

AVAN YASHT

- A Bird's Eye - View

(Some time ago, on the occasion of the Avan Parab, A Khshnoom fidai gave a talk on the salient points in the Avan Yasht in Gujarati, before a Bombay audience.

Mr. Hanoz M. Mistry, who was present there, has kindly translated the talk in English for our readers, which we are publishing on the occasion of our traditional Avan Parab -Editor.)

Avan Yasht - A Synopsis

Avan Yazad is that force of Dadaar Ahura Mazda who enjoys great popularity among the Zoroastrians of today. Avan Yasht is that prayer in the Khordeh Avesta which is dedicated to Avan Yazad. The Avan yasht comprises 30 Kardas, each of which contains fascinating facts.

Avan Ardivisur Banu, as she is rightly addressed, was held in great reverence when Iran was the seat of the Zoroastrian Civilisation. Her fame gradually spread to Rome where a cult was created specially dedicated to her. But the Romans who were known for their devayasni tendencies made huge idols in her praise and worshipped at her altar.

In Avesta, Avan is termed as ARDVI which is lengthened to ARDVISURE. The adjective 'ANAHITA' has also been added.

The word ARDVISUR has two parts viz.,

a) **Ardvi** : which is the proper noun for that yazatic force who is the keeper of weapons

b) **Sur - Weapons** : The logical question that arises is, where is the need for a Yazata to keep weapons ?

The word 'ANAHITA' lends meaning to the reason for keeping weapons.

In Avesta it has been explained that there are three main types of pollution (𐬀𐬀𐬀𐬀) in this world viz,

1) **Aahiti** - The pollution connected with various on this earth. This pollution is capable of extremely rapid acceleration.

2) **Paviti** - Aerial pollution. Infections, virus which are air-borne.

3) **Akhti** - Contagious pollution. This is

caused by contact. This does not include only diseases. Even if a Juddin touches devout Zarathosti a pollution is created in his aipi.

Aahiti is an omnibus term which includes Paviti and Akhti

Ardivisur is Anahita. She is the keeper of weapons to convert this 'Aahiti' to 'An-ahiti'. Each yazad has, by divine authority, been assigned specific tasks in the divine scheme of creation. Avan Ardivisur has been assigned the specific task of destroying the pollution (𐬀𐬀𐬀𐬀) in this universe. This she does by wielding three weapons in her command. These weapons are.

1) **Aap (Plural is aapo)** - waters of different kinds.

Aap does not mean only the physical water found on this earth. They are the benevolent forces and divine currents (aashirwardi pravaho) which emanate from Minoi. With 'aap' is usually found a twin word 'Urvar' which literally means trees and plants. Together they stand for the blessings of Dadar Ahura Mazda which emanate right from Minoi. These pravaho are first received from Dadar by Khordad Ameshaspand at which stage they are in the form of 'Gohar' i.e. noor (pure light)

2) This Gohar is then passed on to Avan Yazad and from which are created certain Frad (𐬀𐬀𐬀) which are six in number and are named in the Avan Ardivisur Niyash/Avan Yasht.

3) When this Gohar descends to the Nisti realm it becomes 'Khastar' which in common parlance means electro-magnetic currents or electricity. This universe has 81 such types of electricity. Certain types are found only in

Minoi and Hasti. The rest are only in Nisti. Electricity, as we know it, is the basest form of Khastar.

Every Niyash and Yasht has khshnumans therein, dedicated to that particular yazad, In Avan yasht & Niyash also there is one big Khshnuman and one small Khshnuman. This Khshnuman has four parts. There is reference therein to three kinds of 'aap'

Two characteristics of this 'aap' are :-

a) The natural waters, of which our physical waters are of the lowest form - these waters are 'Vanghuinam' i.e. they are capable of taking us towards goodness or towards Behman Ameshaspand.

Mazdadatnam. (मज्झिमनिम) These waters guide us towards Behman Ameshaspand using the laws of Mazdadat. Mazdadat is that law of Dadaar Ahura Mazda by which the universe is created. It refers to the process of Involution - the conversion of spirit into matter.

b) The khshnuman also tells us that these 'aapo' (Plural of aap) are 'Areduyao' i.e. these aapo are the weapons of Ardivi who is the destroyer of pollution.

(वीर्यनामय उपेस्नाम मज्झिमनिम) This refers to all the Yazatic emanations in the universe which are connected with Avan and the Urvars connected with them. These urvars contain the rays of khurshid Yazad. Mankind is unable to survive without these urvars. Thus, Avan has control over aap and Urvar.

Before going ahead with the controls of Avan Yasht it is essential to mention Avan Ardivisur Niyash / Avan Yasht be prayed only in the first three Gaahs i.e. the presence of Khurshid Yazad is absolutely essential for attuning oneself with Avan Yazad. It is also absolutely essential to pray the Farajiyat prayers before reciting Avan Niyash / Yasht.. It must always be borne in mind that there is no progress for a Zarathosti Ravaan unless he follows the prescribed tarikats and rules of Manthra Khani.

The Kardas :- Avan Yasht has 30 Kardas. The first para of each kardo is common. These 30 Kardas have been arranged in a sequence

as per the divine laws of nature.

Kardas 1 to 4 give a description of Avan Yazad her beauty, her prowess and her divine functions in nature. The first Karda contains almost the full Avan Ardivisur Niyash with the 'Aa Hatamcha no Ha' which is the 65th Ha of the Yasna. These Kardas contain the following matter. a) Facts relating to the function of Avan in the whole universe and b) Facts relating to the function of Avan viz-a viz man.

Avan Yazad does not have a physical body and hence the description of her person and jewelry must not be taken in the literal sense but in the allegorical sense.

Many scholars are of the belief that since Romans created beautiful idols in praise of Avan the description of these idols found their way into Iranian civilization and hence were incorporated in the Avan Yasht. This concept is totally absurd.

These Kardas explain the role of Avan Yazad in the progress of Creation and the part played by her in taking one and all towards Frashogard. It explains facts relating to the birth of man, how he should live his life and how his soul progress.

Certain paras are repeated at the start and the end of all the 3 kardas. This gives rise to the question of repetitiveness. This repetitiveness is essential because with these Manthras we attune ourselves with Avan Yazad. These repetitive paras create a continuous contact.

There are three ways of attaining attunement with Avan Yazad

a) With the power of thought force which the common man cannot do. This method is used by big Ashwans and Abeds.

b) By bringing our breath on the same frequency as the ushtaan of the Yazad. Even this is not possible by a common man.

c) With Manthra - Recitation of Manthravani results in the emanation of Stoot. This enables a contact of about 35% and that too only by a Zarathosti who lives life as per the regulations and tarikats of the Zoroastrian religion

In karda 2 and 3 Avan is described as having a Rath (chariot) drawn by four white horses. This rath is described as moving throughout the universe. The reins of these white horses are in the hands of Avan Yazad. These White horses are in reality four similar types of rays which emanate from Khurshid Yazad.

In karda 5 Dadar Ahura Mazda is shown as attuning himself with Avan Yazad in Airyanavaijya by performing the yasna ceremony. He asks Avan Yazad to bless Zarathustra and guide him to perform his functions in accordance with the Mazdayasni principles.

In Kardo 24 Zarathustra attunes himself with Avan Yazad by performing the Yasna ceremony.

There is a peculiar method of attunement which can be followed only by Dadar Ahura

Mazada and Zarathustra.

Kardas 6 to 20 show the way in which various spiritually advanced souls operating on the white and dark sides of Nature attune themselves with Avan Yazad and ask for her blessings. The "nars" from the white side like Peshdadian Hoshang Padshah, Jamshid etc. are granted their wishes while those on the dark side of nature like Zohak, Arjaasp etc. are not granted their wishes as they wish for the destruction of the good element in nature.

Kardo 21 contains questions and answers exchanged between Zarathustra and Avan Yazad. All matters relating to Zarathustrian tarikats are described therein. It also contains a description of what a Mobed should be like.

Kards 28 has a reference to the functions of Avan Yazad.

Kardo 30 refers to Huafrid, the founder of the Huafridran dynasty.