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But, we may trace a distant indirect connection. Perhaps, by the Sun, Herodotus meant Mithra, the God of Light, who is generally associated with the Sun in the Avesta. We learn from the yasht in honour of Mithra, that Mithra, who presides over Light,—both physical and mental or moral light—blesses those who are truthful and honest, but punishes, those who are dishonest and who break their promises, with sickness (yasht X, 110). So, leprosy being a sickness was possibly considered as a punishment for the sin of Mithra-drûji, i.e., of offending Mithra by dishonesty.

## THE INDIAN CUSTOM OF A HUSBAND OR WIFE NOT NAMING HIS WIFE OR HER HUSBAND.

(Read on 31st August 1921.)

Edward Clodd's recent interesting book Introduction. entitled "Magic in Names and other things" (1920). We in India are familiar with the custom, whereby it is considered improper for a husband to call his wife by her name or to name her before others and for a wife to call her husband by his name or to name him. This custom, though it has died out now among the educated higher classes, is still prevalent to a great extent. When a husband or wife had to call one another, they did so by names other than her or his own name. Mr. Clodd thus refers to the Hindu custom: "The Hindu wife is never, under any circumstances, to mention her husband's name, so she calls him "He," "The Master, "Swamy," etc."

<sup>1</sup> p. 57.

Now India is not the only country where one finds this custom. It is prevalent in other countries also. Among some tribes, there is a prohibition, not only against naming one's wife or husband, but also against naming particular

relatives, e.g., against naming one's mother-in-law, or son-in-law, or father-in-law, or even a sister. Hence, Mr. Clodd has named his section on the prohibition of uttering names, as "Mana¹ in names of Relatives." In some cases, there is an aversion against even mentioning or uttering names that have fallen into disapprobation. For example, Mr. Clodd says: "As further showing how barbaric ideas prevail in the heart of civilization, there is an overwhelming feeling against having men bearing the reprobated names as hands for the boats in the herring fishing season, and when they have been hired before their names were known, their wages have been refused if the season has been a failure . . . . In some of the villages on the eas coast of Aberdeenshire it was accounted unlucky to meet anyone of the name of Whyte when going to sea, lives would be lost, or the catch of fish would be poor."

We generally say: "What is in a name?" But it seems there is a good deal in a name. A name can What is in a do many a thing and a name can undo many a thing. As an example for what a name can do, we may refer to the case of the name of God. It is held to be efficacious in various ways. The name of Ahura Mazda or Brahma, the name of Alla or Jehovah, is held to be auspicious and to be efficacious for the fulfilment of many an object. At times, simply the mention of a name—the name of God or the name of a person or even the name of a day or month—is held to be mubûrak or auspicious. Among us Parsees, the

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Magic, for the present purpose, is defined as the mana by which the sorcerer pretends to (in some cases honestly believes that he can) obtain control over persons and their belongings to their help or harm, and also control over invisible beings and the occult powers of nature." (p. 10).

daily prayers of Nyâishes or hymns in honour of the grand objects of Nature—the Sun, the Moon, Light in general, Fire and Water—have at the end a formula of prayer spoken of as "Roz nek-nâm," i.e., "the day of good name." Therein the worshipper names the particular day and month in which he offers his prayer, and speaks of that day and month as mubârak or auspicious. He says: "Roz nek nâm, roz pâk nâm, roz mubârak roz. . . . (Here he names the particular day on which he says his prayer) . . . mah mubârak mâh . . . (Here he names the month) . . ."

In the Hormazd Yasht, it is said that the mere mention of the name of God is efficacious to keep off all possible difficulties. Zoroaster says to Ahura Mazda: "O Righteous Ahura Mazda! tell me that name of yours which is the greatest, the most excellent, the best, the most efficacious, the most victorious the most health-giving, the most efficacious in counter-acting evils from the demons and evil-minded persons; tell me certainly that name, so that (by means of that name), I may master all the demons, all bad persons, so that I may overcome all magicians, all fairies, so that nobody, neither a demon nor a bad man, neither a magician nor a fairy, may do me any harm."

Now, though, on the one hand, it is held to be auspicious to begin a work with the name of God, on the other hand, at times, and among some people, it is thought advisable not to mention the name of God every now and then. It is held to be disrespectful to God, to name him everywhere and anywhere, at every time and at any time. For example, the Jews are very chary about the name of their God, Jehova, which name is believed to "be the sacred unpronounceable name of the Eternal." As said by Rev. A. J. Maclean, the name "Jawieh (Jehovah) was so sacred that it was not in later Jewish times, pronounced at all." Similarly, I have come across a Mogul

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible, p. 32.

document of the reign of Jehangir, wherein, wherever the words 'Gaz ilahi,' i.e., "divine Gaz" occur, the word ilahi (divine) is omitted, and, from what we know of the words and of the standard of measurement in the time of Akbar and his successors, we are led to infer, that the word "ilahi" is understood in the place in the document, where a small space is kept blank or unwritten after the word gaz.

This is not only in the case of God (Khudâ), but also in the case of kings (Khudâvands), who are, as it were, the representatives of God on this earth. In some Mogul documents of Jehangir, in some places, where the name of Jehangir has to be written, the space is kept blank, and we are led to infer the name from the context, where, though not the name, all his honorific titles or designations are given.

Thus we see, that there is among some people, a kind of prohibition to mention the name of God or the king, whose names are otherwise, or among other people, held to be very auspicious. Sir James Frazer in one of the volumes of his series of the Golden Bough, the volume entitled "Taboo and the Perils of the Soul" gives an interesting chapter under the head of "Tabooed Words" wherein he speaks of "Personal names tabooed" "Names of relatives tabooed," "Names of the Dead tabooed," "Names of kings and other sacred persons tabooed," "Names of Gods tabooed" and "Common words tabooed." From this chapter, we see that the tabooing of names is common, to some extent, among several civilized people.

Now, the above cases of not mentioning the name of God or king, referred to by me, fall under one of the above sections of Frazer's "Tabooed Words." As a very recent case of a certain kind of tabooing words, I may mention the case of Plague. I do not know, what was the case among other communities, but I speak of what I know of my Parsee

Edition of 1911, Chap. VI, Tabooed Word.

Community. Though Bubonic Plague was prevalent in India in former times, even in the time of the Mogul king Jehangir, as we learn from his Memoirs (tuzuk-i-Jehangir), when it overtook Bombay, it came to us as a surprize, and spread panic, the like of which I have never seen. Nearly half of Bombay was empty. Our people were so much terrified, that they dared not even to mention the word 4si (plague). When they spoke of a case of plague having occurred in a friend's or relative's family, they did not say भरश থাও છે, i.e., plague has occurred, but simply એક કેસ બન્યા છે, i.e., "a case has occurred", and people understood what was meant. A striking instance of this, you see in the name of the Plague Hospital of our Community. The Trustees of the Parsee Panchayet, properly measuring the thoughts and feelings of the Community, did not name the Hospital "Parsee Plague Hospital" but "Parsee Fever Hospital," and the name has continued upto now. Had it been called Plague Hospital, the name would have frightened many a patient and his or her relatives.

All this shows, that in reply to the question "What is in a name?" we can say, from our present point of view, that "there is a good deal in the name." We know that Shakespear asks:

"What's in a name? That which we call a rose.

By any other name would smell as sweet?"

But we find, that, if not from a general point of view, from the point of view of anthropology there is a good deal in a name. Why, take the very word name, which is common in sound in all Aryan languages. Some derive the word name from 'nehmen' to take; others derive it from 'an' to-breathe and take the word to be a form of animus, soul. Some fancifully connect the word with Am or Om. Sir James Frazer, thus sums up, as it were, the idea connected with the word name: "If we may judge from the evidence-

of language, this crude conception of the relation of names to persons was widely prevalent, if not universal, among the forefathers of the Aryan race. For, an analysis of the words for 'name' in the various languages of that great family of speech points to the conclusion that 'Celts and certain other widely separated Aryans, unless we should say the whole Aryan family, believed at one time not only that the name was a part of the man, but it was that part of him which is termed the soul, the breath of life, or whatever you may choose to define it as being" 1. Here, Sir James Frazer speaks of "the relation of names to persons." Now, speaking of the Iranian branch of the Aryan race, we find a close relation between the name and the person. A name is essentially necessary for the performance of all ceremonies of one's living soul (zindeh ravân) and of his soul after death (anousthe-ravân). If you want to perform any religious ceremony or prayer for the good of a child, the child must be named and all possible care is taken. to select a good name. In all the ceremonies of one's life, the name of the person is important. The very ceremony of betrothal which begins marriage is spoken of as نام زد شدن nâm zad shudan, i.e., "to be struck with a name." Even if the husband dies after betrothal and before marriage, the name of that betrothed husband is recited with that of the wifein all ceremonies. That is the case even after a re-marriage.

As said by Mr. F. M. Conford, the author of "from Religion to Philosophy" (p. 141), as quoted by Mr. Clodd on his title page, "the name of a thing, or of a group of things, is its soul; to know their names is to have power over their soul." So, to have one's name in our possession, is, as it ever, to have his soul in our possession. In an old orthodox Indian household this primitive idea or belief seems to have been carried a little further. An Indian mother took it to be her privilege to rule over her sons. She would not like her new daughters-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Golden Bough, Part II, "Taboo and the Perils of the Soul," Edition of 1911, p. 319.

in-law to participate in her privilege. She could rule over her son by her having his name which was as it were his very soul. So, she would not like the new daughter-in-law to name her husband and thus exert some power over his soul. As said by the reviewer of Mr. Clodd's book in the Athenæum of 4th June 1921, Mr. Clodd in his above book, "selects for treatment the tendency to impute to the name as such that capacity for action or passion which, in the eyes of modern matter-of-fact folk, belongs only to the person or thing named.'

Now, coming to the case of wife and husband, Mr. Clodd says, as said above, of the custom of India: "The Hindu wife is never under Circumlocutory way of naming a any circumstances, to mention her husband's person. name; so she calls him "He," "the Master,"

"Swamy," etc.

Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson, in her recent work, "the Rites of the Twice-born, "thus speaks of the Hindu custom (p. 15): 'A taboo on names is still observed, and is universal throughout India. The wife never mentions her husband's name, and a husband never mentions his wife's, save on the wedding day. The correct way for a husband to send a message to his wife is to say, not 'tell to my wife,' but 'tell that in my house', and in the same manner he announces any message he may have received from his wife as 'from inside my house one says. Similarly the polite way to ask after the health of a man's wife is to say 'are the ladies of your house well?' not 'is Mrs. Bhat well?' In some castes until the mother and father are about fifty, they do not as a rule mention their children's names; after that the husband might allude to his wife as 'the mother of my son so-and-so'; until the father is about fifty, he never speaks to his children in the presence of his elders, would never call to his son if his own father were at hand."

<sup>1</sup> During the wedding ceremonial, the husband " mentioning his wife's name for the one and only time in his life," says : " May the god Hiranyaparna (an epithet of Vishnu) make Târâ (or whatever the wife's name is) devoted to me" (Ibid p. 84). Sis a diel lo mold to I

Mr. Clodd gives similar instances from his own country "An old-fashioned Midland cottager's wife rarely speaks of her husband by name, the pronoun "he" supplemented by "my man" or "my master" is sufficient distinction." This old-fashioned Englander's circumlocutary language reminds us of some similar language we hear in Gujarat; for example, a Hindu lady and even a Parsi lady would say, if the husband is not at home: મારા માટાડા ઘરમાં નથા i.e., My man is not at home.

Mr. Clodd also refers to some "circumlocutory phrases" which were used in some tribes by a husband or wife instead of calling the wife or husband by name. For example, he says that in the Amazulu tribe, the woman calls her husband by "Father of so and so." This reminds me of my boyhood, when I heard an old relative calling his wife, not by her name, but by the name "Melloo," which was the contracted or another form of Meherwan or Meherwanjee, as Tehmulis that of Tehmuras. He had a son named Meherwanjee, so he called his wife by his son's name. The circumlocutary phrase, once prevalent at Naosari, for the husband to call his wife was સાંભલેચકે, i.e., "Do you hear?" and for the wife સાંભલાચકે also, meaning "Do you hear?" the only difference being, that the husband addressed his wife in second person singular, and the wife in second person plural, the latter being considered, in some respects, a more respectable form of address.

The fear of uttering tabooed or prohibited names has been so much prevalent among some tribes and persons, that they would not only not mention the prohibited names, but not even utter ordinary words in which the prohibited names occur as a part of the word. Mr. Bertrand Russel, in his first article on "Dreams and Facts" in the Athenæum<sup>1</sup>, thus illustrates this: "Many of them (i.e., the tribes) believe that to pronounce the name of their chief is such sacrilege as to bring instant death; they even go so far as to alter all words in which his name occurs as one of the syllables; for example, if we had a king named John, we should speak of a Janquil as (say) a

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George-quill, and of a dun geon as dun-George." If I may illustrate this in our own way I would say: suppose a lady has her husband's name as Sinh ( Ale), which name, as a common word, means a "lion." So, if a lion were to come to her door, she would not say the alion i.e., " the lion has come", but would use some other word for the animal or some circumlocutary phrase.

Now, the question is: "What is this custom due to?" Mr.

What is this custom due to?
Magic through names.

Clodd's book, among other matters, gives to the question the answer, given also, ere this, by others, that it is due to the fear, that magic is exercised over one through his

or her name.

There is a difference of opinion among Anthropologists and others about Magic. Some say that Magic preceded Religion, and others say that Religion preceded Magic. I think, Magic was preceded by Religion and is succeeded by Religion. In the very early primitive ages, when Man was in frequent contact with Nature, Nature led him to Nature's God. His religion was simple and he believed in a Higher Power or Powers which ruled over Nature. Then Magic is a degeneration. When Man fell from his simple pure life, Religion fell with him and Magic began to step in. Then, with advanced time, Magic again began to be dethroned from its assumed place and Religion was enthroned to a greater extent. But we will not enter into the subject here.

Magic is a kind of individuality which certain persons possessed as a class of leaders and exercised over others. In Pacific regions it is spoken of generally as mana. Clodd defines Magic as "the Mana by which the sorcerer pretends to (in some cases he honestly believes that he can) obtain control over persons and their belongings to their help or harm, and also control over invisible beings and the occult powers of nature. Magic

is White or Beneficent when it helps. It is Black or Maleficient when it harms." But, in considering the question of Magic, we must guard against the tendency of taking at times real religious beliefs as magic. The word magic coming from the Magis, the old Iranian Mobads or priests, who are still known by that name, suggest a kind of caution. In my paper on "Iranian Incantations for burying hair and nails," I referred to one set or class of tangible things, viz., hair and nail. In that paper, I quoted the following passage from Mr. R. Campbell Thomson's "Semitic Magic: Its Origin. and Development:" "In all magic, three things are necessary for the perfect exorcism First the word, the Word of Power, by which the sorcerer invokes d vine or supernatural aid to influence the object of his undertaking. Secondly, the knowledge of the name or description of the person or demon he is working his charm against, with something more tangible, be it nail-parings or hair, in the human case. Thirdly, some drug, to which was originally ascribed a power vouchsafed by the gods for the welfare of mankind, some charm or amulet, or in the broadest sense something material, even a wax figure or 'atonement' sacrifice, to aid the physician in his final effort."

The Second of the three things referred to in the above passage, forms the subject of Mr. Clodd's above book. On this second thing or component of exorcive magic, Mr. Thompson said: "The second component of the perfect charm was that the magician should know something, even if only the name, of the person or demon, whom he hoped to bring into subjection .... The name alone will be enough for want of anything better."1

Magic works through (1) things that are Tangible and (2) things that are Intangible. Among the tangible things, through which a magician can work, are a man's blood, hair and nails,

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Semitic Magic" by R. C. Thompson (Introduction, pp. XLVI-LI.).

saliva, sweat, excreta, i.e., in short, what passes from or out of his body. A man's clothings also comes under that head. These all are vehicles of magic. Among the intangible things through which magic can be exercised are: shadows, reflections, echoes and names.

As to shadows and reflections, I have not heard anything to show the belief that magic was exercised through them. But I know, that children are at times prohibited from playing with their shadows or reflections in water or mirror. It is believed that such a play is likely to bring soon some illness for the children. But it is possible, that the origin of this belief may be the above belief of magic being exercised through them. Mr. Clodd refers to some folk-lore connecting shadows with illness.

The Gujerati word for shadow is ઓરા, and we, at times, hear of a person, who has quarrelled with another, saying to the latter, "તારે આરે પણ નહિ આવીશ" i.e., "I will not come even within your shadow." What is meant is: "Not only will I avoid your company, but will not even come so much near you as to let your shadow fall upon me," signifying that, even the shadow of an evil-minded person is bad.

On the subject of reflections, Mr. Clodd says: "In rustic superstition, the breaking of a looking-glass is a portent of death, and the mirrors are covered up or turned to the wall when a death takes place in the house. 'It is feared that the soul, projected out of the person in the shape of his reflection in the mirror, may be carried off by the ghost of the departed which is commonly supposed to linger about the house till the burial." I have seen this covering of mirrors on occasions of death in several Parsee houses in Bombay.

Now as to the question of Magic through names, Mr.

Clodd says: "Taboo is the dread tyrant

Magic through of savage life. Among civilized peoples,

under the guise of customs whose force is

stronger than law, it rules in larger degree than most persons

care to admit. But among barbaric communities it puts a ring fence round the simplest acts, regulates all intercourse by the minutes codes, and secures obedience to its manifold prohibitions by threats of punishment to be inflicted by magic and other apparatus of the invisible. It may be called the Inquisition of the lower culture, because it is as terrible and effective as was the infamous Holy Office. Nowhere, perhaps, does it exert more constant sway than in the series of customs associated with Names."1

Among the uncivilized men, one's name is taken to be "an integral part of himself." To disclose one's name is to put him "in the power of another whereby magic can be wrought of another." That view has unwittingly come down even among the civilized as illustrated by various words given by Mr. Clodd. For example, to "apprehend" a thing (from prehandere) is to "sieze" or "lay hold of" a thing; to "possess" a thing is (from sedare to sit), "sitting by a thing." Again, words like 'lunatic' (luna the moon), 'disaster' (aster a star) and 'consideration' "embalm the old belief in the influence of the heavenly bodies on man's fate." Mr. Clodd further points to the verb "to be" as a word "which once had a physical significance." This is better illustrated by the Indian word for ghost, bhût ( eqq ), which literally means "one that was or existed at one time." The word is nothing but the past tense of bû (bhû) " to be."

Mr. Clodd mentions a number of tribes among whom people were "unwilling to tell their real names. This reluctance is due to the fear of putting themselves at the mercy of sorcerers." This dislike of telling one's name has passed unwittingly through various phases even among some civilized people. One would not tell to another his own name but let it be told by others. Our author refers to the experience of a lady in North Wales, where she met five girls and when one of them was asked her name, she "simpered and, pointing to the girl standing next to her, said, 'Her name is Jenny Ower,' and not one of them would tell her own name. The children were not shy on other topics, but they were not to be beguiled over this." Even now-a-days, in modern society, it is considered to be rude, to ask some body at once his name. We politely ask it in some begging form like this: "May I ask your name." Perhaps this comes down from the above old idea of not telling one's name to others.

When asked at present, "What is the cause of this custom of not naming one another"? The reply generally is a little vague. They say that it is the result of an idea of some kind of shyness (lûj alor)

According to some, the real origin of this practice is to be traced to the above belief which is prevalent in many parts of the world, that a magician can perform his magic on a person by knowing his name. So, one's name must be spoken as little as possible. The nearest and the dearest must be careful not to mention it. A wife or a husband is the nearest and dearest relative of a person. So, of all others, she or he must be the last person to speak the other's name, so that an enemy may catch it and practise, or get practised, magic through that name over that person.

I will refer in this connection, to the modern practice among civilized people who name their wives or husbands, but not in their usual forms. A husband or wife calls his wife or her husband by, what they call, "pet names." I beg to ask, if this practice also is not a relic of the old belief. They call each other by their names but not their real names but abbreviated or corrupted or changed names. That practice seems to have some connection with the belief to avoid uttering the real name falling on the ears of an evil-doer.

According to Herodotus, Carian women also did not name their husbands; but the reason was different. He says of the first settlers in Caria, that they "brought no wives with them when they came to settle in this country, but seized a number of Carian women, after they had killed their men: and on account of this massacre these women established a law and imposed on themselves an oath, and transmitted it to their daughters, that they would never eat with their husbands, nor ever call them by the name of husband, because they had killed their fathers, their husbands and their children, and they after so doing had forced them to become their wives. This was done in Mitetus."

Another view of the custom of not naming one's husband or wife, which I like to discuss here. May not this custom be the result of holding one's name very dear and well nigh sacred, too dear and sacred to be often mentioned and spoken? Or may not the custom be the joint result of both these views? Perhaps this custom has arisen from the point of view of respect for the opposite party, as in the case of God's name or the King's name not being mentioned.

This brings us to the question of not naming royal personages or dignitaries of the court. While talking to a king or to members of his family you must always use some set forms like Your Majesty, Your Royal Highness, Your Highness. In conversations with Governors or High ambassadors you are to say "Your Excellency." Similarly in Courts of Justice, you have to use words like "Your Lordship, Your Honour, Your Worship," etc. It will be wrong to use their individual names. All these restrictions are attributed to a sense of honour.

I will conclude my paper with a brief reference to some of Some tangible the tangible things referred to by Clodd as the magic is the means through which magic is exercised over a person.

<sup>1</sup> Bke I, 146, Clary's translation.

From what little I have heard and learnt of the practice of magic in our country, I do not know much of the influence of magic through blood, though we often hear of one's vomiting blood as the result of somebody's magic. I have heard about its influence through nails and hair, especially the latter. I have occasionally heard of the hair of children being clandestinely clipped for the purposes of magic. When a child's hair are thus inclandestinely clipped by somebody, the mother gets anxious. Here, the enemy, whoever he be, tries to harm the mother through her dear child. The harm to her dear child is more than harm to herself. Sometimes, the hair and the nails are said to have been clipped or cut forcibly so that the child bled. In that case, perhaps the blood as well as the hair and the nail are intended as vehicles of magic.

In my paper on "Two Iranian Incantations for burying Hair and Nails" <sup>1</sup> I have dwelt upon the old Iranian view about these. The custom of burying these probably arose at first from this fear of magic being worked through them.

Teeth also serve as means for magic. According to Mr. Clodd some tribes do not throw away fallen teeth, lest magic be worked through them. The Parsees also at one time buried the fallen teeth. Some tribes preserved fallen teeth, "so that the owner may not lack them at the resurrection and they do not throw them away lest "magic be worked through them."

"In Yorkshire when a child's tooth comes out it must be dropped in the fire and the following rhyme repeated: otherwise the child will have to hunt for the teeth after death—

"Fire, fire, tah' a becon,

An send our Johnny a good teeth ageean."

This idea of preserving the droppings of the body for resurrection, reminds me of the old Iranian custom of preserv-

<sup>1</sup> Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, Vol. VIII., No. 8, pp. 557-72. Vide my Anthropological Papers, Part I, pp. 340-354.

ing, for the purpose of resurrection, the bones of a dead person in, what are called, astodans or ossuaries, some of which we had received from Persia for our Museum.

Mr. Clodd refers to lucky and unlucky days for hair-cutting or nail-pairing. Among the Parsees; the Gâhambâr festival days and the Muktâd or Farvardegan days were the days on which it was considered irreligious to cut hair or pair nails.

Mr. Clodd quotes Sir James Frazer to say, that there were some tribes among whom there were "priests on whose head no razor has come through their life." That was so, and is so, even now, among Parsee priests. They never shave but simply clip the hair. When a Parsee priest got his head shaved, he was spoken of as relinquishing the profession of priesthood.

Mr. Clodd refers to several instances of saliva-magic and refers to the Bible for some instances. I know nothing of this kind of magic here on our side.

The portrait or his "Counterfeit presentment" is taken by some persons as "a part of his vulnerable Magic through self put at the mercy of a wonder-worker." Portrait. I have heard of some Parsees of the last century, who objected to being photographed under a belief that persons photographed or portrayed soon died. Mr. Clodd refers to a similar belief among some in Scotland. The belief of portraits having some elements of the living self of the persons whom they represented, is illustrated by what Lady Blunt says of her visit of some part of India. There, while showing to some purdah ladies her album, on turning the pages one after another, they came across the portraits of men. The ladies at once drew their purdahs or veils over their faces to prevent their being seen by the self or selves of the portraits.

<sup>1</sup> Vide my above paper on "Two Iranian Incantations for burying hair and nails."