

Neo-Zoroastrian Lorebook

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(except appendix)

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Zoroastrians struggle to survive and flourish, to help the needy, to keep alive the pure fire of life and wisdom and to support the good government.

UNDERSTANDING EXISTENCE

Zoroastrians struggle to understand the nature of existence so that they understand what it is they should be aiming for in life, and how exactly to go about it.

THE DANCE OF LIFE

The processes of life are patterns of energy continuously moving, if often repeating . In natural circumstances living beings are continually presented with situations of stress which demand their attention and stretch their abilities, followed by situations of comfort which allow them to relax and recover.

A good life does not come from achieving a permanent condition of comfort and idleness but by the right situations presenting themselves at the right time to give the greatest potential and stimulus for activity of different kinds as most suits a person at any particular time.

As a general rule it is important for living beings to have a regular pattern to the situations they face. This sets up corresponding patterns of expectation within a person and allows them for instance to prepare themselves in advance for future activity.

Harverty is a Zoroastrian word for wholesomeness or health. Health of body and soul come from good experiences and in turn they enable future good experiences. Amorty is another Zoroastrian word for non-dyingness or immortality. Where a person receives good experiences they are not injured in body or soul and thus have no cause of decay which might lead them to die before their time.

HEALTH OF THE BODY

Of course the health of the body and the health of the soul are inextricably interlinked. A soul will be restricted by the body it inhabits, while a soul in disorder will have an impact on the body.

Zoroastrians strive for good bodily health. They seek to ingest food that is wholesome, with ample nutrients and free from toxins. They pay attention to the water they drink that it is free from harmful substances. They consider the air they breathe that it is free from harmful contaminants or disease-causing organisms beyond that which the body is able to cope with. They consider the kind of physical exercise they take and the emotional stress they are under. They try and avoid allowing the body to be physically assaulted beyond its ability to recover. They don't normally accept to having foreign substances injected directly into the bloodstream.

Whether people are healthy depends much on the physical environment they are living in , the way that their food is produced and the kind of life that they lead. So Zoroastrians seek to create good systems of living where physical health comes naturally.

HEALTH & HAPPINESS OF THE SOUL

The soul is the true body of a person. It is a complex organism within which the spiritual energies of a person flow. The nature of the soul directly shapes how a person feels and acts. The Zoroastrian word for soul is Urvan or Ravan – a word which implies movement.

The flow of spiritual energy is what living is about. Where the spirit roams free then we are filled with purpose and happiness. Zoroastrians use the word Ushta (Light) to refer to this flow of the spirit. Ushta is often translated Radiant Happiness.

Whether the spirit flows free or not depends on the landscape it inhabits – the contours of the mind and soul. These contours are shaped over time in reaction to the experiences a person has.

Emotions are perhaps the most basic kind of spirits. They arise in us automatically in response to the situation one perceives oneself to be in. They serve an important function to energize a person to do what they need to do at a particular time. However they are only a rough and ready guide to action and sometimes it is best to overrule them. If emotional energies are aroused but not expressed then there is a potential cause for ill-health unless some other way is found to dissipate them.

Emotions arise in response to the situation that one is paying attention to. For them to work beneficially a person needs to give an appropriate degree of attention to different situations they face depending on their importance and to have an accurate mental picture of those situations. But if say they pay a lot of attention to something that doesn't affect them or which they can't do anything about or else they misunderstand what is going on then emotions will be aroused uselessly.

Emotional ill-health can be caused when the situation one perceives oneself to be in is not straightforward but sets up a conflicting or disordered reaction pattern. Perhaps different conflicting emotions are aroused, or else because of anxiety or otherwise emotions cannot be expressed. If emotions such as anxiety are aroused to an intensity beyond which a person can cope then the soul can be wounded. A wounded soul is likely to act in a distorted way in all future encounters with life, unless some way is found to heal the wound.

Healing of emotional wounds comes by receiving an antidotal energy – one that is the opposite of that which originally caused the wound. However a wounded person may not easily be open to receive healing energies – as they fear further wounding. This fear may be exaggerated but the risk of further wounding may still be real. Also there may not be anybody around them to help heal them. So the healing process depends on setting up an environment where wounded persons are likely to receive healing energies and not harmful ones, and where they can move step by step from a position of possible initial unreceptiveness to that of greater receptiveness.

Emotions are not the only kind of spiritual energy. Whereas emotions are reactions to a situation, desires are wishes for a situation to occur that is not yet occurring. On the whole desires are not as automatic as emotions, although often they can be triggered off by circumstantial possibilities, or by the needs of the body or the soul.

When desires are aroused within a person then they reach out to make their wishes come true. Many of what are called 'human needs' have desires associated with them. The need for food can stimulate the desire for food – and thus the behaviour of going searching for food. The need for challenging circumstances to stretch a person can stimulate the desire to seek out adventure.

Beyond desires there are still other kind of spiritual energies – usually called 'higher' ones as they are less connected to the business of day to day life and may be more complex and refined. The soul can be energized and vibrate to a higher level as a result of engagement with a carefully crafted composition of music for instance. However whenever we are sufficiently relaxed and are subjected to patterns of stress and release in a rhythmic way it is likely that our soul will vibrate and the spirit will flow.

HEALTH OF SOULS IN ASSOCIATION

The health and happiness of individuals is largely shaped by the way that they come into interaction with other beings and the material world. Thus when considering how to improve the well-being of individual people it is necessary to consider the wider picture of the way a whole society is patterned.

We use the word Kasatra to refer to the pattern of settlement and activity of people, and to the conscious practice of shaping it.

To achieve a good life for all then the activities of each must contribute to the making of the collective pattern of the life of a society. The dynamic situation which each individual finds themselves in results from the action of others. How they react or act in the situations they encounter helps creates future situations for themselves and others.

Those who are unconscious of reality will tend to react automatically to the situations they face. If they are lucky and the situations they face are suited to their needs then this may not be a problem. However if they are unlucky and situations are not suited to their needs then they will not be able to do anything about it.

Those who are conscious of reality are more able to influence the unfolding patterns of life than those who are unconscious. If some people in a population are conscious and others unconscious then the conscious will have the potential to shape the life experience and behaviour of the others.

Full consciousness or enlightenment is the same thing as full intellectual maturity or adulthood. It is something for people to strive for in life, even if the final goal is never completely attained.

ENCLOSURES

An enclosure is a space within which life processes can unfold autonomously without distortion or interference from outside activity. The existence of enclosures in a world allows a variety of patterns of life to develop independently. Where human living enclosures are relatively small compared to the population inhabiting them then it makes it easier for individuals to mentally grasp the whole picture of life within the enclosure and thus to shape it.

Enclosures are built with walls which are barriers to communication and action. These walls may well be made of physical material, but also can be built in people's minds where they understand that some places or activities are off-limits to their attention or action. This may come from a conscious respect from the integrity of the life of others. Alternatively an enclosure may be brought into existence where a space is invisible to those outside it and their normal movements mean they don't stumble into it.

HOLISTIC LIVING

Holistic living is living in consciousness of the whole system of life of which one is a part and being in a position to shape it. It is not easily possible for an individual to engage in holistic living on their own – as normally they wouldn't be able to live without help from other people. Instead an association of people can try and engage in holistic living if they are able to secure territory that is sheltered from outside disruption.

Holistic living will only be a practicable possibility at a deep level for an association of people, where they live in a relatively small enclosure sheltered from outside pressures. Otherwise if the enclosure is very large (e.g. planet-sized) then the processes of life will likely be too complicated or difficult to see for holistic consciousness to develop in any degree of detail. Also any thing they try and do will likely be obstructed by the actions of others.

BUILDING A SOCIETY

A society is an association of people who have come to live interdependently with each other without necessarily having strong personal bonds.

A society needs firstly territory over which it has sufficient control, with the physical resources for living. It needs a sufficiently agreed way of organizing itself and allocating different roles and responsibilities to different people. It needs ways of bringing up and educating the young so that they develop the characteristics necessary to make the society work. They need to be able to do the tasks required of them, while also being able to step outside them to see how things could be done better.

A good social system will be flexible – so that to some extent people are educated to the tasks that need doing, but that also tasks are adapted to what people can best do and enjoy. A good pattern of living will provide opportunities for a range of different activities to stretch and delight the souls of those engaged. Some of these will have a focus on external requirements, others will focus on the needs of those engaged in the activity.

The pattern of the society needs to be one that sustains itself. In particular there need to be sufficient people in a position to keep the society on track and working for the general benefit. A society is weakened if too much of its economic output is diverted by criminals to their private ends. This especially becomes a problem where the criminals use their ill gotten gains to influence the conduct of the government. In the worst case ruthless criminals can take complete control of a society and replace it with a prison-work-camp or slave plantation.

WIZARDS

A wizard is a professional wise person. Wizards typically have a broad outlook on life and are able to apply their wisdom to practical effect.

Good Wizards are often especially persecuted by those who want to dominate a population for their own benefit, so other good people should assist them if the occasion arises.

FIRE TEMPLE

Physical fire is a symbol of spiritual fire – the activity of life itself. For it to burn brightly the Fire of Life must be kept pure from harmful influences that would disrupt it and make it ill.

An important aspect of the Fire of Life is the Fire of Good Mind. It is the Fire of Good Mind which keeps the Fire of Life going. Thus to Zoroastrians physical fire represents also the Good Mind which must be kept pure from harmful influences for it to remain good.

For the ancient Iranians physical fire was of central importance in their lives. Often they lived in a cold climate and fire was essential to keep them warm as well as to cook food and keep away wild animals. However creating a flame to light a fire was not an easy task for them so it was the practice in each village to keep a fire burning all the time in a dedicated fire-house to which the ordinary householder could go to get a flaming torch to light their own fire at home. The fire in the fire-house needed to be attended around the clock. Thus arose the Zoroastrian tradition of keeping a fire eternally alight.

It is worthy of note that the ancient Iranians, like other ancient Europeans, worshipped deities on mountain tops, not in temples, and so the ritual fire on the mountain would have been different from the eternal fire in the village but lit from it. However later the traditions of the fire-house and the mountain ritual combined into the Fire Temple.

The Fire Temple is the place where the drama of keeping the Fire of Life and Good Mind continually alight and free from impure influence is ritually enacted. By engaging with this drama Zoroastrians can strengthen their commitment to keep the Fire alive and pure and healthy in the world outside the Temple.

Those setting up a Fire Temple in a modern setting must ensure that all possibly harmful influences are excluded from contaminating the fire (considered as a living being). So the air needs to be free of contaminants, the food given to the fire must be wholesome (e.g. natural wood), those approaching the most sacred fire need to be covered, electro-magnetic devices should be excluded from the inner part of temple, and the temple should be shielded from non-natural electro-magnetic waves coming from outside.

In a Fire Temple the priests engage in symbolic ritual enactments of the dramas of the operation of the cosmos. Thus they keep alive in the hearts of man, the essential features of the workings of the world.

VARA

A Vara is a kind of enclosure - a part of the world which is walled off from the rest. Whereas a fire-temple is a ritual enclosure, a Vara is an enclosure for living in.

Because the activity within the Vara is sheltered from the activity outside, it is possible for it to develop autonomously according to the needs of the people inside the Vara without distortion by external pressures.

Historically speaking a Vara was probably just a village with a wall around it to keep away predatory animals. However in the history of the ancient Iranians there was a time of a Great Winter when life on the surface of the earth was inhospitable to life. So according to the account we have in the Avesta, they set up a Vara below the surface of the earth – protected from the harshness outside – inside which they built a whole town – lit by artificial lights – and where they lived continuously for many generations. Thus they were able to preserve the continuing fire of human life and culture which would otherwise have gone out.

CULTURE

Culture are the patterns of human life which are potentially transmissible from one person to another. They are the good patterns of thinking and acting which enable individuals to interact happily with each other and their environment. Culture is the programme which sets up and maintains ongoing patterns of collective life.

However it is difficult to develop such good culture. Typically only some people are able to develop new patterns at all and even then they usually only make small adaptations to what has gone before. Thus it takes a lot of time and effort for a community of people to develop good culture. Thus it is important that existing culture is kept in remembrance and not allowed to disappear entirely. People and their predicament vary over time and the mainstream culture needs to adapt accordingly . However situations that have occurred in the past can easily re-occur in the future. Thus cultural patterns that have been found valuable once, may well have a future use, even if there relevance is not apparent to the current generation. So strenuous efforts should be made to keep the full richness of a community's cultural heritage in remembrance by some part of the community, even if it is of no visible practical application at the time.

Cultural patterns vary in their nature and the way they are transmitted. Some are relatively robust – because they can be encoded on a written page or because people are always very keen to keep them alive. Other cultural patterns are more fragile – perhaps because only a small proportion of a population has an interest in them or they rely on direct person to person transmission, and there is a generation that doesn't see the value of them, thus breaking the chain.

Stories are an important form of culture. They paint a landscape populated by particular kinds of beings with particular goals and motives, who try to do particular kinds of things, and end up with particular kinds of results. The idea is that when a story is told we should see parallels in our own existence and thus find our own life illuminated. Good stories are engaging to the listener and have meaning on several levels. Good stories are easily passed on from one teller to another and the wisdom contained within goes with them – without every storyteller necessarily having to understand the full meaning of them themselves.

Rituals are another form of culture. In origin a ritual is the symbolic acting out of a drama , perhaps to strengthen people's sense of how society or the world functions or else perhaps to provide release for energies that cannot easily be released in daily life, or else as a self-contained community activity in its own right.

The way people associate with each other in general is shaped by culture. The cultural patterns people are exposed to, and the status or degree of attention given to them, will influence what they think of as acceptable or normal behaviour and what is not. For instance people may be given different roles or stations in society which shape the expectations that others have of how they will behave and thus their own sense of how they should conduct their lives and relate to others.

Culture will shape what are seen as normal or acceptable things to think or to talk about in different kinds of situations with different kinds of people.

Cultural patterns may be developed under favourably conditions – where innovation is encouraged and prominent developers and promoters of culture are motivated by desire to increase the general well-being. However less favourable conditions are where the ruling authority wants to keep a tight control over cultural patterns and is able to reach into every part of a society in order to ensure this happens.

PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy is the practice of making sense of the underlying patterns of the world. The Sufi Way prepares us to do this efficiently, but actually doing it is Philosophy.

SCIENCE

Science is a practice of natural philosophy which emphasizes the importance of making careful observations about the world. A scientist may create special circumstances in the world (“a scientific experiment”) for the purposes of observing phenomena which wouldn’t occur in the normal course of things.

The wizards of the ancient Iranians and other peoples would make careful observations of the movement of the planets and stars apparently continuously over a period of many centuries. Only by such long-term and continuous careful work would some aspects of the order of the cosmos reveal themselves.

It is said that the flame of the scientific method was preserved by the Persian sufis at a time when the European lands to the west went into a dark age of authoritarian rule of a few over a superstitious majority. However some westerners such as Roger Bacon studied with the eastern sufis and introduced the scientific method to the west.

SOPHISTRY

A Sophist is somebody who is aligned with (or attuned to) reality. Essential to understanding the concept of a Sophist is that aligning oneself to reality is not just an intellectual matter of good understanding, but something that involves the whole character of a person.

In principle it is possible to become a Sophist as a result of self-guided struggle for attunement and the experiences one naturally receives in life. However in practice few people are able to achieve this without other people helping them by providing experiences especially designed to help the process along. In most cases also a person may not be able to progress properly without the help of a personal teacher who can see what they are particularly needing at each point in time, and provides it for them.

Sophistry is what we call the practices that help a person along the road to becoming a Sophist.

There have been many Sophists throughout human history, although at any one time the number of Sophists has been only a small proportion of the population.

However it is important that there exist Sophists in a human population and that they have influence there. For as it is only Sophists who are fully attuned to the nature of existence it is only they who are able to know what is the action that the population needs to take to make life better for themselves and the world.

Sophistry is about developing a character that is attuned to the essential nature of existence as far as this is unchanging, and which is able easily to attune to the essential nature of particular situations as they arise.

Important to the Sophist understanding is that essential value can be generated by all souls (“everybody’s happiness is important”), yet in a natural state people will consider their own well being and those they identify with as of higher importance than that of everybody else. Also in a natural state emotions such as anger, fear and hatred will cause a person to pay less attention to the well-being of others who are the object of such emotions.

Sophistry works to challenge the natural selfish attitudes of a person, and to encourage them to see the intrinsic value of all people and creatures. (i.e. that it is part of the nature of all living creatures to create value as they live – something we might describe as them being happy or joyful or acting with purpose)

Some Sophist teachers encourages us to love all creation – the teacher will encourage the emotion of love within us and discourages those of anger, fear and hatred. They will discourage purely personal attachments and encourage us to attach our affections to all. (N.B. An alternative path discourages all attachments and emotions including love but fosters a zeal to do what is right.)

A Sophist may have a basic desire to help the living being, but this is of little use unless they are also properly prepared to be able to do so.

So the next important feature of the Sufi Way is the development of the ability to discern the truth of a situation . We are talking about the ability of a person to produce a mental map of a situation which helps them to discern the pattern of chains of cause and effect.

A person's understanding of the nature of the world depends partly on their own direct experience of it, and partly on reports they have heard from other people. As a person will only have a direct experience of a small part of the world, in fact reports from other people are the main source of information. In addition it is the nature of most people to believe reports from others which seem to be authoritative even when it runs counter to their own experience. A minority of people have a nature that they trust their own experience and mental construction more than that from others.

Also when evaluating a situation a person will have a lot of pre-conceived assumptions (blind attachment to ideas) which shape the way they see things. For instance if a person has preconceived assumptions that would make it impossible for something to happen then they will find it difficult to see things clearly if what they think is impossible to happen is actually happening.

Sophistry seeks to bring people's assumptions into consciousness – so that they are no longer blindly attached to them and become more flexible in their thinking – and more open to new ways of looking at things.

With these two steps in Sophistry a person will have a desire to help the souls of the world, and the ability to develop a map of the workings of the world, however these still will not be enough if they cannot recognise activities which are creating value from those which are not.

So the last important feature of Sophistry considered here is to develop a person's ability to recognise intuitively activities which are creating essential value. Now what we call essential value is the good flow of the spirit – and this happens best when the soul or souls in interaction with each other are acting in a rhythmic or harmonious way. Harmony presents itself to us as beauty. So part of Sophistry is to foster our ability to recognise and appreciate beauty – and with the greater sensitivity the better. A way to do this is simply to expose people to beautiful things, such as beautiful music or beautiful architecture and let the experience sink into them.

THE WORLD ORDER

The boundaries of a community come where channels of influence stop.

Where an association of people are attending to each other, but not to those outside then we can say we have a closed community.

However in our current period of history with our current state of technology, it is possible for people anywhere on the globe to gain the attention of others anywhere else. And in practice this is happening more and more as previously closed communities and societies have become open to be influenced by people who are living remotely from them.

In our age the whole of planet Earth acts as a single enclosure in space as on this planet it is quite difficult to create smaller enclosures which are genuinely self-contained - self-supporting and self-governing.

GOOD WORLD ORDER

Conceptual approaches to improving the order of things need to take this whole-earth view to have success. Thus a religious movement interested in social change needs to think and act on a global scale to be likely of having any effective lasting impact.

It can do this by preserving and strengthening the Global Humanah – the Global Good Mind – which can be seen as the life-supporting aspects of all the individual minds of the world imagined together as a single collective being.

The activity of supporting Humanah can be explained in three aspects:

1. The preservation of the practice of good thinking and the record of the wisdom traditions of the world in multiple sheltered autonomous enclosures which are protected from the momentary whims of any external ruling authority.
2. The encouragement of the good mind among the general population.
3. The encouragement of the good mind among those who govern the affairs of the world.

The Pagan Attitude

The pagan seeks health and strength for their enduring survival, growth and happiness.

The pagan sees strength in association with others and works for the collective strength of the sibband, clan or tribe through the strength of the individual members, the frith or harmonious relations between members, the good cultural and ritual practice and the territory and physical possessions of the group.

The pagan sees themselves as a part of the world they live in and seeks to play their part in maintaining the good functioning of the processes at work in the world.

The pagan struggles for good order which they see as under constant threat from forces that would break this up and cause chaos.

Religious pagans typically venerate multiple wights and deities which represent the different movements of the world and features of human life.

The Chrestian Attitude

The Chrestian seeks to be useful to others. The Chrestian aims to overcome their selfish inclinations and serve the other with wholeheartedness. The Chrestian aims to be filled with the spirit of love and concern for others. The Chrestian seeks to be wise so they will be of good service.

Religious chrestians typically worship one or two deities or a small number of closely related deities which stand for what is universally good. (e.g. Christians typically emphasize the deities God the Father and Jesus and sometimes Mary. Zoroastrian chrestians emphasize Aramazda (Wise Lord) and Sarosh (Listener to the needs of the world))

The Diabolist Attitude

The Diabolist serves themselves only and believes that it is fine to trample over the welfare of others. A diabolist may be cunning and manipulative if need be or else cause harm openly if they can get away with it. Like pagans diabolists normally band together with others to enhance their influence.

Religious diabolists characteristically worship two kinds of deities – one deity that gives license to unfeeling destructiveness such as Aeshma, Samael or Satan, and one that encourages unfeeling productiveness such as Lucifer.

Zoroastrian Humanism

Zoroastrian Humanism was started by the philosopher Zarathustra over 3000 years ago. He saw that the people of his time were disconnected from reality but attached to mindless superstitions and were easy prey for the self-serving barons.

Zarathustra proposed a simple way of thinking to make sense of existence and help people do the right thing to improve the world and their lives. He set his ideas down in a composition of 17 songs that have been transmitted down the ages to us today. Three of his most important concepts were:

ARTAVISTA – The best joining of things – truth and right

ARAMAZDA – The source of the activity which brings forth life

HUMANAH – The Good Mind that leads to good action

The ideas of Zarathustra have been immensely influential in history, shaping world philosophies and religions but often the simple purity of the original has become obscured and the hope of a better world frustrated. Yet it is still possible to go back to our intellectual beginnings with Zarathustra's own words and start afresh.

Zoroastrians believe that people should be judged by whether their actions in life tend to help the betterment of the world or not. Zoroastrian Humanists in particular emphasize that there is no substitute for the Good Mind of Humanah to lead people in the right direction and any religious belief must support the Good Mind, not act against it.

Good Thoughts! Good Words! Good Deeds!

NEO-ZOROASTRIAN HUMANIST MOVEMENT

THE MOVEMENT

The Neo-Zoroastrian Humanist movement aims to be a force in support of the Good World Order.

It aims to do this by being a focus for the development of Humanah – the Good Mind – in the world, by the preservation and promotion of cultural artefacts and activity which promote this, and by the creation and preservation of human communities in a position to freely further the movement.

As a Humanist movement we believe that Humanah – the Good Mind – is the most useful single concept to guide us as to our purpose.

As a Humanist movement we engage in the practice of the development of Humanah among those who are part of the movement.

As a Zoroastrian movement we look to Zarathustra as the founder of our movement, we pay attention to his writings, and we pay respect to the legacy of the traditional Persian religious movement which bears his name.

NEO-ZOROASTRIAN SYMBOL

Neo-Zoroastrian Humanists use a symbol to represent their movement comprised of three elements :

1. Spread Wings – representing the world soul.
2. Eight-spoked wheel – representing Asha, the good order of existence, (a symbol found on Achaemenid era inscriptions).
3. Fire – representing the Fire of Life and Good Mind . This is usually shown with seven distinct flames as a mark of its sacredness.



TEXTUAL TRADITION

Neo-Zoroastrian Humanists consider the work known as the Songs of Zarathustra (and sometimes as the Gospel of Zarathustra) as the sacred text of Zoroastrian Humanism. No other text has the same status.

There is no requirement for Neo-Zoroastrian Humanists to use any other particular material or learning method to help develop the Good Mind within themselves, as long as it is helping them to do that, and they are free to choose what helps them the most.

However those Neo-Zoroastrian Humanists wishing to be part of an international community of Neo-Zoroastrian Humanists who share more in common culturally than the bare bones are recommended to give priority to texts from Iranian-language or English-language sources.

They may wish to learn the classical Persian language (which is little different from that in current use) as well as gaining some acquaintance with the language of the Avesta. They should also be fluent in reading the English language.

It is recommended that they acquaint themselves with all the same texts as traditional Zoroastrians. Foremost among these is the Avesta, and important also are the two versions of the Bundahisn and the Denkard encyclopaedia.

Neo-Zoroastrians interested in Sophistry are recommended to give attention to the works of Rumi and other works of his era by other persons which were composed in the Persian language at the time and which have been acclaimed as most worthy since then.

Other Sophist teachers whose recorded teachings are especially recommended are: Socrates, Jesus, Aurelius and Inayat Khan.

Other Sophists whose works or speeches may be usefully read or listened to include the son and grandson of Inayat Khan, and also Idries Shah and Fethullah Gulen.

Some may also be interested in the texts of Buddhism or the early Vedic texts such as the Rig Veda or the heritage of ancient European pagan peoples

NEO-ZOROASTRIAN SOCIETIES

A Neo-Zoroastrian Humanist Society is an association of people who have come together to support the Good Activity of Life, especially the Good Mind and to spread the name of Zarathustra.

Neo-Zoroastrian Humanist Societies at a minimum should aim to spread awareness of Zoroastrian Humanism as a possible way of thinking.

Normally they should also hold regular meetings to build fellowship among their members, and to help them to a greater connection with Zoroastrian Humanism.

Ideally they would also organise study groups to attain a deeper understanding of the traditional Zoroastrian, Sufi or ancient European pagan traditions or otherwise to develop the character of mind and wisdom of the group attendees.

Ideally they would also organise regular Zoroastrian ritual groups, celebrate festivals, organise social activities and where appropriate help facilitate other kinds of community activity which are needed.

NEO-ZOROASTRIAN RITUAL MEETINGS

It is recommended that Neo-Zoroastrians (or some of them) should support establishment of Fire Temples on traditional lines, but that a diverse range of other kinds of ritual or religious meetings be encouraged for instance:

1. A fire temple ritual – up to a dozen people with specific roles in a ritual that symbolizes the activity of the cosmos.
2. Sufi-inspired meeting –communing with the beautiful.
3. Like a jesuchristian church service or house group but praising Sarosh rather than Jesus.
4. Like a pagan sacrificial circle - remembering the wights, deities, ancestors and all the different chains of influence in the world.
5. A quaker meeting – unprogrammed and mainly in silence but with opportunity for any individual to get up and speak.

NEO-ZOROASTRIAN FESTIVALS

Neo-Zoroastrians celebrate Zarathustra's birthday on March 26th each year alongside most other Zoroastrians world-wide. We don't normally celebrate the traditional Iranian festivals like Nowruz – the spring new year. Instead we celebrate Yuletide and other traditional occasions of our culture.

ZOROASTRIAN RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY

Some Neo-Zoroastrian Societies may want to secure their own territory and physical resources and to set up an autonomous residential community . Under favourable conditions this might be a village-style community or monastery on the earth's surface . Under adverse conditions this might be a Zoroastrian Vara as described below.

ZOROASTRIAN VARAS

Zoroastrian Varas are defensible enclosures likely to be underground in each of which should be established a Zoroastrian monastery with associated village and all the necessities of self-sufficient survival.

Such Zoroastrian Vara communities should be able to expect to live autonomously, preserving the good mind for the task especially of supporting the rulers of the world to good rule, while at the same time not being a source of negative disruptive influence in the world at large.

A Zoroastrian Vara should contain all that is necessary to start a system of life on barren territory whether on planet Earth or another planet should it be necessary as a result of the bad contamination or destruction of life activities on the Earth's surface. They should contain banks of genetic material of different biological species , including the human species. They should have libraries to preserve as much of the cultural heritage of the world's peoples as possible – the writings and recording of the varied ways of thinking and behaving that people have developed. The members of the Vara would need to maintain all the living processes necessary for their own survival and to be able to make use of the banks and libraries or stored material when the right time comes.

While such Zoroastrian Vara communities should seek the good will of the rulers of the world they should not rely on achieving this for their survival but take measures to physically secure the Vara perhaps by placing it in a remote underground location or by making it invisible to detection.

In this they would be following in the footsteps of past monastic communities who chose remote and inaccessible locations to safeguard themselves from harmful intrusion.

NINE ANCIENT TEACHERS

1. **Zarathustra**
2. **Gautama**
3. **Socrates the Enquirer**
4. **Confucius**
5. **Jesus of Galilee**
6. **Marcus Aurelius**
7. **Mani**
8. **Mohammed**
9. **Mowlana Balkhi Rumi**

SAINTS

A **Saoshyant** is the Persian term for a ‘saviour’ or ‘saint’ – somebody who is working ‘to save the world’ – i.e. somebody consciously and effectively working to bring the world into good order. The Greeks had a word **Chrestus** meaning ‘a useful person’ – someone useful to the wider world, a good person. **Superchrestus** is the world-transforming saoshyant who comes at the end of the age to restore the world to its pristine state.

Esteemed Persian Saints & Venerable Persons

Zarathustra (March 26)

Cyrus the Great of Persia and Queen Cassandane his wife

DEITIES

Deities are related to wights but whereas wights typically have all the messiness of real world phenomena, deities have a more idealised abstract nature.

Wights just are – but deities which come alive in people’s minds change the workings of those minds, and thus what happens in the world.

SOME DEITIES

Aramazda is the Wise Lord - the one pure Good God

Sarosh listens to the needs of the living beings and is obedient in meeting them

Aeshma or Samael the opponent of Sarosh, is blind and deaf to the well-being of others, and pursues their own desires regardless.

Lucifer is the deity of technocratic rule. He has much of the intelligence of Woden-Vayu, but treats living beings as objects of manipulation. Lucifer calls upon both Sarosh and Samael. **Good Lucifer** seeks the common benefit. **Bad Lucifer** has selfish ends.

Gaia is the wight or deity of the living processes of planet earth.

Persian Deities:

Varuna deity of governance (equivalent to Tiew – see below)

Vayu air deity of striving for wisdom and strength (equivalent to Woden)

Veretragna deity of victory (some similarity to Thor)

Anahita river deity is a provider (equivalent to Frigga)

Tishtrya rain deity and fertility (equivalent to Frey)

Mithra challenges wrong-doers (equivalent to Balder, though fiercer)

Maya power of magic and illusion (some similarity to Loki)

and others.

Zoroastrian Historic Era

There are several different year dating schemes used by other Zoroastrians – none of which we recommend for use.

Instead we introduce the Zoroastrian Historic Era as a candidate to be used in appropriate circumstances. The Zoroastrian Historic Era is aligned to begin exactly 2000 years earlier than the Christian or Common Era. So the year 2001 ZHE is 1 CE. The Zoroastrian Historic Era is the era in which Zoroastrian Humanist thought has been a force in the world.

Zoroastrian Humanists do of course also use the Common Era dating scheme where this make most sense.

Possible scheme for measurements

One Inch is twenty-four mils length, One Foot is twelve inches, One Yard is three feet
One Hundred Length is one hundred yards, One Mile is twenty hundred length
One Acre is the area of a square which is seventy-two yards on each side

One Fluid Ounce is twenty-four mils volume
One Short Pint is twenty fluid ounces, One Long Pint is twenty-four fluid ounces
One Short Gallon is eight short pints, One Long Gallon is eight long pints

One Ounce is twenty-four grams, One Pound is twenty ounces
One Stone is twelve pounds, One Hundred Weight is one hundred pounds
One Ton is twenty hundred weight

Temperature is measured on the Fahrenheit scale

The **Holy Instruments** are:

1. The **Holy Cup**. Out of the Holy Cup (or pot or dish) come all good things that are consumed. Water to Quench thirst, Soup to Nourish, Potions to Heal, Drink to Make Merry and Soma itself to change mental states and open one up to deeper spiritual reality.
2. The **Holy Pipes** which make music and set us dancing aright.
3. The 8-spoked **Wheel of Asha**, symbol of good order of the cosmos.
4. The **Sword of Sarosh** is an instrument to fight for what is righteous against what is unrighteous.
5. The **Skyworm** (a winged two-legged serpent) is a beast which among the Saxons represents the powers of the gods of the air to defend the good world order.

Wizardry

Aspects of Wizardry:

Mazdayasna – Worship of the Supremely Wise Being (which in Zoroastrianism implies also the Supremely Good Being).

Philosophy The practice of seeking to understand the nature of existence

Endosophism The practice of inner change that brings a person to be more directly connected to reality. More or less synonymous with Sufism.

Spellcraft The practice of careful use of skills of speech and presentation to produce an effect in others. Some forms of Spellcraft may be considered forms of Magic. It may be righteous (honest) or unrighteous (deceptive).

Magic The practice of influencing other people's understandings and behaviours from a position of superior awareness.

Kasatra The practice of ordering the nature of the settlement of mankind on the earth and the interrelations between people and the relations between people and their environment. Includes **Sibbandry** which is concerned with building communities for living. Also includes **Warcraft** and **Statecraft** – concerned with gaining and maintaining influence over a territory and its population and shaping them.

Biocraft The practice of seeking to influence the development and health of living organisms. **Medicine** is specifically concerned with making interventions to influence the health or good functioning of living organisms for good or ill.

Material Craft The practice of moulding the inanimate material world and creating inanimate material objects of a particular nature.

RUNES

Runes are the 'secrets of existence'. They are mental pegs which help us make sense of the world. Often runes come in sets .

ZOROASTRIAN HEPTAD or Amesha Spentas

1. **Spentaman** 'Life-promoting mind-spirit' (opposed by **Angraman**)
2. **Humanah** Good Mind (opposed by **Akamanah** or **Akaman**)
3. **Artavista** is 'Best Joined' or 'Good Relationship' , Truth , Right
4. **Spentarmity** - life-promoting service
5. **Hukasatra** - good ordering of settlement
6. **Harverty** - wholeness, health, harmony
7. **Amorty** – non-dying-ness / not dying before one's time / immortality,

Pantheons of deities are a kind of runeset.

THE SEVEN SHINGS

The **Seven Shings** are seven things beginning with the 'Sh' sound in the Persian language which Persian Zoroastrians traditionally prepare for their New Year ceremony at the Spring Equinox. Anglican Zoroastrians have their big annual celebration at Yuletide in December instead, but celebrate Zoroaster's birthday along with most other Zoroastrians world-wide on March the 26th. Anglicans are encouraged to prepare the **Seven Shings** as gifts for Zarathustra on his Birthday. Maybe they could be prepared on a special table along with a picture of Zoroaster and a copy of the Gathas. Ideally the gifts should be made by the family involved or by somebody they know.

1. **SHARAB (Wine) for celebration** - Any alcoholic drink such as home-made wine, mead, cider or beer.
2. **SHIR (Milk) for nourishment** - From an animal which lives nearby or is owned by somebody you know.
3. **SHARBAT (Sherbet) for enjoyment** - Any sugary confection.
4. **SHAMSHIR (Sword) for security** - Could be a ceremonial sword or knife, or other kind of defensive weapon.
5. **SHEMSHAD (Box) for wealth** - A box to store wealth for the future - e.g. in the form of silver coins. Perhaps a silver coin could be included.
6. **SHAM (Candle) for illumination** - A candle will light the way in the dark. Maybe include some matches. If you were able to manufacture it yourself then a modern equivalent such as an electric torch would be acceptable.
7. **SHAHDANEH (Hemp Seeds) for enlightenment** - Not all modern varieties of hemp seed will be of help for enlightenment, but they can still be used to grow the hemp crop to be made into clothing and other items. Thus they will be a very useful gift.

SOME PAGAN RUNES

WIGHTS

The word 'wight' just means a 'being'. The concept of a wight is based on the perception that there are movements in the world which conform to a regular or meaningful pattern. A wight is a mental construct for whatever is the cause of that pattern.

Some Examples of Types of Wights:

soulwight – a living creature

manwight – a person (from Old English Man – a person)

placewight – keeps a particular place being the kind of place it is

soccerwight – causes people to associate with each other (or **bandwight**)

makerwight - causes things to be produced from raw materials

breakerwight – cause things to break up – undermines their internal dynamic

steererwight – what influences or governs multiple beings so that their different activities fit together to achieve some purpose

tellerwight – what causes understandings of the world to travel from person to person

goldwight – orders people's perceptions of how much gold or money they have and other people have and how money is created and destroyed and transferred from one to another (or **moneywight**)

garthwight – controls the building, placement and destruction of walls which are barriers of communication and influence between people. Garthwights build garths or enclosures within which holistic (i.e. self-contained and complete) activity can happen.

Giants are wights which are large in size compared to us. These include the giant processes or activities of the natural world which continue regardless of their effect on humans. Similarly the movements of the human world which happen on such a large scale that they are not responsive to individual needs are also giants.

The **Demiurge** is a kind of giant that is responsible for shaping the nature of people (and by extension other creatures also).

A **Natural Demiurge** refers to anything that shapes the world, while otherwise a **Manic Demiurge** (manic=with a mind) is a conscious seat of activity which shapes the growth and nature of people. A Demiurge can be more or less good or bad.

MORE PAGAN RUNES

A **band** is an association of people.

A **sibband** is an especially strong band whose members (siblings) have loyalties to each other sufficient to enable them to live together.

A Sib-Band is a Sibling-Association - a group of people who have made a covenant of peace with each other and have agreed to treat each other like brothers and sisters.

A **soccerwight** is the imagined being which brings individual people together into association with each other and shapes the nature of their interaction.

Frith is the peace or harmony of the band. A **frithweaver** works to keep the good frith.

A **Meet** is a meeting . This is where people come into each others awareness – so that they are open to receiving mental influence from each other.

A **Beatmeet** is a meeting that happens on a regular basis so that it forms part of the ongoing expectation of its participants.

A **Moot** is a meeting for discussion

An **Openmoot** is a meeting for discussion without a pre-arranged agenda so that participants are able to bring issues of concern to them to the attention of the rest.

Ten Commandments

1. Thou shalt not borrow money at interest - for surely if you give back to a banker more than he gave you, he will become rich and take power over you?
2. Thou shalt not watch television - for surely those who serve Lucifer will use it to tell their stories and deceive you?
3. Thou shalt not work for strangers more than four days out of seven - for else on what days will you work for yourself?
4. Thou shalt not poison the earth - for else in what good place will you live?
5. Thou shalt not deny the work of Lucifer - for if you seek to hide his work then how will your neighbour learn the truth from you?
6. Thou shalt come together with others in a fellowship for living so that each may relate with others and meet their needs and pursue their desires. There should be no more than fifty grown among you, and you should take a place that you may be together in privacy for discussion and activity.
7. Thou shalt obtain at least half your food from land which is near to you, and half your water, so that no stranger can deny you the means of life.
8. Thou shalt be strong and those with you so that if any come against you then you may send them away.
9. Thou shalt seek the truth of the world with vigour so that you shall know what effect will come from what action.
10. Thou shalt promote what is good for yourself, and for your neighbour, and for all the people and creatures of the earth.

Some Sayings

There is no good but what is good. There is no evil but what is evil.

A person's karma is the movement they make in the world.

The world karma is the world action. This is the movement of all the beings in the world. The world karma makes the world.

My karma doesn't make me, for I am a part of the world, and the world karma makes the world.

How can you defend your possessions? First decide if your possessions are worth defending.

Magic is when something happens you cannot explain.

A magician is somebody who makes you think one thing is happening when another thing is.

We worship the Good Lord, but not the wights who may be good or bad. Those we remember.

The fire of life needs tending, for if nobody tends it it will go out.

If you meet a giant, remember, to him you are an ant. He will not care if he squashes you.

To have a Good Mind means to have a mind that wills what is good.

They say that all you need is love. But if a dog loves you will he make you your dinner?

Democracy is something you do, not something you live in.

The wolf asked the dog why he was chained to the post. The dog said his master wished it thus. The wolf said he preferred to be free and walked away.

The farmer said he did not support the duke. Then he gave the duke the produce of his fields to support the duke's men through the winter.

The legs of the table said that they did not support the table.

As the thief took some silver coins from the man's wallet, he told the man he was putting some coins in. The man thought the thief a generous fellow.

Simon told John that Jack was planning to kill him. So John drew his sword upon Jack and they fought together and both were mortally wounded. Then Simon took John's farm and Jack's mill for himself.

As the nice farmer fed the chickens in the sunlit yard, a chicken muttered to another that the farmer was going to kill them all.

A man worked all his waking hours in the factory. I don't know why I never speak to my wife and children he said.

The baron was oppressing the people. The people's champion said let us wage war on the baron. Fighting the baron, half the people died, and so did the baron. The new baron oppressed the people.

In each cottage in the village sat a lonely housewife. I wish I could meet some other housewives they all said to themselves.

The giant was fed up with all the people. He blew hot air over the land and the rain-clouds disappeared. There was a drought and no crops grew. The people died.

The giant was fed up with so many people. He scattered poisons through the air they breathed and the food they ate and the medicines they took. The people got weak. Then he sent a plague upon them.

The giant thought there were too many people. He divided them into two big armies of equal strength. Then he told the two armies to fight each other to the death.

The giant was fed up with all the people. He made laws that it was forbidden to grow food.

Each day the people fed the giant. Each day the giant got bigger. Each day the giant wanted more food.

"Fe,Fi,Fo, Fum, I smell the blood of an Englishman", said the giant.

The Pantochrestian Mission

THE GOOD WORLD ORDER

One planet, one empire, many nations.

Subsidiarity rules - each governs themself on the smallest scale.

One emperor governs just what is needed on the planetary scale.

One aristocracy provides unity and continuity.

One corporation of the people supports the good order of the whole.

THE FOSTERING OF THE GLOBAL DEMOS

Foster the Global Demos - the Corporation of the People.

One corporation in diverse companies.

Talking in freedom.

Aware of what is.

Concerned for the Whole.

Upholding the good constitution of the world.

THE TRANSMUTATION OF THE OLIGARCHY

The occult oligarchy with its untrue religion.

Smart robbers skulking in the shadows.

Clever system of manipulation by deception, bribery and intimidation.

Transmutate into benevolent aristocracy serving all the people.

Providing stability through own solidity and long-term thinking.

Rewarded by loyalty and deserved acclamation and knowledge of cosmic importance and high estimation.

APPENDIX

The **Seasons of the Ages** are:

Spring - The age when society is young and expanding. People live an organic life close to the rhythms of their environment. Typically people live in small villages which are culturally isolated and economically self-sufficient, and the morality tends to encourage the activity, growth and strength of the self and community.

Summer - The age when society is mature, and people come together in cities and build empires. Intellectual culture is systemic rather than organic. Morality stresses the needs of the whole of life as against the selfish and parochial. People have broad horizons and the greatest achievements of cultural development are made.

Autumn - The age of decay when the patterns of life no longer seem to be working for the common benefit, and things seem to be breaking down. Earlier signs of progress are being reversed. There is a reduction in public spiritedness, and nobody seems to be taking care of the common good. Standards of education and behaviour drop. This is an age of increasing fear and disorientation.

Winter - The age when the conditions of a civilized life are withdrawn. The complex patterns of economic life built up in earlier ages break down and many are left without means of subsistence. The law is the law of the jungle, where violence pays, and there is no protection except from counter-violence or physical isolation. Most of the population die during this Age, whether through violence, starvation, disease or poisoning. Most forms of cultural life come to end, and are never revived again. Some however are taken captive by dominant powers and may gain a tolerable existence as slaves to do needed work. Others who are taken captive may be killed immediately, tortured or abused for the pleasure of the capturer or put to work in unbearable conditions.

However some people made preparations for the Winter age during Autumn time. They gathered a community together who were mindful of the future. They found a protected spot, and stored provisions there. They learnt the arts of community life and practical survival in a harsh environment. If luck goes their way these people may survive through the Winter and come out into the Spring-time, when the harsh conditions ease and in the new emptier world they find the potential for new life with growth and happiness. They will be the seeds of that new life, the seeds that carry the memory of the past, so that the people that were are not forgotten out of history, and the struggles they went through were not in vain, but bear fruit into the future.

Nine Basic Human Needs

Security is the need to feel safe, to feel assured that they know what is going to happen, to know ahead of time what the plans are. What constitutes Security can be different for different people.

Adventure is the need for an adrenaline rush, to have new experiences, to travel, to have BIG experiences, to have drama in their life, to have a sense of anticipation about upcoming events.

Freedom is the need for independence and spontaneity. It is also the need to have choices and to feel in control of making those choices. In many people, Freedom might be combined with Adventure, since a person who has a need for Freedom might be willing to partake of more Adventures, than a person who has both Freedom and Security. Freedom does not care for plans or heavy structure. What constitutes Freedom for one person may be very different from another's need perception of Freedom.

Exchange is the need to trade information and knowledge with others, not just to mingle or socialize, but to deliver and receive something of value. That something of value may be information, conversation, communication, energy, friendship, services, money, gifts, love, justice, shared experiences. People with a need for exchange are concerned about the flow of energy in all types of relationships. They like to see things "moving" in some way that expresses balanced equality, integrity and an equal exchange.

Power. People with a need for Power need to be in a position of authority and responsibility. They need to explore Power, leadership and accomplishment. People with a need for Power tend to be good organizers and accept responsibility, setting an example of leadership.

Expansion is the need to build something, to add onto, to create an empire, to expand horizons, to go where no one has gone before.

Acceptance is the need to accept yourself and be accepted by others. This includes a feeling of belonging. People with a need for Acceptance are usually very easy-going and pleasant to have in a group.

Community. People with a need for Community like having people around. They are highly social and will express their enjoyment of gatherings. These are the best folks to put in charge of parties and company gatherings. They will seek out people and are able to maintain large numbers of relationships. The need for Community is different from the need for Exchange in that the need for Community does not require the exchange of anything.

Expression is the need to be artistic, to be seen, to be heard, to be felt. It is the need to express oneself through words, speech, actions, dress, art and self-creations of all types.

TWELVE VIRTUES

Truth - Be honest and straightforward in all your dealings. Avoid deceit and deception.

Industriousness - Be productively engaged in life. Avoid laziness. Strive to accomplish good things.

Justice - Let equity and fairness be your hallmark. Treat others in accordance with what they deserve, and give each person a chance to show his or her best.

Courage - Fear is natural, but it can be overcome. Train yourself to do the things you fear, both physically and morally.

Generosity - An open hand and an open heart bring happiness to you and to others. The miserly are never happy.

Hospitality - In ancient times, travellers were greeted with food, drink, and a warm place by the fire. See that your guests never want.

Moderation - Enjoy all good things, but do not overindulge. No one admires a glutton or a person who cannot control his or her appetites.

Community - Cooperate with kin and friends, do your fair share, and remember your responsibilities to others. Consider what is good for the whole.

Self-Reliance – Whether as individual or group look to your own resources to provide for your needs and achieve your goals.

Steadfastness - Learn to persist, to endure in the face of adversity without discouragement. Do not be blown about by every changing wind.

Loyalty - Be steadfast in your commitment to others and to yourself. Have a true heart.

Wisdom - Learn from your experiences. Grow in the understanding of the world, and of the human heart. Comprehend as much of the universe as you can in the years available to you.

The Persian Runes

The **Persian Calendar Runes** are an extended set of thirty runes which include the Zoroastrian runes along with others many of them referring to traditional deities. Persians to this day use them to name the days of the month.

The Persian runeset is comprised of four rows, the first two of seven elements each, and the last two of eight.

The **Divine Ratus** are a set of 33 divine beings which can be comprised of the same 30 entities listed here plus 3 others.

First Row

1. **Ahura Mazda** - Aramazda,
2. **Vohu Manah** - Humanah,
3. **Asha Vahishta** - Artavista,
4. **Khshathra Vairya** - Hukasatra,
5. **Spenta Armaiti** - Spentarmity,
6. **Haurvatat** - Harverty,
7. **Ameretat** - Amorty

Second Row

8. **Apam Napat** - deity of waters,
9. **Atar** - Heat/Fire,
10. **Apo** - Water,
11. **Hvar** - Sun,
12. **Mah** - Moon
13. **Tishtrya** - Rain deity,
14. **Geush Urvan** - Soul of Creation

Third Row

15. **Haoma** - deity of ritual drink (Soma),
16. **Mithra** - deity of contracts,
17. **Sraosha** - deity of listening (Sarosh),
18. **Rashnu** - deity of judgement,
19. **Fravashayo** - guardian spirits,
20. **Verethragna** - deity of victory,
21. **Raman** - breath of life,
22. **Vata** - Wind

Fourth Row

23. **Dahman Afrin** - devout blessing
24. **Daena** - conscience/religion,
25. **Ashi** - recompense,
26. **Arshtat** - justice,
27. **Asman** - sky/heaven,
28. **Zam** - earth,
29. **Manthra Spenta** - sacred invocation,
30. **Anaghra Raoca** - endless light.

THE SAXON or GERMANIC RUNES

(The Elder Futhark – 24 runes in three Rows of Eight)

1. **FEHU:** Wealth is a comfort to all men; yet must every man bestow it freely, if he wish to gain honour in the sight of the gods.
2. **URUZ:** The aurochs is proud and has great horns; it is a very savage beast and fights with its horns; a great ranger of the moors, it is a creature of mettle.
3. **THURISAZ:** The thorn is exceedingly sharp, an evil thing for any knight to touch, uncommonly severe on all who sit among them.
4. **ANSUZ:** The mouth is the source of all language, a pillar of wisdom and a comfort to wise men, a blessing and a joy to every knight.
5. **RAIDHO:** Riding seems easy to every warrior while he is indoors and very courageous to him who traverses the high-roads on the back of a stout horse.
6. **KENAZ:** The torch is known to every living man by its pale, bright flame; it always burns where princes sit within.
7. **GEBO:** Generosity brings credit and honour, which support one's dignity; it furnishes help and subsistence to all broken men who are devoid of aught else.
8. **WUNJO:** Bliss he enjoys who knows not suffering, sorrow nor anxiety, and has prosperity and happiness and a good enough house.
9. **HAGALAZ:** Hail is the whitest of grain; it is whirled from the vault of heaven and is tossed about by gusts of wind and then it melts into water.
10. **NAUTHIZ:** Trouble is oppressive to the heart; yet often it proves a source of help and salvation to the children of men, to everyone who heeds it betimes.
11. **ISA:** Ice is very cold and immeasurably slippery; it glistens as clear as glass and most like to gems; it is a floor wrought by the frost, fair to look upon.
12. **JERA:** Summer is a joy to men, when the gods suffer the earth to bring forth shining fruits for rich and poor alike.
13. **EIHWAZ:** The yew is a tree with rough bark, hard and fast in the earth, supported by its roots, a guardian of flame and a joy upon an estate.
14. **PERTHRO:** *Peorth* is a source of recreation and amusement to the great, where warriors sit blithely together in the banqueting-hall.
15. **ALGIZ:** The Elk-sedge is mostly to be found in a marsh; it grows in the water and makes a ghastly wound, covering with blood every warrior who touches it.
16. **SOWILO:** The sun is ever a joy in the hopes of seafarers when they journey away over the fishes' bath, until the courser of the deep bears them to land.
17. **TIWAZ:** Tiw is a guiding star; well does it keep faith with princes; it is ever on its course over the mists of night and never fails.
18. **BERKANO:** The poplar birch bears no fruit; yet without seed it brings forth suckers, for it is generated from its leaves. Splendid are its branches and gloriously adorned its lofty crown which reaches to the skies.
19. **EHWAZ:** The horse is a joy to princes in the presence of warriors. A steed in the pride of its hoofs, when rich men on horseback bandy words about it; and it is ever a source of comfort to the restless.
20. **MANNAZ:** The joyous man is dear to his kinsmen; yet every man is doomed to fail his fellow, since the gods by their decree will commit the vile carrion to the earth.
21. **LAGUZ:** The ocean seems interminable to men, if they venture on the rolling bark and the waves of the sea terrify them and the courser of the deep heed not its bridle.
22. **INGWAZ:** Ing was first seen by men among the East-Danes, till, followed by his chariot, he departed eastwards over the waves. So the Heardingas named the hero.
23. **DAGAZ:** Day, the glorious light, is beloved of men, a source of hope and happiness to rich and poor, and of service to all.
24. **OTHALA:** An estate is very dear to every man, if he can enjoy there in his house whatever is right and proper in constant prosperity.

GERMANIC DEITIES

Tiew is a sky deity maintaining good order in the world. Tiew is the deity of kings and leaders and all those who help steer the activity of the world to keep it suitable for life.

Woden is an air deity . Woden struggles to reach his full potential in both the mental and the physical domains. Woden is a philosopher and shaman, favourite deity of wizards. Woden is also known as a war-leader.

Thor is also an air deity, especially associated with storms. Thor is known especially for his physical strength. He is more approachable than Woden – and is a popular deity with the farmer and worker.

Frigga is a mother goddess, who nurtures the young and supports the community.

Frey is a deity of fertility and growth.

Balder is a deity of purity and righteousness. His dominant personality is one of innocence and self-sacrifice . His alternative personality is fiercer and he is a champion of justice.

Wayland the material craftsman and engineer,

Sif the deity of community or sibbands,

Freya the independent spiritual craftswoman

Loki is a trickster deity who cares little for those around him. In his lighter personality there is no great malice involved – just self-centred opportunism – and he can be of service in keeping others on their toes. In his darker personality he can be a formidable danger using all forms of magic and deception to subvert the good order of life.