## **A Banquet Speech**

#### āfrīn ī sūr

This is a benediction pronounced in the  $s\bar{u}r^1$  "where excellent food was served and where cooks and table boys, singers and musicians, and gatekeepers were engaged."<sup>2</sup> The text is also an example of after-meal speech at banquets and at anniversary ceremonies (different from death anniversary), the rozgār. The text as reached us dates back to the Sasanian era; and a list of Persian dignitaries in it shows that it belongs to the sixth century, or as Tavadia states: "We have found only the upper limit, namely the reign of Xusrav I."<sup>3</sup> It is called with different headings by different scholars.<sup>4</sup> It can be compared with another text, the  $\bar{A}fr\bar{i}n \ \bar{i} \ myazd$  'Benediction of a ritual repast'.<sup>5</sup> Tavadia's commentary is yet invaluable.<sup>6</sup>

# Text mādavān

ped nām ī yazdān

(1)  $\bar{a}z\bar{a}d\bar{n}h\bar{1}^7$  yazdān ud vehān andar harv gāh ud zamān guftan ud hangārdan sazāgvār, ped nāmcišt andar rōzgār-ē ī ped ēn ēvēnag.

بیژن غیبی، سور سخن، بیلفلد، ۱۳۷۲ یزدگردی.

<sup>7</sup>. var.  $\overline{i}$  az.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>. Pers. *sūr* 'banquet, feast; morning meal'; Av. *sūra*- adj. 'morning', *ušå* sūra 'morning dawn', sūirya- nt. 'morning meal'. (Pers. šām 'evening; evening meal', cf. Dk vi M 516 šām ud sūr) Pers. sūr also renders Av. draonah- nt. 'portion, quantity, oblation', and is in turn rendered by Skt. utsavapāka- 'festival cooking'. The four stages of a sūr or a rōzgār are planning (handāxtan), making (kirdan), preparing (sāxtan) and organising (rāvēnīdan) (Cf. the three stages of the dron service).

HAM 151 sūr ud x<sup>v</sup>aran; DA 37<sub>61</sub> stabr sūr vazurg; <sup>T</sup>M 47 II sūr x<sup>v</sup>ard ud dāšn pedīrift ... ēn mard sūr nēk kird dāšn dād; Dk iii, M 367 sūr-dahišnīh ī abar dar ī dahriz ped hāmrōz.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>. Tavadia, 14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>. Tavadia, 21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Peshotan Sanjana (1871) mādayān ī āzādīh ī az yazdān ; West (1888) stāyišn ī drōn ; Jamaspji Asana/ T. D. Anklesaria (1913) abar stāyēnīdārīh ī sūr āfrīn; Tavadia (1935) sūr sax<sup>v</sup>an.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>. "We may call it an *āfrīn*, say, *sūr āfrīn* or rather *āfrīn ī sūr* like *āfrīn ī myazd*, because of some common traits." Tavadia, 11

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>. TD 23 (in the private collection of B.T. Anklesaria), 247-250; D 3 (Mulla Firoze Library), 78-91; Suppl. Pers. 2044 (BNF), 141-144; D 3, 78-91.

The Pahlavi Texts, edited by J.M. Jamasp-Asana, II, Bombay, 1913, 155-159.

Jehangir C. Tavadia, "Sūr Sax<sup>v</sup>an or a dinner speech in Middle Persian", Journal of the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute, 29, 1935, 1-99.

(2) göš andar dāred ašmā vehān ī ēdar mad ēsted, dā abar stāyēnīdārīh ī ēn sūr, āfrīn az yazdān, ud spāsdārīh ī ēn myazdbān<sup>8</sup> soxan göbam :

## [hamāgzōr]

(3) hamāgzōr baved, hamāgzōr ohrmazd ī  $x^{v}$ adāy kē ped mēnōgān ud gētīgān mahist, kē hamāg ēn dām ud dahišn dād, pediš pānag ud dāštār būd ēsted.

(4) hamāgzōr ēn haft amehrspend ī ped garōdmān hend : ohrmazd ud vahman ud urdvahišt ud šahrever ud spendarmed ud hurdad ud amurdad.

(5) hamāgzōr ēn haft vahišt kē ped <sup>+</sup>gerbālāy ēk, ped midrag pāyag<sup>9</sup> do, ped star pāyag si, ped māh pāyag cahār, ped x<sup>v</sup>aršēd pāyag panz, ped harburz pāyag šaš, <sup>+</sup>haft ped rōšn garōdmān ī vasrōšnīh ī huzihr ī brāzāgdum ī puranōš<sup>10</sup> ī purnēkīh, kū<sup>11</sup> pēšgāh ī ohrmazd ī x<sup>v</sup>adāy, ī x<sup>v</sup>ad ped mēnōgān x<sup>v</sup>adāyīh, kē ēn haft amehrspend.

< hamāgzōr ēn haft kišvar :> arzah ud savah ud fradadafš ud vīdadafš ud vorubaršt ud vorujaršt, ud kē ped meyān, x<sup>v</sup>anirah ī bāmīg ī vashambār ī purmardōm ī purnēkīh.

(6) hamāgzör ādur farröbay ud ādur gušnasp ud ādur burzēnmihr, ud abārīg ādurān <ud> ātašān ī ped dādgāh nišāst ēstend, cand ahīdar hamēšagsöz ud hamēšagpih<sup>12</sup> ud hamēšagzöhr bavānd.

(7) hamāgzōr mihr ī frāxgōyōd, ud srōš ī tagīg, ud rašn ī ristag<sup>13</sup>, ud varhrām ī amāvand, ud vāy ī veh, ud veh dēn ī mazdesnān, ud aštād ī frādādār-gēhān<sup>14</sup>, ud fravahr ī ahlavān.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>. var. *myazdbān rāy*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup>. بالالح / abr pāyag/, or /midrag pāyag/ (Av. \*miz-, OPers. \*mid-, \*mid-ra-, Skt. míh- 'mist, fog', mihikā- 'cloud') rendering Av. mānō (see Pahlavi Texts, 72). Cf. F 7 aβra: midrag.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> . -יטואישאוט /

 $<sup>^{11}</sup>$  . If /kē/.

 $<sup>^{12}</sup>$ . ואיטיי שארא אוא איז שאיש אא אוא איז שאיש און (Jamasp-Asana איטי שאיש).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup>. אין שעוש /*rašn rāstag*/ (Cf. Dk viii M 719 אין ערון עראר /*rašn ristag*/, <sup>T</sup>Parth. *rist* adv. 'rightly').

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup>. <sup>14</sup>. <sup>15</sup>. <sup>16</sup>. <sup>16</sup>.

(8) hamāgzōr hamāg mēnōg ī meh ud veh kē ped sīhrozagīhā<sup>15</sup> pēdāgēnīd ēsted.

(9) hamāgzōr šāhān šāh ī mardān pahlum.

(10) hamāgzōr pus ī vāspuhr ī šāhān<sup>16</sup> farroxdum ī dāmān pahlum ī andar gēhān abāyišnīgdum.

(11) hamāgzōr vazurg framadār kē ped vazurgīh vazurg, ud ped pādixšāyīh pādixšāy<sup>17</sup>, ud pez dahišnān meh ud veh.

(12) hamāgzör x<sup>v</sup>arāsān spāhbed ; hamāgzör x<sup>v</sup>aröfrān spāhbed ; hamāgzör nēmröz spāhbed ; < hamāgzör ādurbāyagān spāhbed>.

(13) hamāgzōr šahrdādvarān<sup>18</sup>.

(14) hamāgz<br/>ör muvān handarzbed ; hamāgz<br/>ör hazārbed ; hamāgz<br/>ör hazārbed ; hamāgz<br/>ör hazārbed ;

(15) hamāgzōr meh ud veh kē-šān $^{20}$  ped ēn myazd arzānīg kird.

### [āfrīn]

dahād zūd ped x<sup>v</sup>adāyīh ī ērān-šahr abrang ped meyān, bavād cōn ped x<sup>v</sup>adāyīh ī jim ī šēd ī huramag ī rōzgār farroxīhā ud  $x^{v}$ ašīhā<sup>21</sup> rāyēnīd.

 $^{\times}$ vehān<sup>22</sup> ēk hazār pedīrād, ud āfrīn ped im mērag ī mīzdbān kunād. (16) ped  $^{+}$ nāmcišt āfrīn ēn kunād kū:

15 . - ال فراجة قال ( - ال فراجة قال ال

<sup>16</sup> ..., M کوبر /<sup>×</sup>mardān ?/. Cf. Dk vi M 476 mardōm hān farroxdum kē ..., M 541 mard hān farroxdar kē ...

18. m) new - new. - may be the final y.

<sup>19</sup>. Tavadia reads *drōn-yāz* '*drōn* cake sacrifice, performer of the *drōn* cake ceremony'. I have not found this office anywhere else. The first part of the word may be *dar* 'door; palace; court', cf. Pers. *darīgbed* 'chief of the court' a title, *dar-handarzbed* 'chamberlain'. The second part may be *dahic/ dahiš*. Armen. nuhhá 'executioner; attendant', nuháuuuhun 'chief executioner; chief guard'(Aram. Hatra dhšpț' a title for Nergal); Syr. ત્રામાં 'the guard; attendants'.

<sup>20</sup>. HOU IN Tavadia kē yazdān.

<sup>21</sup> . אין אישטיש אישטי Tavadia farrax<sup>v</sup> vehān x<sup>v</sup>ēšīhā.

<sup>22</sup>. דעט Tavadia *yazdān*.

abāg mardōmān ī x<sup>v</sup>ad tandrust ud dagrzīvišn ud x<sup>v</sup>āstag ped abzōn ēdōn bavād cōn az abestāg pēdāg: (17) "ka-mān nēk stāyend hāmōyēn gētīg x<sup>v</sup>aštar."

ud hamvār āfrīn ped ēn mān kunād kū: vas bavād ped ēn mān vas asp ī ray, zan<sup>23</sup> ud mard ī juvān<sup>24</sup> ī šāyendag ī hanzamanīg, guftār abāg yazdānāyād<sup>25</sup>, vaszarr abāg-asēm, vasjav abāg-gannum, vashambār ī purnēkīh, ud huram ud huniyāg.

<sup>+</sup>bavād nēk zamān ud nēk sāl ud nēk māh ud nēk rōz, ud nēkīh az ēn mīzdbān rāy vas nektar.

[spās]

(18) spās ī ohrmazd; spās ī amehrspendān.

spās āsrōnān ud spās arsēštārān ud spās vāstryōšān ud spās hudoxšān.

spās ātašān ī ped gēhān.

spās x<sup>v</sup>āngarān  $(x^{v}ālegarān)^{26}$  ud spās huniyākkarān, ud spās darbānān ī ped dar.

spās ēn mīzdbān kē ēn rōzgār handāxt ud sāxt, kird ud rāyēnīd. nēk-amān pih, ud stabr-mān sūr, ud pahlum-amān hamrasišnīh ud stāyišnīg menišnīg gōbišnīg ud kunišnīg spāsdār –ī azabar spāsdārīh anī tis nest.

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(19) bē man soxan vēš abāyed guftan pēš ašmā vehān, kū sagr ham az x<sup>v</sup>arišn, ud purr ham az may, ud huram ham az rāmišn. bē, ašmā vehān, stāyišn ī yazdān ud āfrīn ī vehān bavandag guftan nē <sup>×</sup>šāyam<sup>27</sup>. ašmā vehān ī ēdar mad ēsted harv

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup>. Tavadia *ud*  $x^{v}$ *arrah*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> . דטד.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> . سوبر سوبر المعرب /vehān āyād/. Cf. Pap. 44<sub>1</sub> (Or. var. 45) burzādur yazdānāyād.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup>. ٣٠٠ خوالگر/ خواليگر , 'table-decker' خوانگر . Pers. ٣٠٠ خوانگر .

cē vehdar dāned guft gōbed. (20) cē an harv cē frahangīgdar<sup>28</sup>; cē man xrad nihang<sup>29</sup>, ud may abēr<sup>30</sup>  $x^v$ ārd ēsted.

x<sup>v</sup>aš x<sup>v</sup>afsed, ud yazdān ped x<sup>v</sup>amn vēned; ud drust āxēzed, ud ped kār ud kirbag kirdan toxšāg baved. ka<sup>31</sup> az bun dahišn (/ bundahišnīh) dā frazāmgārīh ōy farroxīhādar kē yazdān ōy ped frārōnīh ud toxšāgīh arzānīg dāred.

(21) āfrīn, con-um guft, bē rasād, zamīg-pahnāy, ud roddrahnāy, ud  $x^{v}$ aršēd-bālāy bē rasād. ēdon bād; ēdondar bād.

frazaft ped drod, šādīh ud rāmišn <ī> harv vehān frārōnkunišnān.

vizārišn

Translation

(1) It is befitting to speak and give thanks to the Yazata and the good, at every watch and time<sup>32</sup>, especially on a day (of anniversary) like this.

(2) Be all ears, you good ones who have come here, so that I pronounce a speech in praise of this banquet, for blessings from the Yazata, and in gratitude towards this host.

(3) May you be  $ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r^{33}$ :  $ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r$  (with) the lord Ahura Mazdā, who is the greatest among those of the world of thought and those of the world of life, who created all these creatures and creations, (and) has been the protector and preserver thereof.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup>. فالموسور Tavadia *farrax<sup>v</sup>īhātar*. Cf. ŠGV 1.40 *dānāg … frahangīg* 'wise (master) … student'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> . ) טטי.

 $<sup>^{31}</sup>$  . Tavadia emends to  $c\bar{e}.$ 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup>. Cf. MX 2.88.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> A technical term. "The members of the congregation by performing the Hamāzōr with one of the principal celebrants make themselves participants in the ceremony." J.J. Modi, *The Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the Parsees*, Bombay, 1922, 381.

(4) hamāgzör (with) these seven Holy Immortals (the Aməşa Spənta) who are in the House of Song (Garō.nmāna): Ahura Mazdā, Vohu Manah, Aşa Vahišta, Xšaθra Vairya, Spəntā Ārmaiti, Haurvatāt, Amərətatāt.

(5)  $Ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r$  (with) these seven heavens, which are: one at the top of a mountain<sup>34</sup>; two at the cloud station; three at the star station; four at the moon station; five at the sun station; six at the Harā Bərəzaitī station; seven at the bright Garō.nmāna, which is very bright, which is beautiful, which is most shining, which has much nectar, which has much goodness, which is the (royal) court of Ahura Mazdā the lord who himself rules over the celestial (spiritual) beings, who are these Holy Immortals.

*<Hamāgzōr* with these seven continents:> Arəzahi, Savahi, Fradaδafšu, Vidaδafšu, Vouru.baršti, Vouru.jaršti, and that which is in the Middle, viz. the luminous  $X^v$ anira $\theta$ a, which has many stores, which has many people, which has much goodness.

(6) *Hamāgzōr* (with) the Fire of Farrōbay and the Fire of Gušnasp and the Fire of Burzēnmihr, and the other Fires that are established in temples<sup>35</sup>; may they be ever-burning, ever having fuel, and ever having libations as early as possible.

(7)  $Ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r$  (with) Mi $\theta$ ra who provides wide prairies, Sraoša the steadfast, Rašnu the straightest, Vərə $\theta$ ra $\gamma$ na the forceful, Vayu the good, Va $\eta^vh\bar{n}$  Da $\bar{e}n\bar{a}$  M $\bar{a}z$ dayasni (the good religion of the Mazd $\bar{a}$ -worshippers), Aršt $\bar{a}t$  who furthers the world of life, and the Fravaşi of the truthful.

(8)  $Ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r$  (with) the great and good Spirits which become manifest in the thirty days (of the month).

(9)  $Ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r$  (with) the King of Kings who is the best of men<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> الملوط (سلس , MK, JJ, SP) الملول (سلس , DP. Tavadia [1000] vīrō(γ)-bālāy 'a [thousand] men's height'. But cf. Pahlavi Texts 72 الملوط (سلس , Av. gairi.bərəz- f. 'the height of a mountain'.

Av. gairi.bərəz- f. 'the height of a mountain'. <sup>35</sup>. dād-gāh, cf. Av. dāityō.gātu- adj. 'who is in (his) prescribed place'. Cf. also Bd Ind. 16 u-š ādur farrōbay ō dādgāh ... nišāst ēsted.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup>. mardān pahlum. In the HKR 66 Husrav son of Kavād is called mardān pahlum; Paul the Persian calls him مرحبة درياتي Cf. also ŠPs II, 5; NP 5/5; KAP 13.13.

(10) *Hamāgzōr* (with) the Crown Prince, who is most fortunate among the princes, the best of creatures, and the most requisite in the world of life.

(11)  $Ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r$  (with) the Grand Minister<sup>37</sup>, who is grand in grandeur, sovereign in sovereignty, and even greater and better among the (material) creations.

(12)  $Ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r$  (with) the General of the East (of Eran-sahr).  $Ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r$  (with) the General of the West.  $Ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r$  (with) the General of the South.  $<Ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r$  with the General of the North.>

(13)  $Ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r$  (with) the Judges of the (Aryan) Kingdom<sup>38</sup>.

(14)  $Ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r$  (with) the Chancellor of the Magi<sup>39</sup>.  $Ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r$  (with) the Chiliarch<sup>40</sup>.  $Ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r$  (with) the definition of the Magi<sup>39</sup>.

(15)  $Ham\bar{a}gz\bar{o}r$  (with) the greater and better ones who have been made worthy for this banquet.

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May the splendour be provided to Ērānšahr soon and may it be as it was during the reign of Yima Xšaēta with good herds<sup>41</sup> who organized a happy and fortunate life.

May you receive a thousand good ones. And may you utter blessings for this master, the host, (16) especially this blessing: May he with his own people be so in good health and long living and with wealth in increase, as is revealed from the Avesta:

(17) "When they praise us well, the whole (material) world (becomes) more pleasant."

And may you always utter blessings for this house: May there be many swift horses, young women and men who are

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup>. *vazaurg framadār* ≈ older (Parthian title) *bidaxš*. Armen. վզրուկ hրամատար, Syr. רביו ובייוס.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup>. šahr-dādvar. Syr. inijaz. Cf. MHD 110 šahr dādvarān dādvar.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup>. *muvān handarzbed*. Armen. մովան անդերձապետ; Syr. כאמווויובו.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> . *hazārbed/ hazāruft* lit. 'chief of a thousand'. Armen. huqupuuutur; Syr. אסווסא.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup>. Av. *hvąθβa*-.

capable and "eloquent"<sup>42</sup>, who speak remembering the Yazata, who have much gold with silver, much barley with wheat, many stores of much goodness, and who are merry and delightful.

May there be good time and good year and good month and good day, and much more goodness be for the host!

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(18) Gratitude towards Ahura Mazdā. Gratitude towards the Holy Immortals. Gratitude towards priests. Gratitude towards warriors. Gratitude towards husbandmen. Gratitude towards artisans. Gratitude towards the fire(-temples) of the world. Gratitude towards the cooks. Gratitude towards the musicians. Gratitude towards the gate-keepers who are at the court. Gratitude towards this host, who planned and prepared, made and organized this day. Good is our food, grandiose is our feast, and best is our meeting.

(We are) grateful with praise, with thought and word and deed, (for) there is nothing above gratefulness.

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(19) Well, I should speak more before you good ones, that I am satiated from food, and full of wine, and merry from pleasure.

But I cannot completely utter, O you good ones, the praise of the Yazata and the blessing for the good. You the good ones who have come here, say whatever you can say better. (20) For I am rather a student (before you), for I am with little wisdom; and I have drank wine too much.

Sleep well, and see the Yazata in dream; and get up healthy, and be diligent in doing secular and religious works.<sup>43</sup> For, from the primeval creation(s) up to the final action, he is the most fortunate, whom the Yazata consider worthy for his righteousness and diligence.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup>. *hanzamanīg* 'assemblyman, councilor' rendering Av. *vyāxana*- 'who is skillful in debates'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup>. Cf. X<sup>v</sup>R 2. 21-3 x<sup>v</sup>aš x<sup>v</sup>afsed drust āxēzed; dibīrestān ped kām vēned.

(21) May there come blessings, as I have uttered; may they come in the width of earth, in the length of river, and in the height of sun! May it be so; may it be more than so!

Finished with peace, joy and pleasure unto all, the good and the righteous dealer.

(Raham Asha)