

The Prophet's Utterances (Part 3)

HU-MĀYĀ

The humanistic aspects of Māyā

Pronunciation symbols

I have adopted the following transcription (after Kanga⁷ & Taraporewala¹²) as permitted by my software, while avoiding the encoding of the **ITRANS convention** hoping to make the reading for non-academic purposes generally easier: -

a as in **fun**; **ā** as in **far**; **ã** (nasal sound **ãn**) as in 'āvān'; **ə** as in **fed**, **ē** as in **fade**; **i** as in **fill**; **ī** as in **feel**; **o** as in **for**; **ō** as in **fore**; **u** as in **full**; **ū** as in **fool**. The nasal sounds are **ãn** as in **āvān**; **en** as in the French 'trés biën', **in** as in **Ahīnsā** (also pronounced 'im' as in Sanskrit **Ahīmsā** and as also in Avestan and Gathic languages) and **ūn** as in **Humāyūn**. The pronunciation of some consonants (as permitted by my software) are 'ś' for 'sh', 'š' for 'ss', 'r̥' for 'ri', 'ñ' for 'ni', 'ž' for 'zh'.

The pronunciation of the vowel sounds 'ə' as in **fed** and 'en' as in the French 'trés biën' is unique to the Gathic/Avestan languages. **These vowel sounds 'ə' and 'en' are not found in the alphabets of Sanskrit and (Shuddha) Gujarāti** (and, possibly in other Indic group of Prakrit languages) where **all 'e' vowel sounds are pronounced as ē as in fade**. In addition, it is interesting that Vedic texts appear to be conspicuous by the absence of a double negative although double negatives do occur later in 'Classical' Sanskrit.

Thus, in the Gujarāti version of the book by Taraporewala, Irach J. S., '**Ashō Zarathushtra nā Gāthā**'¹¹ all the 'e's are shown with the typical Gujarāti alphabetic 'pã(n)khru(n)' (pronounced as 'ē' as in **fade**). In the original Gujarāti version of his 'Khordeh Avesta' Ervad Kavasji Edulji Kanga⁶, however, uses a crescent above the 'e's to create the sound **ə** as in **fed**, and **en** as in the French 'trés biën' and the typical Gujarāti alphabetic 'pã(n)khru(n)' to create the sound **ē** as in **fade**. In the English version of his book Taraporewala, Irach J. S.¹² uses the accepted symbols for **ə** as in **fed**, **ē** as in **fade** and **en** as in the French 'trés biën'

The Vēdic concept of Māyā²

It would be prudent to look first into the context in which the word **Māyā** is used in the Vedic texts before embarking on the concept of the **Avestan word Hu-Māyā / Hu-Māyē / Hu-Māyi(n) / Hu-Māyu(n)** (Avestan Hu is Vedic Su, meaning good) used in a different connotation in our Avestan texts. According to the Vēdās, Māyā is a human materialistic craving, working through **its veiled power, which creates a distorted view of the senses between the observer and the observed**. This **mystical extremely powerful supernatural craving**, mysterious will and wondrous mind-born energy or **Shakti** (the Prakṛti of divine Nature) - Māyā, **has roots in the sense perception**, which are capable of manipulating our perceptions to indulge in self-centred and non-humanistic activities. It works through its three attributes: -

1. the negative **tamasic guna** of **ignorance, laze, inertia, passivity, hypocrisy and deceit** and
2. the negating **rajasic guna** of the self-centred **sensuous life force**.
3. But, it works in a good subdued/humane manner when the positive **sattavic guna** of **harmonious goodness, truth, purity and transparency** is predominant. This humanistic sattavic guna, promoting selflessness, helps the individual to become involved in life matters without a selfish motive or self-interest. Needless, self-interest does tend to creep in if the one who becomes involved in 'an apparently humanistic' work does so just to remain occupied or for some vested interest- say, for social recognition, for ultimate material gain etc, typical of the 'bad' **tamasic guna**. Thus, there are two clear aspects to Māyā. It not only camouflages the truth but

also misrepresents the truth by deceiving our senses under its misleading influence. Its *sattavic* guna part promotes the humanistic aspect while the *tamasic* and *rajasic gunas*, together promote the not-so-good aspect of the extraordinary power of Brahmā, creating an **attachment** to worldly possessions, property, wealth etc. In reality all material things belong to the Creator. These gifts are meant for minimum use at a need-based rather than a greed-based level. **To my mind, the greatest delusion, which Māyā creates in the mind of the greed-based perpetrator is that it makes the person thoroughly convinced (through own selfish egotistic mindset) that he/she is not at all responsible, even though all the actions are performed because of the person's own insatiable / obsessive desires.**

With these three *gunas* combined, Māyā is variously described as illusion, magic or supernatural power, **obsessional attachment leading to an 'illusory satisfaction', so insatiable that no amount of ill-gotten gain is ever enough.** This pathological materialistic craving and want is materialistic nature itself personified, where the insensitive person remains trapped in a vicious cycle to obtain unending manipulative personal gain at the dire cost of others.

It is through the knowledge and complete understanding of Māyā and by increasing the subtle *sattavic guna*, that one can cross the induced vagaries of the senses. It would thus appear that understanding of the concept of Māyā helps in acquiring this trinity of values to achieve an ideal state of near perfection in society. In such a society, people obtain gains, which Vēdic metaphysics describes as a value system based on truth (**satayam**), goodness (**shivam**) and divine beauty (**sundaram**).

Vedic metaphysical interpretation of this mystical illusion

Being the Creative Art of Brāhma, its main purpose is to discipline the senses and harmonise the inner (*manas*) mind and external energies seeking (*ētani*) mind and finally to take a person to a stage where every thing merges into the One - the Supreme Reality. During the stages of lack of spiritual awareness, when one's material and intellectual knowledge is bereft of divine and spiritual knowledge, one normally remains ignorant of this *Shakti* energy, which is the creative Art of Brahmā.

It is only when such an individual is eager to realise the true attributes, form and his eternal laws (*Vēdic Ṛtā / Gāthic Ashā*) he become the true seeker of the Creator. At first, the cosmic illusion (Māyā) camouflages Brahma. It poses great hindrance in these initial stages and projects the unreal world of *nāma rupa*, which is only in name and form.

It would thus appear that the real purpose of Māyā is to ensure that all impurities in thoughts, actions, ideas and desires need to be eliminated before a person becomes the real seeker of the Creator. The corollary is interesting In that the illusory exercise is thus aimed at ensuring that the seeker is genuine and does not merely wish to seek Him just for ostentation, social recognition or any other material and manipulative gain.

Rg Vēdā refers also to Māyā being the '**creative art**' of Indra (**Indra Māyā-bhih**, the illusory Indra representing the power and strength of Nature). To create illusions, Indra frequently transforms himself into different forms like clouds, atmosphere, thunder etc. – '**Rupam rupam prati rupō bababhuvā**' – a changing world of forms.

Māyā (and derivatives) in the Rg Vēdā ³ **Māyā**

i, 117.3- **Aśvins**: ‘..... baffling the **guiles** of the malignant dasyu, felling them , ye mighty in succession.’

i, 175.6- **Viśnu-Indra**: ‘..developed, **vast** (probably **deceitful**) **in form**, with those who sing forth praise...’

ii, 11.10- **Indra**: ‘.....and, having drunk his fill of the flowing Soma, baffled the **guileful Dānava’s devices**.’

ii, 29.6- **Viśvédévas**: ‘Protect us, God; let not the wolf destroy us. Save us, ye Holy, from **the pit and the falling**.’

lii, 21.3- **Agni**: ‘...thou art **enkindled (māyā māyinām)** as the best of seers’. This may well be construed as ‘the light that lures’ (as in Shammā-Parvānā, the flame that attracts the moth)

iii, 62.18- **Indra and others**: ‘**Lauded** by Jamadagni’s song, sit in the place of holy law.; Drink ye the Soma, ye who strengthen Law.’ (Jamadagni here is an epithet of Ṛṣi Viśvāmitra ‘by whom the fire has been kindled’. The sentence, in the context of the hymn, may be translated as ‘**lured** by Jamadgami’s song’).

v, 31.7- **Indra**: ‘Didst thou check and stay even Śuṣṇa’s **wiles and magic**, and drawing nigh,’

v, 40.5- **Indra, Sūrya, Atri**: ‘All the creatures looked like one who is **bewildered**, who knoweth not the place he is standing.’ (The meaning, here, becomes ‘**disoriented**’ in the darkness of Surya’s absence).

v, 40.8- **Again in the same hymn**: ‘The Brahman, Atri.....established in the heavens the eye of Surya (the Sun) and caused Avarbhanu’s **magic arts** to vanish.’

v, 63.4- **Mitra-Varuna**: ‘Ye wait on thunder with the many tinted clouds and by the Asura’s **magic power** cause heaven to rain.’

v, 63.4- **Mitra-Varuna**: ‘Your **magic** Mitra-Varuna resteth in the heavens. The Sun thy wondrous weapon cometh forth as light. Ye hide him in the skies.....’

vi, 45.16- **Indra**: ‘Praise him who, **matchless** and alone, was born the Lord of living men, most active with heroic soul.’

vi, 47.18- **Indra**: ‘Indra moves multiform by his **illusions**.....’

vi, 50.5- **Viśvédévas**: ‘What time do ye hear our call, O Maruts, and come upon **your separate path** when all creatures tremble.’ (This might well mean ‘**your illusory way**’)

vi, 65.1- **Ushā-the Dawn**: ‘She, who at night-time with her **argent lustre** hath shown herself even through the shades of darkness.’

vii, 97.8- **Bṛhaspati**: ‘Both heaven and earth, divine, the deity’s parents have made Bṛhaspati **increase in grandeur**.’

viii, 41.8- **Varuna**: ‘...with his bright foot he overthrew their **magic** and went up to heaven.’

viii, 100.1- **Praskṇva’s gift**: ‘Thy bounty, Dasyave-vrka, **exhaustless** hath displayed itself. Its fullness is as broad as heaven.

x, 53.9- **Agni**: ‘Tvaṣṭar, most deft of workmen, knew each magic art, bringing most blessed bowls that hold the drink of the Gods.’

x, 73.5- **Indra**: ‘...hath Indra with these, his **magic powers** assailed the Dasyu.....’

x, 85.36- **Sūryā’s bridal**: ‘I take thy hand in mine for **happy fortune** that thou mayst reach old age with me, thy husband.....’

Māyāh:

i, 31.7- **Agni**: ‘Agni thou savest in the synod when pursued even him, the farseeing one who walks in **evil ways**.’

i, 32.4- Indra: 'When Indra, thou hast slain the dragon's firstborn and overcome the **charm of the enchanters**.....'

i, 93.1- Agni-Somā: '.....accept in friendly wise my hymn and **prosper** him who offers gifts.'

i, 176.4- Indra: 'Slay everyone who pours no gift, who, **hard to reach** (avoiding thee), delights thee not.'

iii, 58.3- Aśvins: 'With light-rolling car and well-yoked horses hear this, the press-stone's song, ye **wonder-workers**.'

v, 2.9- Agni: 'Thou quickly passest by all others, Agni, for him to whom thou hast appeared most lovely, **wondrously fair**, adorable.....'

vi, 20.7- Indra: '.....thou givest to worshippers, R̥jśvan, **imperishable wealth**, O bounteous giver.'

vi, 22.10- Indra: 'Give us confirmed prosperity, O Indra, vast and **exhaustless** for the foe's subduing.'

vi, 25.8- Indra: 'To thee fro high dominion hath been given, for evermore, for slaughtering the Vṛtras, all **lordly power** and

vi, 49.13- Viśvedevas: 'When one so great as thou affordest shelter, may we with **wealth** and with ourselves be happy.'

vii, 1.10- Agni: 'Let these men, heroes in the fight with foremen, prevail against all godless **arts of magic**,

vii, 32.8 - Indra: 'For Indra, Soma drinker, armed with thunder, press the Soma juice. Make ready your dressed meats; cause him to favour us. **The giver blesses the giver**. (There appears to be a hint, here, at excluding the first two 'bad' gunas in favour of the third **sattavic guna** - **harmonious goodness, truth, purity and transparency**).

vii, 81.3- Uṣa-the dawn: 'Promptly, we welcome thee O Uṣas, daughter of the Sky – thee, bounteous one, who bringest **all we long to have** and to the offerer health and wealth.'

x, 37.8- Sūrya: 'Sūrya.....the radiant God, **the spring of joy to every eye** as thou mount up the high...'

x. 99.2- Indra: '.....with his companions, not without his brother, quells Satpatha's **magic devices**.'

Māyām

v, 85.5- Pṛthivi: 'I will declare this mighty deed of the **magic** of Varuna, the Lord immortal who

Svetasvatra Upanishad iv, 9.10⁴ too, clearly mentions that **Prakṛti (divine Nature) is Māyā**; the mighty **Lord Creator, Brahmā is Māyi(n)** [compare with Humāyīn - the (n) is nasal], the illusion maker and the whole world, with beings, is part of Him. Being Shakti (energy/cosmic power) of Brahmā, Māyā creates illusions in human minds and thus hinders the truth in the human senses, which tends to even misrepresent the reality.

Bhāgavad Gitā ¹

7.4 & 5 however differs somewhat. It says 'Māyā is a part of lower (material) nature of God, which is responsible for a conflict between the mind, reason and ego.'

9.10 holds the view that 'it is only the Supreme Lord who has assigned the task of creation of the Universe to Prakṛti (Nature) and she performs this divine role under His supervision.' Lord Krishna uses the words, '**Guna maiyi mmam Māyā**' ('stay away from the wondrous veil of I-ness, the self / ego').

7.27 'Maya is the divine potency of the Creator (Brahmā's 'Yoga Māyā') and it gives a delusion by creating a pair of opposites.'

Bāghavad Gitā also makes it clear that **‘a Sanyāsi is not one who renounces the world totally. Rather, the person renounces most material desires, lives on the path of moderation and performs all activities selflessly without attachment on the path of Karma Yōgā. In this noble path of Karma Yōgā a person performs duties on behalf of his Creator and does not give credit to him/her self as the doer. A true Sanyāsi is one who performs intense selfless activities for the welfare of humankind and not the one who renounces all activities.’**

Gautama Buddha ¹⁴ independently observed the flux in Prakṛti brought on by Māyā and his ethical metaphysics is largely based on the concept of a perpetual flux in Nature. He advised **‘total detachment to matter and all material things to avoid the effect of this constant Flux. Only those who consider the passing state as permanent cling to it desperately and blindly run after all material things. They resist the laws of change and flux, which are beyond resistance. It is these laws of change and flux, which inculcate a belief in permanence to non-permanent things and characters.’** Being agnostic, Buddha did not feel necessary to bring God in his ethical philosophy. He linked the illusion in Nature and Universe to flux. He preached that with the right knowledge of *ashata marga* (his eight-fold path), *Panch-sheela* and *Dhamma*, this effect can be considerably reduced until the stage of *Nirvana* is reached when the effect of the Flux is annulled. Professor Mary Boyce too described the end of time as ‘the cessation of all, change.’

Holy Bible 2 Timothy 3.1 to 5 ⁵ describes an (apparently ensuing) Dark Age thus - ‘Men will be lovers of self, money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, inhuman, implacable, slanderers, profligate, fierce, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasures rather than God, holding the power of religion but denying the power of it.’

Yajur Vedā 40.15 to 17 ¹⁸ talks of the effect of Māyā in our sense perception of truth – **‘the face of truth is covered by an attractive golden lid.’** It says that it is Māyā who creates this golden disc and hides the source. Unless this golden lid, forming its veil, is lifted one cannot recognize the truth of Reality.

The Avestan concept of Hu-māyā

Initially, the Vēdic Āryānic and the Gāthic Āiryānic peoples were one. There were irreconcilable differences, which led to a major schism. The Vedic people were the first to commence their long march for conquest trade and greener pastures southwards and both westwards and eastwards. The time line in history suggests that Zarathushtra’s people did not do so until a century or more after his death.

References in the Avesta

Humāyā: Gosh Yasht 9.31 Kanga refers to the introduction of *‘the good ordinance /a wise code in the countries of Varēdhaka and Khvyaonya.’* ⁶

Humāyā: Ashi(sh)vang Yasht: 17.51 Kavi Vishtāspa asks a boon ‘Bestow upon me this boon, thou Ashi Vanghui (of pure righteousness, which is exalted) that I may disown wilful ignorance of knowledge through the practice of evil ways and that I may disown, too, the revering of daēvas. Grant me the wish that I may revere and promote *the practice of good ordinance* in the kingdom of Khion,’ ⁶

Humāyāō: Fravardin Yasht 13.139 The word, actually the name of an Avestan lady, daughter of Kavi Vishtāspa, *‘whom we revere’* ⁶

Humāya & Humāyacha: In *Visparad 12.4 & 12.5* Sethna¹⁰ refers to the word as *‘possessing good wisdom’* in the accumulation and proper use of material wealth, that is. In *Visparad 12.4* Sethna¹⁰ refers to the word as *‘possessing good wisdom.’*

Humāyī(n) / Humāyī(m): *Yasna Haptanghaiti 41.3* Sethna¹⁰ translates it as “possessing good sense”, in *Visparad 3.3* as being “rich in wisdom”. Kanga⁶ refers to the word in *Gah 4.8* “the missionary of wisdom.”

Humāyēhē: *Visparad 9.2* Sethna¹⁰ translates it as “freedom from deceit” clearly, in matters of accumulating material wealth. *Yasht 24.17*

Humāyotara: *Visparad 12.4* Lawrence Mills⁸ translates “more full of wisest meaning”

Humāyotaracha: *Visparad 12.4* Lawrence⁸ Mills translates “precepts of the wisest meaning”

Humāyaka ⁷ were those Avestan individuals whose Māyā was predominantly or exclusively promoted by the *bad tamasic and rājasic gunas*, which involved dissatisfaction with the possession of immense material gain and who used deceitful tactics to acquire more by stealth and at the cost of others.

Humāyakəm ⁷ is a derivative meaning deceitful / full of tricks referring to the daēvā-yasnic people in *Āvān Yasht 5.113*. ‘Bestow upon me good, O most beneficent Aredvi Sura Anāhita, that I may become triumphant over Peshochengham, the corpse burier, the devil worshipper who is full of deceit and the irreligious Arjāspa in the daily battles of life.’¹⁰

Hu-Māyā - the name of an Avestan lady

Such was the import created by the Avestan humane concept that there are instances in the Avestan Texts and Pāhlavi text of the word, **Hu-Māyā** and derivatives **Hu-Māyē / Humāyi / Homāi / Humāyu(n)** being used as given names.

Avestan Text: **Fravardin Yasht 13.139**: Among the reverences shown to Avestan ladies was one *Hu-Māyā* (one of the daughters of King Vištāspa: ‘*Humāyāo ashaonyāo fravashīm yazamaidē*. (Reverence be to the holy Fravashi of Humāyā)’⁶

Pāhlavi **Bundāhīsn 33.7**: ‘.....during the reign of Vohuman (Bahman) since there was no male heir to the throne left in the ruling dynasty who could rule; they crowned Vohuman’s daughter, Humāyē on the throne of sovereignty. She reigned for thirty years.’¹⁶

Ferdowsi, in the **Shāh Nāme**, describes **Humāyēh**, daughter of Shāh Gushtāspa as ‘talented, educated, and wise.’ He describes how she and her sister, Bēhāfarīd were abducted by Arjāspa and rescued from captivity in his Fort by their brother, Ēsfandiār.

Zarathushtra’s teachings ²

The Prophet’s vision of Māyā was clearly the ‘good’ Māyā of the Sattavic nature. The concept of Māyā promoted by the illusory aspects of the Vēdic **tamasic type guna** (human attribute) of stupor, inertia, passivity, hypocrisy and deceit and the **rājasic type guna** of the self-centred life force seeking external energies were considered alien by Zarathushtra in his teachings, as a reformer. He could see nothing that was illusory or an obsessional attachment. This was, to him, clearly a negative outlook in life very much against the very purpose of Creation. Life was meant for positivism and enjoyment. Indeed, he preached that the experience of every noble aspect of life was possible only by the vigorous involvement of the whole body, mind and spirit with entire sincerity (Hu-Shyaōthnā). The **sattavic type human attribute** of goodness, truth, purity, transparency and selflessness, **a good/meaningful ordinance or code - the humanistic aspect of Māyā possessing good understanding (of the meaning of life), rich in wisdom** was predominant in his mind and in his hymns. This humanistic aspect of Māyā, the Sattavic human attribute of the Vedas, which helps the individual progress by meaningful activity (Shyaōthnā and Hu-Shyaōthnā) was most appealing to his followers.

Zarathushtra saw absolutely no limits to human progress and success. In, the, then, land-based economy, honest tilling of the soil of the good Earth, the humane care of the domesticated beneficent animals and respect for the environment of benevolent Nature, carefulness in not polluting the flowing waters and the emphasis on personal and community hygiene were

paramount to congenial life, communal harmony and progress. Seasonal festivals culminating in the most important one - the Nō-Ruz in an ordered society with reverence to the irrevocable Law of Āshā led his people to a fulfilling life-style. His reformist concept befitted the perfect goodness of Ahurā Mazdā, the Creator.

In the context in which it is used in the Avesta *I would like to describe concept of Hu-māyā in the Avesta as a 'magnificent obsession'*. Clearly, Humāyā, the good/meaningful aspect of Māyā (personal and communal prosperity obtained without inflicting harm and wilfully depriving others of their legitimate possessions and rights) is aimed at fostering a progressive quality of life for the person and for the ultimate benefit for all in the communal settlements.

Gāthā Ahunavaiti - Ys. 31.11

"...because O Mazdā, thou didst, in the beginning, create both mind and matter for the sake of Good Thought and everything that is beautiful and words to regulate progress [sənghāns]."^{11 12}

Indeed, Zarathushtra saw no limits to success if this one achievement could lead to further communal advancement in the settlements of his fellow men.

Gāthā Ushtavaiti - Ys. 43.2

"...through thy wise and holy mind, O Mazdā, thou didst ordain, through the Eternal Laws of Āshā and the Māyāō (divine wisdom) of Vohu Manāh to assist progress through a long-continued span of life."^{11 12}

Gāthā Ahunavaiti - Ys.33.9

"Thine, indeed, are these two divine powers, promoters of all righteousness - divine light and divine wisdom....."^{11 12}

An analytic view

The outward manifestation of the Vēdic Māyā would be equivalent to the unique Avestan aspect of 'intent' through the workings of the mind. Every normal person, thinking positively, rightfully desires to seek advancement. This *urge to have* initially strengthens his *will to have*. The sheer *power of the will*, then, encourages the person to employ the untiring instrument of success. The very means to that end is the *physical self*, which becomes the instrument for the fulfilling of that urge for desirable materials. A *craving* for the possessions occurs through his *mental self*. Acquirements and acquisitions follow, which lead to amassing and apparent *communal recognition*. This accomplishment of personal desires is labelled by society as the *pinnacle of success* the person has reached. However, sadly, the person, believed to have reached the pinnacle of success (depending on the level of his own thinking and the external energies that have goaded him) may not be of the same opinion. He might still want to go further and he may well ask himself, "**and, why not.**" He may also not want the same society, which supported his advancement to benefit from his possessions, mainly because such a demand (clearly a loss to him, as he sees it) would hamper his ongoing uncontrolled aspirations. He would rather opt to reinforce and further strengthen the shackles that already bind him. In other words, his *achievements are still incomplete* by virtue of the fact that he is *not fully satisfied* and has not reached his entire fulfilment (his self-gratification is not complete, as it were). Not many achievers are prepared to concede, on this point, though. The feeling of dissatisfaction and *incomplete fulfilment* leads to *frustration*. He is now ready to seek over-commitment often beyond his endurance, which may tempt him to use not-so-good tactics. These, then, tend to lead him astray, causing disharmony of his body, mind and spirit - a *conflict between being and having (limitless greed, watered by ego and instigators and the attraction of having without the joy of giving part of the unrequited acquisitions) with total disregard for the ensuing consequences*. This follows on a clear breakdown of physical and mental health. It

was gratifying to hear that the richest man in the world has apparently given away 85% of his competitively earned wealth to the downtrodden, underprivileged and helplessly exploited.

Avestan emphasis on progress and prosperity as opposed to renunciation

It is now that Zarathushtra's philosophy of the most perfect Creator, the Good Mind and the orderly Law of Āshā comes into play. He could not see total renunciation / detachment as the solution since that would only lead to a negative concept of life and end in regression. To him it did not make sense. Besides, in real life, it is practically impossible to exclude all desires since the urge to exclude all urges is in itself a desire. As, even Lord Krishna puts it in **Bhāgavad Gita 5.3 'True renunciation is only renunciation of the mind by the mind, the body continuing to thrive.'** ¹ In other words, a strong desire for food and some creature comforts still need to remain in order to remain alive and healthy.

Egotism – 'The evil of the I-ness Factor'

Zarathushtra was very much against any form of Egocentric progress through exploitation and suppression of the under-privileged. He points out, too, that the existence of the simple principles of Evolution, in the absence of Moral Intuition, results in **Egocentricity**. The Self-centred Ego (Aka Manāh), which clearly promotes the workings of the wrongful tamasic and rājasīc portions of Maya devise the dogmatic mind. These two 'bad' portions are subtle enough to pose in a way as to mask their real identity and, since the intention of wilful masking of a 'bad intention' is surreptitious, **Ego is itself Evil personified**. One's Self/Ego/I-ness is a **knowing falsification of one's own conscience [Zarathushtra calls this falsified / evil consciousness /ego – 'duz-daēnəng'** (the Vēdās call it '**ahamkār**']. Groups, too, sometimes, commit offences because their misconceived common purpose in not promoting Āshā carries the leaders away.

We must here look into Zarathushtra's notion of the possessors of a spiritual void. In Yasna 49.11 he talks of those who possess a Falsified Conscience (Ego – duz-daēnəng) and who manage to cultivate an Evil Insight (Akaish Khwarethaish).¹² These intermediaries have been really living in their own self-induced hell on earth and they will, no doubt, go back to their familiar abode in the After Life. [“...the possessors of Evil Insight, be they among rulers, workers, speakers, thinkers and those who follow untruth by 'falsifying their Consciences', are truly the real dwellers of the Abode of Untruth. It is, ultimately, in the Abode of Untruth, that their soles will be relegated to.”]

The volatility of the strong feeling of Communal Consciousness, sometimes, becomes so intense that the common bond leads to a false personal craving for **Group gratification**, mainly arising from (the evil intent of) **Self-gratification and a wild sense of superiority**. The volatile groups Zarathushtra had to contend with were the daēvā-yasnic Karapans, Kavis, Usigs, even some priests, who had incorporated the exhilarating Haōma ritual in the Yasna ceremony and the incorrigible group of cattle rustling thieves – all with their Collective Consciousness, obviously, misplaced. Their Consciousness had not become integrated into the Universal Consciousness since their mutual co-operation and some positive appraisal was only sporadic and temporary. Their present day equivalent would be the socially deviant groups of political radicals and religious extremists, who are prepared to incite antiracial and ethnic sentiments for the promotion of self-interests and the others, who misuse alcohol and drugs for self-gratification. Zarathushtra was vehemently against the imposition of such mind-bending practices (the intent being evil).

Guru Granth Sāhib (the Sikh Holy Book) ¹³ mentions 5 vices jointly called the Five Evils or Five Thieves: **Hōmāi (ego), Krōdha (rage), Lōbha (greed), Mōha (attachment) and Kāma (lust)**, which must be vigorously opposed. Note that Ego is the first among the 5 deadly vices. It says Māyā is '**material obsession**'. It is 'Moh', which is the '**obsessional craving**'. The wanton

accumulation of materials for self has no place in Sikhism. It advises – ‘all the worldly wealth accumulated by one - gold, stock portfolios, commodities and real estate will all be left here on Earth when one departs. Do not become obsessively attached to them.’

‘Su-Māyā’ - the Vedic equivalent of the Avestan ‘Hu-Māyā’

The word Su-Māyā (Sanskrit ‘Su’ is Avestan ‘Hu’) occurs only twice in the **Ṛg Vēdā**. Clearly, the Vedic peoples, too, recognized the moral and ethical stance in the exclusive possession of the good **sattavic** attribute of *harmonious goodness, truth, purity and transparency* in Māyā (without its other two not-so-good components - the **tamasic** *guna* of *ignorance, laze, inertia, passivity* and the **rajasic** *guna* of the self-centred *sensuous life force*).

In **Ṛg Vēdā i, 88.1**, a hymn to the Maruts Griffiths ³ translates **su-māyāh** as ‘**mighty powers**’ thus: - ‘*Come hither, Māruts, on your lightening-laden car, sounding with sweet songs armed with lances, winged with steeds. Fly unto us with noblest food, like *birds, O ye ‘mighty powers’ (Māyina – i.e. possessed of the power of Māyā - Ṛg Vēdā v, 58.2).*

Again, in **Ṛg Vēdā viii, 77.6**, a hymn to Indra Griffiths ³ translates ‘**su-māyām**’ as ‘**wealth**’:- ‘*When, Māghavan, thou honourest the worshipper, no one is there to stay thy wealth.*’ He described the meaning as ‘**one who has good plans; intelligent**’

Monier Monier-Williams ⁹ in his Dictionary translates the word **su-māyā** as ‘**consisting of flowers**’; ‘**being of a pleasant disposition**’

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Qaddimi day of Gatha Vahisto-Isht, Yazdegardi Era 1375 (Thursday, 20 July 2006)

Short write-up about the article:

The author continues his series in his pursuit of the comparative study in 'The Prophet's Utterances', pointing towards the close relationship as well as the discrepancies in the thought processes of the Vedic Aryan and the Gathic/Avestan Airyanic peoples. Here, he dwells on the positive and humanistic real life aspects of Maya as opposed to its other two not so good aspects. Clearly, there is a compromise between the two opposing aspects in the Vedas where as, there is vigorous antagonism in the Gathas and the Avesta. This article, incidentally, highlights the point of 'intent'. Clearly, in Zarathushtra's vision the good, humanistic intent needs to be identified and distanced from the evil negative intent.

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