



On *Aiiehiā*, Afflictress of Childbirth, and *Pairikā*: Two Avestan Demonesses (with an Appendix on the Indo-Iranian Shipwrecked Seaman)

MARTIN SCHWARTZ

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY

Part I

Old Iranian tradition may be expected *a priori* to have had the equivalent of Lilith [i.e. an invidious demoness who afflicts pregnant women and newborn children], given belief in a similar demoness throughout the Near East and the Arab world, Central Asia, and elsewhere.¹

The oldest relevant Iranian material artifacts, the Sasanian seal-amulets, show the demoness in question as, in effect, backgrounded by the promotion of the magical protective god who is her opponent, whose name (earlier taken as *Sāsān*) I have shown to be *Sesen* (Schwartz 1998a and 1998b; for epigraphic-linguistic evidence for the vocalization *Sesen*, see Huyse 2005, 59–60).

I take this opportunity to summarize and amplify my earlier remarks on this god, and then return to the question of the demoness. The divine name is reconstructable as **Sasm*. The name is first attested in Ugarit, and later in the Phoenician world, in the onomastics of the Old Testament and 7th cent. B.C.E. Assyrian texts, etc. The abundant attestation of the name (which is clearly not Semitic) on Cyprus makes it likely that the divinity originated in Eteo-Cypriot culture,² and thence disseminated to Ugarit and the Phoenicians.³

From the Phoenicians, the cult of *Sesen* spread to Aramaic culture, whence the form *Sesen* (~**Sissinn-*, by long association with the Semitic word for “date-palm branch”). In Late Antiquity, *Sesen* developed into a general protective god

(especially as *Sesengen Barpharangēs*, the second name an Arameo-Greek form “son of the *crevasse-goddess,” a trace of the god’s mythical chthonic origin), and a protector specifically of children against a demoness, a function already found in one of the earliest testimonies, the 7th century B.C.E. First Plaque of Arslan Tash.⁴ This function is well attested in the closely related Jewish and Christian *materia magica* of the Late Antique periods. In Iran, where *Sesen* already figures in Parthian theophoric names from Nisa, the childbirth-protecting function of *Sesen* is clear from the Sasanian seal-amulets (see Gyselen 1995, with Schwartz 1998a).

Now, it is characteristic of the Jewish and Christian material that the developments of *Sesen*, the protector of childbirth, are manifest in triadic form: the three Jewish angels *swny*, *swwny*, and *sn(y)gly* of the amulets (and similar names on the magic bowls), and the Byzantine saints *Sinēs*, *Sisin(n)ios* and *Sēnodōros*, etc. On the Medieval Greek side, dyadic forms are also attested: *Sisinnios*, *Sisynodōros*; *Sisinnios*, *Sisinnarios*; *Sisinnios*, *Bisinnios* (with *Bi(s)-* = Lat. *bi(s)-* “two-, twice”); Armenian *Sisianos* and *Kiprianos*, etc. A slippage between a single, a dyadic, and a triadic representation is found in the Greek text reproduced and translated by Naveh and Shaked 1998, 114–15, in which the saints are listed as a triad, *Sisinnios*, *Sinēs*, and *Sēnodōros*, but named as a dyad within a triad: *Sisīnie*, *Sinē*, *kai synodia* “O *Sisinnios*, *Sinēs* and company” (where *synodia* “company” in Byzantine Greek has the

same pronunciation /sinoð-/ as in /sinóðoros/, and where we have the subject as a single saint once called *Sēnodōros* and once called *Sisinnios*.⁵

I have already noted that the Sasanian seal-amulets provide epigraphic evidence for the dyadic naming of *Sesen* (Schwartz 1998a, 256b). I now suggest that the dyadic manifestation appears iconographically in the same material (see Gyselen 1995, p. 31, fig. 16; p. 32, fig. 18; p. 34, figs. 20–23; p. 35, fig. 24, a pair confronting a bestial, probably lupine, demonic entity; and p. 35, figs. 26–29, which probably show a triadic representation of *Sesen*).

I now return to *Sesen*'s opponent, the demoness who afflicts childbirth. On the one Sasanian artifact in which the demoness is named, the seal-amulet from the Metropolitan Museum, she is called *Sesenmarg-Dēw* (Gyselen 1995, 25 with ref. to Naveh and Shaked 1998; for the vocalization, see Huyse 2005, 59–60). I think this name is best translated “the Demon(ess) *Sesendeath*,” in which we have an ambiguity: Not only may the name indicate that the demoness can bring about “the death of *Sesen*,” but also that she may receive “death through *Sesen*.” While the demoness’ own distinctive name may be taboo, it is interesting that there is a parallel for the child-harming demoness being named from her enemy: the name of Solomon (who occurs alone or alongside *Sisinnios* in Christian texts, and alone in Islamic texts) yields names for the demoness in Christian and Islamic lists of magical names: Med. Gr. *Solōmōnē*, Rumanian *Salomnia*, and Arabic *Salamās*, *Salamān*, *vel sim*.⁶

I shall now try to show that the ancient indigenous Iranian name of the demoness is retrievable. The 21st Fargard of the *Widēwdād* constitutes, in effect, an elaborate birth-charm. Here the Cow, Clouds, Sun, Moon, and Stars are respectively called upon, via the Holy Mant(h)ra, to exert themselves to counter illness and provide liquidity and fertility, while regularly, in verses 4, 8, 12, and 16, the *Vourukaša* Sea (province of the goddess *Anāhitā*, who promotes the fluids of pregnant women) is invoked for birth and growth. Most importantly, verses 6–7, 10–11, and 14–15 are directed on behalf of the future mother:

I will now cleanse birth and growth for thee.
I will now purify for thee form and force.
I will cause thee to be pregnant and bear milk.
O fecund one, thou art rich in lactation,

in milk, in milch, in marrow, in progeny.
I shall purify a thousand sources for thee
to pour towards thy breasts, for nourishment
of the child.

A spell follows in verse 17, which is the text’s climax: “Through conjuration is driven away the *Kaxuži*, driven away the *Aiiehiā*, driven away the sorcerous *Jahi*!” For *kaxuži*, Bartholomae (1904, 160, s.v. *ayehyā*-) convincingly compared OInd. *kuhaka*- “trickster, swindler.” *Jahi*- refers to a female, especially one associated with sexual misconduct or sorcery; see de Jong 1995, 28, 31, and 48.⁷

This leaves *aiiehiā*. Comparison of Ved. *ayāsya*- (Wikander 1938, 52) is made highly unlikely by the internal *-ā-* vis-à-vis Av. *-a-*, and the Ved. mg. “untiring” (a positive attribute of *Indra*, among others; the synonymous Vedic *ayās-* also represents a positive attribute) is not very apt for *Widēwdād* 21.17. By contrast, *aiiehiā* is easily explained as the feminine adjectival derivative of the metal-word *aiiah*-.⁸ As a regular phonological development, *aiiehiā* would parallel Old Avestan *yehiā* < *yahya*, whereas pre-nasalization and palatalization of *h* would be expected for Young Avestan; thus *aiiehiā* is of Old Avestan origin. Cf. the possible OAv. provenance of her antagonist *Anāhitā*'s fixed epithet *Arəduuī* (vs. **Arəδfi*).

For the original meaning of *aiiah*-, Vedic *ayas*-, as “copper and/or bronze” rather than “iron,” see Muhly 1973, 175–76; Mallory 1989, 121; and Mallory and Adams 2002, 241. The word is found in three compounds at Yt. 13.45 in reference to respectively the helmet, weapon, and shield of the *Frauuāšis*, where *aiiah*- has its Bronze Age meaning; cf. Lat. *aes*, ONorse *eir* “copper, bronze.” Note Yt. 10.96 describing *Mithra*'s mace as cast of tawny metal (*zarōiš aiiaṅhō*), i.e. “bronze,” not “iron.”⁹ The PIr. word for “iron” is in fact reconstructable as **answan(ya)*- (< **ansuwan*-, the probable ultimate source of Tocharian B *eñcuwo* “iron,” *eñcuwañne* “made of iron” = Toch. A *añcwāši*; Khwarezmian (< Toch.?) *hnčw* “iron-tipped [weapon],” *θ:hnčw tyγ* “[staff] with iron tip.” The Pahlavi translation of Av. *aiiaṅh(aēna)*- as *āhan/āhen* “iron” is due to the later prominence of iron, and the phonic similarity.

The connection of *Aiiehiā* with bronze is found in the description of *Al* (the demoness who afflicts babies and new mothers) in two Armenian scrolls, both of which, while differing

in other details, describe the nails (claws) of AI as "brazen, made of bronze" (Russell 1987, 448, and, with regard to a different text, Feydit 1986, 307, "... ses ongles étaient d'airane . . ." (the latter reference was kindly provided by Dr. Mihaela Timuș) indirectly continuing the metallic conception of *Aiiehiia*. Jewish magical bowls speak of *Smamit*, sister of (*sw*)/*sny*, etc., going to a mountain and performing sorceries of copper/bronze and iron against the child-killing demoness (Naveh and Shaked 1998, 189–90), paralleled in Med. Gr. by Meletinē building a high fortification in *Khalkoprátia* (a Constantinopolitan place-name whose occurrence here may reflect something like **khalkopragía* [Naveh and Shaked **khalkoprágmata*] "works of copper/bronze"; see Naveh and Shaked, p. 115 fn. 5 with 112) (the name Meletina, if from Gr. *mélitta* "bee," like *Smamit* "spider," would recall the entry of the demonesses in the form of a fly, and her name "fly," *Myia*. This may reflect an older version of the tale in which the demoness is the sister of the hero, one of various examples is seen in the text given by Naveh and Shaked, 118; other such texts are found in Winkler 1931, 127–28 seq.). Thus we have an indirect reflection of the demoness herself performing sorceries of bronze and iron. For mention of the two metals together as a means of controlling demons occurs in other texts of the corpus; see Naveh and Shaked, 91–92, 94.

The influence of the aforementioned Middle Iranian reinterpretation of "bronze" as "iron" on coterritorial Jewish tradition may explain why the name of the fiend is found on Jewish amulets and bowls as *Sideros*, from the Greek word for "iron" (*sídēros*, masc., whence the gender of the fiend), and in related non-Jewish material the demoness is named as a calque of a Semitic word for "iron" (cf. Naveh and Shaked 1998, 116 and 121). In fact, one may now specify the Semitic source as Hebrew *barzel* "iron," with *b-*, rather than the *p-* of its Aramaic cognate *parzālā*: In Coptic hymns in honor of St. Sisinnios, his demoness opponent is called *Berzelia* (> Ethiopic *Werzelya*) and in other Coptic texts *Aberselia* (etc., see Van der Vliet 1991, 232–33),¹⁰ while in Greek material Gyllou/Gel(l)o(u) has listed, among her names, *Bardellous*, *Anabardalaia*, *Anabardou*, and *Bordona* (Winkler 1931, 158–59; Perdrizet 1922, 21).

However, the naming of the demoness from "iron" in the Jewish and Christian material is probably independent of the Avestan name

Aiiehiia, since there is no evidence bridging the two bodies of data. "Iron" as the name of the demoness may be explained, paradoxically enough, from the fact that iron was used to repel the demoness (thus Naveh and Shaked 1998, loc. cit.). From Armenia, where iron shears were put under the pillows of women as a talisman against AI, we have a magic scroll reporting that St. Sisianos sees the demoness with iron shears in her hand (Russell 1987, 447–48). This would be an intensification of the paradoxical naming. In general, however, calling the demoness by that which is thought to be inimical to her may be explained as a magical means of weakening her (cf. the demoness being called from Solomon's name, as discussed above). It is in any event copper/bronze which is originally associated with the lilithine demoness in the Iranian tradition.

Aiiehiia's name would embody the hard and bellicose connotations of bronze, for which one may compare Russell 1983, 250, on the Hesiodic associations with bronze: In the scheme of four ages, the people of the age of bronze lived in houses of bronze, were warlike, and having slaughtered each other, were apparently the first to go down to Hades. The underworldly Tartaros itself is encircled by bronze. Here, bronze betokens "death, darkness, and ancient evil."

It is obvious that the lilithine nature of *Aiiehiia* follows from the fact that this figure, together with *Kaxuži* and *Jahī Yātumaitī*, is exorcised at the end of *Widēwdād* 21, the entirety of which is a charm promoting childbirth. It is likely that in this climactic position all three terms are complementary epithets for the same afflictress of childbirth. As parallel to this complementarity, cf. Hutter 1995–1999 on Lilith's Mesopotamian background: In the Middle Babylonian period, different demonesses merged in the conception of the afflictress of childbirth, *lamaštu* and (*w*)*ardat lilī* and *lilitu* (see further Farber 1989). The latter two demonesses are referred to as females who "stroll about searching for men in order to ensnare them. Sexually unfulfilled, she is the perpetual seductress of men." The *lilitu* (like *Lamaštu*) "cannot bear children and . . . has no milk but only poison when she gives her breast as a deceitful wetnurse to children" (cf. Byzantine *Abyzou* "breastless" as the name of the demoness, whence Heb. *'byz* and similar names in various Greek and East European amulets). *Lamaštu* is also a whore (Winkler 1931, 173).¹¹ A relevant parallel to the triadic

naming of the Avestan demoness is also found, for example, in the Greek prayer of St. Michael (Perdrizet 1922, 24) "I conjure thee, Strangleress (*strangaliā*) multiform one (*polymórphē*¹²), . . . Enchantment (*Baskosýnē*)." [Addendum: I thank Dr. Mihaela Timuş for reminding me to mention that, as I had indicated in our correspondence, the Avestan figure who combats the child-afflicting demoness of Wd. 21 is probably Anāhitā. We agree that although Anāhitā is not mentioned in the latter text, the parallels with the description of Anahitā in Yasht 5 are clear: "She purifies the semen of all males and the wombs of all females for birth. She gives easy delivery to all females and brings down their milk in due time and measure." The parallelism had been noted by Darmesteter, *Le Zend-Avesta*, in his preface to Wd. 21. We regard it as important that, as against the Near Eastern tradition, with its aggressive male divine opponent (> opponents) to the demoness, the old indigenous Iranian tradition seems to have had a female figure, a fertility goddess, countering the demoness. I add that my investigation of the Old Iranian magic against a lithine demoness was inspired by Dr. Timuş' discussions with me on the issue years ago. See now Mihaela Timuş' article in this volume: "Légendes et savoirs périnataux chez les Zoroastriens."]

Part II

Another demoness is known in Avestan as *pairikā*. The Middle Iranian cognates show that Proto-Iranian had *parikā*, with the same Avestan shortening of etymological *i* [probably due to initial stress] as in Av. *ainika*, *paitika* (see below), *jahikā* (= *jahi*; see above), and further *kainikā* "girl," etc. As transition to this topic from the data in Part I, I proceed from the fact that there is evidence which suggests that the Aramaic Lilith was occasionally associated with the West Middle Iranian *parik*, another shape-shifting demoness. On an Aramaic magic bowl from Khuzestan, the figure of the child-destroying demoness as the destructive "mother" (a theme found in Syriac, Arabic, and Byzantine material) is replaced by 'm' *pryk* "Mother Parik" with Sesen: *sysyn* 'dwd *d'm* *pryk* [cf. Fauth 1971 [1970], 255]. Other Aramaic magic bowls, from Nippur, have pl. *pryky* collocated with "temple spirits," and "Astartes," for which Montgomery (1913, 73) suggested connection with Av. *pairikā* as a beautiful seductive

witch; here **pryk*' may have been associated with the equivalent of Syr. *parakkā* "shrine spirit," also mentioned by Montgomery. In addition, in the folklore of the Zoroastrians of Sharifabad, Iran, we find "Shah Pari" as "queen of the malicious *pairikās*," who is a "stealer of infants," albeit confused with Shah Pari taken as "Kind Paridun" = the healing figure Ferīdūn (Boyce 1977, 63), cf. Timuş in the present volume. I propose that *šah-pari* < *šah-pare* = *šabpara*, *šapara*, *šap(a)rak*, etc., "bat" (< "night-flier") as demonic entity. J. W. Frembgen (2006, 249) has in fact noted that in Southern Pashto the bat is called "shah parak" "flying king," that the equivalent in the north (Peshawar, Swat), "kha-parak" is also the name of a female demon, and that "shaprak" in the colloquial of Iran and Afghanistan was formerly common for "prostitute."

The connection of *parik* with the Lilith figure may be explained from their shared aspect as succubus (female incubus). The nightmare-succubus aspect of the *pairika* is seen from the Avestan tale of Kərəsāspa, to whom a *pairikā* latches on sexually in Vaēkərəta (Kābul), *Widēwdād* 1.9. According to the Pahlavi account, Kərəsāspa (Sam/Karsāsp) is killed in his *sleep/dreaming* in Kābul. The verb for the demoness' attaching herself, *uparhacaṭ* (√*hak* in Bartholomae 1904, 1741) "became companion to, accompanied," parallels the synonymous Aramaic verb *l-w-y* "to accompany" used in Aramaic magic bowls for the action of Lilith, whence the subsidiary name of the demoness in Aramaic and Syriac, *Malwītā* "The Companion, Accompanier." In New Persian, *paris* are conceived of as harming people during sleep with epilepsy or madness (thus Pers. *pari-zade* "struck by a *pari*," Hafez and Khāqānī). Most importantly, the meaning "nightmare" for *pairikā* is shown by the Avesta. In Yt. 13.104 "we have the series 'bad dreams (*x'afna*-), bad *daēsas* (not "omens," but rather "apparitions," cf. Oss. *des/dis* "astonishment," New Persian *dēs* "shape" < "appearance"; cf. Lat. *monstrum* and Gr. *phántasma*), bad *ōifras*, and bad *pairikās*.¹³ Here *ōifra* is rightly taken as a variant of *vifra*-, cf. *ōiθrā* = *vifrā* "separately." Given the context, *ōifra*- = *vifra*- is to be taken as "trembling," with *vifrā*- from Indo-Iranian √*vip* "to be agitated, move from side to side" (see Appendix). The Arm. word *vēp* "fable" may be explained as a borrowing from a Parthian word from the same root, originally meaning "fever dream, delusion."

In view of the *pairikā*'s nature as a sexual figure, with characteristics of a bewitching female

incubus and nightmare demoness, I take *pairikā* as “the Surrounder” (from PIE **peri-H₃k^we-H₂*, see below), representing the figure of the feared female as enveloper, binder, engulfer, swallower, etc. For this figure, note the overlapping materials (although not necessarily the respective psychological interpretations) of Freud’s disciple Ernest Jones (1931, 57–98 *seq.*, 190–236, and 241–49 and especially 412–13, with citations of Boerner, Cubash, Delassus, and Macario, on acutely erotic dreams of being enveloped by a witch/demoness lover, accompanied by trembling, etc.), and Jung’s disciple Erich Neumann (1955 and 1974, 147–73 *seq.*). Cf. in addition the Pahlavi epithet of the shape-shifting *parīg*, *wiṣād-zafar* “having wide-open mouth/jaws” in the narration about Srit, who is eventually destroyed by a multiplicity of *parigs* (*Zādspram* 4.18 *seq.*).

Very rich formal support for such an etymology is given in an excellent and informative article, Janda 2008 [2006], 213–19, to which we may add OInd *úpāka-*; MPers. *abāg*, Pers. *bā* < *upa*; and (like OInd. *prātika-*, Av. *paitika-* < *p(ṛ)ati*), Vedic *ánika-*, Av. *ainika-* < PIE **H₁eni*, and OIr. **nika* > Khwarezmian *nyk /nik/* < **ni*. Janda, *op. cit.*, 220–24, sees “surrounding, Surrounder” as reference to the magic bonds of the sorceress on her victim. These formal and semantic explanations were already anticipated in detail by Gray 1929, 197. However, **parika-* would be expected to occur in such a sense elsewhere, but the attestation is limited to the Iranian demoness. More importantly (and this goes against Janda’s alternative explanations of *pairikā* which involve *pári-/pairi-*), an OIr. directional adjective **parika-* would only mean “that which is itself situated around something.”¹⁴ B. A. Olsen’s (1999, 34) phonologically intricate attempt to connect *pairikā* with Arm. *harč* “concubine” fails with the assumption that a PIE word is at source.¹⁵ Note that Olsen’s etymology proceeds from comparison with Old Irish *airech*, whose alleged meaning “concubine” is refuted by Janda 2008 [2006], 216–18.¹⁶ With the elimination of the Old Irish form, only the Iranian and Armenian ones are left as evidence for their alleged Proto-Indo-European etymon for “concubine,” of which the Iranian would have to be qualified by a bridging definition “demonic concubine” (dämonische Buhlerin, Pokorny 1959, 789), but the meaning “concubine” is not attested for *pairikā* and its Middle Iranian cognates, and the sexual aspect of *pairikā* is not foregrounded. In addition, the problem which Janda pointed out

for the alleged antecedent of the Iranian and Irish words: the purely formal reconstruction of an Indo-European word for “concubine” is opaque as to analysis of its basic constituents. *Ceteris paribus*, Arm. *harč* may instead be related to Av. *hāirišī* “a female.” For earlier explanations of *pairikā*, see the article *Pairikā* in *Encyclopædia Iranica* (Adhami 2010), which also has useful data on *pairikā/parīg* in Iranian literature; cf. also Panaino, 139. Jamison (2009, 320) lists Av. *pairikā* “witch” and *jahikā* “bad woman” together as examples of OIr. *-kā* suffixation and (fn. 10) cites, toward a “potential etymology” of *pairikā*, references to the “disputed” connection with Lat. *paelex* and Gr. *pallakis* “concubine.”

I suggest the following scenario of how the **parikā*, originally the “surrounding” horrid female—nightmare/succubus/witch—took on the various other aspects reflected for the term. The witch-succubus would have been associated with menstrual (and seminal) contamination, extended, in Iranian mythical thinking, to ruination of fertility in general (cf. Choksy 1989, 94–98), whereby ruination of crops and impedance of rainfall. The latter function led to connection of these demoness(es) with atmospheric and astral phenomena originally associated with other demonesses (Panaino 1990, 139, compares the *pairikās*’ aspect of shooting stars with that of the Old Indic *Rakṣasīs*).

Archaic Iran may be expected to have had a multiplicity of evil spirits of female gender, like Vedic *drūh-* f. “wrongness, that which makes things go wrong” (Vedic generic pl. *drūhas*). A trace of this situation is found in the *Widēwdād*’s corpse-demoness, *druxš yā nasuš*, which, incidentally, goes against the predominant but simplistic translation of *druj-* as “lie,” with dualistic counterpart *aša-* (for which “rightness” is a better translation than “truth”). The scarcity of Av. *druj-* used for specific types of demons can be attributed in part to the *pairikās* usurping the role of specific types of *druj*.

The transformation seen for the *parī* in Islamic Iran to a mere beautiful, and generally benign, fairy, may be understood from the marginalization of Zoroastrian lore and traditions, whereby the older topos of the *parī(g)* as a demoness capable of assuming seductive forms yielded the fairy figure (with *parī* associated with *par(ṛ)* “wing”). In addition, however, there was a long background of fear of and thereby euphemistic treatment of the demonesses. This is already seen in the Avesta,

Yt. 8.51 and 53, which reports, disapprovingly, on those who call the *pairikā dužiiāriiā* ("she who brings a bad season") by the name *huiiāriiā* "she who brings a good season."

Survivals of the older notion of the *parī* as evil are seen in the Islamic gloss of Arabic *yūl* (Khwar. *arḍaw*) as Pers. *dīv-e biyābān*, *parī-ye jādūyān* "desert demon, parī-sorcerer" (Schwartz 1970, 388); cf. the Av. collocation of *yātu-* "sorcerer" and *pairikā* "witch." Note also *parī-zade* "epileptic, insane" discussed above. In regional Iranian folklore, the *parī* is a capricious, sexually seductive female water-spirit.¹⁷

[Addendum: With regard to *pyryky* on the magic bowls, it is confidently taken directly from Iranian *parikā-* on grounds of its constant spelling and semantic similarity to the Iranian word, by Sh. Shaked, "Bagdana, King of the Demons and Other Terms in Babylonian Aramaic Magic," in *Papers in Honour of Professor Mary Boyce*, vol. 2 (Leiden, 1985), pp. 511–25, p. 512, fn. 5. A misreading as an alleged "male *pyrk*" on a magic bowl is noted by T. Kwasman's review article, "A New Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic," *JAOS* 132.1 (Jan.–Mar. 2012), pp. 77–99, p. 95.]

Appendix: *Pāuruua vifra-*

The adjective *vifra-* appears in Avestan at Yt. 5.61, the tale of the shipwrecked *pāuruuō yō vifrō nauuāzō* "Pāuruua the *vifra-* boatman." Whereas *viprā-* (which figures into the related Vedic account of the shipwrecked Paura) in Vedic means "inspired seer-poet," no such equivalent occurs in Iranian. The Vedic term would refer etymologically to the agitated state of the visionary, cf. the well-documented trembling of the Kafiric shaman-seer in trance. In the case of the shipwrecked Pāuruua, the hapax *vifra-* would merely refer to his being tossed about by the sea. For the Vedic narration, Jackson and Oettinger (2002, 227–28) have shown that *viprā-* does not refer to Paura himself, but to a figure having some rescuing role. I suggest that the Avestan version is more conservative as to the relevant term, with reinterpretation in the somehow related Vedic version.

Notes

Acknowledgments: I thank Stefan W. Zimmer, Alexander Nikolaev, and Alexis Manaster-Ramer for their

helpful comments, and Peter Jackson and Michael Janda for kindly e-mailing me their relevant articles.

1. For the rich intercultural connections of the relevant myths and magic, see Schwartz 1998a and Schwartz 2002. In p. 236, fn. 26, the etymology suggested for *Mardās* should be deleted, and in the bibliography, 237, the reference is to Hans, not Hugo, Winkler (H. A. Winkler in the bibliography of the present article).

2. It is conceivable that a late reflection of the Cypriot origin of *Sasm is St. Cyprian in Syriac and Armenian as an ally of Sesen/Sisin/Sisianos in fighting the demoness. The interpretation of the name of a spirit 'lšyy on the First Arslan Tash Plaque (see fn. 4) as "the Alasiot" = "the Cypriot" is controverted. However, 'lyšy, called "the quiver-bearer," is collocated with the divine name *hwrwn* in the Syriac amulet against lilitis and other evil spirits, Gignoux 1987, 28, text line 8. The same page, text line 4, has *ssnyg'n*, to be interpreted as "afflictions controlled by Sesen." The spelling *hwrwn* here represents *Hōrōn*; for *h = ḥ* in this ms. see Gignoux 1987, 3. For the relationship between *Sasm and *Hōrōn*, see fn. 4 below. For early attestations of *Sasm, see Becking 1999, 725–26. Note there the reference to P. R. S. Moorey, "A Bronze 'Pazuzu' Statuette from Egypt," *Iraq* 27 (1965), pp. 33–34; the dedication to *ssm br pth* seems to indicate that Pazuzu's magic opposition to the demoness who kills babies (in Mesopotamia, *Lamaštu*), is here transferred to *Sasm (with *ssm br pth* apparently = *ssm bn pdr*).

3. Cf. the material in Fauth 1971 [1970], 229–32, 234, 245–46, and 253.

4. For the latest translation and bibliography for this amulet, and defense of its authenticity on archaeological, epigraphic, and linguistic grounds, see Pardee 1998. The authenticity was also convincingly defended by van Dijk 1992. Regarding van Dijk's observation, 68, fn. 28, that little was known about Hauron (*Hawrān/Hōrōn*) when the amulet was first published in 1933, add the evidence for this god's association with *Sasm (Sesen, Sisin), Schwartz 1998a, 256. In fact, the nature of *Sasm as protector of childbirth gradually emerged after the first publication of the plaque.

5. Cf. Naveh and Shaked 1998, 192 and 196, with a slightly different formulation from mine, and an observation that the Jewish magical bowls vary in treating the angel as one or more.

6. See Winkler 1931, 152, for the attestations. Winkler derives these from that of the New Testament figure Salome, noting that fevers are called "the daughters of Herod" in a Russian conjuration. I think it is more likely that a paradoxical Med. Gr. name **Solōmōnē* for the demoness was misunderstood, through partial similarity of names, as referring to the evil and charming woman who demanded that John the Baptist be decapitated.

7. De Jong, 27–28, fn. 51, suggests, but is justly skeptical, that in *kaxužī* the *ž* may be an Avestan dialectal

equivalent of the [rō] in the attested Av. [kax^rrōi] and the rz of Khwarezmian *kxrzy- "sorceress, soothsayer."

8. Suffixation of *-ya-, with adjectival function, is found in other words for metals: Av. *zaran-īia-* (OInd. *hiraṇ-yā-*) "gold" (alongside *zaran-aēna-* "golden," like *aiiagh-aēna-* "made of bronze"), and **answan-ya-* "made of iron" (discussed in the main text). Parthian "swn, Kurdish *asin* [āsin] reflects apophonic *-un- alongside *-wan-.

9. Cf. Boyce 1987, 511–12, for the Yashts which represent Bronze Age cultures; further Boyce 1984, 11 and [for Yt. 10.96] 29.

10. Note also van der Vliet's discussion of Berzelia's alternate name *Alabasdria*, whence it is clear that *Alabasdria* has nothing to do with *Aberselia* or Central Asiatic *Albasty*, etc. The Coptic name *Berzelia* has been known since 1907; see Winkler 1931, 97 and 195, where it is correctly seen as the source of Ethiopic *Werzelya*, etc.

11. For the whorish aspect of the childbirth-afflicting demoness in Late Antique material, see Winkler 1931, 169–70.

12. Probably *Amorphous*, *Amorphou* in the Medieval Greek lists (Perdrizet 1922, 20) refers to the lack of consistent shape of the demoness, rather than her ugliness. This form (rather than the variant *Morphous* cited by Naveh and Shaked 1998, 119) is the source of 'mwrpw on late Jewish amulets. *Morphous* via Arab. **mrfws* probably lies behind the *brqws* (Winkler 1931, 26), etc. in the lists of names of the demoness in Islamic talismans. As for the Med. Gr. variant *Mōrra* [= Mod. Gr. *mōrā* /*morā*/ "[female] incubus, succubus," Perdrizet 1922, 23], cf. South Slavic *Mora* (Germ. *Mahr*), Winkler 1931, 117.

13. Note Arm. *yuškparik* (Ir. "ass" + *parik*) = Gr. *onokéntauros* "ass-centaur," a horrid midday dream-apparition.

14. The OIr. adj **Parikāna-* apparently attested via toponyms and ethnonyms from Aramaic, Elamite, and Greek, assembled by Bivar 1985, 31–32, would refer to a place in greater Achaemenid Persia which was peripheral ("surrounding") some other, more important place; for the suffix cf. OIr. **Hagmatāna-* "Ecbatana." Bivar's view that the Av. *pairikā*, etc., represents a prudish priestly mythologization based on camp-follower women from the place represented by the aforementioned toponyms/ethnonyms goes against morphological expectations that **parika-* should yield **Parikāna-* and not vice-versa. In addition, Bivar's explanation leaves unresolved any further etymological analysis. More importantly, it is *a priori* unlikely that the attestation of the demoness *pairikā* in the oldest Yashts, which represent the original Central Asiatic location of the Iranian people, would contain an extreme and extensive mythological transformation of [conjectural] prostitutes from a western area which only later would become Iranian and bear an Iranian name **Parikāna-*, attested first in Achaemenian times.

15. Cf. Janda 2008 [2006], 216 with fn. 14, *contra* Olsen's etymology.

16. As concerns Janda's view on *airech*, Stefan Zimmer (e-mail of June 23, 2012) notes that Power 1936, 95 showed that this word referred to a legal wife (of second rank). Prof. Zimmer comments further: "Die Verbindung von altir. [= Old Irish] *aire* [mask. k-St.] 'freier Bauer, Edelmann' zu *airech* 'Ehefrau zweiten Grades' . . . ist nicht so einfach, . . . den *aire* selbst ist nicht restlos geklärt. Sowohl **arya-ka-* (so wieder de Bernardo Stempel 1999) als auch **are-saks-s* (so Thurneysen *ZcP* 20) sind möglich. Daneben stehen noch zwei Homonyme: *aire* 'das Wachen' (fem. *iā*-St.), *aire* 'die Last' (mask. *io*-St.). Das (nicht sicher so anzusetzende) Adj. *airech* 'noble' ist vermutlich nur der Plural des Subst. *aire* 'Edelmann'. Daneben stehen noch *airech* 'Packpferd' und das *o/ā*-stämmige Adj. *airech* 'aufmerksam' . . . Der etymologische Vorschlag, . . . *pairikā* . . . = *airech* 'Konkubine' zu setzen, wird heute meist abgelehnt, v.a. da die *airech* keine 'Konkubine' ist . . . sondern eine legale, geachtete Ehefrau zweiten Ranges."

17. Similarly Arm. *p'ari* (cf. Abeghian 1899, 103–4), and more interestingly the Vedic *apsaras-*. In fact the latter concept parallels Av. *pairikā*, MPers. *parig*, and Pers. *pari*. The *apsaras-* can cause insanity (MacDonell 1898, 134), and is a succubus (female incubus) (O'Flaherty 1984, 276); in addition, according to *AtharvaVeda* XI.9.15, the *apsaras-* terrifies through its having a canine aspect (*śvanvatī-*), cf. in the aforementioned Pahl. account of Srit and the *parig*, the latter, attacked by Srit, multiplies into a pack of dogs which tear Srit apart. This all points to an old overlap of the Iranian and Indic conceptions of the respective mythical female creatures.

References

- Abeghian 1899 M. Abeghian. *Der armenische Volksglaube*. Leipzig.
- Adhami 2010 S. Adhami. "Pairikā." *EIR*, online version—<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/pairika>, accessed 10 June 2012.
- Bartholomae 1904 C. Bartholomae. *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*. Strassburg.
- Becking 1995–1999 B. Becking. "Sasam." In *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, ed. K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, and P. W. van der Horst, 725–26. Leiden.
- Bivar 1985 A. D. H. Bivar. "A Persian Fairyland." In *Papers in Honour of Professor Mary Boyce*. Vol. 1. *Acta Iranica* 24. Leiden.
- Boyce 1977 M. Boyce. *A Persian Stronghold of Zoroastrianism*. Oxford.

- Boyce 1984 _____ . *Textual Sources for the Study of Zoroastrianism*, Manchester.
- Boyce 1987 _____ . "Priests, Cattle, and Men." *BSOAS* 50.3:508–26.
- Choksy 1989 J. K. Choksy. *Purity and Pollution in Zoroastrianism*. Austin.
- Farber 1990 W. Farber. "Lilū, Lilitu, Ardat-Lili." In *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie*, vol. 7, 23–24.
- Fauth 1971 [1970] W. Fauth. "SSM BN PDRŠŠA." *ZDMG* 120:229–56.
- Feydit 1986 F. Feydit. *Amulettes de l'Arménie chrétienne*. Venice.
- Frembgen 2006 J. W. Frembgen. "Embodying Evil and Bad Luck: Stray Notes on the Folklore of Bats in Southwest Asia." *Asian Folklore Studies* 65:241–47.
- Gignoux 1987 P. Gignoux. *Incantations magiques syriaques*. Louvain.
- Gyselen 1995 R. Gyselen. *Sceaux magiques en iran sassanide*. *Studia Iranica*, Cahier 17. Paris.
- Gray 1929 L. H. Gray. *Foundations of the Iranian Religion*. Bombay.
- Hutter 1995–1999 M. Hutter. "Lilith." In *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, ed. K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, and P. W. van der Horst, 973–76. Leiden.
- Huyse 2005 P. Huyse. "Eine erneuter Datierungsversuch für den Übergang vom Schluss-y der mittelpersischen Inschriften zum Endstrich im Buchpahlavi [6–7 Jh.]." In *Languages of Iran: Past and Present: Iranian Studies in Memoriam David Neil MacKenzie*, ed. D. Weber, 51–68. Wiesbaden.
- Jackson and Oettinger 2002 P. Jackson and N. Oettinger. "Traitāna und Ōraēta(o)na, Reste urindogermanischer Heldenlegenden." *Indo-Iranian Journal* 45:221–29.
- Jamison 2009 S. Jamison. "Remarks on the Indo-Iranian *-ka- Suffix: a Marker of Colloquial Register." *Indo-Iranian Journal* 52:311–29.
- Janda 2008 [2006] M. Janda. "Die *Peri* aus dem Paradies: Avestische *pairikā*." *Die Sprache* 46.2:213–28.
- Jones 1931 E. Jones. *On the Nightmare*. London.
- De Jong 1995 A. de Jong. "Jeh the Primal Whore? Observations on Iranian Misogyny." In *Female Stereotypes in Religious Traditions*, ed. R. Kloppenborg and J. W. Hanegraaff, 15–41. Leiden.
- MacDonell 1898 A. A. MacDonell. *Vedic Mythology*. Strausburg.
- Mallory 1989 J. P. Mallory. *In Search of the Indo-Europeans*. London.
- Mallory and Adams 2002 J. P. Mallory and D. Q. Adams. *The Oxford Introduction to Proto-Indo-European and the Proto-Indo-European World*. Oxford.
- Montgomery 1913 J. Montgomery. *Aramaic Incantation Texts from Nippur*. Philadelphia.
- Muhly 1973 J. D. Muhly. *Copper and Tin: The Distribution of Mineral Resources and the Nature of the Metals Trade in the Bronze Age*. New Haven.
- Naveh and Shaked 1998 J. Naveh and S. Shaked. *Amulets and Incantation Bowls*. Jerusalem.
- Neumann 1955 E. Neumann. *The Great Mother*. Princeton (repr. 1974).
- O'Flaherty 1984 W. D. O'Flaherty. *Dreams, Illusions, and Other Realities*. Chicago.
- Olsen 1999 B. A. Olsen. *The Noun in Biblical Armenian*. Berlin.
- Panaino 1990 A. Panaino. *Tištrya*. Pt. 1, *The Avestan Hymn to Sirius*. Rome.
- Pardee 1998 D. Pardee. "Les documents d'Arslan Tash: Authentiques ou faux?" *Syria* 75:15–54.
- Perdrizet 1922 P. Perdrizet. *Negotium perambulans in tenebris*. Nancy.
- Pokorny 1959 J. Pokorny. *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*. Vol. 1. Bern.
- Power 1936 N. Power. "Classes of Women Described in *Senchas Már*." In *Studies in Early Irish Law*, ed. D. A. Binchy and M. Dillon, 81–108. Dublin.
- Russell 1983 J. R. Russell. "The Tale of the Bronze City." In *Medieval Armenian Culture*, ed. T. Samuelian and M. Stone. Chico.
- Russell 1987 _____ . *Zoroastrianism in Armenia*. Cambridge, Mass.
- Schwartz 1970 M. Schwartz. "Miscellanea Iranica." In *Henning Memorial*

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Schwartz 1998a
[1996] | Volume, ed. M. Boyce and I. Gershevitch, 385–94. London.
_____. “*Sasm, Sesen, St. Sisinnios, Sesengen Barpharangēs, and . . . ‘Semanglof’.” <i>BAI</i> 10 [1998 [1996]:253–57. | Van der Vliet 1991 | Name.” In <i>Charmes et sortilèges. Magie et magiciens</i> , ed. R. Gyselen, 231–37. Res Orientales 14. Bures-sur-Yvette. |
| Schwartz 1998b | _____. “Sesen, a Durable East Mediterranean God in Iran.” In <i>Proceedings of the Third Indo-European Conference of Iranian Studies</i> . Pt. 1, ed. N. Sims-Williams, 9–11. Wiesbaden. | Van Dijk 1992 | J. Van der Vliet. “Varia Magica Coptica.” <i>Aegyptus</i> 71:217–42.
J. Van Dijk. “The Authenticity of the Arslan Tash Amulets.” <i>Iraq</i> 54:65–68. |
| Schwartz 2002 | _____. “Qumran, Turfan, Arabic Magic, and Noah’s | Wikander 1938 | S. Wikander. <i>Der arische Männerbund</i> . Lund. |
| | | Winkler 1931 | H. A. Winkler. <i>Salomo und die Karina</i> . Stuttgart. |