

## 3.1.5. ORIGIN OF THE ROYAL POWER

As in the Near East, where the kings claim their power and legitimacy from the gods, and often a particular god, the relationship between Ahuramazdā and the king occupies a prominent position in the Old Persian inscriptions, the purpose of which, as is usual with royal inscriptions, was to legitimate the rule of the king: it was bestowed upon him by the supreme god and was acquired through legitimate succession.

In the Achaemenid inscriptions it is Ahuramazdā who makes the kings, and he does this in return for the kings' worship by conferring upon them *xšaça* "power." The standard formula is:

*Auramazdā ... xšaçam manā frābara*

Ahuramazdā gave me the power (or: realm).

For similar formulas in Ancient Near Eastern texts, cf.

From the reign of Tiglath-pileser I (1114-1076 B.C.E.): "**Great gods, managers of heaven (and) underworld, ... who make great the sovereignty of Tiglath-pileser, ... upon him you set the exalted crown, you grandly established him for sovereignty over the land of the god Enlil ...**" (Grayson, 1991, pp. 12-13).

From the reign of Ashurnasirpal II (883-859 B.C.E.): "**At that time my sovereignty, my dominion, (and) my power came forth at the command of the great gods**" (ibid., p. 239).

The Indo-Iranian formulaic heritage is illustrated by examples such as the following.

In the Avesta *xšaθra* belongs to several deities, but especially to Ahura Mazdā, as implicit in *Y. 8.5*:<sup>26</sup>

*vasasca tū Ahura Mazda uštāca xšaēša  
hauuanəm dāmanəm vasō āpō vasō  
uruuarā vasō vīspa vohū ašaciθra  
xšaiiamnəm ašauuanəm dāiiaa  
axšaiiamnəm druuantəm*

May you, Ahura Mazdā, rule at will and wish over your own creations.

Put at will, o waters, at will, o plants, at will, o all good things who \*contain the seed of Order, the follower of Order in power, the follower of the Lie out of power.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> In the *Gāthās* the *ahuras* are the bestowers of "power" (*Y. 29.10*): *yūžəm aēibiiō ahurā aogō dātā ašā xšaθrəmcā auuat* "You (all), o Ahuras, give to these (here) strength according to Order, as well as that power."

<sup>27</sup> If the "power" belonged to the Lie, then (*Yt. 13.12*) *yeidi zi mē nōišt fdaidišt upastəm uyrā ašanonəm frauuašaiiō nōišt mē iḍa āghāt.təm pasu vira \*yā stō sarədanəm vahišta drujō aogara drujō xšaθrəm drujō astuuā aghuš āghāt* "for, if the strong fravashis of the followers of Order had not brought me support, then the cattle and men here would not have been mine,

Among other deities bestowing power is Miθra, e.g., *Yt.* 10.16, 65:

yō vīspāhu karšuuōhu mainiiauuō yazatō  
vazaitē xšaθrō.dā  
yō vqθβō.dā yō xšaθrō.dā yō puθrō.dā yō  
gaiiō.dā yō hauuan<sup>h</sup>ō.dā yō  
ašauuastō.dā

He, the deity who flies over all the continents **giving power**.  
... who gives herds, who **gives power**,  
who gives sons, who gives life, who gives  
good living, who makes (men) followers  
of Order.

In the Rīgveda *kṣatrām dhā-* is a frequent word combination (also *ójo dhā-*; see Kellens-Pirart, III, 1991, p. 40). We may note the following passage (RV 1.157.6):

átho ha **kṣatrām ádhi dhattha** ugrā, yó  
vām havīsmān mánasā dadāša

You two (Ásvins) powerful ones **bestow the power** on the libation-bearer who has made offerings to you with his heart.

Schematically we have for the realization of this—relatively universal—theme:

	DEITY	GIVE	POWER	TO WORSHIPER/TO KING
OPers.	Ahuramazdā	frabar-	xšačam	manā
Av.	yazata (Miθra, etc.)	dā-	xšaθrəm	ašauuan
RV	Ásvins	dhā	kṣatram	yó havīsmān dadāša

### 3.1.6. THE SUCCESSION

Xerxes justifies his succession to the throne, before his (older) brothers, as follows (XPf 28-32): *Dārayavauš pučā aniyaiciy āhar<sup>ta</sup>tā Auramazdām avaθa kāmā āha Dārayavauš haya manā pitā pasā tanūm mām maθištam akunauš* “Darius had other sons as well. Thus Ahuramazdā willed it: Darius, my father, made me greatest after himself.”

This is a Near Eastern literary topos found also in the inscriptions of Esarhaddon (680-669): “I was (indeed) the(ir) youngest (brother) among my elder brothers, (but) my own father, upon the command of Ashur, Sin, Shamash, Bel and Nebo, the Ishtar of Nineveh (and) the Ishtar of Arbela, has chosen me—in due form and in the presence [...] of all my brothers ...” (tr. Oppenheim, in Pritchard, ed., 1955, p. 289).<sup>28</sup>

who are the best of species; the **strength** would have been the **Lie’s**, the **power** would have been the **Lie’s**, the corporeal existence would have been the **Lie’s**.”

<sup>28</sup> See also ed. Borger, 1956, p. 40; tr. Porter, 1993, p. 18.

## 3.1.7. AHURAMAZDĀ'S SUPPORTIVE FUNCTION

A common theme in ancient literatures is that of the king/worshiper obtaining the protection and support of Ahuramazdā and the other gods as a “boon” (*yānam*) for worshipping them correctly. This mutual relationship is expressed in Old Persian in Darius's boast that he prayed to Ahuramazdā and Ahurmazdā gave him help (*DB* 1.54-55, 59-60):

*pasāva adam \*Aurmazdām*  
*patiyāvahayaīy Auramazdāmai*  
*upastām abara ... vašnā Auramazdāha*  
*adam xšāyaθiya abavam*

Then **I** prayed to Ahurmazdā for help.  
 Ahuramazdā gave me support ... By the  
 greatness of Ahurmazdā I became king.

In Avestan the formula *upastām bar-* is found in the prayer of Pāruua, the ship's captain (*Yt.* 5.62-63):<sup>29</sup>

*upa ušāghəm upa.zbaīiaf Arəduuīm*  
*Sūrqm Anāhitqm Arədui Sūre Anāhite*  
*mošu mē \*jasa [mss. jauua] auuaḡhe*  
*nūrəm mē bara upastām*

At dawn **he** invoked Arəduuī Sūrā  
 Anāhitā: O Arəduuī Sūrā Anāhitā,  
 quickly, **come to my help! Bring me**  
**support now!**

and in *Yt.* 13.1:

*mraoṭ Ahurō Mazdā Spitamāi*  
*Zaraθuštrāi*  
*aēuua tē zāuuarə aojasca x'arənō auuasca*  
*rafnasca framrauua ərəzuuō Spitama yaṭ*  
*aṣaonqm frauuaṣinqm ... yaθa mē jasən*  
*auuaḡhe yaθa mē barən upastām*

Ahura Mazdā said to Zaraθuštra the  
 Spitāma:  
 I shall proclaim to you \*exactly, o upright  
 Zaraθuštra, the power and strength, the  
 glory, the help and support  
 of the ... faiths of the orderly, so that **they**  
**may come to my help, that they may**  
**bring me assistance.**

In these Avestan passages we also have the extremely common formula *auuaḡhe jasa-* “to come to (one's) assistance,” with dative of person + final dative, seen also in *Y.* 72.9 *jasa mē auuaḡhe Mazda* “Come to my help, o (Ahura) Mazdā!” or in the hymn to the water, *Y.* 68.9:

*surunuiiā nō yasnəm ahurāne Ahurahe*  
*xšnuiiā nō yasnəm ahurāne Ahurahe*

May you hear our worship, o lady of the  
 Lord! May you take pleasure in our  
 worship, o lady of the Lord!

<sup>29</sup> The formula *upastām dā-* is used in *Yt.* 13.12, 17 (see n. to [3.1.8]).

*upa nō yasnəm āhiša āca nō jamiiā*  
*auuaṅhe aš.yeštica huiieštica*  
*hufrabərəitica zaobranəm*

May you take a seat at our worship! **May you come to our help** on account of (our) great, good worshiping and the good offering of libations!

This formula is not found in Old Persian; however, the verb *patiyāvahqayaiy* is a denominative, *pai-auah-ia-* “ask for help,” from *\*auah-*, Av. *auuah-* and therefore implies exactly the same as the Avestan expression *upa.zbaitia ... jasa auuaṅhe*, with which we can also compare the Rgvedic formulas *āvase hvā-/hū-* and *hava-* “to invoke for help” (very frequent), cf. *RV* 2.29.1:

*ṣṇvatō vo vāruṇa mītra dēvā, bhadrāsya*  
*vidvām āvase huve vah*

**I invoke you** gods, Varuṇa and Mitra, **for help** as the listening ones, knowing your blessing.

and *āvase gam-* in *RV* 8.54.3:

*vāsavo rudrā āvase na ā gamañ,*  
*chṛṇvāntu marūto hāvam*

**May** the Vasus, Rudras, **come to our help**. Let the Maruts hear our invocation.<sup>30</sup>

Similar—or identical—formulas are found in Near Eastern texts, where “the idiom *rēṣūt X alāku* ‘to go to the aid of X,’ with the deity as subject and king as object, is common in the inscriptions of the Assyrian kings” (pointed out by S. Cole) from Sargon II to Ashurbanipal, cf. from the reign of Sennacherib (704–681 B.C.E.): “**I prayed to Aššur, ... the gods, my helpers, to conquer the mighty enemy, and they immediately heard my prayers. They came to my aid**” (ed. Luckenbill, 1924, p. 44 col. v 62–67; tr. S. Cole).

### 3.1.8. AHURAMAZDĀ’S REMUNERATIVE FUNCTION

In the Avestan examples above Ahuramazdā’s support, as well as that of other deities, is obtained as a reward for good and correct worship. The same theme is found in *DB* 5.16–20 (= 32–36):

*Auramazdām ayadaiy vašnā*  
*Auramazdāha yaθā mām kāma avaθādiš*  
*akunavam ... haya Auramazdām*  
*yadātaiy yānam avahayā ahatiy utā*  
*jīvahayā uta martaḥayā*

**I worshiped Ahuramazdā**. By the greatness of Ahuramazdā, as was my wish, thus I did to them ... **He who worships Ahuramazdā, he will obtain a boon** both while alive and when dead.

with which cf. *RV* 1.24.11:

<sup>30</sup> Cf. *Y.* 28.3 *ā mōi rafəδrāi zauuṅg jasatā* “come to (my) invocations to my support.”

*tāt tvā yāmi bráhmanā vándamānas, tād  
ā śāste yájamāno havírbhiḥ*

**That I ask you** (Varuṇa), praising you  
with (my) prayer; that **the worshiping**  
**one** requests **with** (his) gifts of worship.

The theme of asking the deities for a boon is common both in Iran and India. The typical Old Persian formula is seen in *DPd* 20-24 (with Schlerath, 1968):

*aita adam yānam jadiyāmiy  
Auramazdām hadā visaibiṣ багаibiṣ  
\*aitamaiy \*yānam Ahuramazdā  
dadātuv hadā visaibiṣ багаibiṣ*

**This I ask Ahuramazdā as a boon**  
together with all the gods. **May**  
**Ahuramazdā give me this as a boon**  
together with all the gods.

and the Avestan one in *Y.* 65.11-12:

*āpō yānəm vō yāsāmi mazāntəm təm mē  
dāiīata ... imaṭ vō āpō jaiḍiīemi imaṭ  
zəmō imaṭ uruuarā imaṭ Aməša Spənta  
huxšaθra huḍāṇhō vaṇhauuasca vaṇ'hīšca  
vohunqm dātārō ...  
imaṭ vispe yazatāṇhō yōi vaṇhazdā  
aṣauuanō*

O waters, **I ask you for a great boon—**  
**give it to me!** ... **This I request** from  
you, o waters, this, o earths, this, o  
plants, this, o Beneficial Immortals of  
good power, giving good gifts, (you)  
good males and (you) good females,  
givers of good things ...  
**this, o all beings worthy of worship,**  
who are givers of better things and  
followers of Order.

In the Rigveda a great variety of verbs and nouns are used to express this theme. Note especially the use of *yā-*—etymologically related to *yāna-*—corresponding to *yānam jadiya-* and *yānəm jaiḍiīa-/yāsa-* (pointed out by S. Jamison).

One further point to note in *DPd* 20-24 and *Y.* 65.11-12 is the typical formula in which the prayer is addressed to the supreme deity, Ahura Mazda, plus all the gods. Schematically:

	I ASK	A BOON	OF A DEITY/DEITIES	AND/TOGETHER WITH ALL (OTHER) GODS
OPers.	<i>jadiya-</i>	<i>yānam</i>	<i>Auramazdām</i>	<i>hadā visaibiṣ багаibiṣ</i>
Av.	<i>yāsa-</i>	<i>yānəm</i>	<i>āpō ... vō</i>	
	<i>jaiḍiīa-</i>	<i>imaṭ</i>	<i>vō āpō</i>	<i>vispe yazatāṇhō</i>

	DEITY/DEITIES	GIVE	ME	A BOON	AND/TOGETHER WITH ALL (OTHER) GODS
OPers.	<i>Auramazdā</i>	<i>dadātuv</i>	<i>-maiγ</i>	<i>aita yānam</i>	<i>hadā visaibiš багаibiš</i>
Av.	<i>(āpō)</i>	<i>dāiia</i>	<i>mē</i>	<i>təm (yānam</i>	<i>imaγ vīspe yazatānhō)</i>

These formulas may be regarded as basic cautionary measures to guard against the possibility that some god might have been insulted at being left out and not having been invoked and thus might ruin the effect of the prayer, as expressed explicitly in *Y. 1.(20-21)*, 22:<sup>31</sup>

*ratauuō vīspe mazišta ašāum ašahe  
ratuuō yezi (θβā) vō diduuaēša ... ā (tē)  
vō ašhe fracā stuīie nī (tē) vō vaēdāiemi  
yezi (tē) vō ašhe auuā.urūraoda yaγ  
yasnaheca vahmaheca*

O all greatest Models! O Model of Order,  
follower of Order, if I have made you  
angry ... I confess this to you, I make it  
known to you—if I have barred you from  
this, the worship and the prayer.

### 3.1.9. PROTECTING THE KING'S RECORDS TO OBTAIN AHURAMAZDĀ'S FAVOR

One of the most wide-spread concepts throughout both the Ancient Near East and the Indo-Iranian world to be expressed in the literatures of these peoples is that of the prayer for remuneration: long life and numerous and strong descendants for the good and the reverse for the evil. This theme is found frequently in the texts we are discussing, but in this case we are clearly dealing with thoughts common to humanity in diverse places. The Old Persian and Avestan formulas, however, may be historically related.

In the Old Persian inscriptions this kind of prayer is found in the context of an exhortation by Darius to his successors to protect and make public the records of the king's deeds:<sup>32</sup>

*DB 4.53-59:*

*nūram θuvām vānavatām taya manā  
kārtam avaθā kārahayā rādiy mā  
apagaudaya yadiy imām hadugām naiy  
apagadayāhay kārahayā θāhay  
Auramazdā θuvām dauštā biyā utātaiy  
taumā vasiy biyā utā dargam jīvā ...  
yadiy imām hadugām apagadayāhay naiy  
θāhay kārahayā Auramazdātaiy ja<sup>ntā</sup> biyā  
utātaiy taumā mā biyā*

Now believe that which I have done!  
Thus do not hide it from the people! If  
you do not hide this testimony (but) tell it  
to the people, (then) may Ahuramazdā be  
your friend, and may you have much  
family—and you shall live long. If you  
do hide this testimony (and) do not tell it  
to the people, may Ahuramazdā smite  
you, and may you have no family.

<sup>31</sup> The *anyāha bagāha* "other gods" are no doubt just all gods other than Ahuramazdā without specification. Differently Gershevitch, 1964, pp. 18, 35, and Boyce, II, 1982, p. 83 with n. 16.

<sup>32</sup> On this theme in Sasanian Iran see Skjærvø, 1985.

DB 4.72-80:

*yadiy imām dipim vaināhəy imaivā  
patikarā naiydiš vikanāhəy utātaiy yāvā  
taumā [ahatiy] paribarāhədiš Auramazdā  
θuvām dauštā biyā*

*utātaiy taumā vasiy biyā utā dargam  
jivā utā taya kunavāhəy avataiy  
Auramazdā ucāram kunautuv ...  
yadiy imām dipim imaivā patikarā  
vaināhəy vikanāhədiš utātaiy yāvā taumā  
ahatiy naiydiš paribarāhəy  
Auramazdātaiy ja<sup>nt</sup>tā biyā utātaiy taumā  
mā biyā utā taya kunavāhəy avataiy  
Auramazdā nika<sup>nt</sup>tuv*

If you see this inscription or these reliefs and do not destroy them and as long as you have family/strength<sup>33</sup> respect them, (then) may Ahuramazdā be your friend **and may you have much family—and you shall live long.**

And that which you do, that may Ahuramazdā make easy for you! If you see this inscription or these reliefs and do destroy them and as long as you have family/strength do not respect them, (then) may Ahuramazdā smite you, **and may you have no family.** And that which you do, that may Ahuramazdā destroy!

Among Near Eastern examples of prayers for descendants cf. from the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II, king of Babylon (604-562 B.C.E.): “O Ninmah, ... **spread my seed out, make my descendants numerous**, let my descendants be blessed with children!” (Langdon-Zehnpfund, 1912, p. 85, my English paraphrase).

In the Avesta the rewards are given by various deities to those who perform the correct rituals and worship, e.g., by the Waters (Y. 68.10-12):

*yō vō āpō vaŋ<sup>h</sup>hiš yazāite ahurāniš  
Ahurahe ...  
ahmāi tanuuō druuatātəm ahmāi  
asnəmciṭ frazaip̄tīm ahmāi darəyəm  
darəyō.jitīm dāliata vaŋ<sup>h</sup>hiš āpō ...*

Whoever worships you, the waters, the Ahurian ones belonging to Ahura (Mazdā) ... to him **give** health of (his) body, **to him \*noble offspring, to him, o good waters, give longevity.**<sup>34</sup>

by the Haoma (Y. 9.19):

*iməm θβəm paoirīm yānəm Haoma  
jaiḍiemi dūraoša vahištəm ahūm  
ašaonəm ...*

This I ask you as the first favor, death-averting haoma: the Best Being of the followers of Order ...

<sup>33</sup> [According to the Elamite, in this expression *taumā* is “strength,” i.e., < *tauman-*. The other *taumās* are either “family” < *taumā-* or “seed, offspring” < *tau<sup>h</sup>man-*.]

<sup>34</sup> Literally “long longevity.” — Prayers for long life are common in the *Avesta*, see Bartholomae, *Air. Wb.*, cols. 694-5.

*iməm θβqm bitīm yānəm ... druuatātəm  
aḡhāsə tanuuō  
iməm θβqm θritīm yānəm ... darəyō.jitīm  
uštānahe*

This I ask you as the second favor, ...:  
**health of this body.**

This I ask you as the third favor, ...: **long  
life for (my) vital spirit.**

by Miθra (Yt. 10.108):

*kō məm yazāite kō družāt kō huiiešti kō  
dužiiēsti ... kahmāl āsnqmciṭ frazaintīm  
us apara barəzaieiēni ...*

**Who shall worship me, who shall belie  
me? Who with good worship, who with  
bad? ... For whom shall I henceforth  
exalt (his) \*noble offspring?**

Cf. RV 8.59.7:

*indrāvaruṇā saumanasām ādṛptaṃ, rāyās  
póṣaṃ yájamāneṣu dhattam /  
prajām puṣṭīm bhūtim asmāsu dhattam,  
dirghāyutvāya prā tirataṃ na āyuh*

O Indra and Varuṇa, **bestow upon the  
yajamānas** sober-minded happiness,  
growth of wealth!  
**Bestow upon us offspring, prosperity,  
abundance! Stretch out our life for long  
life!**

and RV 10.85.41, 45:

*rayīm ca putráṃś cādād, agnīr ...  
imāñ tvām indra mīḍhvaḥ suputrāṃ  
subhāgāṃ kṛṇu dāsāsyām putráñ á  
dhehi pátim ekādaśaṃ kṛdhi*

Agni **has given** (me) both wealth and  
**sons ...**  
O remunerating Indra, give this one good  
sons and a good share! **Bestow** on her **ten  
sons** (and) make the husband the  
eleventh!<sup>35</sup>

The theme of blessing for the protectors and restorers of the king's records but threats against their destroyers have Ancient Near Eastern predecessors, cf.:

From the reign of Esarhaddon: If a future ruler sees deterioration in his predecessor's work then "may he anoint the inscription with my name with oil and bring it back to its place. Then **the gods will hear his prayer; he will have long life and increase his family**" (Borger, 1956, p. 75, my English paraphrase).<sup>36</sup>

From the reign of Narām-Sîn "As for the one who removes this inscription

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Yt. 10.28: *āaṭ ahmāi nmānāi daḍāiti gəušca vqθβa vīranqmca \*yahmi* [mss.: *yahuua* F1 (anticipating the following *yāhuua*?); *yāhuuō* J10] *xšnūtō bauuaiti upa aniiḍ scīndaiieiti yāhuua tbištō bauuaiti* "Thus he (Miθra) gives herds of cow(s) and men to that house in which he is satisfied. The others he breaks up, in which he is antagonized."

<sup>36</sup> A similar passage from the reign of Assurnasirpal II (883-859 B.C.E.) is seen in Grayson, 1991, p. 320.

may the gods Šamaš and Lugal-marda tear out his foundation and **destroy his progeny!**" (Frayne, 1993, p. 112); and the colophons from the library of Assurbanipal contain such statements as the following: "He who trusts you shall not come to shame, o king of gods, Assur! (But) whoever carries off (these tablets) or writes his name next to (var. in place of) mine, him **may Assur and Ninlil** angered and enraged topple and **destroy** his name and **his seed** in the land!" (tr. after Hunger, 1968, p. 98 and *passim*).

In the Avesta it is the *daēuua*s who deprive humans of these same rewards, cf. from the *Gāthās* (*Y.* 32.5):

<i>dəbənaotā mašīm <b>hujīātōiš amərətātascā</b></i>	you deceive the man of <b>good livelihood and immortality.</b> <sup>37</sup>
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cf. *Y.* 46.8:

<i>paitīiaogəṭ tā ahmāi jasōiṭ duuaēšaṇhā tanuuəm ā yā īm <b>hujīātōiš pāiīāṭ</b></i>	On the contrary, may (that) come with hostility to him upon (his) body, (that) by which <b>one may keep him away from good living.</b>
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The large-scale consequences of divine anger are seen, e.g., in *Yt.* 10.18:

<i>yezi vā dīm aiβi.družaiti ... daṅhəuš vā daṅhupatiš fraša upa.scaṇdaīieiti Miθrō graṇtō upa.ṭbištō uta nmānəm uta vīsəm uta zaṇtūm uta daxīiūm</i>	But if one deceives him ... a land-lord of the land, forthwith Miθra angered and enraged breaks up both the home, house, tribe, and land.
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and *Yt.* 10.108:

<i>kahmāi āsnmqciṭ <b>frazaiṇtīm</b> haθra.jata <b>nijanāni</b></i>	For whom <b>shall I smite down</b> here and now (his) *noble <b>offspring.</b>
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### 3.1.10. OBEDIENCE BY DAY AND NIGHT

A curious (coincidental?) parallel between Old Persian and Avestan is the following one, which involves an expression for "day and night," cf. *DB* 1.19-20 (and *DB* 1.23-24 quoted above [3.2.1]):

<sup>37</sup> Kellens-Pirart, III, 1991, p. 84, compare *RV* 10.60.8 (= 9, 10) *evā dādhāra te māno jīvātave nā mṛtyāvé 'tho ariṣṭātātaye* "Thus has he upheld your mind for life—not for death but for not being hurt."

*manā barḍaka āharṇā manā bājim*  
*abarṇā [taya]šām hacāma aḥaḥaya*  
*xšapavā raucapativā ava akunavayaṇtā*

They were my (faithful) subjects. They brought me tribute. What was said to them by me **by night or by day**, that they would do.

The theme itself is Near Eastern, cf.:

From the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II: "I am prepared **day and night to revere the gods**" (Langdon-Zehnpfund, 1912, p. 151, my English paraphrase).

From the reign of Nabonidus: "Nabonidus ... who attends to the **reverence for the gods**, who is untiring **day and night**" (ibid., p. 231, my English paraphrase).

The Avestan "parallel" is found in Y. 57.17 (to Sraoša "Obedience"):

*yō vīspāiš aiiṇca xšafnasca yūdiieiti*  
*māzaniiaēibiitō haḍa daēuuaēibiitō*

(Sraoša ...) who **all days and nights** battles with the Mazanian *daēuua*s.

What links the two Iranian passages is the theme of **listening to the word of God** = *sraoša*- to ensure the maintenance of the (macro)cosmic order and **listening to the word of the king** (see [3.2.1]) to ensure the maintenance of the political (microcosmic) order.<sup>38</sup>

### 3.1.11. CROSSING RIVERS

One final remarkable theme common to Old Persian and Near Eastern inscriptions but which also has an echo in Avestan involves stratagems for crossing a river and contains the grammatical expression *aniya*- ... *aniya*- ~ Av. *aniia*- ... *aniia*- "some ... others." The Old Persian version is found in DB 1.85-87:

*kāra haya Nadiṇtabairahayā Tigrām*  
*adāraya ... nāviyā āha pasāva adam*  
*kāram maškāuvā avākanam aniyam*  
*ušabārim akunavam aniyahayā asam*  
*frānayam*

The army that belonged to Nidintu-Bel held **the Tigris**. It was navigable. Then I loaded the army onto inflated hides. **Some** of (the army) I mounted on camels, **another** (still) I brought horse(s) for.

and the Avestan one in Yt. 5.78:

<sup>38</sup> The expression "by night and by day" is otherwise quite common in Old Indic, cf. RV 1.98.2: *sā no divā sā riṣāḥ pātu nāktam* "Let him protect us from harm day and night!" — As J. Katz points out to me, the variation in case between the two members of the expression—*xšapa* (gen. sing.) ~ *rauca*- (acc. sing.) *pati*; *vīspāiš aiiṇ* (instr. plur. for acc. plur.) ~ *xšafnas* (gen. sing. or acc. plur.); and *divā* (instr. sing.) ~ *nāktam* (acc. sing.)—may be a stylistic device of Indo-Iranian age.

<i>arāmaēštā anīiā āpō kərənaot fraša anīiā        *fratacaiaī [mss. fratacaī] huškəm pəšum        raēcaciaī tarō vaŋ'hīm Vītaŋ'haitīm</i>	Some of the waters she made stand still, others she *made flow forward. She left a dry ford over the good Vītaŋ'haitī.
--	--

We also have *anya-* ... *anya-*<sup>39</sup> in the description of the waves in the famous “Viśvāmitra’s crossing of the rivers” (RV 3.33.2):

<i>indreṣite prasavām bhīkṣamāṇe, áchā        samudráṃ rathyēva yāthaḥ /        samārāṇé ūrmibhiḥ pīnvamāne, anyā vām        anyām āpy eti śubhre</i>	Driven on by Indra, requesting (leave to) gallop, you go to the sea like to chariot steeds. Having joined with the waves, swelling up, <b>the one</b> of you goes into <b>the        other</b> , o pretties!
---	---

Another parallel is seen in the *composition* of the Avestan and Rigvedic passages. Vistauru applies a “truth utterance,” describing his battle against the *daēuua*-worshippers, to command Arəduuī Sūrā Anāhitā to help him cross the river (Yt. 5.76-77):

<i>tqm yazata Vistauruš yō Naotairiiqnō upa        āpəm yqm Vītaŋ'haitīm ərəuxōāt paiti        vacaŋhaī uiti vacābiš aojanō        tā bā aša tā aršuxōa Arəduuī Sūre        Anāhite yaṭ mē auuauuat        daēuuiiasnanqm nijatəm yaθa sārəma        varsanqm barāmi        āat mē tūm Arəduuī Sūre Anāhite huškəm        pəšum raēcaciaī tarō vaŋ'hīm Vītaŋ'haitīm</i>	Vistauru the Naotarid worshiped her by the water Vītaŋ'haitī with speech correctly spoken, saying the following words: <b>By that Order, by that correctly spoken        (word)</b> , o Arəduuī Sūrā Anāhitā, that ‘I have smashed down as many demon- worshippers as I carry hairs on the head,’ so leave for me, you, o Arəduuī Sūrā Anāhitā, a dry ford over the good Vītaŋ'haitī!
---	---

Similarly, in the Rigvedic hymn, Viśvāmitra and the rivers engage in a brief exchange, recalling Indra’s heroic smashing of Vṛtra and release of the waters. Then the rivers add, RV 3.33.8

<i>etād vāco jaritar māpi mṛṣṭhā, ā yāt te        ghōṣān úttarā yugāni</i>	Do not forget this word, o praise-singer, that future generations may hear it from you!
--	---

but the actual crossing is not mentioned until strophes 9-10:

<sup>39</sup> Kindly pointed out to me by J. Katz. On the formula see Jamison apud Watkins, 1994, chap. 29 n. 11.

*ní šū namadhvam bhávātā supārā,  
adhoakṣāḥ sindhavaḥ srotyābhiḥ //  
ā te kāro śrṇavāmā vácāmsi, yayātha  
dūrād ánasā ráthena*

Bend down, o rivers, become easy to  
cross, with (your) currents (passing) below  
the axles!  
We will listen to your words, o herald.  
You have come from afar with ... chariot.

Darius is here, as always, campaigning against a follower of the Lie, whom he will—like Vistauru and Indra—smash with the assistance of Ahuramazdā.

The description of overcoming natural obstacles (usually mountains) during campaigns by clever stratagems—specifically rivers—is common in the Ancient Near East, cf.:

From the reign of Ashurnasirpal II: “**I crossed the Euphrates** at the city **Ḥaridu by means of** the boats which I had made, (and on) **rafts (made of inflated) goatskins** which had moved along the road simultaneously (with the army)” (after Grayson, 1991, p. 214).

Cf. also from the reign of Tiglath-pileser I, king of Assyria (1114-1076 B.C.E.): “In the high mountains, which thrust up like pointed daggers and which were impassable for my chariots, I put the chariots on (the soldiers’) necks (and thereby) passed through the difficult mountain range” (ibid., p. 18).

I am not suggesting that the common grammatical form *anya-* ... *anya-* is an inherited poetic formula in these examples, but that its use by Darius may have been prompted by its occurrence in the inherited theme of **stratagems for crossing rivers** present in contemporary oral literary tradition; thus, Darius’s description incorporates a Near Eastern literary topos but employs literary devices of Indo-Iranian date.<sup>32</sup>

### 3.2. INHERITED THEMES

While the preceding section contained examples of Near Eastern themes expressed using Indo-Iranian forms, in the following section I have gathered examples of themes that are probably of proto-Iranian or Indo-Iranian date. Some of these are of general nature, however, and might perhaps also be included in the preceding group (e.g., [3.2.1]).

#### 3.2.1. THE LAW OF AHURAMAZDĀ AND THE KING

The king’s various functions are common themes in the inscriptions. He has to protect the land, he has to ensure that the land remains stable, that his people abide by the Law (*dāta-*, lit. “that which has been set down”), and especially that they treat each other according to the Law (*DB* 1.23-24):

<sup>40</sup> Cyrus’s expedition against the Massagetae may have been undertaken in the same spirit.

*imā dahayāva tayanā manā dātā  
apariyāya yaθāšām hacāma aθahaya  
avaθā akunavaya<sup>n</sup>tā*

These lands which behaved **according to the Law that was mine**, as I told them, thus they would do.

*DNa 16-22:*

*ima dahayāva tayā adam agarbāyam ...  
tayašām hacāma aθahaya ava akunava  
dātām taya manā avadiš adāraiya*

These lands which I seized ... whatever they were told by me, that they did. **The law that was mine**, that held them.

If people abide by the Law of Ahuramazdā they obtain good recompense in life and death (*XPh* 46-56; cf. *DB* 5.16-20 = 32-36 cited in [3.1.8]):

*tuva kā haya apara yadi-maniyāy šiyāta  
ahaniy jīva utā marta artāvā ahaniy  
avanā dātā paridiy taya Auramazdā  
niyaštāya ...*

You who in the future if you think: Let me be both happy (while) alive and blessed (when) dead! (then) **behave according to that Law which Ahuramazdā established ...**

*martiya haya avanā dātā pariyaita taya  
Auramazdā ništāya utā Auramazdām  
yadataiy ąrtācā bąrzmaniy hauv utā jīva  
šiyāta bavatiy utā marta ąrtāvā bavatiy*

**The man who behaves according to that Law which Ahuramazdā established** and worships Ahuramazdā according to the Order in the high(est), he becomes both happy (while) alive and blessed (when) dead.

The importance of honoring the Law of Ahura Mazdā is implied in the *Mihr yašt* (*Yt.* 10.139):

*nōi xšnāuuaiieiti Ahurəm Mazdəm ... yō  
Mazdəm tarō maniete ... tarō dātəmca  
Rašnumca arštātəmca frādaṭ.gaeθqm  
varədaṭ.gaeθqm*

He does not satisfy Ahura Mazdā ... whoever despises (**Ahura**) **Mazdā ...** and (his) **Law** and Rašnu and world-furthering, world-increasing righteousness.

The concept of the “Law” is not prominent in the Avesta, but if we look at the “contents” of the Law of Ahuramazdā as expressed implicitly in *DB* 4.61-69, we find several parallels with *Yt.* 10.139:

*θātiy Dārayavauš xšāyaθiya  
avahayarādimaīy Auramazdā upastām  
abara ...  
upariy arštām upariyāyam naiy  
škauθim naiy tunuva<sup>n</sup>tam zūra  
akunavam*

Thus says King Darius: on account of the following Ahuramazdā brought me support ...  
**I abided in rectitude. I did no injustice** to either wealthy or poor.

Even though the passages themselves are not parallel, there are several lexical echoes between them: Because Darius abides (*upariyay-*) in rectitude (*upariy arštām*) and does no injustice (*zūrah*) Ahura Mazdā brings him support, and because men abide (*pariyay-*) by the king's Law, the land is at peace. In the Avestan text, in order for Miθra to benefit them, men are enjoined not to despise Ahura Mazdā, Rašnu, or rectitude (*arštāt-*), which is needed for the world to prosper. Note here that *rašnu-* is from *raz-* "straight," the opposite of *zūrah-*, literally "crooked." These concepts are closely connected with that of the "straight path," on which see [3.4.5].

### 3.2.2. AHURAMAZDĀ'S PROTECTIVE FUNCTION

Once Ahuramazdā has made the king what he is, it becomes his duty to protect and support him. These functions are seen in two contexts: first, in prayers to Ahuramazdā to protect the king, his land, and his work, and, second, in the mutual give-and-take relationship between god and king, in which the god, in return for the king's fidelity as worshiper, assists him in overcoming his enemies. The theme is also Near Eastern, and the sentiment is clearly universal.

The inscriptions contain several prayers for the protection of the land in combination with prayers for the protection of the king's work and prayers for the protection against evil.<sup>41</sup>

Protection of the king's realm/land and his work is seen in *XPa* 18-20:

<i>mām Auramazdā pātuv utamaiy xšačam utā taya manā kartam utā tayaмай piča kartam avašciy Auramazdā pātuv</i>	May Ahuramazdā protect me and my realm and that which I have done, and that which my father has done, that too may Ahuramazdā protect.
--	---

and *A<sup>3</sup>Pa* 24-26:

<i>mām Auramazdā utā Miθra бага pātuv utā imām DHyaum utā taya mām kartā</i>	May Ahuramazdā and Miθra the god protect me, this land, and that which I have made.
--	---

See also below on "protecting the land from evil."

Protection of the land or the Aryan land is seen in the Avesta, cf. *Yt.* 10.78:

<sup>41</sup> In these formulas deities other than Ahura Mazdā are not mentioned by name before the inscriptions of Artaxerxes.

*tūm \*tā daǵhuuō<sup>42</sup> nīpāhi \*yā  
hubərəitīm \*yātaieiṇti<sup>43</sup> Miθrahe  
vouru.gaoīiaotōiš*

**You protect those lands** which establish good treatment of Miθra who provides wide grazing grounds.

and *Yt.* 19.69:

*taṭ asti kauuaēm xʷarənō θrāθrəm  
airīianəm daǵiiunəm gəušca  
\*paṇcō.hīiaīiā [mss. °iiāi] auuaǵhe  
narəm aṣaonəm daēnaiiāscā  
māzdatiasnōiš*

That is the Glory of the poets: **protection of the Aryan lands** and the five kinds of cattle for help to the men who follow Order and to the Mazdayasnian Religion.

Note the combination of *nīpā-* and *vṛjana-* in *RV* 1.73.2 and that in Old Persian *vardana* is a smaller unit of a *dahayū*:

*devō nā yāh savitā satyāmanmā krátvā  
nīpāti vṛjānāni viśvā*

He whose prayers come true **protects**, like god Savitar, by his *kratu* **all the vṛjanas**.

Schematically we have:

	DIVINITY	PROTECT	(KING)	THE LAND	(KINGS' WORK)
OPers.	<i>Auramazdā</i> <i>Auramazdā,</i> <i>Miθra baga</i>	<i>pā-</i> <i>pā-</i>		<i>-mai y xšaça-</i> <i>imām DHyaum</i>	<i>taya manā kartam</i> <i>taya mām kartā</i>
Av.	<i>Miθra</i> <i>kauuaēm xʷarənō</i>	<i>nī-pā-</i> <i>θrāθrəm</i>		<i>daǵhu-</i> <i>airīianəm daǵiiunəm</i>	

Protection of **the land from harm** is seen in *DPd* 13-18:

*manā Auramazdā upastām baratuv  
hadā visaibiš багаibiš utā imām  
dahayāum Auramazdā pātuv hacā  
haināyā hacā dušiyārā hacā draugā*

**May Ahuramazdā together with all the gods bring me support!** And **may Ahuramazdā protect** this land from the (enemy) army, from bad seasons, and from the Lie!

and in *DNa* 51-53:<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> The substitution in the mss. of the ending *-uuō* for the acc. plur. ending *-uš* is seen also in *V.* 2.8, 9 *nōiṭ ... gātuuō viṇḍan* "they did not find places."

<sup>43</sup> F1 has *tā daǵh (ā superscript) uuō ... yā hubərəitīm yātaieiiti*. The text looks corrupt.

<sup>44</sup> Also *A<sup>2</sup>Sa* 5-6: *AM Anahata utā Miθra mām pātuv [hacā] vispā gastā* "May Ahuramazdā, Anāhitā, and Miθra protect me from all evil!" (Steve, 1987, p. 90).

*\*mām Auramazdā pātuv hacā \*gastā  
utāmaiṯ viθam utā imām dahayāum*

**May Ahuramazdā protect me from evil,  
as well as my house and my land!**

In the Avesta the protection against evil granted by Ahura Mazdā and other deities is frequently mentioned, e.g., in the *Šrōšbāz* 3:

*pāta nō ībišīaṇtaṭ pairi Mazdāasca  
Ārmaitišca Spəntaca*

**Protect us from evil, o (Ahura) Mazdā  
and Spəntā Ārmaiti!"**

with which cf., e.g., *RV* 10.42 (43, 44).11:<sup>45</sup>

*bḡhaspátir nah pári pātu paścād,  
utótarasmād ádharād aghāyóh*

**Let Bḡhaspati protect us from the evil-  
minded one, from behind, from above,  
from below!**

A long series of variations on the “protection” theme is found in *Y.* 58.2, 5:

*taṭ nō nēmō nipātū pairi daēuuātaṭcā  
ībaēšaṇhaṭ mašīiātaṭcā ahmāi nēmaḡhē  
āuuāēdaiiamaidē gaēθāscā tanuuascā  
nipātaīiaēcā nišaṇharətaīiaēcā  
harəθraīcā aiβīiāxštraīcā ...  
yaθā nō dātā Amašā Spəntā aθā nā  
θrāzdūm θrāzdūm nō vaḡhauuō  
θrāzdūm nō vaḡhīš θrāzdūm nō Amašā  
Spəntā huxšaθrā hūdāḡhō  
naēcīm tēm aniiēm yūšmaṭ vaēdā ašā aθā  
nā θrāzdūm*

**Let this reverence protect us (both) from  
the evil demon and man. We make our  
living beings and bodies known to (this)  
reverence for (their) protection,  
watching, guard, and overseeing ...  
As you have made us, o Beneficial  
Immortals, thus protect us. Protect us, o  
good males, protect us, o good females!  
Protect us, o Beneficial Immortals with  
good power, giving good gifts! I know  
none other than you, so protect us!**

With reference to “(other) gods” as in *DPd* just cited, cf. *RV* 1.106.7 (= 4.55.7):

*devair no devy áditir ní pātu devás  
trātā trāyatām áprayuchan*

**Let the goddess Aditi protect us  
together with the (other) gods! Let the  
god protector protect (us) constantly!**

Schematically we have:

<sup>45</sup> Cf. also *Yt.* 13.146 *tā nō qzahucit hatō θrāiēnte aiβi.darštāiš auuābiš* “They protect us even in (dire) straits with visible (acts of) aid”; and *RV* 7.1.15 *séd agnīr yó vanuṣyatō nipāti sameddhāram āmhasa uruṣyāt* “He is Agni, who protects (us) from him who envies (us), who shall deliver him who lights the fire from straits.”

	DIVINITY	PROTECT	KING/WORSHIPER/ THE LAND	FROM EVIL
OPers.	<i>Auramazdā</i>	<i>pā-</i>	<i>dahayy- viθ- + dahayy-</i>	“from 3 scourges” <i>hacā gastā</i>
	<i>AM, Anahata, Miθra</i>	<i>pā-</i>	“me”	<i>*hacā vispā gastā</i>
Av.	<i>Mazdā, Ārmaiti Spənta</i>	<i>pairi-pā-</i>	“us”	<i>tbišiiantaī</i>
	our reverence	<i>ni-pā-</i>	“us”	<i>tbaēšaṇḥaī</i>
RV	<i>bḥhaspāti-</i>	<i>pāri pā-</i>	“us”	<i>aghāyóh</i>

### 3.2.3. THE KING’S PROTECTIVE FUNCTION

The primary duty of the king is to protect his land against internal and external enemies, as in *DB* 2.34-36:

*avadā hamaranam akunava<sup>n</sup> Auramazdā-  
maiṇ upastām abara vašnā Auramazdāha  
kāra haya manā avam kāram tayam  
hamiçiyam aja vasiy*

There they did **battle**. Ahuramazdā bore  
me support. By the greatness of  
Ahuramazdā my army **smote** that army,  
which was **rebellious**, strongly.

and *Yt.* 17.12:

*taxmām staotārēm vazənti āsu.aspəm  
dərəzi.raθəm ... paskāī hamərəθəm  
jaṇtārēm*

(Their horses) convey the brave praiser  
with fast horses, with solid chariot ... who  
**smites the opponent** from behind.

Note that both formulas contain the elements *hamar-* + *jan-*. Schematically we have:

	THE FAITHFUL	IN BATTLE	SMITE	OPPONENTS
Av.	<i>staotar-</i>		<i>jaṇtar-</i>	<i>hamərəθa-</i>
OPers.	<i>kāra haya manā</i>	<i>hamaranam kar-</i>	<i>aja</i>	<i>avam kāram tayam hamiçiyam</i>

Another point of interest here is the variant of the Indo-European formula **hero** **slay** **adversary**, on which see Watkins (1994, *passim*).

By protecting the land the king guarantees long-lasting peace (*DPe* 22-24):

*yadiy kāra Pārša pāta ahatiy hayā  
\*duvaištām šiyātiš axšatā hauvciy aurā  
nir(a)sātiy abiy imām viθām*

If the Persian people are protected, (then)  
the longest-lasting unbroken **peace** will  
descend **upon this house**.

In the Avesta the gods give peace to the land and strength to its ruler—as in

Darius's inscription—presumably to make him able to protect his land (*Yt.* 16.19 to *Cistā*):

*yqm yazata sāsta daḥhēuš daḥhupaitiš*  
*āxšī isəmnō daḥhauue aməm isəmnō*  
*tanuīe*

whom the ruler of the land, the lord of the  
land worshiped seeking **peace for his**  
**land** and strength for his body.

### 3.2.4. MAGICIANS AND SORCERERS

Among the agents of Evil are magicians and sorcerers, who are bent upon destroying the work of Order. These are frequently mentioned and proscribed in the Avesta, and precautions are taken against their activities in the building inscription of Artaxerxes II at Susa (*A<sup>2</sup>Sa* 5-6; Steve, 1987, p. 90):

*AM Anahata utā Miθra mām pā<sup>n</sup>tuv*  
*[hacā] vispā gastā utā imam taya akunā*  
*mā yātum mā kayadā vi[x x]litu[v]*

May Ahurmazdā, Anāhitā, and Miθra  
protect me from all evil. And **may no**  
**magician or sorcerer \*destroy** this which  
I made!

Their destruction of the land is seen in *Yt.* 10.2:

*mərəṇcaite \*višpəm [mss. višpanəm]*  
*daḥhaom mairiō miθrō.druxš Spitama*  
*yaθa satəm kaiiaḍanəm auuauuāt*  
*ašauua.jaciṭ*

The rogue who is false to the treaty, o  
Spitāma, **destroys** the \*whole land **like** a  
hundred **magicians**; so much does he  
smite the righteous.

Cosmic destruction by magicians and sorcerers is seen in *Y.* 61.1-3:

*Ahunəmca Vairīm fraēšiiāmahi aṇtarəca*  
*zqm aṇtarəca asmanəm ... hamistaiiaēca*  
*nižbərətaiiaēca Aṇgrāhe Mainiiūš ...*  
*hamistaiiaēca nižbərətaiiaēca*  
*kaiiaḍanəmca ... yātumatəmca*

We set in motion the Ahuna Vairiia  
between heaven and earth ... for the  
discomfiture and removal of the Evil  
Spirit ... for the discomfiture and removal  
of sorcerers ... and magicians.

in *Yt.* 8.44:

*Tištīrīm yazamaide ... yim nōit mərəyante*  
*Aṇrō Mainiiūš nōit yātāuuō mašiiānəm*  
*naēḍa višpe haθra daēuua*

We worship Tištīriia ... whom neither the  
Evil Spirit **destroys** nor the **sorcerers**  
among men, nor all the *daēuua*s together.