Hanns-Peter Schmidt (1930-2017) Gedenkschrift
xšnaoḏrahe ahurahe mazdā

Detail from above the entrance of Tehran's fire temple, 1286/1917–18. Photo by © Shervin Farridnejad
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Hanns-Peter Schmidt (1930-2017) Gedenkschrift

The 6th volume of DABIR is a Gedenkschrift to honour Hanns-Peter Schmidt (1930-2017), an excellent German scholar of Indo-Iranian studies, who mainly worked on the Vedas and the Gāthās, as well as Indian mythology and the Zoroastrian religion.
This volume of Dabir was supported by Ms. Mary Oloumi in memory of her father, Iraj Oloumi
I devote this article, which aims systematically to prove that Y(asna) 33.2c1 contains an oral acrostic, to the commemoration of our dear late colleague Hanns-Peter Schmidt, a great Indo-Iranist whose close studies of the Gathas were both innovative and highly reliable.

I’ll begin with Schmidt’s (1985: 53) insightful summary of 33.2 (seq.): “If man treats his fellow-men...”
according to their allegiance to truth or deceit, if he follows the rules of hospitality and if he overcomes the strife existing in society..., he then pleases God and reaps the benefits of the restoration of the original paradisical life, a state in which man totally communes with God and His entities." Schmidt's overview will be borne out by the independent analysis to be given in the course of the present article.

It was under the stimulus of Schmidt 1966 and 1985, with their attention to various lexical-semantic linkages between stanzas of Gathic poems, that I produced an account of the systematically concentric ring composition which governs each of the completed Gathic poems, and applied this to identifying first-stage "proto-poems" within the longer completed poems (Schwartz 2002 [2006]: 53–54; note that the proto-poem of Y 49 consists of stanzas 1–8, to which were added stanzas 9–12, with stanzas 8 and 12 linked via yāsa-. Cf. the first chart below).

Together with using of the concentricism of ring-composition, I shall confirm the proposed acrostic by applying my discovery of the method by which Zarathushtra generated, poem upon poem, the Gathic corpus (Schwartz 2002 [2006]: 54–63; Schwartz 2003 [2007] 5–8; Schwartz 2009; Schwartz 2010; Schwartz 2014: 27; Schwartz 2015a: 4–5; and Schwartz 2017: 430), a phenomenon which I now call Serially Correspondent Recursive Intertextual Mechanics (acronym SCRIM, playing on a term for a fabric whose opacity is dispelled by a light shining through, with my additional allusion to the charts which lay bare in the Gathic corpus the accumulation of lexical scaffolding from the earlier poems). The application of these structural phenomena, as well as textually based independent arguments, go far beyond any mere a priori assertion that in 33.2c (tōi) vārāi rādəṇtī ahurahiiā zaošē mazdā̊ acrosticizes the phonic form underlying 32.1c"uruuāzəmā 'bliss', i.e. the Beekesian reconstruction /vrama/, where /v/ = Eng. w (see Beekes 1988: 136). Indeed, without such corroboration, and without a performance scenario, the thesis of a preliterate acrostic could seem inherently dubious (for my earlier proposals on this Gathic acrostic, see Schwartz 1991:144–145; Schwartz 2003: 185 seq.; and Schwartz 2015a: 56).

I'll now give a broader account of the latter word (stem uruuāzəman-). Its presence at 32.1 (whence that of its cognates in other Gathic passages) refers to an afterlife reward for piety. It therefore stands in opposition to the claim of the Haoma cult, preserved in Young Avestan (Y 10.8), that the intoxication of haoma is accompanied by bliss (uruuāsmanā), where YAv. uruuāsman- = OAv. uruuāzəman-. It has been demonstrated (Schwartz 2006a, Schwartz 2006b) that much of Y 32 (and some of Y 48) are directed against the pre-Zarathushtrian Haoma cult, whose OAv. hymn is the basis of a post-Zarathushtrian revision, Y 9–10. Some clear allusions to the Haoma cult/hymn in Y 32 are the pejoration of Yima and his father at 32.8 (vs. their laudation in connection with the foundation of the Haoma cult, Y 9.5); 31.10a’huuo ̄ mā srauuā̊ mō rəṇdat̰ ’He misdirects indeed my words/reputations’, with paronomasia of huuo ̄ mā/hau mā/ as /haumā/: ‘Via haoma (he misdirects...’) followed in the rest of 32.10 by a parodic recasting of phraseology found at Y 9.29–31; this leads up, via allusions to the haoma-ritual, to 32.14c”düraoša-, cult-epithet of haoma.

For 32.1 it must be understood that the ‘bliss’ (uruuāzəmā) of Mazdā Ahura is shown as sought (yāsa-) both by a pious group and by a duplicitous (32.3c daibitānā ‘doubly meaning’) demonic party, both vowing to Mazdā Ahura with the same words, but respectively meaning ‘We will be Thy messengers (dūtā̊ ŋ hō), holding back (dāraiio)’Your enemies’ and ‘We will be smokes/obfuscations (dūtā̊ ŋ hō) to Thee, holding up/embracing (dāraiio)’Your enemies’. There are two respective divine reactions within the scheme of concentricism of stanzas in the proto-poem 32.1–13: 32.2 ‘To those Mazdā... responds (aēibīū mazdd ę... paiti.mraot) from His dominion, (He,) Ahura, connected/united with Good Mind, and (being) the boon associate of sun-possessing Rightness: “We choose your Holy Harmonious-Thought (Devotion); may She be Ours!”’, and 32.12b ‘To those...
Mazdā speaks bad things (aēbiuū mazdā̊ akā mraot) to/against those who misdirect the life of the cow via the bliss-oath (*uruuāš̄.uxtī’).

Here *uruuāš̄(.) (mss. *uruuāx̄(.), cf. conversely mss. uruuā̃- for uruuax̄̃- [see Adendum]), with uxti̊-‘oath’ (Arm. uxt), refers back to the demonic duplicitous declaration to gain Mazdā’s uruuāzmā, and attests a root-štem uruuāz̄- (whence adj. uruuāziia- in the series YH 36.2 uruuāzištō … uruuāzištahiiā uruuāzištiiā … mazištāi yānhq̄m, YH 36.1-2 conflating Y 30.1c’ and 2c’ with Y 49.7d-8a [Schwartz 2003 [2007]: 3-4], and YH 36.2 uruuāzištahiiā uruuāzišii showing gen. + instr. as also the immediately following phrase nāmištahiiā nəmanghā).

The stēm uruuāz̄- is also found as instr. at 30.1c’ yā raocēbiš darēsatā uruuāz̄a ‘via the bliss visible with the lights’, which indirectly shows that 32.1 uruuāz̄əmā is eschatological; it is granted by (32.2) Mazdā, who is connected/united (Ōsar) with Good Mind, and is ‘the boon associate of sun-possessing Rightness’, again eschatologically referent (see Kuiper 1964). Note also the eschatological dénouement of Y 32 (15a”-c): ’kauui-dom and karapan-dom will be tied down to the House of Wrong (Hell) along with those whom they hold in harness, nor, in the House of Good Mind (Paradise) will those (latter people), together with the (former) two (groups), be brought unto Those Who rule at will.’ (For this passage one must rearrange the words of 32.15b-c, whose syntax is senselessly convoluted, to read: nōit vaŋhūs̄ domēnā mananghō // tōi abiūbairiāntē / jiūtāuš asxaitāmnhng vasō. Disarrangement in oral transmission took place via influence of the penultimate stanza of 50.9 (c”) … vasō xsaitā, and the phonic similarity of vaŋhūs̄ and jiūtāušor). [See on 50.9 in Addendum, chart.]

The Zarathushtrian reference of uruuāzəman- to the afterlife is maintained in YAv. uruuāsmān- at P 38: ‘Then I, Who am Ahura Mazdā, will show the soul bliss (uruuāsma) and Best Exištence (= Paradise). The eschatological aspect of uruuāzəman- is also clear from the corresponding superlative adjective uruuāzištata at 49.8: ‘For Frashaoshtra, establis the most blissful connection/union which is in Thy good dominion, and for me, too; that I entreat Thee, O Mazdā Ahura. For all eternity will we be Thy legates.’ 49.8 parallels 32.1-2 with uruuāzištq̄m, cf. uruuāz̄əmā; saram’ connection, unite’, cf. sārmnō; we will be Thy emissaries, fraēštā̊ ĩ̄n̄g h̄o, Parth. frēštq̄g etc.), cf. ‘we will be Thy messengers (dūtā̊ ĩ̄n̄g); and both passages have xšaθra- ‘the (divine) dominion’. The close compositional relationship between 32.1 uruuāz̄əmā and 49.8 uruuāzištq̄m and the eschatological topos ‘in Thy dominion’ is shown by the following SCRIM chart with the proto-poem Y 49:1-8.

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32.1b” uruuāz̄əmā 49.8a” uruuāzištq̄m ‘bliss(-)’
32.2c” vaŋh’im 49.7c” vaŋh’im ‘good’ (f. acc.)
32.3c” asrūdūm 49.6b”,a” sroτū ‘he',[he]r’
32.4c” xratš’uš 49.6’ xratš’uš ‘of/from intellect’
32.5b’ mananjhā 49.5b” mananjhā ‘with mind’
32.6c” ḍəahmī …xšaθrōi 49.5d” ḍəahmī xšaθrōi ‘in Thy dominion’
32.7a” naēcīt 49.4b’ nōit ‘not’
32.8b” ahmākang 49.3c” ahmāi ‘i” pers. pl. pron.’
32.9b” vaŋh’uš mananjhō 49.2d vohu mananjhā ‘Good Mind’
32.10a” mā 49.1a’ mā ‘me’

32.1 and 49.8 also feature yāsa- ‘entreat’, as does 28.8 (like 49.8, with ‘I entreat for Frashaoshtra and me… forever’) and 51.21 (tō m vaŋh’im aṣīm yāsa, ‘Him do I entreat for a good reward’, whose eschatological
reference is made clear by the overall thematic juxtaposition with 51.20a \( \text{tať} \ vō \ haza\oš\āhō \ vispā\hō \ daïdiō \ sauuo \ ‘that strength(ening) be given by all of You, Who are of the same disposition’, where sauua(h), as throughout the corpus, refers to vigor in the afterlife (thus too 51.9c sauuaio), 51.20 coming after clear allusions in 51.13-19 to reaching Heaven.

At the aforementioned 28.8, the entreaty for the afterlife is to Mazdā, Who is haza\oša- ‘having the same \( \text{zaōša} \)’-disposition/nature/favor’ with (Bešt) Righteousness and Good Mind (in the joint godhead), and all are addressed as haza\oša- at 51.20. Thus uruwâz\āmā in 32.1(-2) is seen from its parallel passages with yāsa- to be a state of bliss enjoyed by Mazdā and His divine co-aspects, Who are together with Him called ‘having the same \( \text{zaōša} \)’- and which is to be rewarded in the afterlife to mortals, who will then share this godly state.

We may proceed to 33.2 and its acrostic. This stanza, the first in the proto-poem 33.2-10, in the final composition is brought into a relationship with the yāsa- passages by the prefatory insertion of 33.1, whose lašt line (c), in reference to deeds weighed as neither good nor evil, has homophonic ōm /yāsa-/ in ōmiiāsaitē (/ham- yāsa-/) ‘are balanced’. 33.2 is further related to 32.1 and 49.7-8 by the juxtaposition, in both 33.2 and 33.3, of the series \( x\’aētu \) ‘family’, \( \text{vrəsēna} \) and \( \text{airi\u0284aman} \) ‘tribe’. It was in fact the collocation of yāsa, the societal triad, and uruwâz- in 32.1 and 49.7-8 which led me to the acrostic for \( \text{vr\u0284ma} \) at 33.2. Here is 33.2:

\[
33.2a \at yə̄ akəm drəguuāite vacaŋhā vā at̰ vā manaŋhā \\
b zastoibiiā vā varəsaitī vaŋhā u vā cō iθaitē ast ī m \\
c tō i vārāi rādəntī ahurahiiā zaošē mazdā
\]

‘Now, whoever will bring about what is best for the wrongsome one, by word or thought or hands, or will recognize the guest in good—those will fulfill Ahura Mazdā’s desire and be in His (good) disposition’.

From the immediate context, \( \text{zaōša} \) here is ‘(good) disposition’ = ‘favor, affection’. But the doctrine attested in the foregoing passages, that the souls of the righteous in the afterlife will be integrated into the blissful state (uruwâz\āmā) of the divine entities Who are haza\oša- ‘having the same disposition (= the same nature)’, implies that at 33.2c \( \text{zaōše} \) refers to being in that divine bliss.

SCRIM proves that 33.2c \( \text{zaōše} \) is compositionally based on 28.8a haza\oša-. I hope to show elsewhere that the proto-poem 28.1-8 is complete in its concentrism and one of the earlier Gathic compositions. Here is its formal relationship to the proto-poem 33.2-10:

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
28.8a & haza\ošm & 33c \ ‘(-) disposition’ \\
28.8a & vahišt\əm, vahištā, vahištā & 33.3a’ vahištō ‘bešt’ \\
28.7c & sruui\u0284mā & 33.4a’ asruštīm ‘hear’ \\
28.6a & daragāiūi & 33.5b’ darogō ji\u0141i\u0284tam ‘long + age/life’ \\
28.5 & darasānī & 33.6c’ darštī\u0284scā ‘see’ \\
28.4 & vohū \ ... \ manaphā & 33.7b’ vohū \ ... \ manaphā ‘Good Mind’ \\
28.3a’ & manascā vohū & 33.8a’ vohū \ ... \ manaphā ‘Good Mind’ \\
28.2c & daiït, 2b’ dāuuωi & 33.8a’ dātā ‘give’ \\
28.1c & uruwânōm & 33.9c’ uru\wānō ‘soul’ \\
28.1b & vispōng & 33.10a’ vispūs ‘all (acc. pl.)’
\end{array}
\]
Just as the proto-poem 28.1-10 is framed in its first and last stanzas by yāsā, so the proto-poem 33.2-10 is framed by 2c" and 10b" zaoše:

33.2c" zaoše 33.10b" zaoše ‘in the disposition/favor/nature’
33.3c" vajhō ušcā... manajhē 33.9b" vahištā... manajhē ‘Good/Best Mind’
33.4a" yazāi 33.8b’ yasnām √ ‘worship’
33.5a“ sraošām 33.7b’ sruuiē √ ‘hear’
33.5c” orzuž 33.6a’ orzuš ‘straight’
33.6c” darštōišcā 33.7a’ *daruṣat cā √ ‘see’
33.6b" varzuiiediūāi 33.2b’ varzšaiti √ ‘bring about’
33.6b’ manajhē 33.10c’ manajhē ‘with mind’

The framing emphasizes a relationship between the antipodal stanzas with zaoše; 33.10a-b affirms that 33.2c zaoše implies that the righteous, in the afterlife, will become part of the divine state: ‘All those of Thine whose lives are good, those who have been, those who are and will be, O Mazdā, give them a share in Thy favor/nature (θβα ημι ης ζαοση αβαξσο.θυουα). Cf. 45.7b ‘For those who are alive, were and will be in immortality—the soul of the righteous one (will be) mighty...’.

It is instructive to note the concentricism of the final Y 33:

33.1a” paourouehūiā 33.14 b’ paourouatātām ‘first (-)’
33.2a” manajhē 33.13b” manajhē ‘mind’
33.3c“ vajhō ušcā... manajhē 33.12c” vohu manajhē ‘Good Mind’
33.4a’ asruštīm 33.11c’ sraotā √ ‘hear’
33.5a’ vispā- 33.10a’ vispās ‘all’
33.5b’ jiāiūtīm 33.10a’ jiāiūt ‘live’
33.6a“ mainiūuš 33.9a” mainiūum ‘spirit’
33.7b' vohu manajhē 33.8a” vohu ... manajhē ‘with Good Mind’

As is often true for final Gathic compositions, trivial formed concentric correspondences are supplemented by the stanzas’ meaning. Where 33.2 has final concentric correlation 33.13 formally only through the banal manajhē/manajhē, 33.13a-b bears out the eschatological significance of 33.2: ‘O broad-sighted Lord, for support show Thou me those *matchless things of Thy dominion, which are the rewards of Good Mind’. The problematic abifrā, taken from *adbifrā (syllabically *ad-bi-frā) ‘matchless’, would correspond to YAv. -bifra- ‘similar characteristic’, cf. Lat. duplex ‘double’. This concentric correspondence again bears on the broader eschatological reference of 33.2c.

For 33.2c vārāi rādaṃtī, cf.51.6a:
‘(For) the person who intends what is better than good, and who fulfills His (Mazdâ’s) desire, Ahura Mazdâ through dominion (will act reciprocatively), but (He brings) that which is worse to him who does not allot to Him, at the final turn of existence’.

This stanzas concentrates the ideas of 43.3-5. The elliptic syntax of 51.6, which is iconic of reciprocity, is like that of 46.18a-b, which again has vāra- as ‘divine desire’, and which is very relevant for 33.2:

46.18a yō maibiio yaoš ahmāi ascī vahištā
b maixiá ištōiš vohū cōišm manayhā
c qštōŋ ahmāi yō nā qštāi daidītā
d mazdā ašt xšmākem vārm xšnaošōmnō

‘He who (intends) the best things of vitality, to him have I promised (the best things) in my power, with Good Mind, but enmities to him who intends enmities for us; thus, O Mazdâ with Rightness, am I gratifying (*reciprocating) Your desire’.

As I shall discuss in detail elsewhere (Schwartz forthcoming on PIE *kelas, *kelasnw, etc.), xšnao- of xšnaošōmnō refers to institutionalized reciprocity as hospitality and cultic exchange; thus respectively in the concentric correspondence to 46.18, 46.1 xšnauš and xšnaošāi. At 46.18 a-b we have, in effect, promise of eschatological reward for hospitality (made explicit in detail in the central stanza 46.10), while 46.18 expresses the theme of personally effecting evil to evil persons. With the dénouement of achieving the divine desire (46.18d), whose eschatological context is shown clearly by the matching final stanza, 46.19 (esp. c mīždəm … parābūm ‘the prize of future existence’), we have all the conditions of 33.2.

Before proceeding to the phonic aspects of the performance of 33.2, it should be noted that the following stanza very emphatically features the initials a- (a-) and v- (v-) (cf. Schmidt 1985: 38):

33.3: /yah artāunai vahištah hvaitu và at và vrzanyah
aryamnā và ahurā vidans và ăvaxşahá gavai
at hau artahya ahat vahaušca văstrai manahah|

‘Whoever is best to the righteous person through family or as community member, or, O Ahura, through tribe, or diligently providing for the cow, he will be on the pastures of Rightness and Good Mind.’

This phonic feature must be intentional, because 33.4, which repeats the societal triad ‘family, community, tribe’ in a contrastively pejorative context, lacks any such phonic feature. The words /artāunai vahištah/ provide the decryptive key: the initials symbolize /Arta Vahištâ/ ‘Best Rightness’, parallel to phrasally repeated initials /v- m-/ or /m- v-/ for /Vahu Manah/ or /Manah Vahu/ ‘Good Mind’ elsewhere. Moreover, 32.1, in which the word for ‘bliss’ is focal, among its other cryptic features contains, in the last four words of lines a and of b, a twofold encoding of the theological overlap between Mazdâ Ahura, Vohu Manah, and Aša Vahišta, which is developed in 32.2 and which is complemented by 33.3 (Schwartz 2015b, 54-56; Schwartz 2003: passim). The oral acrostic 33.2c would then resume, in another ingenious invention, the intricate use of initial sounds.
It has been shown above that in 33.2c the concept of uruuāzəmā i.e. */vrāzma/ 'eschatological bliss' is conceptually latent. This latency would be realized as an oral acrostic through a performance with successive phonic modulations; indeed something of the sort, a fourfold, increasingly loud recital of the Ahuṇa Vairiia prayer, was attributed to Zarathushtra in Young Avestan tradition (Y 9.14). The oral acrostic in 33.2c would proceed from the pause metrically indicated after tōi. One may suggest, e.g., four recitals:

1. /vārāi rādanti ahurahya zušai mazda'ah/;
2. (capitals here indicating greater relative loudness) /VāRĀi RĀdanti AhuRAhya ZAušai MAzdA'Ah/;
3. further silencing of the less loud sounds, and RĀ/RA in the second and third words pronounced as an echo of the first RĀ, and then,
4. with second and third R pronounced as a glide, one obtains a final highly resonant and reverberating /V( a )RĀĀAAAZəəMAA/, i.e. /vrāzma/.

But it is the SCRIM phenomenon which offers decisive evidence for the acrostic. 32.1-10 demonstrably yielded the proto-poem 33.2-8. The SCRIM chart for this interestingly shows a number of the same lexemic correspondents seen in the other SCRIM charts offered in this article, a fact relevant for the mnemonics which Zarathushtra used. What matters most is that in the SCRIM chart for 32.1-10:33.2-8, the only correspondent for 32.1b” uruuāzəmā /vrāzma/; 33.2c phonemic-syllabic acrostic **/v-r-ā-z-m-a/.

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<th>32.1b”</th>
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<th>33.2c”</th>
<th>**/v-r-ā-z-m-a/</th>
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<td>33.10a”</td>
<td>yə̄...ya´ scā...b´ yd scā</td>
<td>‘rel. pron.’</td>
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**Addendum**

The emendation 32.12b’ uruuāš(’) ‘bliss(-)’ for the contextually unlikely mss. uruuāxš(’) ‘stride’ is proved by the charted correspondence below with 50.5b” vaorāzaθā (redup. stem */va-vrāz-a-/) ‘may You be giving bliss’ (whose larger context, 50.4d and 50.5d show that the reference is to a paradisic afterlife). In the chart below, for 32.15b”-c’, see above on the passage; 32.7c” tuuām is part of an emendatory partial exchange of 32.7c with 32.6b, where irixtam would be, as necessary, concentrically linked to its cognate 32.1b” raēxnaŋho; cf. Schwartz 2002[2006]: 58, chart, and 63 fn. 22. For another SCRIM chart involving 32.7 seq., see Schwartz 2015a: 4-5 and Schwartz 2017: 430. Here is the SCRIM chart for Y 50: Y32.7-16:
50.1c  šβατ cá mazdā  32.7c“  tuu̇m mazdā  ‘2nd pers. sg. + Mazdā’
50.2a”  gqm  32.8b“  gāuś  'cow' (32.8b“ also ‘strayed’)
50.2c  jīš  32.9a“  jījāšuś  ν‘to live’
50.2d”  dā̄m  32.10b“  dā̄šōng  ‘law-abiding’
50.3d”  dr̡guudā  32.11a“  dr̡guūntō  ‘wrongsome’
50.4d”  sraušānē  32.12a“  srauwaṃhā  ν‘hear’
50.5a“  vaorāzaṇā  32.12b“  *urṿūś( )  ν‘(have) bliss’
50.6a’  mꝛ̣rā  32.13c‘  m记者了解  ‘mant(h)rist’
50.7d”  auuaŋ̣hē  32.14c“  auuō  ‘aid’
50.8d  vaŋ̣hōuš manayāb  32.15*b”  vaŋ̣hōuš... manayhō  ‘of Good Mind’
50.9c“  vasō xšaiāa  32.15*c“  xšaiamnāng vasō  ‘(be) ruling at will
50.9d“  išaiiq̣ s  32.16c“  išiēnɡ  ν‘energize, speed, dispatch’
Bibliography


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