

Beneficial-Sacred Embodied Truth, Spenta Aramaiti

In the Gathas, the Divine quality *ārmaiti-* frequently is used with the adjective *spənta-*. The meaning of *spənta-* 'beneficial-sacred' has already been discussed,¹ so let us consider what Zarathushtra has in mind when he uses the word *ārmaiti-*.

Professional linguists and others are in substantial disagreement about the meaning of *ārmaiti-*, (originally pronounced in four syllables *ā-rə-mai-ti-*),² which they variously have translated as right-mindedness;³ divine wisdom;⁴ piety or respect;⁵ faith and devotion;⁶ satisfying intention;⁷ fittingness, submission and humility;⁸ and serenity, stability and tranquility.⁹ Clearly, the art of linguistics alone has not solved the puzzle of decoding the meaning of this Gathic Avestan word, *ārmaiti-*.

There is no dispute that *ārmaiti-* is an attribute of the Divine (for convenience, I will use the collective term *amesha spenta* for the attributes of the Divine, although that collective term is not mentioned in the Gathas). In many Gatha verses, *ārmaiti-* is grouped with other *amesha spenta*.¹⁰ In many key ways *ārmaiti-* is treated in the same way as other *amesha spenta*.¹¹ It is identified as an *amesha spenta* in the later texts.¹² Therefore, as Professor Thieme has so logically pointed out,¹³ such English words as 'piety or respect', 'faith and devotion', 'fittingness, submission and humility' cannot be what Zarathushtra has in mind when he uses the word *ārmaiti-*, because these are not qualities that are relevant to the Divine.

On the contrary (in my view), these are human qualities that often are thought to be qualities that the Divine desires in a worshipper (although a given translator may have had other reasons for arriving at his translation). But more importantly, these opinions regarding the meaning of *ārmaiti-* distort Zarathushtra's thought in a material way, as I will demonstrate. However, (like other *amesha spenta*) *ārmaiti-* is a Divine quality that mortals also have (although imperfectly, incompletely) as the evidence below shows.

In light of the diversity of opinion on the part of linguists, is it possible to ascertain with reasonable certainty, what meaning Zarathushtra has in mind when he uses the word *ārmaiti-*? I think it is ~ based on how he uses the word. Let us look at the evidence. All quotations from the Gathas are from the Insler 1975 translation, unless otherwise stated, although (with respect) I do not agree with his translation of *ārmaiti-* as 'piety' and therefore leave the word untranslated in such quotations.

In Y49:5 we see that the true (correct) order of existence (*aša-*) and its comprehension, good thinking, are a part of the concept of *ārmaiti-*, "...that man, Wise One, ... who has allied his conception [*daēnā-*]¹⁴ with good thinking. Any such person of [*ārmaiti-*] is of the (same) good lineage with truth [*aša-*]..." Y49:5, Insler 1975. If a good thinking person is a person of *ārmaiti-*, as this verse states, it would be reasonable to conclude that good thinking is included within the meaning of *ārmaiti-*. Good thinking is the comprehension of truth (*aša-*). And in this verse a good thinking person (who is a person of *ārmaiti-*) springs from the true (correct) order of existence (*aša-*).¹⁵ If we were to look at this verse alone, we might be tempted to conclude that 'right-mindedness' (which is a part of 'good thinking') may indeed be the meaning of *ārmaiti-*, as some linguists have contended. But 'right-mindedness' and 'good thinking' are somewhat redundant, and we have to question, would Zarathushtra have created two redundant *amesha spenta*? More importantly, 'right-mindedness' does not fit all of the ways in which Zarathushtra uses *ārmaiti-*.

In other verses, we see that the meaning of *ārmaiti-* includes not only good thinking (the comprehension of truth), but also words and actions of truth.

In Y30:7 Zarathushtra says: "But to this world He came with the rule of good thinking and of truth, and ...¹⁶ enduring [*ārmaiti*-] gave body [*kəhrpəm*] and breath (to it)..." Y30:7, Insler 1975. How do we give "body and breath" to the rule of truth and good thinking? We cannot do so with right-mindedness alone. Good words and actions also are required to make the rule of truth and good thinking real ~ give it "body and breath" ~ give it life, form, substance.¹⁷

And indeed, Zarathushtra specifically says "...Through its actions, [*ārmaiti*-] gives substance to the truth..." Y44:6.

He speaks of "...[*ārmaiti*-] of good actions..." Y45:4.

And he tells us that a man expresses his beneficial-sacred *ārmaiti*- by actions stemming from good thinking: "By his action stemming from good thinking, a man of good determination [*hux ratuš*] has expressed his understanding and his [*spənta- ārmaiti*-]..." Y34:10.¹⁸ I agree with those linguists who see *x ratu-* as 'reason, reasoning',¹⁹ so I would translate this phrase 'By his action stemming from good thinking, a good-reasoning (person) has expressed his understanding and his [*spənta- ārmaiti*-]...' Y34:10.

These verses indicate that the meaning of *ārmaiti*- includes thoughts, words, and actions that embody the true (correct, good) order of existence (*aša-*) ~ give it substance, give it life.²⁰

In Y51.21 Zarathushtra shows us the full spectrum of the activities included within the meaning of *ārmaiti*-. They are understanding (which is an aspect of thinking), words, actions, and conception or envisionment *daēnā*- (an aspect of thinking).

"[*spənta*- 'beneficial'] is the man of [*ārmaiti*-]. He is so by reason of his understanding, his words, his actions, his conception [*daēnā*-]..." Y51:21, Insler 1975.

If a man of embodied truth (*ārmaiti*-) is beneficial-sacred (*spənta*-) because of his understanding, his words, his actions, his envisionment, then the meaning of *ārmaiti*-, of necessity, would have to include thoughts, words and actions that are beneficial-sacred (*spənta*-). And beneficial-sacred (*spənta*-) is a quality of the true (correct) order of existence *aša*- and each of its components (*amesha spenta*).

And of course, the adjective 'beneficial-sacred (*spənta*-)', is frequently used to describe *ārmaiti*-, "...[*spənta- ārmaiti*-] which is esteemed..." Y34:9; "...Neither has he supported [*spənta- ārmaiti*-] ..." Y49:2; "Where shall there be protection instead of injury? ... Where [*spənta- ārmaiti*-]?" Y51:4.²¹ And we know that there is an equivalence between being beneficial-sacred (*spənta*-) and the true (correct) order of existence (*aša*-).²² So if *ārmaiti*- is *spənta*-, it's meaning would have to include being truth-filled i.e. embodying the true (correct) order of existence (*aša*-). And how do we embody truth? We can only do so with thoughts, words and actions that are in accord with the true (correct) order of existence ("...Through its actions, [*ārmaiti*-] gives substance to the truth..." Y44:6).

Based on all of the above this evidence, it would be reasonable to conclude that to Zarathushtra, *ārmaiti*- means making the true (correct) order of existence (*aša*-) real, giving it "substance" (Y44:6), giving it "body and breath" (Y30:7) ~ embodying it with thoughts, words and actions of truth²³ ~ a conclusion that is corroborated by many interesting (footnoted) parallels;²⁴ and seems also to be corroborated by a comparison between a phrase in the Gatha verse Y33:14 and the GAv. *Yasna Haptanghaiti* 39:5.²⁵

The Vedic *arāmati*,²⁶ was a pre-Zarathushtrian Indo-Iranian goddess.²⁷ Zarathushtra's *ārmaiti*- is quite different, as the evidence demonstrates. In the Gathas, *ārmaiti*- is not a goddess, it is an attribute of the Divine, a personification of the true (correct) order of existence (thoughts, words and actions which embody the true (correct) order of existence) ~ which mortals also have (incompletely, imperfectly). And in mortals,

thoughts, words and actions which embody truth is also Zarathushtra's idea of the way to worship. Such worship with good thoughts, words and actions in mortal existence ~ the existence of matter ~ may well have been why *ārmaiti-* became associated with the 'earth', as its material counterpart (implied in the Gathas, and expressed in later texts).²⁸

With regard to the meaning 'right-mindedness' for *ārmaiti-*, I am indebted to Professor Elizabeth Tucker for the following information. At a prehistoric Indo-Iranian date **arāmati-* probably did mean 'possessing correct thought, right-minded'. It is a linguistic fact that this (compound) word consists of two elements. And while the opinions of linguists may differ about the meaning of the first element **arā*, they agree that the 2d element **mati-* compares with Vedic *mati-*, (Latin *mens*, *mentis*, English *mental*) and stems from the same root *man-* 'think' as GAv. *manah-*.

So if Zarathushtra uses the word *ārmaiti-* in a sense which extends its old literal meaning, to include not just correct thought, but also word and action, the question arises: Was this development an innovation of Zarathushtra's, or had the meaning of *ārmaiti-* already evolved before Zarathushtra's time, from just 'right thought' to 'right thought, word and action'? On the present state of our knowledge, we simply do not know.

Some Zoroastrians who favor 'right mindedness' for *ārmaiti-* have argued that all the Gatha verses which speak of words and actions of *ārmaiti-* are not inconsistent with calling *ārmaiti-* right-mindedness, because right-mindedness produces such words and actions. But 'right-mindedness' by definition pertains only to the mind. It describes a mind of a certain quality ~ rightness. Words and actions are not a part of the intrinsic meaning of 'mind'.

One might (reasonably) question: If *ārmaiti-* means 'embodied truth', how does that fit with the many verses in which *ārmaiti-* and truth (*aša-*) appear side by side? Well, in two ways, depending on the verse. In one sense, the true (correct) order of existence *aša-* may be used as an idea, a concept, whereas *ārmaiti-* makes the concept real ~ by comprehending and implementing it in thought, word and action. In another sense, if the true (correct) order of existence *aša-* is used as a reality, the thoughts, words and actions which embody it (*ārmaiti-*) are a part of the totality of this existence. If you look at each verse in which *ārmaiti-* and *aša-* appear together, with these two ways in mind, you will see that the verses make beautiful sense. Here are a few examples:

"...Through its actions [*ārmaiti-*] gives substance to [*aša-*]..." Y44:6, Insler 1975; i.e. '...through its actions embodied truth (the reality) gives substance to the true (correct) order of existence...' (the idea);

"... by reason of the solidarity of [*ārmaiti-*] and [*aša-*]..." Y47:6 Insler 1975; i.e. by reason of the solidarity of the concept (*aša-*) and its embodiment (*ārmaiti-*).

"When, Wise One, shall [*ārmaiti-*] come, along with [*aša-*], bringing peace and pasturage throughout the dominion?..." Y48:11; i.e. '...when, Wisdom, shall thoughts words and action which embody truth come along with the existence of the true (correct) order, bringing peace and nurture throughout the realm?...'. Here thoughts, words and actions which embody truth (*ārmaiti-*) are a part of the totality of an existence that is true (correct).

"...Hither, where [*ārmaiti-*] is in harmony with [*aša-*]..." Y46:16, Insler 1975; *yaθrā ašā hacaitē ārmaitiš*
²⁹ i.e. '...where (the reality of) embodied truth is in harmony with (the concept of) the true (correct) order of existence...';

"...Any such person of [*ārmaiti*-] is of the (same) good lineage with [*aša*-]..." Y49:5, Insler 1975, i.e. any such person of thoughts, words and actions which embody truth (*ārmaiti*-), is an offspring of an existence that is true (correct)';

"...May [*aša*-] be embodied and strong with breath. May there be [*ārmaiti*-] under the rule of Him who has the appearance of the sun..." Y43:16, i.e. '...may the true (correct) order of existence [*aša*-] be embodied and strong with breath, may there be embodied truth [*ārmaiti*] under the rule of Him who has the appearance of the sun...'. Here, truth is an idea and in the first sentence, the wish is expressed that it may be embodied with breath ~ which parallels *ārmaiti*- in the second sentence. These 2 sentences are two ways of saying the same thing.³⁰

"When I might call upon [*aša*-], the Wise One ... shall appear: also ... [*ārmaiti*-]." Y31:4, i.e. '...when I might call upon the true (correct) order of existence, Wisdom ... appears, also embodied truth...'. To 'call' something is a way of saying to 'search' for it, to ask it to come to us. So here, searching for truth, 'calling' it, results in the appearance of Wisdom, (Who is embodied truth *ārmaiti*-, personifying the true (correct) order of existence, *aša*-).³¹

And in Y43:10 (with beautiful logic) the reward for *ārmaiti*- (embodying truth with thoughts, words and actions) is the true (correct) order of existence (*aša*-).³²

Once we appreciate that *ārmaiti*- means embodying, or making real, the true order of existence (*aša*-) ~ giving it "body and breath" (Y30:7), giving it "substance" (44:6) ~ with thoughts, words and actions of truth, it is easy to understand why *ārmaiti*- increases or brings about the good rule of Wisdom the Lord, the true (correct) order of existence, and its comprehension good thinking, "...thee, o truth, and good thinking and the Wise Lord ... for whom [*ārmaiti*-] increases their unharmable rule..." Y28:3. Good rule (both human and Divine) consists of thoughts, words and actions that embody the true (correct) order of existence (*ārmaiti*-). In effect, neither wisdom, nor good rule could occur without thoughts, words and actions, which personify, embody the true (correct) order of existence (*ārmaiti*-) ~ which may be why *ārmaiti*- is so often described as *spənta*- 'beneficial-sacred' ~ more so than any other amesha spenta.

In Y51:4, Zarathushtra describes the components of Wisdom's rule as follows: "Where shall there be protection instead of injury? Where shall mercy [*mərəzdikā* 'compassion'] take place? Where truth [*aša*-] which attains glory? Where [*spənta*- *ārmaiti*- 'beneficial-sacred embodied truth']? Where the very best thinking [*vahišta*- *manah*-]? Where, Wise One, through Thy rule?" Y51:4. These are rhetorical questions which contain their own answers. In effect, Wisdom's rule is the rule of these three divine qualities ~ the true order of existence (*aša*-), its beneficial-sacred embodiment in thought, word and action (*spənta*-*ārmaiti*-), and its most-good comprehension ~ most-good thinking (*vahišta*- *manah*-) ~ which ultimately is complete enlightenment, Wisdom personified (*mazdā*-).³³

Once we appreciate that *ārmaiti*- means making truth real ~ giving it "body and breath" (Y30:7), "substance" (Y44:6) ~ with thoughts, words and actions of truth, it is easy to understand why *ārmaiti*- brings about completeness (*haurvatāt*- the wholly, completely 'truthful' (*ašavan*-) state of being), and an existence in which mortality is no longer necessary, and therefore no longer is bound by mortality ~ non-deathness (*amərətāt*-): "Yes, both completeness [*haurvatāt*-] and [*amərətāt*-] are for Thy sustenance. Together with the rule of good thinking allied with truth, ...³⁴ [*ārmaiti*-] has increased these two enduring powers..." Y34:11.³⁵

The role played by *ārmaiti*- in Zarathushtra's thought.

As with truth (*aša-*), and good thinking (*vohu- manah-*), in the Gathas *ārmaiti-* is used, sometimes as a concept, sometimes as an attribute of Wisdom, sometimes as an attribute of man, and far fewer times as an entity. Here is the evidence.

ārmaiti- as a concept.

"...May there be [*ārmaiti-*] under the rule of Him who has the appearance of the sun..." Y43:16, i.e. '...may there be embodied truth (thoughts, words and actions of truth) under the rule of Him who has the appearance of the sun...'; and what is Wisdom's rule? It is the rule of truth, its embodiment, its comprehension Y51:4 ~ a lovely circle of thought. (By the way "the appearance of the sun" is a simile; light is a symbol of truth; w/Wisdom (who is truth personified), is an enlightened state of being, and the strongest form of light in Zarathushtra's culture was the sun).

"... hither where [*ārmaiti-*] is in harmony with truth [*aša-*]..." Y46:16, i.e. hither where embodied truth (the reality) is in harmony with the true (correct) order of existence (the idea).

ārmaiti- as an attribute of man.

There are many verses in which *ārmaiti-* is an attribute or activity of man.

"I shall try to glorify Him for us with prayers of [*ārmaiti-*]..." Y45:10, i.e., 'I shall try to glorify Him with prayers of thoughts, words and actions which embody truth...' ~ a lovely way to pray.³⁶

"Let those of good rule, rule over us ... with actions stemming from good understanding ... with [*ārmaiti-*]..." Y48:5, i.e. 'Let those of good rule rule over us, with actions of good understanding, with thoughts, words and actions which embody truth'.³⁷

"... Any such person of [*ārmaiti-*] ..." Y49:5, i.e. any such person who embodies the true (correct) order of existence with his thoughts, words and actions.³⁸

"[*spənta-*] is a man of [*ārmaiti-*] He is so by reason of his understanding, his words, his actions, his conception [*daēnā-*]..." Y51:21, i.e. 'beneficial-sacred (*spənta-*) is a man of embodied truth. He is so by reason of his thoughts, his words, his actions, his envisionment'.³⁹

ārmaiti- as an attribute of Wisdom the Lord.

In the Gathas, there is much evidence that Wisdom (*mazdā-*) personifies truth,⁴⁰ which is another way of saying that He embodies truth with His thoughts, words and actions. I have found no extant verse in which *ārmaiti-* is specifically described as an attribute / activity of the Wise Lord. But there is a lot of evidence in the Gathas which requires that conclusion. Here are a few examples.

First example: Truth, good thinking and *ārmaiti-* are said to have been 'fathered' by Wisdom personified ("...the Wise One [*mazdā-*] is the Father of truth [*aša-*]..." Y47:2; "...I know the Wise One [*mazdā-*] ... to be the Father of effective good thinking [*vohu- manah-*]. And His daughter is [*ārmaiti-*] of good actions..." Y45:4). To 'father' truth, good thinking and *ārmaiti-*, is a metaphoric way of saying, to generate these attributes from Himself, indicating that these three qualities are a part of His being.⁴¹

Second example: *ārmaiti-* is included in tandem with Wisdom and His other divine qualities (*amesha spenta*) as allegorical entities, requiring the conclusion that *ārmaiti-* is one of His attributes "The Wise One who is the Mightiest Lord, and [*ārmaiti-*], and truth [*aša-*] which prospers the creatures, and good thinking [*manah- vohu-*], and (good) rule [*xšaθra-*], ~ listen to me, ..." Y33:11. In this verse, all four divine qualities (*amesha spenta*) are allegories, in tandem with Wisdom.⁴²

Third example: "...The Wise One in rule is Lord through [*ārmaiti*-]." Y47:1. Here, if Wisdom rules, and is Lord, through the true (correct) good order of existence embodied in thought, word and action, such a personification of truth (*ārmaiti*-) would have to be part of Wisdom's nature, and thus an attribute of the Divine.

Fourth example: In Y43:6 *ārmaiti*- appears as an allegorical entity, but if we look at the concept which the allegory represents, we see that *ārmaiti*- is an attribute of Wisdom (*mazdā*-). Here is the pertinent part of this verse. "...To them does [*ārmaiti*-] announce the judgments of Thy will..." Y43:6. The idea behind the image is that Wisdom's judgments are made with thoughts, words, and actions that embody the true (correct) order ~ which could only be His own thoughts, words and actions, indicating that such embodied truth (*ārmaiti*-) is a part of His nature.

Fifth example (there are many more): Zarathushtra uses the first four amesha spenta ~ truth, good thinking, *ārmaiti*- and good rule, in kaleidoscopic variations, as both the way to earn the reward, and the reward itself – which reward is a state of being in which the attributes of the divine have been attained completely.⁴³ If *ārmaiti*- is part of the reward, and if this reward is a state of being that is Divine, then *ārmaiti*- would have to be an attribute of the Divine, as are its fellow amesha spenta, truth, its comprehension (good thinking) and its good rule.

And if indeed, *ārmaiti*- means 'truth embodied in thought, word and action', there are verses which speak of such thoughts, words and actions of the Lord (without using the word *ārmaiti*-). For example:

"... Lord of the word and deed stemming from good [*mainyu*-]..." Y45:8, i.e. '...Lord of the word and deed stemming from a good way of being...';

"...the truthful Lord, [*spənta*-] in His action ..." Y46:9,⁴⁴ i.e. '...the truthful Lord, beneficial in action...'.
ārmaiti- as an entity.

In some verses in the Gathas, *ārmaiti*- is referred to as an entity. For example:

" The Wise One who is the Mightiest Lord, and [*ārmaiti*-], and truth [*aša*-] which prospers the creatures, and good thinking [*manah*- *vohu*-], and (good) rule [*xšaθra*-] ~ listen to me, ..." Y33:11. Here *ārmaiti*- is the first of four attributes of the divine (amesha spenta) all of whom are addressed as (allegorical) entities.

"...Give thou, o [*ārmaiti*-] power to Vishtaspa and to me ..." Y28:7. Here, *ārmaiti*- is referred to as an entity, but if we look through to the meaning behind the image of *ārmaiti*- as an entity, this phrase tells us that thoughts words and actions which embody the true order, give 'power' to the king and to Zarathushtra, (in whose thought, 'power' is related to the attributes of the divine, the amesha spenta).⁴⁵

"...To them does [*ārmaiti*-] announce the judgments of Thy will..." Y43:6. If we look through to the meaning behind the image of *ārmaiti*- as an entity, this phrase tells us that Wisdom's judgments are made through thoughts, words, and actions which embody the true (correct) order of existence (*ārmaiti*-).

"... And His daughter is [*ārmaiti*-] of good actions ..." Y45:4. If we look past the image of the daughter of Wisdom to the meaning this image stands for, we see that this phrase tells us that the Wisdom generates *ārmaiti*- (thoughts, words and actions which embody the true (correct) order) ~ not surprising when we consider that His state of being is the true (correct) order of existence.

There are many verses in which Zarathushtra is ambiguous in his references to *ārmaiti*-, not specifying whether it is an attribute of man, or Wisdom, or both. I think this ambiguity is deliberate, indicating that it is the embodied truth (*ārmaiti*-) of both man (unperfected being) and the Divine (perfected Being) that applies in such verses.⁴⁶

Now, if Zarathushtra uses *ārmaiti*- as a concept, and also as an attribute of Wisdom and man, then (as with truth and good thinking) his references to *ārmaiti*- as an entity can only be allegorical. And we see that those later texts (written many centuries after Zarathushtra's time) which describe *ārmaiti*- as an actual angel-like living entity ~ one of the helpers of Wisdom, one who is worshipped / celebrated, and who presides over and takes care of the earth and its fruits ~ are not consistent with the way in which Zarathushtra uses *ārmaiti*- in the Gathas. But once again, in a way, these later notions do indeed reflect Gathic thought, in that thoughts words and actions which embody the true (correct) order of existence (*ārmaiti*-) would indeed nurture and take care of our world – a Gatha idea (and a lovely allegorical image) which may have been the genesis of the role of *ārmaiti*- as caretaker of the earth and its fruits, in the later texts.

One cannot help but wonder: If *ārmaiti*- means thoughts, words and actions which embody truth, why does Zarathushtra call his idea of paradise 'the House of Good Thinking' (i.e. a state of being that comprehends truth)? Why not the House of Aramaiti, (i.e. a state of being that embodies truth)?

Some later texts do indeed describe the attainment of paradise in four steps ~ the first step places a person in the Good-Thought paradise, the second step in the Good-Word paradise, the third step in the Good-Deed paradise, and the fourth step in the Endless Lights.⁴⁷ Clearly here, the paradise of good deeds is at a higher level than the paradise of good thoughts. Well, this metaphoric way of describing paradise in four steps simply makes the point that to attain the state of being that is paradise, good thoughts are a good beginning, but they are not enough. They have to be translated into good words and good actions, in order for the soul to personify the true (correct) order of existence, become the 'endless lights' (light is a metaphor for *aša*- and for the Divine in the Gathas, and the Divine is frequently described in the later texts as radiant, glorious, and full of light).⁴⁸ Zarathushtra's notion of wisdom personified is experience based. It is attained through the earned experiences generated by choices in thoughts, words and actions, as well as through unearned experiences,⁴⁹ ~ an idea that is consistent with the paradise of these later texts.

But in the extant Gathas, although (along with other amesha spenta), *ārmaiti*- is shown to be both the reward and the way to earn the reward,⁵⁰ we do not find any specific reference to the paradise of good words and actions ~ no mention of the House of *ārmaiti*-. Why?

Well, perhaps because (in our reality) words and actions are tools of this material existence, which is a temporary arena to enable the choices and experiences which are necessary for the evolution of a way of being from a mixed (more-good / bad) state of being to one that is wholly good, wholly beneficial-sacred (*spənta*-), wholly in accord with the true (correct) order of existence (*aša*-), at which point the reason for mortality (including its tools ~ material words and actions) ceases to exist, and a non-mortal state ~ non-deathness (*amərətāt*-) ~ is attained. The fact that Zarathushtra speaks of Wisdom's words and actions implies that *ārmaiti*- is a part of His nature. It is one of the bits of evidence that (at one level) is consistent with the idea of the immanence of the Divine in the material world. But when the purpose for the material world is accomplished,⁵¹ and it ceases to exist, perhaps what is left is a wholly truthful (*ašavan*-), wholly beneficial (*spənta*-) state of being that is pure 'mind' (as Zarathushtra uses 'mind') ~ the joyful, beneficial, loving, all-knowing w/Wisdom personified (*mazdā*-) that is 'the House of Good Thinking', 'the House of

Song'. This state of being would have its own 'words' and 'actions' (*ārmaiti-*), but they would not be the words and actions of the mortal shells of our present reality through which we embody truth (*ārmaiti-*).

It is worth remembering, however, that each time we embody the true (correct) order with a thought, word, or action, in that instance we create a bit of the divine, we bring the divine to life (however temporarily). I think that may be one reason why *ārmaiti-* is so frequently called *spənta-* ~ beneficial~sacred ~ more so than any other divine attribute (amesha spenta).⁵²

Scholars and students of the Gathas and the later texts, sometimes speculate about what is the 'proper order' of the amesha spenta – which is first, which is second, et cetera. In the Gathas, these concepts do not appear in a rigid order. They appear in a variety of orders, in kaleidoscopic ways.⁵³ Some scholars have concluded that the "correct" order of the amesha spenta is that the first three are good thinking (*vohu- manah-*), truth (*aša-*), and good rule (*vohu- xšaθra-*). They may perhaps have been influenced by the later texts (which so classify them) or because of the grammatical genders of these terms ~ truth, good thinking, and good rule being neuter nouns, and *ārmaiti-*, completeness *haurvatāt-*, and non-deathness *amərətāt-* being feminine nouns. This later (or grammatical) classification has no intrinsic relevance, and overlooks two facts.

In the Gathas, good rule ~ whether Divine or human ~ cannot exist without the true (correct) order of existence (*aša-*), its comprehension (*vohu- manah-*), and its embodiment in thought, word and action (*ārmaiti-*),⁵⁴ so these first three qualities would have to precede good rule.

In addition, of all the amesha spenta, only truth, good thinking and *ārmaiti-* are described as having been fathered by w/Wisdom, i.e. generated by It. These Gatha facts (among others) lead me to conclude that, at a basic level, these three qualities cause or produce the last three – good rule, completeness (*haurvatāt-* the completely truth-possessing *ašavan-* way of being), and non-deathness (*amərətāt-* the resulting state of being that is no longer bound by mortality).⁵⁵

Conclusion:

Based on the ways in which Zarathushtra uses *ārmaiti-*, it would be reasonable to conclude that *ārmaiti-* means making truth real, giving it "body and breath" (Y30:7), giving it "substance" (44:6) ~ embodying the true (correct), wholly good order of existence (*aša- vahišta-*) in thought, word and action ~ the proverbial 'good thoughts, good words and good actions' which are a fundament of Zarathushtra's thought ~'good' in the Gathas being equated with the true (correct) order of existence, as we already have seen.⁵⁶

It grieves me to hear people say that "good thoughts, good words and good actions" do not appear in the Gathas. True, they do not appear as that particular manthra. But they do indeed appear abundantly in so many various, beautiful, kaleidoscopic ways, not the least of which is the lovely concept of *ārmaiti-* ~ a concept that includes nurturing each other, our world and its fruits; a concept that enables the evolution of the soul towards completeness and non-deathness.

I do not know any one word in English that captures the full meaning of *ārmaiti-*.

What then would be its the closest English equivalent? It is clear that none of the choices favored by linguists (and detailed at the beginning of this piece) are consistent with the ways in which Zarathushtra uses *ārmaiti-* in the Gathas. Such words as 'piety', 'respect', 'devotion', are indeed shades of the meaning of *ārmaiti-* as mortals express this divine quality, because Zarathushtra's notion of worship is to worship the Divine with its own attributes ~ the true (correct) order (*aša-*), its comprehension (*vohu manah-*), its embodiment in thought, word and action (*ārmaiti-*), its good rule (*vohu- xšaθra-*), its complete and undying attainment (*haurvatāt- amərətāt-*), the wholly beneficial/sacred way of being (*spənta- mainyu-*).⁵⁷ But such worship-

related words as 'piety, respect, devotion,' are only one thread, one color, in the multicolored, tapestry that is the meaning of *ārmaiti*-. Such worship-related words are not relevant to the Divine (who presumably does not 'worship' Itself). Are there any other English equivalents which are consistent with *all* of the ways in which Zarathushtra uses *ārmaiti*-?

realization (as in making real) is not adequate because in English, 'realization' is most commonly used for 'becoming aware' i.e. a solely mental process, which falls short of the words and actions which are included in the meaning of *ārmaiti*-. and 'realization' can be applied to making real what is good or what is wrongful, which also falls short of the meaning of *ārmaiti*-.

service is also inaccurate (although at one time I favored this interpretive translation). 'Service' can be good or wrongful. It lacks the essential meaning of *ārmaiti*- which is to make the true (correct) good order of existence real, give it substance, with thoughts, words and actions. And 'service' has no strong, sound linguistic basis and its common English meaning obscures the fact that *ārmaiti*- is an attribute of the Divine (an amesha spenta) ~ although Wisdom the Lord is indeed a 'God' who serves!

embodied truth. The closest English equivalent is, 'the true (correct) good order of existence embodied in thought, word and action'. A very long definition. Its shortened version ~ 'embodied truth' ~ is awkward, inelegant. But if our translation choices are informed by a passion for the truth (as indeed they must be), the awkward and inelegant must be preferred over something more polished, more aesthetically pleasing, but less accurate.

Because the translation of *ārmaiti*- is one of the areas in which I (with respect) disagree with Professor Insler, I leave *ārmaiti*- untranslated in all quotations from his translation.

* * * * *

¹ Detailed in *Part One: The Beneficial-Sacred Way Of Being, Spenta Mainyu*.

² The way in which the word is written in extant manuscripts (more than a millennium after Zarathushtra) it would be pronounced in three syllables *ār-mai-ti*. But as Thieme states, *ārmaiti*- is an erroneous late spelling ~ as long since recognized ~ for a four-syllabic *arəməiti*-, which alone is metrically correct, Thieme, *Reflections on the Vocabular of Zarathushtra's Gathas*, which appears in *Proceedings of the First Gatha Colloquium, 1993*, (WZO 1998), p. 207. In other words, the meter of the Gathas requires that the word be pronounced in four syllables, (which Thieme reconstructs as *a-rə-mai-ti*-), so in all likelihood, four syllables was the way in which the word was pronounced when Zarathushtra composed the Gathas.

³ Humbach (1991), and Humbach/Faiss (2010) translate *ārmaiti*- as "rightmindedness".

⁴ Sethna translates *ārmaiti*- as 'divine wisdom', Sethna (1978), *The Teachings of Zarathushtra*, p. 17.

⁵ Insler in his 1975 translation, translated *ārmaiti*- as "piety", but more recently, he has expressed a preference for "respect" in an unpublished paper delivered at the Gatha Colloquium sponsored by the World Zoroastrian Organization and the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York and held in 2009.

Martin Schwartz 1993 has also translated *ārmaiti*- as "piety", in his translation of Y32:2, which appears in Schwartz, *The Ties that Bind: On the Form and Content of Zarathushtra's Mysticism*, in *Proceedings of the First Gatha Colloquium, 1993*, (WZO, 1998), p. 129.

Hanns-Peter Schmidt 1986 states: "For *ārmaiti*- and *tarəməiti*- I have substituted 'respect' and 'disrespect' for the awkward 'proper thought' and 'perverse thought' I used previously (1974). 'Respect' is less specialized than 'devotion'

and 'humility' and lacks the overtones of the present day usage of 'piety' (Insler) and the negative connotations of 'conformity' ..." Hanns-Peter Schmidt, *The Form and Meaning of Yasna 33*, (American Oriental Society, 1986), p. 4.

Mills 1894 translates *ārmaiti*- as 'piety' in his work *A Study of the Five Zarathushtrian Gathas*, (AMS Press reprint) pp. 6 - 7 (translating Y28:3).

Moulton 1912 translates *ārmaiti*- as "Piety" or "Devotion", p. 345.

6 Taraporewala 1951 translates *ārmaiti*- as "Faith and Devotion", p. 100. His quotation from Bartholomae's translation on that page shows that Bartholomae translates the word as 'piety'.

7 Thieme 1993 rejecting such translations as "deference", "fittingness", "submission" and "humility", suggests that *ārmaiti*- means an attitude "characterized by satisfying intention." Thieme, *Reflections on the Vocabulary of Zarathustra's Gathas*, in *Proceedings of the First Gatha Colloquium*, 1993, (WZO, 1998), pp. 206 - 208, expressing the opinion that as an attribute of Ahura Mazda, it is characterized by care/solicitude, and as an attribute of man, by loyalty/devotion. I have great respect for Thieme, but I have seen no evidence in any Gatha verse which supports these two different flavors of the meaning based on whether it applies to the Divine or to man, as the quotations in this chapter make clear.

8 See Thieme's discussion, *ibid*.

9 Jafarey 1989 translates the word as "serenity, stability, tranquility" p. 116.

¹⁰ For example: In the following verses of the Gathas, *ārmaiti*- and other amesha spenta are mentioned in various groups as follows (they are shown here in the order in which they appear in the Old Av. text of these Gatha verses):

ārmaiti- as one of two amesha spenta

Y28:7, Y43:10, Y44:10, truth and *ārmaiti*-
Y34:9, *ārmaiti*- and truth,
Y48:5, good rule and *ārmaiti*-.

ārmaiti- as one of three amesha spenta

Y43:1, Y44:6, Y46:12, Y48:11, Y49:2, truth, *ārmaiti*- and good thinking,
Y45:4, Y51:20, truth, good thinking and *ārmaiti*-,
Y53:3, good thinking, truth and *ārmaiti*-,
Y49:10 good thinking, *ārmaiti*- and rule,
Y44:7, rule, *ārmaiti*-, and the beneficial-sacred way of being (*spənta- mainyu*-)
Y47:6 the beneficial-sacred way of being (*spənta- mainyu*-), *ārmaiti*- and truth.

ārmaiti- as one of four amesha spenta

Y28:3 truth, good thinking, rule and *ārmaiti*-,
Y30:7 rule, good thinking, truth and *ārmaiti*-,
Y31:4, Y51:4, truth, *ārmaiti*-, the most-good thinking, and rule,
Y46:16 truth, *ārmaiti*-, good thinking, rule,
Y32:2, good thinking, rule, truth and *ārmaiti*-,
Y33:11 *ārmaiti*-, truth, good thinking, rule,
Y33:12 *ārmaiti*-, the most-beneficial-sacred way of being (*spəništa- mainyu*-), truth and good thinking,
Y33:13 rule, good thinking, *ārmaiti*- and truth,
Y34:10, Y45:9, good thinking, *ārmaiti*-, truth and rule

Y44:6, Y51:21	<i>ārmaiti</i> -, truth, rule, good thinking
Y51:2	truth, <i>ārmaiti</i> -, rule and good thinking,
<i>ārmaiti</i> -, as one of five amesha spenta,	
Y43:6	the beneficial-sacred way of being (<i>spənta- mainyu</i> -), rule, good thinking, truth and <i>ārmaiti</i> -,
Y43:16	the most-beneficial-sacred way of being (<i>spəništa- mainyu</i> -), truth, rule, <i>ārmaiti</i> - and good thinking.
<i>ārmaiti</i> -, as one of six amesha spenta,	
Y34:11	completeness, non-deathness, rule, good thinking, truth and <i>ārmaiti</i> -,
Y45:10	<i>ārmaiti</i> -, truth, good thinking, rule, completeness, non-deathness.
<i>ārmaiti</i> -, as one of seven amesha spenta,	
Y47:1	the beneficial-sacred way of being (<i>spənta- mainyu</i> -), the most-good thinking (<i>vahišta-manah</i> -), truth, completeness, non-deathness, rule, and <i>ārmaiti</i> -.

¹¹ There are many key ways in which *ārmaiti*- is treated as an amesha spenta. For example:

ārmaiti-, truth and good thinking are the only three that in the Gathas are 'fathered' by Wisdom, without emending *tā* to **ptā* in Y47:3, as almost all linguists have done, thereby making Wisdom the 'father' of *spənta- mainyu*- ~ an emendation which is not required by the words of the Avestan text, and is not supported by any evidence in the Gathas (in my view).

ārmaiti-, truth and good thinking are, sometimes referred to as allegorical entities ~ sometimes in tandem with Wisdom the Lord. Other divine attributes are less frequently allegorized ~ *spənta- mainyu*- (when not describing Wisdom's beneficial-sacred way of being) is specifically referred to as an entity perhaps only once; good rule possible twice; completeness and non-deathness not specifically in any verse, and not impliedly in any undisputed verse);

ārmaiti-, truth, good thinking, good rule, completeness, and non-deathness, are the way to earn the reward, and also the reward itself;

ārmaiti- (many times), truth, good thinking, and good rule (each once) are described as *spənta*- ~ a beneficence that is sacred, the essence of the divine (as the later collective noun for His attributes ~ amesha spenta ~ indicates);

ārmaiti-, truth, good thinking, good rule, completeness and non-deathness, are the way to worship and serve the Wise Lord;

ārmaiti- is an object of 'esteem'. As with some the other amesha spenta (other than truth and good thinking) *ārmaiti*- is not specifically described as an object of worship (but is impliedly an object of worship, see *Part Two: The Puzzle of Worship*).

¹² For example, in the Khordad (Av. *Haurvatat*) Yasht, Yt. 4:1, *spənta- ārmaiti*- is enumerated amongst the amesha spenta,

... *aməšanqm spəntanqm vohū manō ašəm vahištəm xšaθrəm vairīm spəntqm ārmaifīm haurvatāasca aməratatāasca*. Yt. 4:1 Geldner 2P p. 78;

"... of the Amesha-Spentas, Vohu-Mano, Asha-Vahishta, Khshathra-Vairya, Spenta-Armaiti, Haurvatat and Ameretat." Yt. 4:1, Darmesteter translation SBE 23, p. 49.

In the YAv. Yy57:24 (identified by Mills as the Srosh Yasht in SBE 31), *spənta- ārmaiti*- is included in an enumeration of the amesha spenta. It states,

... *aya daēnaya fraorənta* '...And in this envisionment is professed
ahurō mazdā ašava the Lord Wisdom, the Truth-possessing One,

<i>frā vohu manō</i>	so also good thinking,
<i>frā ašəm vahištəm</i>	so also the most-good true (correct) order of existence,
<i>frā xšaθrəm vairīm</i>	so also the rule to be chosen,
<i>frā spənta ārmaitiš</i>	so also beneficial-sacred embodied truth,
<i>frā haurvatās</i>	so also completeness
<i>frā amərətātās</i>	so also non-deathness
<i>frā āhūiriš frašnō</i>	so also the questioning of the Lord,
<i>frā āhūiriš tkaēšō</i>	so also the teaching of the Lord." Y57:24, my translation.

The Avestan words are from Geldner 1P p. 201.

Additional examples of enumerations of the 6 amesha spenta in later texts (all of which include *ārmaiti-*), are given in a footnote in *Part Two: The Puzzle of the Amesha Spenta*.

Regarding the above "questioning of the Lord" (in Yy57:24) as part of the envisionment that is wisdom-worship, we see the same idea expressed in one of my favorite names of the Divine given in the *Hormezd Yasht* in which the author purportedly has the Lord Wisdom stating His names, one of which is:

"...My name is the One of whom questions are asked...", Yt.1:7, Darmesteter translation, SBE 32, p. 24.

It has been suggested that this idea that the Divine could be asked questions, was a later invention of the priestly establishment to justify their frequently used technique of having Zarathushtra (purportedly) asking questions of Ahura Mazda, and having Ahura Mazda (purportedly) giving replies that authorized all the many (cruel, greedy, and sometimes ridiculous) rules and prohibitions they wished to enforce ~ thereby giving divine authority to their own rules ~ almost none of which are in the Gathas, and many of which are the very kinds of tyrannies against which Zarathushtra rebelled.

But I think the origin of this 'name' ~ "One of whom questions are asked" ~ pre-dated this YAv. technique of the priestly establishment in the YAv. texts. Notice, there is no 'name' which states, 'One who gives Answers', yet the (purported) giving of answers by Ahura Mazda (to validate their rules) was the whole reason for the YAv. priestly technique of questions and answers.

On the other hand, the Gathas themselves are full of questions (but very few explicit answers given by the Divine). I think Zarathushtra (long before Socrates) used questions as a teaching device ~ to make his followers think, try to puzzle out what the answers might be. Indeed, many of the questions in the Gathas are rhetorical and contain their own answers, but to find the answers, one has to think about the question and its context. An excellent teaching device. Learning is much more effective when one has to discover the answers for oneself ~ with assistance from the teacher.

¹³ Thieme, *ibid*.

¹⁴ The GAv. word which Insler translates as 'conception' is *daēnā-* which means 'conception' in the sense of a way of looking at things ~ 'envisionment' (an excellent English equivalent suggested by Martin Schwartz in his paper *The Ties that Bind: On the Form and Content of Zarathushtra's Mysticism*, in *Proceedings of the First Gatha Colloquium*, 1993, (WZO, 1998), § 51, p. 161). Some linguists (including Martin Schwartz in his earlier essay in CHI (1985) Vol. 2) have translated *daēnā-* as 'conscience', but that cannot be accurate, because in the Gathas, *daēnā-* can be both 'good' and 'bad', whereas one's 'conscience' can only be good; *daēnā-* in the later YAv. texts became a term for the mazdayasnian envisionment/religion, and evolved to *dīn* meaning 'religion' in the even later Pahlavi texts. See *Part Three: Daena*, for a more detailed discussion of the meaning of this word, how it is used in the Gathas, and how its meaning evolved over time.

¹⁵ About the phrase *ārmatōiš kascī ašā huzəntuš* Y49:5c which Insler 1975 has translated "... Any such person of [ārmaiti-] is of the (same) good lineage [huzəntuš] with truth [ašā]..." Y49:5, Insler comments that the figure *ašā huzəntuš* is a variant of a phrase in Y46:13 *ašā ... huš.hax āim* "good companion with truth" (p. 299). The word *huzəntuš* also appears in Y46:5 where Insler 1975 translates it as the "man of good lineage". The prefix *hu-* is frequently

used in Avestan, and means 'good'; for example *humata-* 'good thought', *hušyaoθana-* 'good action', *hux šaθra-* 'good rule'. Humbach 1991 comments that there are two possible derivations for *huzəntuš*, one deriving "from the root *zan* 'to beget, give birth'," and the other "from the root *zan/x šnā* 'to know'..." (he translates *huzəntuš* as 'well-acquainted'). So if we follow Insler's syntax, the phrase in the above Gatha verse Y49:5, could be translated as Insler 1975 has done "... Any such person of [*ārmaiti-*] is of the (same) good lineage [*huzəntuš*] with truth [*aša*]..." Y49:5. Or it could be translated "... Any such person of [*ārmaiti-*] is of the (same) good knowledge [*huzəntuš*] with truth [*aša*]..." Y49:5. Either one shows the connection between *āramāiti-* and truth (*aša-*).

If we choose the Insler 1975 option, the phrase could be understood in one of two ways (or both ~ Zarathushtra often uses double entendre).

On the one hand, it could mean that a person of *ārmaiti-* is an offspring of the true (correct) order of existence, which makes sense because the true (correct) order of existence is a concept, and thoughts words and actions which embody it, come out of that concept ~ are born of it (in a manner of speaking).

On the other hand, it could mean that *ārmaiti-* is a sibling of the true (correct) order of existence ~ both having been generated by the Divine which accords with the verses which describe Wisdom as the metaphoric father (generator) of truth and *ārmaiti-*, ("... the Wise One is the Father of truth." Y47:2; "... and His daughter is [*ārmaiti-*] of good actions..." Y45:4).

But it makes no substantive difference because even under the second alternative, Wisdom's existence is the true (correct) order of existence (*aša-*), which is generated by Him, and so also is truth embodied in thought, word and action (*ārmaiti-*).

¹⁶ Insler has inserted "(our)" here as an interpretive aid. There is no equivalent GAv. word in the text, and in my view, Zarathushtra did not intend to so limit *ārmaiti-*. The absence of the pronoun here reflects the teaching of the Gathas that it is the *ārmaiti-* the 'embodied truth' of all the living (including the *ārmaiti-* 'embodied truth' of the Divine), which gives 'body and breath' to the rule of truth and good thinking. For a detailed discussion of this verse with comparative translations, see *Part Six: Yasna 30:7*.

¹⁷ Similarly, in Y47:2, Zarathushtra says: "A person shall bring to realization the best [*vahišta-* 'most-good'] ... with his tongue, through words stemming from good thinking, and with his hands, through (every) act of [*ārmaiti-*] ..." Y47:2. *vahišta-* is the superlative degree of intrinsic goodness (*vohu-*). In the Gathas, the superlative *vahišta-* is used sometimes as a crescendo of expression, rather than as a difference in quantity (see *Part One: The Manthra of Truth, Asha Vahishta (Ashem Vohu)*). Here in Y47:2, in place of the true (correct) order of existence (*aša-*), Zarathushtra uses *vahišta-* 'the most-good', to describe what *ārmaiti-* brings to realization ~ makes real. We know from other parts of the Gathas, that intrinsic 'goodness' (both *vohu-* and *vahišta-*) is equated with the true (correct) order of existence *aša-*, (see *Part One: Truth, Asha*). In fact so firmly established is Zarathushtra's thought that the true (correct) order of existence is most-good, wholly good, that *aša- vahišta-* 'the most-good truth' became a standard name for *aša-* in the later texts.

So in this verse, Y47:2, when one brings 'the most-good' (*vahišta-*) to realization with thoughts, words and actions of *ārmaiti-* (embodied truth), one brings to realization the true order (correct) of existence (*aša-*), with thoughts words and actions which embody it. Let us re-read this part of Y47:2 with this understanding in mind:

"A person shall bring to realization [*vahišta-* the most-good, which is the true (correct) order of existence *aša-*] ... with his tongue, through words stemming from good thinking, and with his hands, through (every) act of [*ārmaiti-* embodied truth], according to the single understanding: the Wise One is the Father of truth [*aša-*]." Y47:2.

What thoughts occur to you? See also a similar thought in, "...Therefore... bring to realization the [*spəništa-* most-beneficial-sacred] and blessed (acts) of [*ārmaiti-*]." Y53:3; *spəništa-* 'most-beneficial-sacred' is one of the superlative forms of *spənta-* 'beneficial-sacred'. In the Gathas, 'beneficial-sacred' (*spənta-*) and 'most-beneficial-sacred'

(*spāništa-*) are equated with the Divine, and with the true (correct) order of existence *aša-*, which is the existence of the Divine (see *Part One: Truth, Asha*). And *spānta-* 'beneficial-sacred' is frequently used as an adjective to describe *ārmaiti-* ~ the true (correct) order embodied in thought, word and action. Beautiful multi-dimensioned thinking.

¹⁸ Similarly:

In Y32 verses 1 and 2, we see *ārmaiti-* equated with being the Lord Wisdom's messenger. In verse 1, Zarathushtra says that the family, the community and the clan all entreat the Divine saying: "... Let us be Thy messengers..." Y32:1. In verse 2, Wisdom and Its (allegorical) companions truth and good thinking, agree saying: "... We have chosen your good and [*spānta- ārmaiti-* 'beneficial embodied truth']. It shall be Ours." Y32:2, thus equating the quality of *ārmaiti-* with being Wisdom's messengers. To be a messenger, one has to have more than an understanding of what is true, correct (right-mindedness). To be a messenger, one has to teach with words and actions of truth. So if the quality of *ārmaiti-* is equated with being a messenger of the Lord Wisdom, it would be reasonable to conclude that its meaning includes thoughts, words and actions that embody the true (correct) good order of existence.

In Y44.10 Zarathushtra speaks of "...through words and acts stemming from [*ārmatōiš*] ..." Y44:10, Insler 1975. The word *ārmatōiš* is both the ablative ('stemming-from-*ārmaiti-*') and the genitive sg. ('of-*ārmaiti-*') case forms of the stem *ārmaiti-*. Jackson 1892 states that in GAv., there is no ablative case for *-i-* stem words (like *ārmaiti-*) so the gen. sg. case form is also used for the abl. sg. (§§ 251, 253, pp. 74 - 75). In translating Y44:10, Insler has chosen to translate *ārmatōiš* as abl. sg. ('stemming from *ārmaiti-*'). However, if we translate *ārmatōiš* as gen. sg., (which is equally accurate), we get the translation 'through words and acts of *ārmaiti-*', indicating that the concept of *ārmaiti-* (embodied truth) includes words and actions of truth, which accurately reflects the idea in Y45:4, and Y34:10 quoted in the main part of this chapter.

In Y51:17, Zarathushtra speaks of "...the esteemed form [*bərəx δqm kəhrpēm*]..." Y51:17 or, stated another way 'the esteemed embodiment', which Insler translates as "... the esteemed form (of piety)..." ~ piety is the Insler 1975 translation of *ārmaiti-*. The words "(of piety)" are not in the GAv. text of Y51:17, but Insler inserts them in parentheses as an interpretive aid, because he believes that "...the esteemed form..." refers to *ārmaiti-*, showing in his commentary, persuasive parallels in other verses, to support this conclusion. For example, in Y44:7b *kā bərəx δqm tāšt ... ārmaitim ...* "...Who fashioned esteemed [*ārmaiti-*]..."; and in Y30:7b *aṭ kəhrpəm utayūitiš dadāṭ ārmaitiš qnmā* "...and enduring [*ārmaiti-*] gave body and breath (to it). ..." Insler 1975 pp. 319 - 320.

¹⁹ See *Part Three: Xratu*.

²⁰ This conclusion that *ārmaiti-* means thoughts, words and actions that embody the true (correct) order of existence (*aša-*), may be corroborated in the YAv. text, *Visperad* Ch. 2, § 5. Mills' translation (which unfortunately is somewhat free and does not always fit the Avestan words), states,

"With this Zaothra, with this Baresman I desire to approach the man who recites the ritual rites [*narəm ašavanəm* literally '(the) truth-possessing man'] with my praise, who is maintaining thus the thought well thought [*humatəmca manō*], and the word well spoken [*hūx təmca vacō*], and the deed well done [*hvarštəmca šyaoθnəm*], and Piety the bountiful [*spāntqm ārmaitim*], ..." *Visperad* 2:5, SBE 31, p. 339; the Avestan words are from Geldner 2P, p. 6 - 7.

As you can see, there is no 'and *spānta- ārmaiti-*' in the Avestan text (which would be indicated in YAv. by attaching the suffix *-ca*). Also, today most scholars who are linguists would translate *narəm ašavanəm* as 'the truthful man' ~ not as Mills has translated it (above). Thus a more literal translation would read

'... I desire to approach the truthful man ... who maintains the thought well-thought, and the word well-spoken, and the deed well-done ~ beneficial-sacred embodied truth.'

As you can see, in this more literal translation, *spənta- ārmaiti-* is equated with (or parallel to) the preceding good thoughts, words and actions of the truthful man. This style of paralleling is often seen in the Gathas.

²¹ Here are some additional examples of the adj. *spənta-* 'beneficial-sacred' being used with *ārmaiti-*,
 "... We have chosen your good and [*spənta- ārmaiti-*], it shall be Ours." Y32:2;
 "... reveal to me by reason of my [*spənta- ārmaiti-*] those conceptions [*daēnā-*] in harmony with truth." Y33:13;
 "... the man of good determination has expressed his understanding and his [*spənta- ārmaiti-*]." Y34:10;
 "...With whom is [*spənta- ārmaiti-*] allied?..." Y51:11;
 "... the [*spəništa-*] and most blessed (acts) of [*ārmaiti-*] ..." Y53:3.

²² See in *Part One: Truth, Asha;* and *The Beneficial-Sacred Way of being, Spenta Mainyu.*

²³ It is not without interest that the later YAv. *Visperad*, equates wisdom and *ārmaiti-* (as do the Gathas "...The Wise One in rule is Lord through [*ārmaiti-*]." Y47:1), and the YAv. *Visperad* also describes *ārmaiti-* as owning the laws of *aša-*, which fits with the meaning of *ārmaiti-* as the true (correct) order of existence embodied in thought, word and action.

"... and that wisdom which is the bounteous Aramaiti [*ārmaitīm spəntqm* 'beneficial-sacred embodied truth'], whose are the laws of the Righteous Order [*dāθre ašahaca* 'the laws of the true order of existence'] ..." *Visperad* 19:2, Mills translation, SBE 31, p. 361; Avestan words from Geldner 2P, pp. 26 - 27.

²⁴ Once we appreciate that *ārmaiti-* means making truth real ~ giving truth "body and breath" (Y30:7), "substance" (44:6) ~ with thoughts, words and actions of truth, we see many interesting parallels. Here are a few:

In Y46:17, it is truth that informs the Lord Wisdom's judging ("...the Wise Lord who, together with His clever advisor, truth, has judged the just and the unjust." Y46:17). In Y43:6 it is *ārmaiti-* that is involved in the quality of Wisdom's judgment ("... To them does [*ārmaiti-*] announce the judgments of Thy will, ..." Y43:6). This is not difficult to understand if *ārmaiti-* is the embodiment of the true (correct) order of existence ~ which is the existence of the Divine.

In Y51:21, a person of *ārmaiti-* is *spənta-* 'beneficial' in his actions ("[*spənta-* 'beneficial-sacred'] is the man of [*ārmaiti-* 'embodied truth']". He is so by reason of ... his actions, ..." Y51:21).

In Y46:9, the truthful Lord (notice the chosen adjective 'truthful') is *spənta-* in His actions, ("... the truthful Lord, [*spənta-* 'beneficial-sacred'] in His action..." 46:9).

Reading these two verses together suggests that the Lord who embodies truth ("the truthful Lord [*ahurəm ašavanəm*]" is a person of *ārmaiti-*, as is the mortal person in Y51:21 (although the latter, less than completely).

In Y30:7, Wisdom is said to come into this world with the rule of truth and good thinking, to which *ārmaiti-* gives body and breath ("But to this world He came with the rule of good thinking and of truth, and ... enduring [*ārmaiti-*] gave body and breath (to it) ..." Y30:7, Insler 1975). This thought is paralleled in Y43:6, except that 'actions' of the 'rule of good thinking' are substituted for *ārmaiti-* "...Thou, the Wise One, hast come into the world with Thy [*spənta-mainyu-* 'beneficial way of being'] (and) with the rule of good thinking, through the actions of which the creatures allied with truth do prosper. To them does [*ārmaiti-*] announce the judgments of Thy will,..." Y43:6, Insler 1975.

In Y50:4 Zarathushtra speaks of worshipping the Lord Wisdom, with truth, good thinking and their rule ("...I shall always worship ... you, Wise Lord, with truth and the very best thinking and with their rule..." Y50:4). In Y45:10 he speaks of worshipping Wisdom with prayers of *ārmaiti-* ("I shall try to glorify Him for us with prayers of [*ārmaiti-*]." Y45:10). Prayers of *ārmaiti-* are prayers of thoughts, words and actions which embody the true (correct) order of existence. Such thoughts, words and actions create good rule (which is the rule of truth, *ārmaiti-*, and most-good thinking Y51:4) ~ reflecting the same worship that we see in Y50:4 (quoted above).

Don't you love the interplay between these concepts (which are attributes of the Divine, that man has incompletely)?

²⁵ The GAv. YHapt. 39:5, says,

vaṇhəuš xʷaētəuš xʷaētātā vaṇhəuš ašahyā θwā pairijasāmaidē vaṇhuyā fəsəratvō vaṇhuyā āmatōiš
 •• YHapt.39:5, Geldner 1P p. 135;

"We serve Thee with (our) own-selfness [*xʷaētātā*], (as part) of a good family [*vaṇhəuš xʷaētəuš*] of the good true (correct) order of existence [*vaṇhəuš ašahyā*], of good caring-protection [*vaṇhuyā fəsəratvō*], of good embodied truth [*vaṇhuyā āmatōiš*]." YHapt.39:5, my translation. (Insler translates *fəsəratvō*- words as 'protection' ("Where shall there be protection [*fəsəratvō*] instead of injury..." Y51:4), but not all linguists agree).

The Gatha verse Y33:14 says,

"For Zarathushtra does give the breath of even his own person [*tanvascīt xʷahyā*] as a gift, in order that there be for the Wise One predominance of good thinking along with (predominance) of the action and the word allied with truth [*šyaoθanahyā ašā yācā uxδahyācā*], that there be obedience [*səraošəm* 'listening'] and His (good) rule." Y33:14 Insler 1975.

There is no word "allied" in the GAv. text here; the instr. sg. *ašā* 'with truth' is used in the sense that truth is within such actions and words, just as in times past, the English phrase 'she is with child' meant 'she has a child within her'.

²⁶ Skjaervo's Old Avestan Index under *ārmaiti*-, shows Old Indic *arāmati*.

²⁷ According to Darmesteter the Vedic goddess Aramati symbolized piety. He interprets in a highly colorful, imaginative way, two references to Aramati in the Rig Veda, to the effect that every day, morning and evening, streaming with the sacred butter, she gives herself up to Agni (the fire deity). But Professor Elizabeth Tucker has informed me that Darmesteter's interpretation of these two passages in the Rig Veda is quite different from the way they are translated and understood today.

²⁸ For example, a Pahlavi Fragment, translated by E. W. West in SBE 5, pp. 374 - 378 shows the association between *ārmaiti*- and the earth. West has appended this Fragment to his translation of *Shayast la Shayast*, but states that this Fragment is not a part of the *Shayast la Shayast* (his ft. 1, p. 372). In fact this Fragment is quite unlike *Shayast la Shayast*. If we can look past this Pahlavi Fragment's sermonizing we see that it conveys some rather lovely ideas (although sometimes trapped in culturally obsolete ways of thinking and expression). See also the discussion of the amesha spenta in Dhalla (1938/1985 reprint) *History*, pp. 39 - 61, 162 - 172, 357 - 367, for additional ways in which each amesha spenta was linked with its material counterpart throughout the long history of the religion (e.g. as caretakers, protectors, etc.). And see *Part Two: Earth, Waters, Plants*, for a discussion of the implied link between *ārmaiti*- and the earth (the arena for mortal thoughts, words and actions) in the Gathas.

²⁹ *...yaθrā ašā hacaitē ārmaitiš ...* Y46:16, i.e. '...where embodied truth is united [*hacaitē*] with the true (correct, good) order of existence...' my translation.

Bartholomae's translation (as shown by Taraporewala) translates the phrase as follows "where with Right [*ašā*] is united [*hacaitē*] Piety [*ārmaitiš*]" (Taraporewala 1951 p. 627).

Insler 1975 translates the word *hacaitē* as "in harmony"; Humbach 1991 as "agrees" (Vol. 2, p. 187); but with Faiss (2010) "in harmony" (p. 138).

Taraporewala (1951) translates *hacaitē* as "knits-herself" ("Where Aramaiti knits herself with Asha") p. 625;

These different translations, all convey different shades of the same underlying meaning ~ that the reality of embodied truth (*ārmaiti*-) accords with, is a part of, makes real, the concept of the true (correct) order of existence (*ašā*-).

³⁰ Here are some examples of truth linked with *ārmaiti*- in its descriptive form (as thoughts words and actions of truth ~ without mention of the word *ārmaiti*-)

".....He serves truth [*ašā*-] during his rule, with good word and good action..." Y31:22, ('good word and good action' is the concept of *ārmaiti*-);

"For Zarathushtra does give the breath of even his own person as a gift, in order that there be for the Wise One predominance of good thinking, along with (predominance) of the action and the word allied with truth, ..." Y33:14, (here, 'the action and the word allied with truth' is the concept of *ārmaiti*-).

"Yes, those men shall be the saviors [*saošyant*-] of the lands, namely, those who shall follow their knowledge of Thy teaching with actions in harmony with good thinking and with truth, Wise One..." Y48:12. (The words 'with actions in harmony with good thinking and with truth, are included within the meaning of *ārmaiti*-, paralleling the specific mention of *ārmaiti*- in the preceding verse "When, Wise One, shall [*ārmaiti*-] come along with truth, bringing peace and pasturage throughout the dominion?..." 48:11).

"Praising, I shall encounter you with such worship, Wise One, and with actions stemming from good thinking allied with truth. When I could rule at will over my reward, then I would, exercising such power, be in the stride of the blessed one." Y50:9, Insler 1975. (Here 'with actions stemming from good thinking allied with truth' is the concept of *ārmaiti*-. Being "in the stride of the blessed one" recalls "the stride of truth" in Y51:17 and represents the action ('stride') which is a part of the embodiment or personification of truth, which is the concept of *ārmaiti*-. Regarding the Insler 1975 translation of this verse, the words in red font are not in the GAv. text shown in Geldner. Specifically, in the GAv. text there is no 'and'; there is no GAv. word 'allied'; *aṣā* is instr. 'with truth', as is *šyaoθanāiš* 'with actions'; the words *vanhəuš ... manan̥hō* are genitive 'of good thinking'. So more literally '...I shall encounter you with such worship Wisdom ~ with truth, with actions of good thinking [*aṣā vanhəuš šyaoθanāiš manan̥hō*]...'; recalling "prayers of [*ārmaiti*-]" in Y45:10.

³¹ See *Part Two: The Lords and the Equations of Y31:4*, for a discussion of this verse.

³² "Therefore do Thou reveal to me the truth [*aṣa*- the true (correct, good) order of existence], which I continue to summon. Being in companionship with [*ārmaiti*- embodied truth] I have deserved it.'" Y43:10. In essence, those who strive to embody truth in their thoughts words and actions, earn the reward of understand the truth for which they search ~ 'summoning' truth in this verse (Y43:10) and 'calling' truth (e.g. Y31:4) are idiomatic ways of saying 'searching for truth'. For the full quotations, and also other examples of *ārmaiti*- as what earns the reward, or the reward itself see *Part Two: A Question of Reward & The Path*, some of which I summarize here (as it pertains to *ārmaiti*-):

In Y43:1, one of the rewards for *ārmaiti*- (embodied truth) is "a life of good thinking", which is the comprehension of truth in life (i.e. in living). And how do we 'live' our understanding of truth? By embodying it, personifying it (which is *ārmaiti*-). Another way of saying that the reward for *ārmaiti*- (embodying truth) is in effect, *ārmaiti*- itself (embodied truth itself) ~ the more we incrementally strive to embody the true (correct) order of existence, the more we personify, embody, become this order of existence.

In Y51:17 the reward for *ārmaiti*- (as 'esteemed embodiment') is the stride of truth. The stride of truth is a poetic (metaphoric) way of saying truth in action (walking the walk), which is the concept of *ārmaiti*- ~ truth embodied in thought, word, and action. So one could say that in this verse also, the reward for *ārmaiti*- is *ārmaiti*- itself. Or the reward for embodying truth is embodied truth.

In Y44:11 the reward for learning about Wisdom's good envisionment [*daēnā*-] is *ārmaiti*- "...How might [*ārmaiti*-] separately come to those to whom Thy conception [*daēnā*] is taught, Wise One? ..." 44:11. A rhetorical question which contains its own answer. Wisdom's good envisionment [*daēnā*-] is the envisionment of existence governed by truth, good thinking, its embodiment (*ārmaiti*-), its rule. So in effect, the reward for learning about truth, its comprehension, its embodiment, its rule (the good envisionment), enables us to embody truth in thought, word and action (*ārmaiti*-).

Conversely, in Y33:13, the reward for *ārmaiti*- (embodied truth) is "conceptions [*daēnā*-] in harmony with truth" which is envisioning an existence in harmony with truth, which is part of the meaning of *ārmaiti*-.

"...Reveal to me by reason of my [spənta- ārmaiti-], those conceptions [daēnā-] in harmony with truth." Y33:13. This is nevertheless consistent with Y44:11 (above), because the process is incremental and complementary. The more we embody truth, the more we understand Wisdom's good envisionment.

³³ For other verses in which good rule is mentioned as the rule of ārmaiti- (among others) see the following:

"When I might call upon truth, the Wise One ... shall appear: also ... [ārmaiti-]. (And) through the very best thinking I shall seek for myself their rule of strength, ..." Y31:4. So when we search for truth, we understand Wisdom (the Divine), the personification (embodiment) of truth; and 'good thinking' is part of the search for truth, and therefore is the means by which a mortal searches for truth and its embodiment, which is 'their rule of strength'.

"Through a [spənta- mainyu- 'beneficial way of being'] and the [vahišta- 'most-good'] thinking, through both action and the word befitting truth, they shall grant completeness and immortality to Him. The [mazdā- 'Wisdom'] in rule is Lord through [ārmaiti-]." Y47:1.

"...Grant thou ([ārmaiti-]) your rule of good thinking for the glory of the Mighty One." Y51:2. In this last line of Y51:2, the word ārmaiti- does not appear in the GAv. text. Insler inserts it as an interpretive aid. I agree, because (in my opinion) the pronoun 'thou' refers to the immediately preceding ārmaiti, and the plural 'your rule' integrates the previously mentioned ārmaiti- (with its multiple thoughts, words and actions) and truth. See Part Six: Yasna 51:2.

For other verses in which good rule is called the rule of truth and good thinking see the following:

"...the rule of truth and of good thinking..." Y29:10 and Y50:3; "...the rule of good thinking and of truth..." Y30:7; "...that rule of good thinking allied with truth...." Y51:18. In these verses, 'good thinking' and 'truth' are almost always in the instrumental case thus literally 'the rule with good thinking with truth'. Insler thinks that the instr. 'with' is a GAv. idiom which he thinks is used in the sense of the 'rule of good thinking and of truth'. (Commenting under Y30:7, at pp 168 - 169, and Y32.2, pp. 196 - 197).

³⁴ Here again I have omitted the "(our)" which Insler 1975 has inserted as an interpretive aid ~ as he does in Y30:7. In the GAv. text of both these verses (Y34:11 and Y30:7) there is no "our". In my view, Zarathushtra did not intend to limit ārmaiti- to mortals, but (consistent with the thought of the Gathas) intended that the ārmaiti- of all the living, (including the ārmaiti- of the Divine) increases completeness and non-deathness (Y34:11) and gives good rule, truth and good thinking, body and breath (Y30:7). See Part One: Completeness & Non-Deathness, Haurvatat, Ameretat, and Part Six: Yasna 30:7.

³⁵ A similar thought is expressed in the following verses.

"... through both action and the word befitting truth, they shall grant completeness and immortality [amərətāt- 'non-deathness'] to Him. The Wise One in rule is Lord through [ārmaiti- 'embodied truth']" Y47:1. Here, the "action and the word befitting truth" is the concept of ārmaiti- and leads to completeness and non-deathness (amərətāt-);

"...Those of you who shall give obedience and regard to this (Lord) of mine they shall reach completeness and immortality. The Wise One is Lord through such actions stemming from [vohu- mainyu-]." Y45:5. Here, 'actions stemming from a good way of being [vohu- mainyu-]' is another way of saying 'actions of the true (correct, good) order of existence' (which is the concept of ārmaiti-) because the true (correct) order of existence is the 'good/beneficial way of being [vohu-/spənta mainyu-]', (see Part One: Truth, Asha). Here (Y45:5) "such actions" of a good way of being (ārmaiti-) are what lead to completeness and non-deathness (haurvatāt, amərətāt-) mentioned in the first line (just as ārmaiti- leads to completeness and non-deathness in Y34:11 quoted in the main part of this chapter). The last part of this verse Y45:5, "The Wise One is Lord through such actions stemming from [vohu- mainyu- 'a good way of being']" parallels "The Wise One in rule is Lord through [ārmaiti-]." Y47:1.

"I shall try to glorify Him for us with prayers of [ārmaiti-], Him the Lord who is famed to be Wise in His soul. Whatever one has promised to Him with truth and with good thinking is to be completeness [haurvatāt-] and

immortality [*amərətāt-* 'non-deathness'] for Him under His rule, is to be these two enduring powers for Him in His house." Y45:10. Here, "prayers of *ārmaiti-*", is the concept of prayers of thoughts, words and actions of truth, which (in my view) have been promised to the Lord Wisdom with truth and good thinking, and lead to completeness and non-deathness (*amərətāt-*); "house" is a metaphor for a state of being which houses these qualities (see *Part Two: The Houses of Paradise and Hell*). Bear in mind, Zarathushtra uses 'completeness' at two levels ~ at an individual level, and also at a collective level (encompassing all the living, including the Divine). See *Part One: Completeness and Non-Deathness, Haurvatat, Ameretat*.

³⁶ See *Part One: Worship and Prayer*.

³⁷ This quotation from Y48:5 says, in the Insler 1975 translation, "Let those of good rule rule over us ... with actions stemming from good understanding and with [*ārmaiti-*]..." Y48:5. But in the GAv. text there is no 'and', so more literally 'with actions stemming from good understanding ~ with embodied truth [*ārmaiti-*]'; so here 'with *ārmaiti-*' parallels and describes the preceding "with actions stemming from good understanding".

³⁸ In this verse, Zarathushtra says, "... the one who has allied his conception with good thinking. Any such person of [*ārmaiti-* 'embodied truth'] is of the (same) good lineage with truth and all those (other forces) existing under Thy rule, Lord." Y49:5. Regarding the phrase a "person of [*ārmaiti-*]..." in this verse and in Y51:21 (quoted in the main part of this chapter) this reference is not to a perfected being. True, *ārmaiti-* is a quality of the Divine. But in the Gathas, man also has (imperfectly) five qualities of the Divine ~ truth, its comprehension good thinking, its beneficial embodiment (*ārmaiti-*), its good rule, and a beneficial way of being (*spənta- mainyu-*). So for an imperfect "person of [*ārmaiti-*]", some of his thoughts, words and actions may embody truth. Some may not. But each time a person aligns his thoughts with good thinking, and implements it in words and actions, in that instance he is a person of *ārmaiti-* ~ he thinks and acts in a divine way ~ even though he is not be a person of *ārmaiti-* at other times, when he falls short of embodying truth with his thoughts, words and actions.

³⁹ For other examples of *ārmaiti-* in man, see also the following (bearing in mind that, where applicable, the masc. in Av. is used also generically to include all genders ~ as it is in English):

"By ... action stemming from good thinking, a man of good determination has expressed ... understanding and ... [*spənta- ārmaiti-* 'beneficial-sacred embodied truth'],..." Y34:10;

"...Friyana, the Turanian, ... who prospered his creatures with the zeal of [*ārmaiti-* 'embodied truth']..." Y46:12;

"A person shall bring to realization the best ... with his hands through (every) act of [*ārmaiti-* 'embodied truth']..." Y47:2;

"...bring to realization the most [*spənta-*] and blessed (acts) of [*ārmaiti-* 'embodied truth']..." Y53:3.

In Y32:1 Wisdom and His companions truth and good thinking speak of the *ārmaiti-* 'embodied truth' of Zarathushtra and his followers who wish to be Wisdom's messengers "...We have chosen your good and [*spənta- ārmaiti-* 'beneficial-sacred embodied truth']. It shall be Ours." Y32:2.

In Y33:13, the Insler 1975 translation shows *ārmaiti-* in man, but I think here it is the *ārmaiti-* of both Wisdom and man, with deliberate ambiguity. Insler translates "... Reveal to me by reason of my [*spəntā ārmaitī*] those conceptions in harmony with truth." Y33:13. In the GAv. text, there is no "to me" (a 1p. dat. sg. personal pronoun which in GAv. can be *maibyā*, *mōi*, or *mē*), nor is there any word "my" (a 1p. gen. sg. personal pronoun *mōi*, *manā*, *mā*). Insler inserts these pronouns "to me" and "my" in his translation because he believes that the idea expressed in this part of Y33:13 is paralleled in Y43:10 where Zarathushtra speaks of himself as "... being in companionship with [*ārmaiti-*] ..." Y43:10 (pp. 218 - 219). But if we stay with the GAv. text, we get "... Reveal ... by reason of ... [*spəntā ārmaitī* 'beneficial-sacred embodied truth'] those conceptions in harmony with truth." Y33:13. Here I think the idea is that the more mortals (not limited to Zarathushtra) try to embody the true (correct, good) order of existence in thought, word and action, the more we understand Wisdom's envisionment ~ the envisionment of an existence of truth ~ an incremental process.

⁴⁰ See *Part One: Truth, Asha*.

⁴¹ Similarly, in Y31:9 translations differ slightly but seem to suggest that *ārmaiti-* belongs to Wisdom.

θwōi as ārmaitiš ... Y31:9

There is no dispute that *θwōi* is 'thine' ~ a possessive pronoun, 2d person nom. sg. fem. (*ārmaiti-* being a fem. noun) Tarap 1951 p. 203; Skjaervo's Old Avestan Index; M&dV (2001) §22.4, p. 74.

There is no dispute that *as* is impf. 3p sg. of the verb *ah-* 'to be'. Skjaervo 2003 in his *Young Avestan Lessons* gives an example of the imperfect tense (3p sg.) using the verb 'to do' as "he did, he was doing" Lesson 3, p. 17; so the impft. 3p sg. of 'to be' would be 'was' ~ as Moulton and Bartholomae translate it (below).

There is no dispute that the case form *ārmaitiš* is nom. sg.

Moulton 1912: "Thine was Aramaiti..." (so also Bartholomae: Tarap. 1951 p. 205);

Insler 1975: "Thine was to be [ārmaitiš]..." I do not know what he had in mind in translating *as* as "was to be".

It would be reasonable to conclude that if *ārmaiti-* belongs to Wisdom, it is a part of His nature (which personifies truth).

⁴² In this verse, Y33:11, all four amesha spenta are allegorical entities in tandem with Wisdom. In other verses where Zarathushtra mentions these four together, he alternates between treating some of them as allegorical entities, some as concepts and some as activities of Wisdom and/or man. For example:

In Y28:3, truth and good thinking are allegorical entities in tandem with Wisdom the Lord; *ārmaiti-* is perhaps an allegorical entity or perhaps a concept (ambiguous); and rule is a concept, "...thee, o truth, and good thinking, and the Wise Lord... for whom [ārmaiti-] increases their unharmable rule..." Y28:3.

In Y31:4, truth and *ārmaiti-* (as entities) are equated with Wisdom (among others); good thinking is an activity of man, and rule is the rule of Wisdom, truth and *ārmaiti-* (among others): "When I might call upon truth, [mazdā- 'Wisdom'] ... shall appear: also reward and [ārmaiti- 'embodied truth']. (And) through the very best thinking I shall seek for myself their rule of strength, through whose growth we might conquer deceit." Y31:4. This verse, and the words I have omitted here, are discussed in depth in *Part Two: The Lords and the Equations of Y31:4*.

In Y51:2, the Lord, truth and *ārmaiti-* are allegorical entities, and good thinking is a quality.

Humbach/Faiss 2010: "Thereby I wish to first show you, O Lord, and Truth, and you, O [ārmaiti-] ... Grant your (own power) through good thought ..." Y51:2;

Taraporewala 1951: "These (deeds) O Mazda, (are dedicated) first-of-all unto You, O Ahura, and unto Asha, and unto Thee O Aramaiti; teach me the Strength of-(Your)-Will, through Your Vohu Mano ..." Y51:2;

Moulton 1912: "Before all, O Mazda Ahura, assure me the Dominion of your possession, O Right, and what is thine, O [ārmaiti-]. Your (dominion) of blessing give through Good Thought ..." Y51:2; so also Bartholomae (quoted in Tarap. 1951 p. 269):

Insler 1975: "These things first belonged to you [vā] ~ to Thee Wise Lord, and to truth. But to thee o [ārmaiti-], I shall reveal ... Grant ... your rule of good thinking ..." Y51:2. As you can see, although Insler's 1975 translation sees *ārmaiti-* as an (allegorical) entity in this verse, he is the only one in our group of translators who does not include *ārmaiti-* in tandem with the Wisdom the Lord and Truth, in the same sentence. He does not explain why in his commentary. This is an instance in which (with respect) I disagree with Insler 1975. In the GAv. text of Y51:2 I think Zarathushtra speaks to Wisdom the Lord, truth and *ārmaiti-* in tandem. Translations of this verse differ in other respects, which is why I only show the words pertinent to the point at hand ~ that Zarathushtra here shows truth and *ārmaiti-* as allegories and good thinking/thought as a quality.

⁴³ See in *Part Two: A Question of Reward & the Path*; and *The Puzzle of the Most-Good, Vahishta*; and *The Houses of Paradise and Hell*.

⁴⁴ Y51:3 and Y47:1 contain a parallel that is suggestive though not conclusive.

In Y51:3, Mazda is Lord through His words of truth and good thinking.

In Y47:1, Mazda is Lord through *ārmaiti*-.

Y51:3: "...Thou art the Lord by reason of Thy tongue (which is) in harmony with truth and by reason of Thy words stemming from good thinking..." Y51:3.

Y47:1 Through a [*spənta- mainyu-* 'beneficial way of being'] and the best thinking, through both action and the word befitting truth, they shall grant completeness and [*amərətāt-* 'non-deathness'] to Him. The Wise One in rule is Lord through [*ārmaiti-*]." Y47:1.

⁴⁵ See *Part One: Good Rule, Vohu Xshathra*; and *Part Two: A Question Of Power*.

⁴⁶ In some of these verses (e.g. Y30:7, Y34:11) Insler inserts "(our)" before *ārmaiti*-, to indicate that in Insler's view, Zarathushtra intends to mean man's *ārmaiti*-. He explains this in his commentary to Y28:3 by showing Vedic parallels where it is stated that the gods are strong because of man's reverence. However, the Vedic word in these examples is not the Vedic cognate for *ārmaiti*-. In these examples, the Vedic word is *namasa* (Insler 1975 p. 123). It corresponds to the GAv. word for reverence which is *nəmah-* (see Insler's commentary on 28:1 *ibid.*, at p. 116).

But in any event, I am not persuaded that these Vedic parallels apply to the thought of the Gathas, because the way to worship the Divine is one of the instances in which Zarathushtra rejected the prevailing Indo-Iranian practices of his society. The power of pre-Zarathushtrian Indo-Iranian deities was ritual based, involving gifts of cattle, sheep, horses, et cetera, which was the wealth of those times. Such wealthy gifts would have made their priests powerful (as the Avestan Yashts so clearly demonstrate). So in the Vedic instances (which reflect this Indo-Iranian tradition), it makes perfect sense to say that such reverence (expressed by such gifts) increases the power of such deities. But Zarathushtra moved away from this way to worship. His currency of worship was truth and its components (the amesha spenta). See in *Part Two: The Nature of the Divine*; and *The Puzzle of Worship*.

I therefore am not persuaded by Insler's Vedic analogy. And I think that in most verses in which *ārmaiti*- is not qualified by a limiting noun or pronoun in the Gatha text, Zarathushtra intends it to apply to both mortals and the Divine. Here are a few examples:

First example: Y30:7

"But to this world He came with the rule of good thinking and of truth, and (our) enduring [*ārmaiti-*] gave body and breath (to it)..." Y30:7, Insler 1975. Insler has inserted "(our)" in parenthesis before *ārmaiti*-. But Zarathushtra himself is silent as to whose *ārmaiti*- gives body and breath to the rule of truth and good thinking in this verse. On the one hand, a strong argument could be made that the reference to *ārmaiti*- in Y30:7 is to Wisdom's *ārmaiti*-, because the last sentence of Y30:7 speaks of Wisdom giving protection during the requitals with molten iron. In my view, this is an act of His *ārmaiti*- ~ His generous, beneficial, supportive, thoughts, words and actions of truth and good thinking protecting us (with truth and good thinking) during the painful experiences of the refiner's fire ~ not by shielding us from harm, but by showing us how to grow through the process ~ which is how Wisdom helps, protects ~ "What help by truth hast Thou for Zarathushtra who calls? What help by good thinking hast Thou for me?...." Y49:12; ".....Therefore protect us in accord with truth." Y34:7. Accord: Y34:5, Y50:1, Y28:6 and Y29, discussed in *Part One: Truth, Asha*; and *Prayer & Worship*; and in *Part Two: The Solution of Y29*.

On the other hand (in Y30:7), I think Zarathushtra deliberately omitted the defining pronoun before *ārmaiti*-, leaving it ambiguous, because realistically the rule of truth and good thinking cannot be brought to life, it cannot be given "body and breath" without the *ārmaiti*- ~ the truth-filled thoughts, words and actions ~ of both mortals and Wisdom.

I think it is the *ārmaiti*- of both the Divine and mortals (including perhaps all life forms) that is intended in the first sentence of this verse Y30:7 (see *Part Six: Yasna 30:7* for a detailed discussion of this verse and comparative translations).

Second example: Y34:11

"Yes, both completeness and immortality [*amərətāt*-] are for Thy sustenance. Together with the rule of good thinking allied with truth, (our) [*ārmaiti*-] has increased these two enduring powers (for Thee). Because of these things, Wise One, Thou dost terrorize the enemy." Y34:11. Parenthetically "the enemy" is untruth ~ falsehood, maleficence, all that is the opposite of the true (correct, good) order (*aša*-), a beneficial order. And it is the growth of the rule of good thinking, truth, and words and actions which embody these qualities, that bring about the complete attainment of the true (correct, good) order of existence ~ in the Divine and man ('completeness' at one level being a collective completeness, see *Part One: Completeness & Non-Deathness, Haurvatat Ameretat*. I therefore think it is the *ārmaiti*- of both mortals and Wisdom to which Zarathushtra refers in this verse.

Third example: Y33:11

In Y33:11, Zarathushtra mentions four amesha spenta in tandem with Wisdom (who is) Lord, "The Wise One who is the Mightiest Lord, and [*ārmaiti*-], and truth... and good thinking... and (good) rule – listen to me..." Y33:11). Yet in the very next verse, three of these amesha spenta, including *ārmaiti*- are mentioned as activities – of mortals? Of the Lord? Of both? "Rise up to me, Lord. Along with Thy [*spāništa- mainyu*- most beneficial way of being] receive force through (our) [*ārmaiti*-], ...powerful might through truth, protection through (our) good thinking." Y33:12. Once again, Insler has indicated his interpretation by inserting "(our)" in parentheses before *ārmaiti*- and good thinking, although he does not make a similar insertion before truth. But Zarathushtra himself treats *ārmaiti*- and good thinking in this verse in the same way as he treats truth – none of them are identified as belonging to either mortal's or Wisdom. It would be reasonable to conclude therefore that it is through these three attributes of the divine (amesha spenta) ~ truth, its comprehension, its embodiment in thought, word and action ~ in both mortals and the Divine ~ that Wisdom's most beneficial way of being [*spāništa- mainyu*-] receives strength, power, protection (against untruth). This verse (and many others as well) makes it clear that Zarathushtra's notion of power is based in the attributes of the divine (the amesha spenta). Yet in so many verses, these attributes are activities / attributes of both Wisdom and man.

Fourth example: Y43:16

"...May truth be embodied and strong with breath. May there be [*ārmaiti*-] under the rule of Him who has the appearance of the sun..." Y43:16. Is the reference here to mortals' *ārmaiti*- ? To Wisdom's? To both? Well, it is only the *ārmaiti*- (the thoughts, words and actions of truth) of both mortals and the Divine that makes it possible for existence to be governed in accordance with truth and its comprehension good thinking (which governance is good rule). The *ārmaiti*- 'embodied truth' of both Wisdom and mortals is necessary to bring about good rule.

⁴⁷ A YAv. text (called Fragment 22 by Darmesteter, and also called by some today the *Hadokht Nask* although it is not the *Hadokht Nask* mentioned in the Pahlavi *Dinkard*) describes paradise in the afterlife being attained in 3 steps, which Darmesteter translates as follows.

"The first step that the soul of the faithful man made, placed him in the Good-Thought Paradise.
The second step ... placed him in the Good-Word Paradise.
The third step ... placed him in the Good-Deed Paradise.
The fourth step ... placed him in the Endless Lights."
Fragment 22, § 15, SBE 23, p. 317.

There is no Avestan word that corresponds with Darmesteter's word "Paradise". This is his own interpretive addition (parenthetically a correct one ~ because one of Zarathushtra's terms for (what we call) paradise is a 'most good existence (*ahu- vahišta*-)'. For more details see *Part Two: The Houses of Paradise & Hell*; and *Part Three: Heaven in Other Avestan Texts*).

West 1871 *The Book of the Mainyo-i-khard*, English part, Ch. VII, §§ 12, 14, p. 140, translates a Pazand text which calls "heaven (vahasht)" good thought, good word and good deed. Pazand "vahasht" is a later form of Av. *ahu- vahišta-*. But this text gives more than one (conflicting) description of 'heaven', indicating in my view that the text we now have is a collection of more than one text by different authors. Nevertheless, some of the descriptions are quite lovely; see *Part Three: Heaven & Hell in Pahlavi Texts*.

⁴⁸ For example:

"...to Ahura Mazda ... radiant [*raēvatō*] and glorious [*xʷarənaŋuhatca*]...", Yy1:1, Mills translation, SBE 31, p. 195; Av. words from Geldner 1P p. 7.

"To Ahura Mazda, bright [*raēvatō*] and glorious [*xʷarənaŋuhatō*] ...", *Sirozah* 1:1, Darmesteter translation. SBE 23, p. 3; Av. words from Geldner 2P p. 260.

"... Unto Ahura Mazda, bright [*raēvatō*] and glorious [*xʷarənaŋuhatō*], ..." Introductory chant to the Yashts, Darmesteter translation. SBE 23, quotation is on p. 23; ft. 2 p. 23 mentions where found; Av. words from Geldner 2P p. 60.

See *Part One: Light, Fire, Glory*.

⁴⁹ See *Part One: A Friendly Universe*, and *Part Two: Asha and the Checkmate Solution*.

⁵⁰ See *Part Two: A Question of Reward and the Path*.

⁵¹ See *Part One: Completeness and Non-Deathness, Haurvatat, Ameretat*; and in *Part Two: Asha and the Checkmate Solution*, and *The Puzzle of Creation*, and *Part Six: Yasna 31:11 and 12*.

⁵² See the discussion on *spənta-* in *Part One: The Beneficial-Sacred Way of Being, Spenta Mainyu*.

⁵³ As detailed in a footnote above, and see also *Part Two: The Kaleidoscope of the Amesha Spenta*.

⁵⁴ As Y51.4 makes clear. See *Part One: Good Rule, Vohu Xshathra*.

⁵⁵ Other ideas, both ancient and modern, about the "correct" order of the amesha spenta are discussed in another chapter, see *Part Two: The Kaleidoscopic Amesha Spenta*.

⁵⁶ See *Part One: Truth, Asha*.

⁵⁷ See *Part Two: The Puzzle of Worship*.