. In Iran, where the feast of fire was linked to Now Ruz, and the scholastic tradition was never broken, the Zoroastrians followed their calendar faithfully, only to perform their ritual in April, when it is quite pointless—the world has been warmed by then without bonfires.

Why, however, was the ceremony of the old festival of fire transferred by the Armenians to the Christian holiday of the Presentation of the Lord to the Temple? An explanation is suggested by the depiction of the scene in Armenian manuscript paintings, which vary little in their basic elements: the Virgin is shown offering the forty-day-old Christ Child to Simeon, as Joseph and Anna look on. There is often an altar in the scene, and the figures stand to either side of it, seeming about to pass the Child over it, or carry him around it. In ancient Greece, it was the custom when a child was weaned for his parents to carry him around the hearth-fire a few times and then pass him over it. This ceremony of dedication and purification, called amphidromia, corresponds in purpose, and, apparently, in the manner of its performance, to the Presentation as visualised by Armenian artists, as well as to the ceremony of the melet-fire, around which the women walked and over which the newly-wedded young men jumped. No Zoroastrian would jump over the Hiromba fire, though, and it is likely that this aspect of the ritual antedated the Zoroastrian features which are present in Armenia and so obviously parallel to Irani Zoroastrian practices.

In Christendom, the feast is seen first in fourth-century Jerusalem; Pope Sergius I (687–701), a Syrian, established a procession in its honor, and in the West, it was only in the eleventh century that the custom came into being of blessing all the candles to be used over the coming year. There was considerable opposition amongst the Fathers of the Church to aspects of the Candlemas rite which involved fire, for it
seems that as the feast spread westwards, local aspects of pre-Christian fire-worship were incorporated into it by the various communities of Europe. It was in the eastern lands, under the aegis of the Sasanian Empire, that the feast first attained to prominence in the Church, however: a Syrian pope promoted it in the West, and the Arm. observance retains many aspects of the older Zoroastrian *Āthrakāna-, Arm. Ahekan. It was the prestige and importance of the Zoroastrian festival that would have given such impetus to its Christian reincarnation, and transformed a relatively unimportant way station in the great cycle of the Church calendar into a bright and joyous celebration of the Armenian people.

The temples, priesthood and fire-cult of pre-Christian Armenia were eradicated or absorbed by the Church, yet one small band of the faithful, the Arewordikc 'Children of the Sun' seem to have clung to the old religion still, their standard being the Sun, the greatest of all physical fires, and one which St Sahak and St Vardan could not reach to extinguish or defile.
Notes - Chapter 15


3. Ibid., 104.


5. Boyce, Zoroastrians, 64, 182.


8. Boyce, 'Iconoclasm,' 98-99; Benveniste, op. cit., 57, compares Arm. atr-usan to Gk. pyr-aitheion, and suggests an etymology of *-asan (in the hypothetical Pth. form) from *ausana 'burner', with the base *aus- 'to burn'. The element atr- (Av. Āṭar, the yazata Fire; Mr. Ādur 'fire') is found in Arm. atragyn, atragunak 'fire-coloured'; atrakan 'fiery'; atrasēk 'fiery-red'; atrorak 'possessing the quality of fire' (Malxaseanc) and possibly in the Arm. proper name attested in Gk. as Ādur (Ir. Nam., 5). The word bagin is encountered frequently in Arm., as we have seen, and generally means 'altar', but can also be used interchangeably with mehean 'temple' (see Ch. 8) with the meaning of 'shrine'. On the Sgd. and MP. words, see W. B. Henning, 'The Date of the Sogdian Ancient Letters,' BSOAS, 12, 1948, 602 n. 3, and 'A Sogdian God,' BSOAS, 1965, 250-1. Henning suggested that Sgd. āyn *ragha and the priests who served them were not Zoroastrians. Such an assumption cannot be made with any certainty of the Arms., however, and there were numerous Zoroastrians in Sogdia from the earliest times. The title of bagnapet is found in Arm. in the Letters of Grigor Magistros (eleventh cent.; see NBHL, a.v. bagin); no attestation of an earlier date in the language is known.


10. See Ch. 7, esp. the pil of Ana, i.e., Anahit, of the Islamicised 'Kurdish' Arms. of Dersim.


12. On this fire, and other religious terms with the name of the yazata Mihr in Arm., see Ch. 8. In the Parthian epic of Vis...
and Rāmīn, Vīs is buried near the temple which housed the holy fire, at Rēvand; Minorsky suggested that the fire of Būrzan Mīhr is alluded to by Isidore of Charax as situated in Astauēnē (see V. Minorsky, 'Vīs u Rāmīn,' BSOAS, 11, 1943-6, 758).

13. The name is attested as a Pth. proper name of the first century B.C., Prnbq *Farnbach (see I. M. D'yakonov, V. A. Livshits, Dokumenty iz Nisy i v. do n.e., Moscow, 1960, 24), but this does not imply that the fire had yet been founded, nor need the name be a specific reference to it, if it had been. Reliable references to Ādur Farnbāg come from the mid-Sasanian period, and it is most likely that this fire, together with Ādur Guśnas, was promoted by the Sasanians as a counterweight to the popularity of Būrzan Mīhr (Boyce, Zoroastrians, 123-4).


15. See refs. to Vīnas in Ch. 2. The form Vīnas is found also on a Sasanian seal bearing the proper name *twlwnaspy *Ādurvīnas (see Gignoux, in La Persia nel Medioevo, Rome, 1971, 539). An Arab traveller of the early tenth century, Mīṣār ibn Muhalil, reported that the fire at the pond of al-Šīs (i.e., Taxt-i Suleimān) had been burning continuously for 700 years without leaving any ash. Minorsky considered this a possible reference to the planē tōn anthrakōn 'charcoal trick' of the Persians mentioned by Byzantine writers in connection with Zoroastrian observances, and suggested that the ashes may have been dumped in the lake at the site (V. Minorsky, 'Roman and Byzantine Campaigns in Atropatene,' BSOAS, 11, 1943-6, 243). It seems, however, that some of the reverence accorded the sacred fire attached also to the ashes which remained. Zoroastrians today when offering sandalwood or money to a sacred fire take a pinch of ash from a ladle (Gu. čāmān) on a tray at the door to the sacred inner enclosure in the fire temple. This ash is touched to the forehead, in the manner of Catholic Christians on Ash Wednesday. The offering is called čāmānī ašādād. Excess ash from the fire temples of Bombay is ceremoniously consigned to the sea (see J. Boyd and F. M. Kotwal, 'Worship in a Zoroastrian Fire Temple,' IJ 26, 1983, 303; oral communication of Dastur Kotwal, Bombay, Dec. 1983). As we shall see, the Armenians scattered ash and embers from the fire kindled on Tearndaraǰ to purify their farm buildings, houses and fields. For an attestation of the latter practice amongst the Armenians and their justification of it, see below; such ashes would have to be cold, however, for it is a grave crime to extinguish a fire with water or other liquid, even involuntarily (sec, for example, Hist. Zor., 1, 297 on the sin of Keresaspa; and the Arm. euphemism 'blessing the fire', below).

16. Arm. Gr., 181; Pagliaro, op. cit., 383. Neither of the two elements of hur-bak can be derived by the application of regular sound changes from Ir. farn-bāg, however; Old Median *Farnah 'glory' becomes Arm. ārāk (see G. Bolognesi, Le fonti
dialettali degli impestiti iranici in Armeno, Milan, 1960, 28, where the late form Arm. Xorohbut, from Mir. Farrow-but, is noted), and the original Ir. -g cannot become Arm. -k. Both hur 'fire' and bak 'hall, court' are good Arm. words, though, and the word is more likely a calque upon a Mir. term preserved in Phl. as dar i ătaxăñ, an expression found in the Denkard as one of the three places towards which a man ought to direct his soul, the other two being dar i hudănăñ 'the house of sages' and dar i wehañ 'the house of good men'. This is a parallel construction meaning 'house of fires', and it is not certain from the context whether it is a technical term for a fire-temple, or a literary device (see DkM. 546, trans. with a transcription of text by S. Shaked, The Wisdom of the Sasanian Sages (Denkard VI), Boulder, Colorado, 1979, 128-9 and intro., xxvii). In Arm., however, there is no doubt that Hurbak was the name of a shrine, and there is attested also the toponym Atm(e)ñanak in Sot'k (AOM, 403; this is the region where a bas-relief was found which may depict Vahagn and Astâk, see Ch. 6). The name seems to mean 'Court of the Fire of (the) *M(e)ñan'. The latter word is unknown; it may be a late pronunciation of mehan (temple) with /h/ pronounced /kh, gh/ (a change attested in Arm. written sources as early as the tenth century) and the diphthong -ea- regularly contracted to -e- in a compound (cf. the title mehenapet 'priest at a mehan', A rêm, 554).

17. M. Boyce, 'On the Sacred Fires of the Zoroastrians,' BSOAS, 31, 1968, 1, 52; Stronghold, 74; the forms vramakan and ormzdaken in Arm. are both Sasanian, for the arms called the yazatas they worshipped Vahagn and Armazd, and it is evident from the context in which the terms are used that they refer to Sasanian institutions, not to Arm. Zor. observances, see Ch. 5.


19. Ibid., 54.

20. Stronghold, 74.


22. Ch. 6.

23. Hübsschmann, Arm. Gr., 151, noted the derivation of Arm. zoh 'sacrifice' from a Mir. form of Av. zaóthra-; Phl. zóhr 'sacrifice' (see also Benveniste, op. cit.), with derivatives zoh-em 'I sacrifice', zoh-emoc, zoh-aren 'place of sacrifice' (LXX Gk. thygiasterion). The animals sacrificed were referred to by the Mir. technical terms patrukak or řočik, both pre-Sasanian, see below. The Arm. form zoh is to be derived from a metathesised borrowing from Mir., *zorh; on the loss of -r- before -h-, cf. Arm. marh/mah 'death', and ah 'fear', ahreli 'frightful', z-ərm-urem 'I terrorize' (see Ch. 14). The Arm. word for incense, xunk, is probably to be derived from Mir., cf. NP. xnk *xunk.
xung, Kurdish xung 'incense' (HAB, II, 420-1). An incense-burner is called in Arm. burvar, a loan-word from MR., cf. Sgd. šūhrn (E. Benveniste, "Etudes iraniennes," TPS, 1945, 70-1) and Mongolian loan-word boyr for 'incense' (A. R. Rinchine, Kratkii mongol'sko-russkii slovar', Moscow, 1947, 32); Arm. boyr 'fragrance' is a loan-word from NW MR., cf. Arm. asxar 'mourning' and Pth. xěd, etc. (Bolognesi, op. cit., 40).


27. Cit. by Gray, 'Foundations,' 69.

28. On But, see the preceding Ch.

29. AHH, 50.

30. Ibid., 44; AH, 1897, 195; E. Lalayean, 'Ganjaki gawar,' AH, 1900, 332.

31. Ananikian, 56.

32. Loc. cit.


34. Stronghold, 76-8.


36. Compare to Arm. bêm Hebrew bîmâ, the table in the middle of the synagogue at which the Tôrâh is read. This table stands opposite the Holy Ark containing the scrolls of the Law, against the wall in the direction of Jerusalem. Gk. bômos may be a very early loan from this Semitic word. Hübschmann rejected Lagarde's derivation of Arm. šelen from Hebrew šulhän 'table' (Arm. Gr., 316), but such an etymology is possible; Ačafan notes the NP. šîlam 'table of kings', which displays similar loss of Heb. š- (HAB, IV, 198-9), and we may observe the change of initial š- to s- in Arm. loans from both Persian and Syriac, e.g., the proper name Senitum Xosrov (NP. senîdam 'I heard') and Arm. sapôr 'trumpet', cf. Hebrew sôfâr.

38. Cf. Ţil, Ch. 7, and MX III.8.


40. One notes that in the fourth century, according to a Syriac martyrology, Šābuhr II ordered a Christian to pray 'to the Sun, god of the east' (Hist. Zor., I, 29 n. 43); Arms. still call the east akotc̣(a)ran 'the place of prayers'; on the Arewordikc̣, who prayed always towards the Sun, see the following Ch. On the Yazdi Zoroastrian lok-e tāc̣ 'hole for the fire', where embers were placed, see Stronghold, 72-3.

41. On the excavations, see A. A. K'c̣alantc̣aryan, Dvīnic 187ạken maakoyṭc̣ 4-8 dبذ (Hayastani hrnagitan husarjannerē, 5), Erevan, 1970; on the temples, see K. G. Bafadaryan, 'Dvīin k'c̣alanḳi himnaḍman zanmanaki ev mijnaberdi hetc̣anosakan myyani masin,' P-bH, 1966, 2, 45-7; the two clay tablets found at the fortress site are shown in pl. 5, 6 (pp. 55, 56).

42. G. K'c̣oc̣aryan, 'Antik dārasrjani zohasec̣an Dvīnicc̣,' P-bH, 1977, 2, 280-6, does not say where in the city the altar was found.

43. The altar and the symbols thereon (ibid., pls. l-4, pp. 281-2); on the granite, see p. 284. These symbols, although found throughout the ancient world, would represent in Iran the ring of divinity; bird of xavarnah (on a hilltop?); and sun-and-moon or horned bull's head.


46. The painting, from Erevan Matenadaran MS. 2744, is reproduced in H. Hakobyan, Vaspurekan manrankar’cut’yun, I, Erevan, 1966, pl. 1. The altar looks like this:

![Altar Image]

47. Cit. by AHN, 51.

48. MP6 chs. 20, 46 (pp. 117, 270-1).

49. The Persian Nō Rōz is meant, but the Arm. name Nāwasard is used (see Ch. 5).

50. The title 'king of kings' (Phl. șāhān šāh) is replaced here by the title attested in MP. inscriptions as 'great king of Armenia' (see Ch. 3 on this office), a position generally reserved for the candidate second in line to the succession in Pth. and Sasanian Iran.

51. It appears that the Christian copyist could not bear to call the Prophets 'lying', and in pious fear inserted the privative em-.

52. Arm. hrahang is a loan-word from Mir., cf. MP. frahang 'education'; in the Sasanian period, the school was called frahangestān (see Boyce, Zoroastrians, 137).

53. The Arm. style reflects this Biblical locution, an indication (should such be necessary) that Edēš’s own literary style informs, in part, the recounting of the decree. The details of the latter are probably factual nonetheless.

54. Arm. an-yaz; see Ch. 6 on Arm. (Y)asti; see cit n. 7, 49-52 on Arm. yaz-el and mis yazacoy 'meat of a ritually slaughtered animal'.

55. The reference here seems to be to the Arm. practice of fueling fire with cow manure; pots of this are dried against the walls of village houses in Armenia and stored in stacks.

56. Cf. Phl. gōmez, the urine of a cow, bull or calf, and Arm. loan-word mēz 'urine' with derivative verb miz-em 'I urinate', from Av. mēza- (E. Benveniste, 'Mots d'emprunt iraniens en arménien,' BSLP, 53, 1957-8, 55-71). The word is attested in a specifically Zoroastrian sense in Arm. only here, in the gen. sg. (Arm. Gr., 128), but cf. the modern Arm. dialect of Hamsen, where the word gumēz means 'a runnel in the middle of a stable where the urine of animals is collected' (HAB I, 592). Acajkan expressed doubt about the first element, connecting it with hōy 'animal
excrement', but it seems more likely that the runnel collected only liquids, the contents giving the name to the container.

Zoroastrians wash with bull's urine, a mild antiseptic, to remove impurities before rinsing themselves with water, lest they defile the latter, which is a sacred creation of Ohrmazd (Stronghold, 95). Tiridates I of Arm. travelled overland to Rome for his coronation in order to avoid polluting the sea with waste matter (see Ch. 8). It is known that the Sasanians maintained a large fleet of merchant ships, but one recalls that ancient mariners, lacking precise instruments and techniques of navigation, tended to sail along the shore. Zoroastrians would have had ample opportunities to dispose of waste with the proper precautions on shore.

57. On the slaughter of xrafstarān 'noxious creatures', see the preceding Ch. and Herodotus, Hist., I, 142. The killing of the otter and other animals is expressly forbidden in Zoroastrianism, see Hist. Zor., I, 298-300; on the otter, or 'water-dog', considered the holiest of the dog species, see Vidēvdat, XIV.

58. 'A measure of grain', loan-word from NW Mir., see Arm. Gr., 165 and S. Shaked, 'Mihr the Judge,' Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam, II, 1980, 1, where is cited Phl. kapīz from Ardāy Wirāz Nāmag, 67 on the punishment of one who cheats in weights and measures.

59. Ebīse, pp. 52-3.

60. On theophoric names with forms of Mithra-, see Ch. 8.

61. In Phl., āstuvāniḥ is used as a technical term for confession of the Zor. faith; the Arm. form, from Pth., is used in the translation of formulae of Christian confession from Syriac (in which the word used is tawdīta); see J. P. Asmussen, Kuāštvanīft, Copenhagen, 1965, 46.

62. A loan-word from Mir., cf. Av. uxti- (Arm. Gr., 216), with the sense of a religious oath or pact; in later centuries, the Arm. word is used also to mean a pilgrimage to a Christian holy site. E. Benveniste and L. Renou, Vrtra et Vrthraga, Paris, 1934, 8, define Av. uxdhem as 'formule protectrice'.


64. See Stronghold, 6.

65. To imagine what the reaction may have been, one is invited to consider how the residents of Rome might react to the removal of the Basilica of St Peter on some similar pretext of illegitimacy to Salt Lake City, Utah, there to be grafted onto the Mormon Tabernacle.

66. The word bagin occurs in the toponym Bagnayr in Širak, the site of a monastery (AON, 411; A. A. ManucCaryan, K'kmut'yun Hayastani...
IV-XI dareri ḳinaraṛakan vksayagṛeri, Erevan, 1977; the name seems to contain Arm. ayr 'cave' (cf. the cave of Mher, Ch. 8, and Ch. 13). In the district of Uti, in the borderlands of Armenia and Caucasian Albania, was Bagmac gi-wé 'Village of the Altars' (AON, 411).

67. The English trans. of the passage was published in JCOI, 1937, 3, 180. The Persian text, ed. by G. Le Strange, Leiden, 1913, 293, reads as follows: Dar Arminiya al-aṣghar ātāxāne-īst ke bām-as be-ṣārūj āndūde ū dar zīr-i nāvedān-as ḫauṣ-i sāxtē. Āb-i bārān ke az ān bām dar ān ḫauṣ jemāc sāvād xūrās-ī ḫān az ān bāsād. Čūn āb be-andak be-of tad bedūn-ī āb bām-ī ātāxmāne-rā be-ṣūyand; bāz bārān āyad ū ḫauṣ purr sāvād.

68. NP. Virān sahr 'City of ruins'; cf. toponyms Aweraki, Awerk 'ruins' (AON, 310); S. T. Eremyan, Hayastane ēst Asxarhac'oye-1, Erevan, 1963, 42.

69. See Ch. 8.

70. Arm. Gr., 195; Eznik, para. 2; see also Ch. 9 on the proper name Mog-paste and the toponym Magu-stana in Arm. The former would mean something like 'one who worships after the manner of the Magi', cf. Arabic majūsī and its Syriac antecedent magūsē. Mog mard in Phl. means 'priest' ('a man who is a magus'), not 'Zoroastrian' generally.

71. On the equivalence of these terms, see for instance ŠKZ NP. 1.34 krtyr ZY 'yhrpt Pth. krtyr 'hupty Gk. Karteir magu; Boyce, The Letter of Tansar, op. cit., 9, and Zoroastrians, 97-8.

72. ŠKZ NP. 33 wrdpt ZY platkpt Pth. wrdpt praktkpt Gk. goulbad tou epi tēs hypēresias 'over the service'. The word is a proper name here (Dictionary of Khotan Saka, 66); Benveniste suggested (TPS, 1945, 69) that it was also a Mazdean ecclesiastical office; see also M. Back, Die sassanidischen Staatsinschriften, Acta Iranica 18, Leiden, 1978, 269-70. For the association of the base vrdh- 'to increase (wisdom, piety)' with the duties of an athravan, see J. J. Modi, Oriental Conference Papers, Bombay, 1932, III, citing Ys. 9.24.

73. See Bailey, Zor. Probs., 162 n. 1, and Dictionary of Khotan Saka, 328; N. Marr and J. Smirnov, Les Vichaps, Leningrad, 1931, 41-2, note Georgian memarge 'prophet', also an Ir. loan-word.


79. Arm. psāk means 'wreath' or 'diadem' rather than the Pth. head-dress, the latter like the modern Turkic başlık. It is an Ir. loan-word, cf. Phl. pusāz, Sgd. paźk (Arm. Gr., 232; W. E. Henning, 'A Sogdian Fragment of the Manichaean Cosmogony,' BSOAS, 1948, 307 line 16).

80. E. Benveniste, op. cit., n. 7, 54.

81. On patarag, see ibid., 48 and n. 4. The word may derive from a Mrv. word p'āiky (H. W. Bailey, oral comm. citing Henning). Another possibility is to derive it from a Mrv. reflex of OIr. *pati-gray- with a base meaning 'chant, celebrate', especially since an Ossetic form demonstrating the metathesis that would be necessary for Arm., argawyn, argawun, means 'to perform a church service' (the latter words are cited by E. Korenchy, Iranische Lehnmörter in den Obugrischen Sprachen, Budapest, 1972, 52).

82. Benveniste, op. cit., 52 ff.

83. E. Durean, Hayoc' hin krōne, Jerusalem, 1933, 117. The act of slaughtering in Arm. is called spand (probably from spen-anem 'I kill') or zen-um. The former is to be distinguished from spand 'wild rue', a Mrv. loan (cf. NP. sipand); Acaean (HAB, II, 91) cites a Sgd. form ůžyān 'sacrifice', comparing Phl. ţzyān 'damage, harm, loss' and an Arm. hapax legomenon, zenakar 'harmful', Phl. ţyān-gār.


85. HAB, III, 267. At Ejmiacin, it is common to see Sunday worshipers in the Cathedral clutching doves to be blessed and sacrificed. In Armenian cities, metal at an Armenian church is often a leg of roast lamb, bought at the butcher's and cooked at the church kitchen (it is very rare for an Armenian church to be without this facility). The meat, served with a sweet pudding of toasted wheat (bulghur), is blessed by the priest and served up to parishioners and guests on plates.

86. AH, 1897, 194. Similarly, Zoroastrians of our acquaintance never extinguish the fire in an āfrinagān, nor do they say they would let it go out, but use a euphemism, 'to put the fire to sleep'.
A loan-word from Th. öcek; in Turkey, this is also the name of the coldest month, January, when no farming can be done and families are gathered at the hearth to keep warm.

Ibid., 70-1.

Cit. in AHH, 57.

See Arm. Gr., 95; L. H. Gray, 'On Certain Persian and Armenian Month-Names as influenced by the Avesta Calendar,' JAOS, 28, 1907, 339.

Arm. Hroto; see Ch. 10.


See M. Boyce, 'The two dates of the feast of Sada,' Yâdgar namé-ye Pûr-Dâvûd (Parhang-e Iran Zamân, 21), Tehrân, 1976, 26-40. See also Boyce, Pratidanam, op. cit., 214.

See Stronghold, 176 et seq., for a description of the Yazdi observance.

A number of descriptions of this popular ritual have been published. The earliest is provided by Garegin Srvanjtyanc (Erker, I, Erevan, 1978, 159), the mid-nineteenth-century Arm. cleric and ethnographer, followed by Manuk Abezyan (MA VII, 62), Y. K. Canikean (Hnutçîvnl c Axnay, Tiflis, 1895, 105) and Eruand Lalayan ('Vaspurakan,' AH, 1917, 202). Later, accounts were provided by Ananikian (p. 58) and Garnik Gëorgean (Chnctusapotum, Jerusalem, 1970, 371, 437). Different writers stress different aspects of the holiday, but it seems it was celebrated much the same way everywhere, except when adaptations had to be made because of Muslim oppression (see below). On the priestly condemnation see Tnãc'oyc', I, Jerusalem, 1970, 25-7, and the present writer's 'On the Pre-Christian Religious Vocabulary of the Armenians,' in G. B. Jahukyan, ed., Mijazgayin hayerenagitakan gitazolov: zekuncenummer, Erevan, 1984, 167-8.

Georgean cites melet, 'campfire, bonfire'; Fr. Khajag Barsamian, a native of Arapkir, Turkey, born in 1951, reported to us that people chanted 'meflet' around the bonfire; the variant mefoloc, also from Arapkir, was noted for us by Dr. Krikor Maksoudian of Columbia University, New York.

It is suggested by some scholars that forms such as teptaz are closer to the original name, a Persian form tîr-ândîz 'arrow-shooting', and that Arm. Team end afaj is merely a
rationalisation of the foreign words. In an Iranian context, one is reminded naturally of the archer Ḫrēkša (Phl. Arīs), cf. Yt. VIII.6; but no such reference seems justified by the Arm. ritual.


100. Loc. cit.


CHAPTER 16
CHILDREN OF THE SUN

We have in the preceding chapters seen many instances of the survival of individual Zoroastrian customs and beliefs in Christian Armenia, and Zoroastrians lived in large numbers in Sasanian-ruled parts of Armenia down to the mid-seventh century, but in the light of instances from elsewhere of the stubborn survival of Zoroastrianism as a faith, even in adverse circumstances, one might reasonably look for something more. Indeed, the old religion did not disappear; in certain mountainous regions of Armenia Zoroastrianism seems to have held out until recent times.

In A.D. 377, St Basil of Caesarea, Cappadocia, wrote of the magousaion ethnos, 'nation of the Magousaioi,' in a letter to Bishop Epiphanius of Salamis, Cyprus. As we have seen, it was not unusual to refer to Zoroastrians by the name of their priests, the Magi. This Greek term derives from an Aramaic form of the Sasanian period. There were many of them in Cappadocia, he wrote. They had come long ago from Babylonia, and kept to their own customs, disdaining to mingle with other people. They had neither books nor teachers of doctrine, but passed down their traditions from father to son by word of mouth. They would not perform sacrifices, and had others kill animals for their needs. They practiced 'unlawful' marriages (Gk. gamois epimainontai paranomoi) and called fire God. They traced their descent not from Abraham, but from one called Zarnouas. In this description we recognize certain distinctly Zoroastrian practices and beliefs such as the deification of fire, the practice of 'unlawful' marriages (most likely Av. xvaetvadatha- 'next-of-kin marriage'), and the oral transmission of doctrine. In Zarnouas one may discern the Iranian Zrvân, 'Time', who was held by some western Zoroastrians to be the origin of all things. Babylonia was at the time of St Basil's writing the administrative center of the Sasanian Empire, and had been so for hundreds of years under the Arsacids, so it is likely that the Magousaioi were descendants of Persian settlers of Achaemenian times, whose temples in Asia Minor
Kartir rededicated during the campaigns of Šābuhr I a century before the time of St Basil.

Zoroastrianism survived in Armenia after the Arab conquest of Sasanian Iran in the mid-seventh century, for we find the conqueror of Dvin (Arabic Marj Dabīl) in A.D. 654–5 issuing an edict of toleration to the Christians, Magians (Arabic majūsī) and Jews of the city.2

In the mid-eleventh century, the Armenian nobleman and scholar Grigor Magistros Pahlavuni wrote a letter to the Syrian Catholicos of Amida. The letter is mainly concerned with Paulicians and Tondrakites, heretical Christian sects. Grigor distinguishes carefully from these 'some others infected by the mage Zradašt [i.e., Zarathuštra], the Persian Magi, and the sun-worshippers infected by them, who are called Arewordikā [Arm. 'children of the Sun']. In that region [Amida] there are many of them, and they publicly call themselves Christians. But we know that you are acquainted with their confused and dissipated way of life.'3 This passage contains the earliest mention of the Arewordikā we possess, and links them, even if indirectly, with Zarathuštra. We shall meet the term in various other writings, and in popular usage, although it is not possible to establish when it was coined.

The term Arewordikā is a compound of the Arm. words arew 'Sun' and ordi 'son', with the nom. pl. ending -kā. The form arewpāst 'Sun-worshipper' (with reference to the Persians) is attested from the works of the fifth-century writer Eznik of Koš and the fifth-century Armenian translation of the Hexameron of St Basil of Caesarea, while St Nersēs the Graceful uses a form arewpāst in his Epistle to Samosata. A proper name in Persian, Āftāb-parast 'Sun-worshipper' is known; it appears, for instance, in the mediaeval epic Samak-e Āyyār. The forms aregnapāst and aregaknapāst, with the same meaning, are attested only from the eleventh century and later. In his commentary on Matthew, the thirteenth-century writer Yovhannes of Erznka explains that God xawarec oyc zešakan loysn, zi mi Astuac karcic i yaregaknapasticn 'blotted out the created light so that the Sun-worshippers might not think it God.'4 The word aregakn has been analysed as a compound of areg, an old genitive of arew, and akn 'eye', so one would expect a compound meaning 'Children of the Sun' to be *aregordikā or *aregakanordik; the form which survives, Arewordikā, is probably from ca. the eleventh
century, although it may be an older form based on an imprecise analogy with arewpašt (for the latter word has no genitive sense). Another possible argument for the early origin of the name is the assertion by St Nersēs that the name of the Arewordik was handed down to them by their ancestors.

About a century after Grigor's letter, the Arewordik were mentioned again by St Nersēs Klayec (called Šnorhali, 'The Graceful' d. A.D. 1173) in a letter to the people of Samosata on the treatment of Arewordik who wished to become Christian. We learn from this document (translated in the appendix to this chapter) that the Arewordik are Armenians who were not converted to Christianity by St Gregory the Illuminator in the fourth century. St Nersēs speaks of their reverence for the Sun and the poplar, and notes that their religion had been widespread at one time: 'this confusion [i.e., the religion of the Arewordik] was by the grace of God rooted out from amongst other peoples living on the earth.' They are accused of ignoring Christian fasts, and of enjoying rich food and intoxicating drink. Their indulgence in good food and drink, their abhorrence of fasting, and their recognition of their own righteousness and piety are qualities frowned upon by Christianity, but fundamental to Zoroastrianism. The Zoroastrian perceives himself as one of the good creations of Ahura Mazda, a soldier in the cosmic battle against evil. His body deserves good treatment, both as a holy creation and as a weapon in the struggle. Indeed, the word used by St Nersēs for rich food, Arm. parart, 'fattening, nourishing', corresponds exactly to the liutcīm parartučean yaroyn Aramazday 'fullness of richness from manly Aramazd' that Tiridates III asks for the nobles and kingdom of Armenia (Agath. 127), and parart may correspond to the Pahlavi epithet of Ohrmazd, rāyōmand 'the rich', used in the ubiquitous invocation pad nām i Dādār Ohrmazd I rāyōmand I xwarrahōmand 'in the name of the Creator Ohrmazd, the rich and the glorious.' The total rejection by the Zoroastrians of asceticism and renunciation of worldly pleasures is one of the most strikingly obvious differences between the Good Religion and the ascetic trends which were most pronounced in early mediaeval Eastern Christianity. Far from being a creature crippled by original sin, man in the Zoroastrian view is intrinsically good, and recognition of this, through pious thoughts, words and deeds, is his highest joy.
In the twelfth century, Dawit of Alawik termed the Paulicians and Messalians Arewordik. The eighth-century Armenian philosopher Yovhannes of Awjun accused the Paulicians of consorting with sun-worshippers, of worshipping the Sun and Moon, and of exposing the dead on rooftops. His contemporary, Pawlos of Tarawn, wrote of the 'worshippers of the Sun. These do not admit the resurrection of the dead, and are true worshippers of Satan. They believe not in the Holy Scriptures, nor do they accept them; and they say that He who died underwent corruption and perished. They liken this life to herbs and to trees, and say that it is as the herb, which when destroyed does not come to life again, whereas its root does so come to life.' It would seem that orthodox Christian writers seem to have lumped Christian heretics and unbelievers loosely together, perhaps because the former may have adopted certain of the practices of the latter. As we shall see shortly, mediaeval Armenian poets were apt to regard even members of faiths as obviously distinct as Islam and Judaism as simply infidels; polemicists against far less defined teachings which were, furthermore, practised covertly, were unlikely to be fine in their distinctions.

In the fourteenth century, Mxit'ar of Aparan wrote, 'There are some Armenians, who speak Armenian, worship the Sun, and are called Arewordik. They have no literature or writing, but fathers teach their children according to traditions their ancestors learned from the mage Zradašt, the chief of the fire-temple. They worship the Sun, turning their faces to it, they revere the poplar tree, and of the flowers they worship the lily, the sunflower and others whose faces are always turned toward the Sun. They consider themselves similar in faith and in lofty and fragrant deeds, they offer sacrifices for the dead and bring all offerings to an Armenian elder. Their leader is called hazerpet, and twice or more times a year all of them, men and women, sons and daughters, gather at a very dark time in a pit and strip naked, and the hazerpet reads to them and rings a bell.'

The Arewordi title of hazerpet is found as OP. hazāra-pati, equivalent to Gk. chiliarchos. In the fifth century Armenian translation of the Bible, Arm. hazarapet is used to translate LXX Gk. oikonomos, and in the usage of the Armenian historians the title hazarapet dran Areac 'hazarapet of the Iranian court' corresponds to the Sasanian Pahlavi
wuzurg-framādār 'Prime Minister'. The Armenian usage is a survival of Parthian, and although as late as A.D. 297 the Persian King of Kings Narse negotiated with Diocletian in the company of Apharban, his arkapetēs (it has been suggested that this is a Gk. rendering of hazārbad), by the time of Xusro I Anōšarvan hazārbad was used only in its original, military sense and never as Prime Minister.12 The meliks of Eastern Armenia in about the mid-fifteenth century commanded their sepakan zawrk6 'private forces' through their hariwrpet 'centurion', hazarapetner (pl.) and zorawar 'general'.13 (On OP. hazārapatīs- MP (h)arkapat- OP. *āzarapatiš (Arm. hazarapet-hazarawuxt), see O. Szemerenyi, 'Iranica V (nos. 59-70)', Acta Iranica, II serie; vol. II, 1975, 354-66.) The meliks preserved the sense of hazarapat as a military title (cf. Mark 6,21-2; Acts 21,31-2) rather than as civilian 'steward' (I Cor. 4, 1-2, Luke 8,3; Galat. 4,2). The OP. title of hazārapatīs was applied to the ten leaders of the 10,000 Immortals, but also to the leader of the mēlīks or doryphoroi regimen of the Achaemenian army. In later centuries, the hazārbad was recognised by Classical writers as second only to the King of Kings; Cornelius Nepos Conon wrote of the ...Chiliarchum qui secundum gradum imperii tenebat 'the chiliarch [i.e., the hazārbad], who held the second position of the (Persian) empire', and Hesychius, noting that the hazārbad reported daily to the King, describes azarpateis hoi eisangeleis para Persiais 'the azarpateis, the announcers-at-court of the Persians.'14

In Armenia, the office of hazarapat existed during the period of the Sasanian marzpanate following the end of the Armenian Arsacid dynasty in A.D. 428; the hazarapat collected taxes and was responsible for the maintenance of order generally in Armenian cities and villages.15 The Aramaic title RB TRĒŠ rabb tarbasu 'chief of the court(?)', (comp. mediaeval Arm. darpas 'palace') in an Aramaic inscription at Mtskheta, the ancient capital of Georgia, has been equated with Arm. hazarapat, for the Georgian title ezoys mozgvari, used to translate Arm. hazarapat in Christian texts (post-fifth century), means 'chief of the court'.16 The Aramaic title has also been compared to Gk. pitiāxēs, Arm. bdesx, and to Sasanian Pers. framādār. For the transformation of this civil term into a religious title, one may compare the development of another Iranian rank, gänzabara 'treasurer' to Biblical Aramaic gizbār 'priest', Mandaic gonzibra 'idem'.17
Yovhannes of Awjun notes that the 'Paulicians' gather in darkness, there to perform intercourse with their mothers like the Persians: a clear reference to **xvaētvadathā-**. As to the gathering of the Arewordik in darkness, this may have been a response to persecution, as we shall see below. In discussing their oaths, Yovhannes mentions that they swear by the glory (**pēark**, comp. Av. **xvarēnah**-) of the one to whom Jesus consigned his Spirit (**ogi**); such an oath may reflect both the **fravasi-** cult and the Zoroastrian concept of **xvarēnah-**, the former connected to the sacrifices offered to the dead which Mxitār cites.

In the late fourteenth century light is shed on the continuing threat to the Arewordi community by the record of **Tcovma Mecopc'i** of the destruction by Tamerlane of four Arewordi villages near Mardin; **Tcovma** notes that the Arewordik multiplied in Mardin and Amida when peace returned. In the life of the martyr P katax of Amida (d. 1524), we learn that he was a blacksmith by trade, son of an Arewordi father and a mother from Maraka whose father had been a priest of the Armenian Church. Mxitār Catholicos noted the presence of Arewordik, and they appear in mediaeval Armenian poetry; Dawit of Salnajor wrote this couplet on them:

Shepherd's clock, wild camomile, Egyptian willow
wait upon the Arewordi.
Their flock is separate indeed: all day long
they turn with the Sun.

These lines recall a fable of Mxitār Gos (d. 1214): 'The flowers of the bulrush and those like it were accused of worshipping the Sun. But they, raising their hands towards the Sun, swore, by the Sun, "We are not Sun-worshippers!"' The poet Yovhannes of **T'lkuran** (a town near Amida, modern Diyarbakir), fourteenth century, mentions the Arewordik in a misogynous poem:

Woman is repelled not by Arewordi,
Nor by Jew, nor by Turk.
The one she loves: he is her faith.
God save us from her evil!

The Arewordik are regarded as infidels comparable to Jews and Muslims.

Down to the nineteenth century, there were members of a sect called in Arabic **ṣamsiyya** 'those of the Sun' living in Mesopotamia; Armenian horsemen belonging to the sect took part in the murder of Bazwāq, isfahsālar of the emir of Damascus, in April, 1138. It has been
suggested that these were Arewordik who had fled persecution by the Armenian Church. This is unlikely, for the šamsiyā were a recognised order of the Xalwati dervises of Siwās since circa 1600, and, therefore, considered Muslims; it is unlikely that the Arewordik would have been. It seems this is another instance of the confusion of heretics and unbelievers, as was noted above in the case of the Paulicians and Messalians.

It was noted above that Zoroastrians still resided at Duin in the seventh century, and it appears that many Armenians resisted conversion to Christianity. It may be recalled that many others returned in the fourth century to their older customs whenever the opportunity presented itself. We are told by the fifth-century historian Pawstos Buzand that non-Christian Armenians performed their rites in secret, under cover of darkness, and this accords well with the description of the Arewordik provided by Mxitār of Aparan above. Such secret gatherings are characteristic of the rites of any religion whose members fear persecution, and do not necessarily indicate that the members of the faith are partial to darkness, which Zoroastrians certainly are not. Sephardic Jews who practised their religion in secret during the Inquisition often held their rites in cellars or other dark places of concealment; and some of the Mexican descendants of these conversos, forced converts to Catholicism, continued until recent times to retire to their cellars every Friday evening at the beginning of the Sabbath, although they no longer understood or remembered why they did so. It is not unusual, either, for a polemicist of a persecuting religion to call scornful attention to the furtiveness of those who practice forbidden faiths, even if the cause of their secrecy is the intolerance of his own creed. Thus, the Zoroastrian Dēnkard scorns 'dēv-worshippers' for their 'movement in darkness' (PhI. niḥānītom awārīnīn), using the pejorative daēvic verb awār-, which perhaps is best translated as 'scuttle, creep'. By the mid-fourth century, some non-Christian Armenians felt it necessary that they practice in concealment their religious observances; the necessity of such precautions would have grown greater with time, as Christianity gained a firmer foothold in the country. Yet we are also told by Yovhanēs of Awjūn that a 'demon' commanded the 'Paulicians' to sacrifice (zohel, cf. Av. zaothra) on hilltops and mountaintops, indeed as
the Achaemenian worshippers of Ahura Mazda had proudly and openly done. 27.

In our day, to be Armenian but not Christian is popularly regarded as a logical impossibility, yet our sources speak of followers of Zaradašt—i.e., Zarathuštra—who were Armenian and who spoke Armenian, and who transmitted the teaching of their prophet orally, like the Magusaioi of St Basil and in accordance with Zoroastrian tradition. 28

Following the Zoroastrian injunction to expose corpses to the Sun (Phl. xwarseged nigrisn), the Arewordikc faithfully laid out their dead on rooftops, 29 just as the pre-Christian Armenians had exposed the bodies of the Hrip"simean virgins (Agath.201): "Ev karsenal ı bac c enkec c in zmarins noc a ar i ker linel sanc c k a sk c in ew gazanac c erkri ew t c noc c erknec c. 'They dragged out their bodies and threw them away to be the food of the dogs of the city and the beasts of the country and the birds of the skies.' But none of these, we are told, molested the virgins' bodies, nor did they decay until Gregory was brought to them on the ninth day after their death (Agath. 223). The veneration of trees was practised by the ancient Urartean inhabitants of the Armenian highland, and so may not be a specifically Zoroastrian custom, although certain trees were venerated in Iran, from Achaemenian times down to the present day. 30

The Arewordi's refusal to recognise the resurrection of Christ is in keeping with Zoroastrian doctrine, which allows for the restoration of the physical body (Phl. tan i pasën) only at Judgement Day (Phl. frašegird 'the making wonderful', Arm. hrasakert) and the Arewordi belief concerning the root which will eventually sprout anew may reflect this doctrine. In accordance with Zoroastrian custom, the Arewordikc made regular offerings for the souls of the deceased.

Of all the beliefs and practices attributed to the Arewordikc, the most prominent is reverence for the Sun, which is central to Zoroastrianism. Every orthodox Zoroastrian should recite a hymn to the Sun, the xwarseed niyayes, thrice daily, together with the Mihr niyayes, the yazata Mithra being closely associated with the Sun, during the morning, noon, and afternoon watches of the day. 31 Several writers have noted how the Arewordikc actually turned with the Sun when praying, and this too is an observable practice of the Zoroastrians, who turn east in the
morning and west in the afternoon when tying the sacred girdle (Phl. kusTïg, Arm. kÇustik). 32 St Nersês Snorhali himself composed hymns to be recited before the rising Sun; it is the turning of the worshipper with the course of the Sun that marked the Zoroastrian and which is specifically anathematised by the Greek Orthodox Church. 33 It was said that the Arewordik® worshipped the moon as well as the sun, and this statement is presumably to be linked with the Zoroastrian usage whereby the worshipper faces the moon when tying the sacred girdle at night if he has no lamp, and recites the Mânh niyâyes, a hymn to the moon, thrice monthly. 34 The cult of the Sun has always remained prominent in Zoroastrianism. 35

Reverence for the Sun was a prominent feature of the pre-Christian faith of the Armenians, who associated the greatest of heavenly fires with the yazatas Mïhr and Vahagn at various times, and Tiridatês I (first century A.D.) in his Greek inscription at GaMi identified himself with the epithet hêlicos 'the Sun'. 36 The name of the eighth month of the Armenian year was Areg, 'of the Sun', and the great gate of the city of Artašat was called Areg surm, 'Gate of the Sun'. In Christian Armenian iconography, a sunburst is often found at the centre of the Cross, and in some early Christian Armenian ornamentation the Sun even replaces the Cross entirely. 37 The image of Christ as the sun of righteousness (Arm. aregakn ardarutcÇan) is found frequently in Christian texts, and in one hymn (Arm. Šârakan) the Christians fight fire, the substance of the sun, with fire in the most literal sense: Pancali surb zawakawkc hovîwâ?qn zwartc Šunkc, hrov hogwoyn sîjucÇin zbocÇn zkrakapâÇc persiÇçn 'The wakeful shepherds through their glorious, holy children extinguished with the fire of the soul the flame of the fire-worshipping Persians.' 38 The tenth-century mystical poet St Gregory of Narek wrote, Ând elicÇç| arewun, Ardarutççan aregaknd i yanjkutçÇwn artis mtcÇÇ 'At the sunrise, may that Sun of righteousness enter my straitened heart.'

Certain other practices and beliefs of the Arewordik® beside those cited above seem to be part of Zoroastrian tradition. Grigor Magistros speaks darkly of an 'angel-like race of demons' revered by the 'Paulicians'. These 'demons' were perhaps the yazatas, about whom the Armenian heresiarch Šmbat TÇondrakecÇÇi learned from 'the Persian, Majusik'. 39 One of them may be the yazata Anahit, for Yovhannês of Awjun mentions
cakes which were offered to the Lady of Heaven (tiknoj erknic); the title Lady (Arm. tikin, Mir. loan-word bambišn, Phl. bānīg) is among the most common appellations of the yazata in both Armenia and Iran. It was noted above that the title Magus, from which was derived Arabic mağūsî, came to be applied to Zoroastrians generally, so that Grigor's Majusik is more likely to mean 'Zoroastrian' than to be a personal name. The ending -îk is Armenian, however, a diminutive mainly denoting affection. It is often used with priests; in the early years of this century, Catholicos Mərtik Xrimean was called Xrimean hayrik 'little father'. According to Yovhannes of Awjun, the Condrakite heretics zaregakn ašc el kamec eal asen, arewik lusik 'when they wish to beseech the Sun, say "Little sun, little light"', and the Oskeberan (a mediaeval miscellany containing texts of various periods) informs us that Manikxəcik erdən yaregakn, ew asen: lusik, arewik kəcəcərik, li es tiezer5k. 'the Manichaean swear by the sun and say "Little light, sweet little sun, you are full of the heavens."' The pre-Christian Armenians also worshipped a goddess Astšik, 'Little Star'. As we have seen, there were Zoroastrians, referred to as mağūsīs by the Arabs, who resided at Dvin in the mid-seventh century. The seventeenth-century Ottoman traveller Evliya Efendi mentions in the narrative of his travels that he saw rich moghs in Genje (Arm. Ganjak) and Zindiks (Manichaans, called Zendiks by Eznik) in Naxijewan. There were Manichaens in Armenia, it seems, from the very earliest years of that faith, for according to the tenth-century Arab bibliophile and scholar An-Nadīm, Mani addressed an Epistle to Armenia.

Not far from Ganjak, on the Apšeron Peninsula, was the ātašgān 'fire-temple' of Baku, whose fires were fed by natural gases. The present building was not built probably earlier than the eighteenth century, and inscriptions in Indian scripts on its walls indicate it was a place of pilgrimage for Parsi travellers in recent times. The fires are now extinguished, but it is possible that the Baku temple was a centre of Zoroastrian worship in the Caucasus before the simple shrine now standing on the site was constructed. It may be stated with reasonable certainty, then, that both Zoroastrians and Manichaans continued to reside in Armenia and neighboring areas until recent times. Eznik's remark that both were Sun-worshippers is borne out by later Armenian writers.
in their citations of invocations to the Sun. But the liking of the Arewordik\textsuperscript{c} for good food and drink is definitely contrary to the ascetic and world-denying teachings of Manichaeism, nor was any man called a Magus likely to be a Manichaean. We cannot tell for certain whether Majusik was a Persian or an Armenian, but it is possible that he was identified as the former because of his adherence to a religion which had once been practised by 'many' peoples (cf. the Epistle of St. Ners\`es) but was by the eleventh century considered Iranian, and certainly non-Armenian. Zoroastrians and Manichaeans would not have intermingled, for however considerable the superficial and visible similarities between them that may have led Christian writers maliciously or ingenuously to confuse them, their philosophies are in diametric opposition to one another and wholly irreconcilable.

Armenian and Persian Zoroastrians living in the hostile Muslim and Christian environment of mediaeval Armenia may well have overcome the differences that had separated them in early Sasanian times, however,\textsuperscript{46} for there would have been no irreconcilable contradictions between their views. The man who was called Majusik could have been 'Persian' in nationality as well as religion.

In his enumeration of Arewordik\textsuperscript{c} customs, St Ners\`es refers to the addition of substances repulsive to Christians to food and enjoins the Arewordik\textsuperscript{c} to cease this practice. The substance alluded to is possibly consecrated bulls' urine (nirang), the ritual consumption of which is crucial in Zoroastrian laws of purity.

Like the Magusaioi of Cappadocia and the Zoroastrians of other countries, the Arewordik\textsuperscript{c} appear to have shunned very much contact with the dangerous and unclean infidel, living, as T\textsuperscript{covma Macop\textsuperscript{c}}\textsuperscript{c}i wrote, in villages of their own. The mountainous isolation of their homeland no doubt assisted greatly their chances of survival and the protection of their ancient faith, although it is this same isolation that makes any information concerning them so precious and scarce. (T\textsuperscript{covma Arcruni wrote of the Armenians of Xut\textsuperscript{c} that 'half of them have lost the use of their mother tongue through the remoteness of their homes . . . they know and are forever repeating Psalms translated by the ancient Armenian translators.')\textsuperscript{47}
A certain survival of the ancient Zoroastrian faith of the Armenians of particular relevance to the Arewordik, the image of shadowless light, may be noted here, however. Students of religion have often remarked upon the uniquely Zoroastrian solution to the problem of evil, whose existence continues to perplex the followers of monist faiths such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam. For the Zoroastrian, Ahura Mazdā is all light, all good and all warmth. Disease, death, darkness and the other scourges of our lives are a result of the invasion of the world by Angra Mainyu and are wholly separate from and inimical to Ahura Mazdā. Evil is a quality apart from God, rather than a mysterious aspect of His inscrutable ways before which men can only bow their heads in humble perplexity. To a Zoroastrian, there is no darkness in God, and all evil is to be fought. Zoroastrian philosophy must sacrifice the concept of an omnipotent divinity in order to achieve this solution, of course, for the wholly good Ahura Mazdā would have destroyed evil long ago, had he been able to do so. Man is therefore an ally of Ahura Mazdā in battle against Angra Mainyu, his minions, and the creations he has perverted; the Armenians preserve the names of many of these, as well as Zoroastrian concepts such as that of a class of Ahrimanic creatures.

Christian theologians have divided the unified Zoroastrian concept of evil into two parts, in an effort to solve the problem. External manifestations of evil, such as plagues or floods, are part of God's plan, and conceal some greater good, or are retribution for our sins, or are sent to test us. Inner manifestations of evil, such as violent or sinful thoughts, desires and impulses, are an absence of God (and therefore have nothing to do with Him or His will), a test sent by Him (either to strengthen us or for other reasons known to God but not immediately to us), or a result of original sin (itself an evil impulse coming either from an absence of God or as a test which our father Adam failed). In both cases, however, an all-powerful God would be competent to fill whatever was void of Him, to make us pass His tests, and to pursue His plans without the inexplicable and unbearable pain which is visited daily upon His creatures. For what is omnipotence if not this? God seems to be the source of both good and evil, of light and darkness (cf. Yovhannēs of Erzinka, cited above) in our world.
The fine poetical and polemical distinctions drawn between manifest and eternal light make such an image difficult to treat of with precision, particularly since the cosmological views of Christianity and Zoroastrianism are totally different: to the Zoroastrian, the गैतिस 'earthly, material' state is a completion and fulfillment of the मौन 'spiritual' creation; to the Christian, the material world is to be seen as an image informed by an unchanging and superior spiritual reality. We have seen how Armenian Christians appropriated the images of the Sun and of Light and turned them to their own purposes. Yet it is still striking to observe the insistence with which various Armenian writers assert that God is all light and totally free of evil. St Nersès, Grigor Magistros and St Gregory of Narek and other writers compare God to a light that casts no shadow; this image is thoroughly Zoroastrian in character, for it was Angra Mainyu who was said to have added to fire its smoke and its shadow. Before the onslaught of evil, fire neither released smoke nor cast any shadow.

Although the Epistle of St Nersès was written to direct the mass conversion of Arewordis to Christianity, members of the sect are mentioned by writers of later centuries, and it seems that some of them may have survived down to the time of the 1915 Armenian Genocide. On 4 July 1979, Mrs. Marie of Marsovan, Turkey, wrote to this writer which had been published by the American-Armenian writer Khachig Tololyan in the Mitkew Aruest ('Thought and Art' supplement of the Armenian-language Parisian journal Haratch (i.e., առաջ 'forward') on 1 July 1979. Mrs. Metak was born in Marsovan, Turkey of parents from Sebastia (Ţ. Sivas). The ancestors of most of the Armenians of Marsovan, she wrote, came from Ani, the mediaeval Bagratid capital of Armenia on the Araxes, far to the east. The area of Marsovan around the hill which was the Armenian quarter, and particularly that part of the district at the foot of the hill where Armenians had settled, was called Arewordi, according to Mrs. Metak, and a cemetery in the gardens outside town was called Arewordi grezman (i.e., grezman), 'Arewordi's tomb'. She recalled a song from Marsovan she had heard with the word arewordi in it, and the surname of the owner of one of the vineyards of the town was Arewordean. The fate of this man is unknown to us.
In 1898, Nathan Söderblom wrote, 'One of the proofs that Mazdeism in the beginning was not peculiar to one people, but had universal pretentions like those of Hellenism, is that Armenia remained entirely Mazdean until the time of the Sasanians, when the relations between the Armenian nobility and the Arsacid court broke down. Only then could Hellenism, thanks to Christianity, undermine Mazdeism in Armenia.' Zoroastrianism, which was introduced into Armenia at least as early as Achaemenian times, survived Christian oppression and Muslim massacre; remnants of the early community of the faith seem to have survived as the Children of the Sun down to the final devastation of the western Armenian lands in our century. Armenian Christianity and folk custom retain many traces of the old religion too, and it may fairly be said that some Armenians retained with tenacity the religion of Ahura Mazda beyond the frontiers of Iran, as the world faith Zarathustra intended it to be, while others, although embracing Christianity, still retained certain Zoroastrian concepts and practices. Despite successive waves of obliteration, the filtering of Armenian Zoroastrian doctrine through hostile Christian polemics and the ruthless destruction by time and invasion of much of the ancient material culture, one can reconstruct the saga of a coherent faith, rich, dearly held, and a worthy chapter in the annals of the Good Religion.
Notes - Chapter 16


4. See NBHL, s.v. aregaknapšt, aregnapašt, arewapast; Eznik scorns Zoroastrians and Manicheans alike, claiming that i kcešin mi en erkokcean: nok'ak erkarameqanuoc ew sok'au nayupisikc; nok'ak arewapaštke oc ew sok'a cašaikc 'the two of them are one in teaching; they are dualists [lit. 'two-rooted'] and these are the same; they are sun-worshippers and these are the servants of the sun' (Eznik, 461 para. 149).


6. Bartikian, 103; Appendix.

7. Bartikian, 103; Alisan, AHH, 100: Paylikeankuoc kam Moğnaykuoc Arulordoc azgn ė.

8. Yovhannes Qjncoc 1. Šnddem Pawjikeaneoc ('Against the Paulicians'), in MatenagrotSýnvk, Venice, 1834, 38; Conybeare, op. cit., 154. Yovhannes wrote: Orkco ew znoccin diakunuq er dovkuoc urum in tanis zel'seals barjrahayec oc erknapis lineol, erdnun ay lànd ayloy asac'sealk: Barjrealn gitë. Išk zaregank akæk'el kanec'seal, ascu: Arewik, Lusik 'They also conceal their own corpses in the eaves, on rooftops, looking upwards, facing heaven. They swear in their confusion "The one on high knows." And when they wish to beseech the Sun, they say "Little Sun, little light."' On such invocations see below. A translation of portions of the text is provided in the appendix to this Chapter.


11. Bartikyan, p. 103; Ališan, AHH, p. 102: En omanoç Haykazeankoc ew hay lezuau arewapastkoç, ew koçcin Arewordikoç: sok'au oç unir gir
ew dpruetiwn, avl awanduetseamb usucanen harkon zordian iwreanc, zor maxnik nocca usealk ein i Zradašt moșe, andruşanpete [sic]. Ew end or ercay aregakan, end symn erkerpagan, ew patuen zcahn berti ew zűšan cašiin ew zbanbakin ew zayln, or zăems iwreanc Šrjećucanen źndėm aregakan. Ew nmanecuccanen zinkceans nocca hawatov ew gosrov banjr ew anušahot. Ew arnen matac muccecelocc, ew tan zamcenyn haa H(a)y ericc'u. Soc'a arajCOND koč'ii Hazarpet, ew yiwracan'iw da ami erku angam kam awelcčean ayc ēr ew kin, ustr ew dustr, žokovin i gub mi ycyž xawarin...Yovhannes of Avjun (op. cit., 37-8): Aregakan erkir pagnelov, norayumm lačc'iai erkerpagancc: mknorsakac' linelov pastawnamatoyoO, yaynocOik mício ankanin xorxorat, okc' dzi ew zšum ęntrecć in iwreanc' linel astuać: ew kam yešiptac'woccc' źnk'имiin gazanasnoyO get. nd xawar xzavarayinsn katarabelov canakutćiwns, i parskañ mayrapakanucčecançh vayr vtsangeal xrin xoheri' They kiss the earth i.e., bow to the Sun and cohabit with (fellow) worshippers of it. They make offerings to mouse-hunters i.e., cats], and, thrust forward by them, they fall into the pit, they who chose the horse and dog as gods, or they drown in the Egyptian river that fosters beasts. In the darkness they perform dark copulations: by their Persian copulation with their mothers they are thrust, imperilled into depravity.' The deified dogs may be the varalczk of Armenian legend (see Ch. 13); the deified horse recalls a silver vase found in Bori, Georgia showing a horse before an altar. The vase has an inscription in Aramaic on its base, and has been dated to the first century a.d. (V. G. Lukomin, Persia II, New York, 1967, pl. 34 cf. p. 215). The Egyptian 'beast' (gazan; on this Iranian loan-word see our Ch. on Evil Spirits and Creatures) is the crocodile; see the appendix to this Chapter.


15. Ter-Gevondyan, op. cit., n. 2, 57 n. 47.


18. Bartikan, 104.
Conybeare, Cat. Arm MSS Brit. Mus., 68, Fol. 216.

Alişan, AHH, 100.

Ibid., 104: Sinjn, iríc úkun u ečerdakn, ku spasen Arewordwun: / Noc’a eram uríš ū, ku ñerjìn zār m hét arewun. S. Avdalbekyan, 'Buyseri pastamunk’i azdecútyyn havykann mi k’ani teklanunneri vra,’ P-bH, 4, 1964, 223, mentions a monastery in Tarawn called Ečdrı (Egyptian willow, Lat. salix aegiptaca). According to tradition, the apostle Thaddeus hid some oil near that plant at the spot; light descended and St Gregory found it (cit. K. Vardapet Lusararean, Gavazanagirık, Jerusalem, 1912); according to Oskean, Taron-Turuberani vank’er, a ečdrı tree was still there before the 1915 Genocide and was carefully tended. On the worship of plants, see our Chapter on Havrot and Mawrot; on the two traditions in Armenian Christianity of the Syrian Apostles and the Parthian St Gregory, see our Ch. on Armenia in Parthian and Sasanian times.

I. Orbeli, Mediaeval Armenian Fables, Moscow-Leningrad; 1956, p. 70.

Alişan, AHH, 103: Kinn ōc’ pêzgey yarewdeyoy, / Ōc’ i T’urk’e.ōc’ i Haye [Nor by Tur, nor by Armenian]: Zov or sirê, hawata ayin ū./ Astuc p’urké kankan saig! We prefer the reading of the second line by Em. Pivazyan, Hovhannes T’ikuranc’i: Tealer, Erevan, 1960, XX: l4, Ōc’ i ğhtê, ūc’ i t’urk’ê. A translation and study of the complete divan of the poet by this writer is to be published in the University of Pennsylvania Armenian Texts and Studies Series.


See PÇB III.3 and our Ch. on Armenia under the Parthians and Sasanians.


DkM 182-6, cited by R. C. Zechner, Zurvan, Oxford, 1955, 15 & 30 n. B. On such dev-worship, see our Ch. on Evil Spirits and Creatures. On Achaemenian worship, see Herodotus, Hist., I, 131; on reverence for mountains in Armenia, see our Ch. on Aramazd.

See the chapter 'Patvand' in H. W. Bailey, Zor. Problems, Oxford, 1971; the fifth-century Armenian writer Eznik of Kolb notes in his Eëc elandoc’ 'Refutation of Sects' that the Zoroastrians do not put their teachings in writing: 'Ey k’ani en grovk’ õç’en sovin patren ztxmars 'And since the religion is not in writing, sometimes they say that and deceive by it, and sometimes they say this, and by the same mislead fools' (L. Mariès, Ch. Mercier, Eznik de Kolb, De Deo, Patrologia Orientalis, Vol. 28, Fasc. 3, Paris, 1959 (Arm. text), 472 para. 192).
29. Al-Biruni notes that during the festival of the dead, Farvardigan, the Zoroastrians left drink on the roofs of houses for the spirits of the dead to enjoy (cf. Boyce, *Hist. Zor.*, I, 123).

30. According to Herodotus (VIII:31), Xerxes offered golden ornaments to a sacred plane tree; Xenophon (*Hellenica*, VII.1.36) noted that the Achaemenian royal court had an artificial plane tree of gold which was a cult object (cf. Boyce, *op. cit.*, p. 143). See also our Chs. on Hawrot and Mawrot and Spandaramet-sandaramet, and the appendix to this Ch.


32. J. J. Modi, *The Naojote Ceremony of the Parsees*, Bombay, 1936, 6, 14; on *k'ustik* see our Ch. on the Fire-cult.


34. Dhabhar, *op. cit.*, 28.

35. Pace Christensen, *op. cit.*, 432: '[nineth-century Zoroastrianism] offâga l'adoration du Soleil pour accentuer le monotheisme du culte d'Ohrmazd, et l'on determina la position de Mithra (Mihr) dans le systeme en concordance avec le Mihr Yast ancien.'

36. See our Chs. on Vahagn and Mihr; on the month of Areg, see G. B. Petrosyan, ed. & trans., *Anania Shirakac*i, *Mateanagitut*yun, Erevan, 1979, 256; on the gate of *Aštisat*, see Agath. 192.


39. Conybeare, *op. cit.*, pp. lxvii, 144; Garsoian, *op. cit.*, 148; see the appendix to this Ch. on the 'Lady of Heaven' and our Ch. on Anahit and Nane.

40. *NBHL*, x.v. arewik.

41. See our Ch. on Vahagn.


45. See n. 41 above.

46. On these differences, see our Ch. on Armenia under the Parthians and Sasanians and our Chs. on Aramazd, Mihr and Vahagn.

47. Garsoian, op. cit., 227.

48. See our Ch. on Evil Spirits and Creatures.

49. See J. R. Russell, Grigor Narekats'i: Matean Oghbergut'ean (Book of Lamentations), Caravan Books, Delmar, N. Y., 1981 (Classical Armenian Text Reprint Series, III), xvi-xvii; in his 89th meditation, St Grigor calls God afenc' xawari caragayt' 'beam without darkness'. A medieval text in which each letter is assigned a meaning and a list of words beginning with the letter and associated with the particular concept is given, begins with A, Arm. Astuac 'God', who receives the epithets anstuerr 'shadowless' and anstuerr lapert 'shadowless lamp', among others (Erevan Matenadaran MS 599, fol. 8b-9b, cited by P. M. Pokosyan, "Ecit' nagreank"-i aralcvace ev Davit' Anhalt', in H. È. Mirzoyan, ed.; Davit' Anhalt' 1500, ho'dvacneri zo'o-vacz, Erevan, 1980, 189.

50. GrBd. IV. 12 'Then (Ahriman) came upon the fire and he mingled it with darkness and smoke.' Cit. and trans. by R. C. Zaehner, The Teachings of the Magi, New York, 1976, 48. The darkness may be understood as the shadow cast by a flame.

51. On the Iranian origin of Arm. geresman 'tomb', see our Ch. on Spandaramet-sandaramet.

Appendix to Chapter 16

1. Translation of the 'Letter of Lord Nerses Catholicos to the city of Samostia [Samosata] concerning the conversion of the Arewordik\(^{c}\), from Nerses Snorhali, Endhanrakan t\(^{c}\)i\(^{c}\)t\(^{c}\)k\(^{c}\), Jerusalem, 1871, 223-9.

A translation of the text into Russian forms the appendix to Bartikyan's article cited above; Biblical citations in it were identified by him. A French translation of his article, 'Les Arewordi (Fils du Soleil) en Arménie et Mesopotamie et l'epitre du Catholicos Nerses le Gracieux', was published in REArm, N.S. 5, 1968, 271-288.

* * *

We, Nerses, servant of God and by His grace Catholicos of the Armenians, send greeting to you, noble priests of the city of Samosata, Bishop T\(\varepsilon\)oros and your fellow priests, and to you, Godfearing lay men, hazan, and to all the householders of our spiritual children, a greeting full of love and blessing from my sacred, God-given office, from the right hand of the holy Illuminator and from this throne—may the Lord keep it whole in soul and body.

Let it be known to you that we received long ago your epistle concerning the Arewordik\(^{c}\) who dwell in your city and their desire and petition to be commingled with the Christian flock, concerning also the fact that, as they are by nation \([\text{azgaw}]\) and language of the Armenian clan \([\text{i tohme}]\), they desire to be made equal as one with it in faith and soul. Several of them came to us, too, with this request. We acquainted them with that which we had read in books \([\text{igroc}\] concerning their demon-worshipping cult \([\text{diwapast shandoy}]\) and with that also which we had heard by word of mouth concerning various wicked concepts and deeds of their fellows. For even as in the tribe of the Romans \([i.e., \text{the Byzantines}]\) the so-called Bogomils \([\text{Poiomelosk\'in}]\) remained obscured from the light of the glory of the Gospel of Christ, secretly retaining in their hearts the cult of Satan and disobeying the teaching of the Apostles, so in our nation the Arewordik\(^{c}\), lingering in Satanic darkness, did not desire to be illuminated with divine light by the hand of our Illuminator, the holy Gregory, and love not light, but darkness to this day. (224). And as in our days, in which good is scanty, God has pardoned them and opened the benighted eyes of their souls, and they, having departed from Satan, appealed to God, not by deception but in truth, then we must thank God for this mercy. Certain others like them who had come to us, having taken a great vow, departed from this evil heresy and by their own tongues anathematised \([\text{nzoved\'in}]\) those who conceal in themselves like godlessness. And they resolved to fulfill all the demands that we set before them. In regard to them we fulfill thereby the Lord's command: "I shall not chase away the one who comes to Me" \([\text{John VI, 37}]\), for God "desires that all men be saved and attain to recognition of truth" \([\text{I Timothy II, 4}]\), as the Apostle says. If their turning to God be done in truth, then such salvation of the souls of so many people is a joy to God and the heavenly angels, and to us on earth. But if their conversion is a lie, as many think concerning them, and they return again to their nonsense \([\text{Proverbs XXVI, 11}; \text{II Peter II, 22}]\), then there will be no harm in it for us, as we according to the
command of Christ desire and strive to catch them, but if it will be possible for all peoples to be in the skin of His Evangel, to separate and collect the good in a good vessel and to throw away the bad, according to the words of the Evangelical parable [Matt. XIII, 48], this is the deed of the just Judge when He sits on the throne of His glory and dispenses to each according to his faith and his deeds.

So, by God's command we have found it fitting to deal with them this way. Let all priests together with our notable disciples come to the great church which is in your city, and let them collect at the gates of the church all those named Arewordik\[zarajiri\], men, women and children. And first they will ask them: "Do you desire with all your heart, your mind and all your soul to cast off the first confusion of your fathers [za\(g\)a\(f\)ajin molorut\(c\)i\(m\) harc\(c\) jeroc\(c\)] and to come to the truthful recognition of God of our Christian faith?" And when they undertake this and say (225) "voluntarily and with heartfelt eagerness we renounce the satanic deceits of our fathers and do appeal to Christ," then ask them anew thrice, as with children at their baptism, "Do you renounce Satan and all his designs, words and deeds?" And when they undertake this and say "We renounce them," then turn their faces towards the West and say, "Spit thrice in the face of Satan, revile him as one who is filthy, lying and unjust." When they have done this, teach them not to consider the Sun as anything other than a luminous body in the firmament, created by God the creator and set in heaven by him, like the moon and stars, as a lamp to the earth [\(c\)r\(a\)g a\(x\)arh\(l\)]. Nor must they revere the aspen [\(z\)b\(a\)r\(t\)i ca\(n\)] [\(a\)lso translated as 'poplar'] any more than the willow [\(z\)u\(f\)i\(n\)] the poplar [\(z\)ke\(a\)wex\(i\)n] or other trees, nor should they think the wood of Christ's cross was aspen-wood; this is a lie and Satanic deceit, that has led them into confusion and has turned them from God. For this tree called the aspen was for them an object of worship [\(p\)as\(t\)a\(n\)] in the times of idolatry [\(k\)r\(a\)p\(e\)s\(t\)ut\(c\)e\(a\)n], and demons used to settle in it and accept the obeisance of men. And although this confusion was by the grace of God rooted out from amongst other peoples living on the earth, amongst you Satan hid and cherished it as a leaven of evil, and if you wish to come to the truth of Christ, then pull out the wicked custom from amongst you. Not only must you not revere the aspen over other trees, but you consider it less honourable than other trees, for thus will Satan be brought low. If some one of you knows of their other demonic talismans [\(d\)i\(w\)a\(k\)a\(n\) \(i\)n\(c\) \(b\)\(b\)\(a\)z\(a\)n\(c\), tell them of those too; tell them to renounce them and to get rid of them.

Then turn their faces to the East and ask "Do you believe in the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, who are three persons [an\(n\)a\(w\)or\(c\)i\(w\)] and one divinity, one nature and (226) one power, one dominion and one creative principle [\(a\)r\(a\)r\(c\)\(u\)t\(c\)i\(w\)] from which by His word there came forth out of nothing all creations visible and invisible, the sky and the earth and all that is in the heavens and the earth, angels and rational men, the sun and moon and stars, the luminaries of the firmament, earthly creatures of air and sea, all grasses and trees, the motionless and the moving, and there is no creation that has come into being, incorporeal or corporeal, that was not created by the true God. Do you believe in the incarnation of Christ, (who is) one of three persons, the Son of God, who desired by the benevolence of the Father and the Holy Spirit to become the Son of man, born of the perpetually virgin Mary for the salvation of mankind, who
accepted baptism in the Jordan from John, was witnessed to by Father and Spirit, who was tempted by Satan and was victorious over the tempter; that He banished demons, and that He who asked of Him in faith was healed of psychic and bodily ills. Do you believe that He gave light to the blind, that He cured the lame, that He raised the dead and walked on the sea as on dry land, that like the Creator He reigned in wind and sea and they were calm, that He sated a great crowd with a few loaves? Do you believe that after He had created a multitude of divine signs and wonders, he took willingly upon himself the passions of salvation, which he suffered in our nature, that he was crucified on the cross and redeemed the sins of Adam and his progeny? Do you believe that He died in body and by his soul granted life to men, that he went down into the grave and saved souls in Hell, that He rose from the dead on the third day and gave men hope in resurrection by his appearance at the second coming, that in the presence of his disciples in our body he rose to Heaven and sat on the right of His Father in the highest, that he will come again for the righteous judgement over all men, granting good (227) to those who have done good and have abided in the true Christian faith, whilst preparing for infidels and unrepentant sinners eternal punishment in the hands of Satan and his devils, (and) that he with His saints and righteous ones will reign eternally and unto ages of ages?

And after they accept this and begin to profess the true faith of Christianity which we have set forth, gather them into the church, and whosoever of them is unbaptised, teach him the mysteries of the faith, preach to adults and impose a penance upon them for a short time; then, after a while, baptise them. Baptise minors and infants at once. As for those who have been baptised before, merely command them and, laying a penance upon them, mark their brows and sense-organs with holy oil, saying "In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit", and then join them to the Christian flock. And as Christ commanded His disciples, that after baptism of heathen disciples "teach them to follow all that I have commanded you" [Matt. XXVII: 20]: so do you do the same with them, commanding them not to murder or to commit adultery or to fornicate or to steal or to bear false witness against their friends or to be drunk or to do any other evils of Satan, which God hates, but instead of these to love their brother, to do good and not only to desist from stealing that which belongs to others, but to give to the needy that which one has acquired through honest labour according to Christ's command, and not to follow that example of a few early Christians who fearlessly violated God's law. Even if amongst the priests there may be one whom they detest, who is lawless and fearless, let them not be tempted by the meanness of the few in regard to true Christian law, but rather let them direct their gaze to the good and the chosen, and let them receive from those a worthy example, for the law of God does not command the dullwitted to be so, but it is their own sloth and imprudence that does this. Satan, who is opposed to good (228), suggests to them for the destruction of their souls that they scorn the laws of God. In a fitting way, then, command also the women to be far from witchcraft, administering of potions [i kaxardut'genew i deəatuut'genew] and all manner of demonic cult [diwakan alandaworut'genew], for whosoever practises witchcraft, he is one who worships and bows down to demons. He who does this and he who causes others to do it deserves neither last rites nor Christian burial. Teach them similarly that if anyone for demonic love mixes with food or drink some filth or rubbish [pike ew zaktew ir] and
gives it to a Christian, that one is separated from God and is deprived of last rites and is worthy of real hatred, so warn them against the preparation of any such talismans [\( \text{Zagorcut}^{\text{en}} \)].

In addition to that which I have said, of which we write in short and in passing, let it be a general rule for them, men and women. Let them twice or thrice or more every year confess to the priests their sins, let them accept the penance which the priest lays upon them for the forgiveness of sins: this is the observance of fasts, prayers, charity, thanks to which they become worthy of forgiveness by God of the sins to which they have confessed. And at all hours of prayer let them come with other Christians to pray with the priests and bow down before God, the creator of all. And let them pray to Him and ask for the atonement of sins in order that they may attain the Kingdom of Heaven and be saved from the tortures of Gehenna, to keep soul and body in this world pure and untainted by all Satan's wiles, temptations and dangers. Those fixed fasts which other Christians in the world observe—let them follow them and keep from eating rich food and intoxicating drink \( \text{[parart kerakroc} \text{ew i t}^{\text{mbrec}} \text{-uc}^{\text{ic}} \text{-empelae}^{\text{c}} \text{].} \)

Teach them also this: to be heedful of and obedient to the Gospel and other sacred writings. Learned priests, explain to them as you can the esoteric words of the writings. Take their children for the study of Scripture. We asked this of them \( (229) \) when they came to us, and they agreed with love to give them to us, so that perhaps their children too might be worthy to enter the priesthood, just as St. Gregory taught the children of the (heathen) priests \( \text{[k}^{\text{unrk}} \text{c]} \) and made them priests and bishops \( \text{[cf. Agath. 845 and our Ch. on Armenia under the Parthians and Sasanians].} \)

And God will reward you a hundred-fold for teaching them, as He said through the mouth of the prophet: "He who extracts the precious from the base shall be called as my mouth" \( \text{[Jeremiah XV: 19].} \)

Finally, let them at last change the name \( \text{Arevordi} \) that they inherit from their ancestors \( \text{[zor unin i naxneac} \text{-irreac}^{\text{c]} \) and be called by the great and wonderful name of Christ—Christians. This is the name that the holy apostles, believers in Christ in great Antioch called themselves. And we shall pray to God to bind them to the rock of faith, so that the gates of Hell \( \text{[dun}^{\text{k}} \text{-d}^{\text{oxoc]} \)--Satan and his minions—cannot turn them from the true faith and Law of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with Father and Holy Spirit glory and power unto ages of ages, Amen!

When by God's grace they are commingled with the Christian flock by those rules we noted above, let them become the wards of the wise, learned and Godfearing priests, that these might be able to teach and instruct them in Scripture. It is not necessary to scandalise them by insisting that they bring gifts to church for baptism, confession, last rites, burial or anything else. Be content with voluntary contributions. Teach them gently rather than harshly, that God may reward you for your kindness rather than punishing you as is meet for tempters, who are cast into the sea with a millstone on their necks \( \text{[Matt. XVIII: 6].} \)


(35) For there are some of them \( \text{[the Heathens, hetçans}^{\text{c]} \) who were deceived by their eyes. Whatever of the elements of heaven and earth appeared once pleasant to behold, they called gods: stars, mountains,
hills, trees and rocks. And they, too, frightened and terrified by the power or ferocity of animals, turned to worship of them, as a serpent [yišap] was honoured amongst the Babylonians, or crocodiles amongst the Egyptians. Others chose and deified elements useful and necessary to the purposes of everyday life, as the Persians and Medes (who deified) fire, water and earth (orpes Parsikk c ew Mark c żur ew żjur ew zerkir); while it seemed more pleasant to them at death to give their bodies to be consumed by wild beasts and birds than to conceal them beneath the earth and by putrefaction to dishonour the one stupidly honoured.

(37) Now, since we have unveiled, denuded and made manifest the stupidity of the idolaters [zkrapastičon], there is no point in calling those others, about whom the present discussion is concerned, by any other epithet [occ incc śn pśtk c deranumut c amb sawnosik, yalagc oroc c bans entc aneyr, nānakel], for they are identical in the matter of their deeds and require no separate name. They bow to the Sun and cohabit with fellow worshippers of it. They make offerings to mouse-hunters (i.e., cats), and, thrust forward by them, they fall into the pit, they who chose the horse and dog as gods, or they drown in the Egyptian river that fosters beasts. In the darkness they perform dark copulations: by their Persian copulation with their mothers they are thrust, imperilled, into depravity. (For the Arm. text of the preceding lines, see Ch. 16, n. 11.)

(38) Falling (upon their faces) they worship even the repulsive idols [kursn] of Chamos and Astarte (Arm. zkamovsayn ew zAstartyyn, LXX Khamōs, Astartē, cf. III Kings XI.7). As ones who praise the leapings of the fire of Gehenna of the lightning-producing demon they prostrate themselves with Jannes and Jambres (cf. II Tim. III.5) before the demon that on Mt. Olympus sprawls on the ground and foams at the mouth.

(38) They also conceal their own corpses in the caves, on rooftops, looking upwards, facing heaven. They swear in their confusion "the one on high knows." And when they wish to beseech the Sun, they say "Little Sun, Little Light."

(38) They are perverse in every oath they utter, saying, "(I am) sworn by the sole-begotten Son', or again, 'I have as witness to you the glory [zpcars] of that one to whose hands the Sole-begotten son consigned his spirit [zogi].'

(41) The demon of passion for the (material) elements forces his subjects to bow down to pleasant forms or lovely images of the elements: thus they learned to make cakes for the Lady of Heaven and to give offerings to the Sun [orpes ew usan isk arnel karkandaks tikno] ermnī ĉ, ew nuirel nuers aregakan. He also taught them to make noise before trees on earth, (saying) 'You are my father,' and to rock (saying) 'You gave birth to us,' and he commanded them to sacrifice on mountains and hills, beneath oaks and poplars and leafy trees (Noynpes yerkri a pśyn ašašakel vardapeter: hayr in es tu, ew kcarin: k'ọ isk onel èmez, ew i very leranc c ew blroc c hramayer zohel, i nerkcøy kalneacc c ew kakamaxeacc c ew varsawor cafo c.)

3. Grigor Magistros, Letter 57, 'Patašxani tCtCoyn katuākosin
Asoroc c i Zamanakin, yorzan ěr dukc i Vaspurakan ew i Taron, zkni bañaloyn zManickec cssn yasxarhēr Yunacc, ew i Tōndrakacc.
Answer to the letter of the Catholicos of the Assyrians at the time when he was Duke of Vaspurakan and Tarawn. After the expulsion of the Manicheans from the country of the Greeks, those remaining of the T'condrakites, their obliterated nation, went to the Catholicos of the Assyrians in the city of Amida that perhaps they might persuade him by trickery; he wrote a letter to Grigor Magistros, the Arsacid, and here is the reply to it, in K. Kostaneano, ed., Grigor Magistrosi t'erkver, Alék-sandrapšl, 1910, 148-164 (excerpts):

(153) But you, holy archpriest and all constant, manly followers of Jesus, come and read that you may find in that province the writings of the holy and thrice blessed priest Anania by the request of Lord Anania, Catholicos of the Armenians, and Lord Yovhannes, overseer of the Armenians, whose names we have written in that letter on how that bloodthirsty evil beast, the homosexual, the lover of slime, the filthy, accursed Smbat appeared in the days of Lord Yovhannes and Smbat Bagratuni, who [i.e., the former Smbat, the heresiarch] had studied his evil confusion from a certain Persian physician and stargazing magus whom you call Majusik [useal zc'ar molut'oin yumemn Bššké ew yastešabašxē mogš, zor Mašusik koč'ekš].

(161) [Grigor describes several sects who believe the universe was created by an evil spirit. He then adds:] But there are certain others also, from Zradast the magus, Magian Persians. And now the sun-worshippers have been poisoned by them, (the former) whom they call Arevondik. And in that province there are many, and openly they call themselves Christians. But we know that you are not uninformed concerning the confusion and corruption of their behaviour. [Aha ew ayilm ank i Zradast mogš: mogpersakankš: ew ayzm i nocšunc dešeal aregaknaphšš: zor arewordshš anuane. Ew aha en yazhm gavari bazumš ev inkšššk k'rístoneykš zinkšššan yanyanpšš košen. BaešŠ shoš orpšši molorutššemb ew anaşakutššemb varin, gitemš, zı očš es antešek.]
ABBREVIATIONS

This list contains abbreviations of both terms and works used in the text and footnotes, including many primary sources; the full bibliographical references to the latter given below are not repeated in the select bibliography which follows.


AHH - Fr. Zevond Alişan, Hin hawatk c kam het'anosakan krönk c Hayocc ('The Ancient Faith or Heathen Religion of the Armenians'), Venice, 1910 ed.


AMT - Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran.


Ar. - Arabic.

Aram. - Aramaic.

Ar'jěn - Ar'jěn bararan haykazean lezu ('Handy Dictionary of the Armenian Language'), 2nd ed., Venice, 1865; contains all the lexical items in the NBHL, but without citations from texts or Greek and Latin equivalents.

Arm. - Armenian.


Av. - Avestan.


BASOR - Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research (Jerusalem and Baghdad).

BBB - W. B. Henning, Ein manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch, repr. in AI, 14, 417-557.


Boyce, Sources - M. Boyce, ed. and tr., Textual Sources for the Study of Zoroastrianism, Manchester, 1984.


BSOAS, BSOS - Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

CHIran - The Cambridge History of Iran.

DkM - D. M. Madan, ed., Dinkard, Bombay, 1911.


Eng. - English.


Gk. - Greek.


HA - Handēs Amsōrey (Journal of the Armenian Mekhitharist Congregation, Vienna).


Heb. - Hebrew.


IE - Indo-European.


Ir. - Iranian.


JA - Journal Asiatique (Paris).


KKZ, ŠKZ – M. Sprengling, Third Century Iran: Sapor and Kartir, Chicago, 1953: text, transcription and translation of the inscriptions of Kirdőr (K) and Šabuhr I (Š) on the Kačaba-yi Zardust (KZ) in Middle Persian, Greek and Parthian; the major Sasanian inscriptions from Iran, with the exception of that at Paikuli, are edited and translated by M. Back, Die Sasanidischen Staatsinschriften, AT 18, Leiden, 1978.

KZ – Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung auf dem Gebiete der Indogermanischen Sprachen.


MIr. – Middle Iranian.

MP. – Middle Persian.


NBHL – G. Awedikcean, X. Siwrmelean, M. Awgerean, Nor Barqirk Haykazean Lezui, 2 vols., Venice, 1836-7 (‘New Dictionary of the Armenian Language’: a dictionary of Classical Arm. with transl. of entries into Gk. and Latin, and citations from texts of the fifth century and later; see Afjeyn).

NP. – New Persian.

OIr. – Old Iranian.

OP. – Old Persian.

Pastabanaran Hanes (Russian title: Istoriko-tiologicheskii zhurnal), Erevan.

P. – Pahlavi.
Phl. Wd. – Pahlavi Vendidad.
Pth. – Parthian.


Sgd. – Sogdian.

SPAW – Sitzungsberichte der königlichen Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Berlin).


Telekagir – Haykakan SSR Gitut‘yunneri Akademiyi Telekagir, Erevan (Russian title: Izvestiya akademii Nauk Armyanskoi SSR); title since 1956: Lraber Hasarakakan Gitut'yunneri.

Tk. – Turkish.


VDI – Vestnik Drevnei Istorii (Moscow-Leningrad).


WZKM – Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes (Vienna).
Y. or Ys. - Yasna.

YM - Yovhannes Mamikonean, Patmut\c{c}iwn Tar\={o}noy ('History of Tarawn'), Venice, 1889. Cit. by page no.

Yt. - Ya\={s}t.

ZDMG - Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenl\={a}ndischen Gesellschaft (Berlin).

ZG - Zenob Glak Asori, Patmut\c{c}iwn Tar\={o}noy, Venice, 1889. Cit. by page no.

ZHLBB - \c{Z}amenakakic\c{c} hayoc\c{c} lezvi bac\c{c}atrakan bararan ('Explanatory Dictionary of the Contemporary Armenian Language'), 4 vols., Erevan, 1969-81.

Zor. - Zoroastrian.

Zsp. - Wiz\={I}dag\={I}h\={A} \={I} Z\={A}dspram, text ed. by B. T. Anklesaria, Bombay, 1964.
TRANSLITERATIONS

For Armenian, the system of transliteration used is a modified form of that used in REArm, the so-called Hülshmann-Meillet system:

The original alphabet of St Mesrop Maštoc consisted of 36 letters; Ҁ renders Classical Armenian МЛ, and was added in the twelfth century with Ъ. The diphthong МЛ, corresponding to Gk ΟΥ, is transliterated by some writers as ΟΥ or Ου.

For the transliteration of Pahlavi and New Persian, one has conformed in most cases to MacKenzie's system (D. N. MacKenzie, A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary, London, 1971, x-xv), except in direct citations of scholars like H. W. Bailey, who use the older or 'Arsacid' transliteration; for Pth. and Manichaean MP., has been used most often Boyce's system (M. Boyce, A Reader in Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian, Acta Iranica 9, Leiden, 1975, 14-19). For Av. and OP. is preferred the system of Air&Wb. The symbols gamma, delta, and theta are transcribed χ, χ, and θ; shva is treated as in Arm. above. The transcription of other foreign languages requires no particular comment.

A discrepancy may be noted between the transliterations of Armenian words in certain cases. This is due to the orthographical reforms introduced in Soviet Armenia, which have not been generally adopted by Armenians abroad. The Soviet orthography is followed for materials printed in Soviet Armenia, using the Classical Arm.

*The symbol shva was not available to the typist.
orthography only where clarity would otherwise be impaired. In Western Arm. dialects the voiceless consonants are voiced and the voiced consonants are pronounced as voiceless; the form of a Western Arm. word or name is transcribed according to the Hübschmann–Meillet system above, and the word as it is actually pronounced is given in brackets where the sense of the argument requires it.
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Many Classical and Mediaeval Arm. texts and other works consulted in this study are noted in the list of abbreviations. Much of the primary material consists of epigraphy, ethnographical data and folk literature (some of the latter of very recent date), and no pre-Christian Armenian texts of great length and verifiable antiquity are known. Therefore, this section is not divided into primary and secondary sources. Instead, certain entries are annotated.


N. Adontz, N. G. Garsoian, *Armenia in the Period of Justinian*, Louvain, 1970 (a study of the development of the naxarar system in the Arsacid period; see also our intro. to the section on Maps).

N. Adonc, 'Tork astuac hin Hayoc' ('Tork, a god of the ancient Armenians'), *Yusarjan – Festschrift of the Mekhitharist Congregation* (see HA), Vienna, 1911.


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N. V. D'yakonova, 'Terrakotovaya figurka Zakaha,' Trudy otdel Vostoka gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha, Leningrad, 3, 1940.


S. T. Eremyan, 'Osnovnye cherty obshchestvennogo stroya Armenii v ellinisticheskuyu epoku,' Telekagir, 1948, 11.


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The two sketch-maps appended to this work are intended to provide a general orientation of Armenia with respect to its neighbours and to indicate principal sites of religious importance in Greater Armenia (Arm. Mec Hayk, Armenia Maior) ca. the first century A.D. A map showing the eight main meheans referred to by Agath. and MX is appended to Fr. Y. Tasean's Arm. trans. of A. Carrière, Les huit sanctuaires de l'Arménie païenne d'après Agathange et Moïse de Khoren, Paris, 1899 (= Hetçanos Hayastani utç meheannern, Azgayin Matenadaran Vol. 35, Vienna, 1899, 44); but it is seen that the number of shrines attested is much larger, and reference must be made at least to detailed maps and works of historical geography which we have consulted.

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historical Armenia based upon Classical and Arm. sources, studies such as that of Eremyan, and coordinates based upon the Aeronautical Approach Chart of the United States Air Force; the table takes into account also the changes in the toponymy of Turkey since Lynch's time.

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MAP 1:

ARMENIA
AND NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES