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## THE CREATION OF THE FIRE IN THE IRANIAN MYTH

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### ABSTRACT

Fire, one of the four natural elements, has been a valuable and holy place among the ancient Iranians and the early Aryanian and over time and in the course of evolution, they had given a kind of the godhead to each of these elements and gifts were offered to the gods. Unlike the Zoroastrians in the Sassanid period, the Zarathustra believed that the fire is a gift from Ahuramazda to the people and knew it a mediation between the gods and the people. During the time, the Zoroastrian Iranians built the buildings called a fire temple in order to keep the fire which this principle entered the Zoroastrian religion that "the sun shouldn't shine on fire" and they were considered the different kinds for the fire. They kindled the fire in all religious ceremonies, happiness, and parties and believed that the fire temples represent three classes of social classes in Iranian society: clerics, kings, fighters, and farmers. The Iranian ancient kings on coins and inscriptions that have left of themselves used the fire role, too.

**Key words: Fire, Avesta, Zoroaster, Fire temple, Ahura Mazda**

### INTRODUCTION

The natural elements such as water, fire, soil and air had a very valuable place among the early Aryans and because the existence of these elements in their life and survival and their flocks was very important and during the time, this value and credit was converted to the worship of these elements so that in the

Iranian myth about the creation of the fire, they believed that the creation of the fire is associated with the creation of plants and of course, we see the same belief in the Indian people's belief that of course this belief is the result of their habit, they made the fire from rubbing two pieces of wood together and they

have granted the divine Origin and the communion to fire.[karnoy-1999-p.31] But some believed that the early Aryans worshiped some natural elements and were dualistic and later they have evolved and have allowed to the worship of the god of species and have worshiped them such as the god of water, the god of soil ,the god of fire and so on.[Motahari-1976-p.107] Some Greek historians believed that the early Aryans have granted the gifts and sacrifices to their gods[Herudet-1336-p.76]The ancient Aryans granted the gifts for the gods of sun, moon, earth, fire, water, wind and at first they Scarified just for these gods[Sykes-1990-p.133]The early Aryans have been pure in the worship of the nature but the clear sky and light , fire, wind and rain which they were their life instruments and they knew the darkness and dryness from the devils[Sykes-1990-p.137] Thus , they believed that the early and main form of the fire had been the same lightning which they had been counted in the constant battle between the gods of the light with the force of the illuminated spirits whichAre the carrier of the lightness , warmth and life with an evil spirits , darkness and dryness[Motahari-1976-p.204]In Avesta , fire is the name of the one of the gods of Mzdysn a "Azar Izad" the angle of Azar or the gods of species of Azar that has been often called the

son of Ahura Mazda . In Yasna 2, paragraph 7 has come "we worships Azar, son of Ahura Mazda" we will praise you Azar the holy and the son of Ahura Mazda and honesty cypress, we will praise all kinds of fire "[Motahari-1976-p.243] we can also notice this early belief in worshiping the natural elements from pre-Zoroastrian priests' titles which they said to priests "Azuran" means "guardian of fire" [Sykes -1990-p.135]

### **"Importance and place of fire among the Iranians"**

Fire had has a high position and rank among the Iranians and has been living in the house of all believers and religious persons and on the earth as the divinity manifestation of Ahura Mazda and they flamed fire in all the celebrations and religious ceremonies and they granted a special respect to the holy fire which held in the temple fire with wood and aroma [karnoy-1999-p.184] The holy fire had been always under the care and under the supervision and attempted to keep it light [Abdullahi-1979-p.184] Of course the Zoroastrian faith and look at fire had not been like modern Zoroastrians and the Zoroastrian counts it a gift and a donatation from god to the people .In one of Gahata's poems ,the Zoroaster says : "when I present a gift to Azar the holy, I knows myself a righteous and honest." The Zoroaster had believed that the

fire is a holy mystery and a precious sign from Ahura Mazda by which it we can discover the nature and essence of the wise god [Motahari-1976-p.244] It hasn't been left nothing from the ceremonies and the worshipment rules and religious actions and since it is known that Zoroaster has abolished the ceremonies and customs of the early Aryans which was accompanied by the superstition and magic and Zoroaster has left just one custom and a worship so that said: "Zoroaster during doing the ceremony of the worshipment , he has been murdered at the altar of the holy fire[Motahari-1976-p.244]Historically ,however ,we cannot notice that Zoroaster has been the opposite of the sanctification and bowing of the fire .

### "Type of fire in Avesta"

In Avesta , the place of the fire is enough high and holy and "Knows it the mediation between god (Ahura Mazda) and his slaves and of course, in the maternal world ,guarding and keeping of the fire is "Amesha Spend Ordibehasht's" responsibility [Abdullahi-1979-p.184].In Avesta ,the emphasis has been very much on not polluting the natural elements so that

In" the third principle of the three principles of Zoroaster implies not polluting the four elements: air , water , fire and soil and knows them pure in this religion [Sykes-1990-p.141]

Krystian in his valuable book "Iran at the Sassanid time" has noted a variety of fire and he names five types of fire:

1. Brzysveh: the fire of temples (which has said it the fire and Hram) and it is a fire that is used in ordinary applications.
2. Vhoufrayaneh: means the fire that it hides in the body of people and animals.
3. Oruazyshteh: means the fire that hides in the plants.
4. Vazyshteh: means the fire that is in the cloud, means the same as lightning
5. Spneishted: the fire that burns in the heaven in the presence of Ahura Mazda.

Of course, Carnoy also names these fires in his book with a little difference.

1. Brzy Soongeh (very useful): Bahram's fire; means the holy fire ignites in the presence of Ahura Mazda and it keeps in the fire temples.
2. Vohoufryan(good friend): a fire that is igniting in the body of people and animals and keep them warm.
3. Orvazysht(very refreshing) : a fire that is burning in the plants and as a result of rubbing , it raises flames .
4. Vazysht(sharp) : electrical-sky fire which purifies the azure dome
5. Span Jaghri; it destroys an evil demon
6. Sapnest(very holy) : it radiates in the presence of Ahura Mazda in heaven.

Of course , Avesta names the other fire called " are you Sang or Nryousang " which is a royal fire which is the peak between people and the gods and it is by the kings because the kings enjoy " divine glory " [Karnoy-1999-p.37] The manifestation of the earthly world of this kind of the fire has been "glory" in Pahlavi and Persian language is the same glory and fortune that has been continuous with the real Aryan kings [Kristian-1994-p.103] In addition to the royal fire, there has been also belief in the other fires such as the fire of a house , the fire of the temples are places which have been called Aduran fire and Vehram(Bahram)fire which seems Aduran fire was special to small fire temples and Vehram fire has belonged to larger regions'temples at the end of the Sassanian era. Every family had has a fire and the head of the family should be careful not to go out. Every village also had a fire known as Azuran and each block also had a fire called Bahram fire [Peerniya-2010-p.225] In all governmental and civilized periods of Iran , we faced the important place of the fire which has santificed and respectful. Of course, this position has been different in different periods. At the time of the Achaemenidae, the Achaemenian kings hadn't religious fanaticism , and left every nation to its own beliefs ,and in this period, the Iranians

worshiped Ahura Mazda as a main god and they worshiped the natural elements such as water, fire, soil and air after the main god [peerniya-2010-p.112] During the Parthians , the fire also respected[Feray-1385-p.321] In the Parthians period told to the clergymen "guardian of a fire temple " , and this expression is read the guardian of a fire temple in modern Persian[peerniya-2010-p.160] In the Sassanid era, they also believed that "the fire is god's daughter"[Motahari-1976-p.160] In the religious ceremony of the Sassanid era, the fire had a special sanctification and respect and it was the manifestation of "Asha " and it located on the center of ceremonies and it used to remove the evils and to attract the satisfaction of the deities.

### **"Keeping from the fire"**

According to historians' research until before the Achaemenid , the fire burned in the fireplace , but little by little as a result of different factors attempted to build a building for keeping the fire and as a result of different factors such as for keeping the eternal fire needed to build a building to be secure against the natural factors and little by little ,it caused this custom in the Zoroasterian religion that "the sun shouldnot shine on fire" [Abdullahi-1979-p.784] Krystiansn , the famous Danish historian, also has the same belief and he

knows to build the fire temple in the Zoroasterian religion "keeping the eternal fire from the natural elements. In each fire temple, there was a special place for igniting the fire which no one was allowed to enter it except "Aturban" the fire guard priest. He went to the fire while he closed a "Pnam" (muzzle) on his mouth in order to not polluting the fire of his breath [Motahari-1976-p.26]

### **"Important fire temples"**

About the principle and the fundamental of building and locating the place of the Zoroastrian famous temples has mentioned the different narratives, but most historians invariably name three main fire temples of ancient Iran. Origin goes back Azar Berzin Mehr temple until before the Zoroaster and it goes to Goshtasb time. Azar Barzin Mehr was in circulation until the Goshtasb period, he was the shelter of the world until the Zoroaster brought the religion Anosheh Ravan, Goshtasb accepted the religion, then Goshtasb built Azar Barzin Mehr in the mountains Rievand. [Motahari-1976-p.254] Know the origin of the fire temple Azar Frenbgh at the time of the story king, Tahmoores on the mountain Khorrovamand in Kharazm. [Kristiansen-1994-p.119] But Pierniya in his book, the complete history of Iran believes that "Azar Fahrenbogh built in Karyan in Fars province that has been

assigned to clergymen", Azar Ghasnesb Located on Shyes in Azerbaijan which had been belonged to the king and the fighters and the kings went there on foot after a coronation. Azar Barzin Mehr was assigned to the class of the sower in Rivand in Khorasan. [Pirniya-2010-p.225] But some of the Other researchers have the other opinions and know their origin the mythological origin : according to religious tradition of the Zoroastrians in the Sassanid period , the first fire temple had been built by Jamshid the mythological king, the fire temple Azar Ghashnesb had been built by Kay Khoosro the fighting king and the fire temple Azar Barzin Mehr had been built by Vyshtasb, the supporter of the Zoroaster. [Abdullahi-1979-p.185] , but in the traditions of the Zoroastrian clergymen has been come " this three fires belonged to the three class of Iran's social classes". According to mythological stories, three sons of the Zoroaster, each of them had been the founder of one of the above-said classes: Azar Frenbogh, fire of clergymen Azar Ghasnesb, fire of fighters' class or the king's fire Azar Barzin Mehr, farmer's class [Kristiansen-1994-p.119], he believes that the place of these three fire temples has been known in the Sassanian era and according to common narratives, the fable kings have

putted these three fires in those places before the Achaemenid.

### "Design of fire on the kings' coin"

Many of the Sassanid kings have used the design of the fire temple and fire on their coins, including: Ardeshir I, is the founder of the Sassanid dynasty who has engraved the picture of the fire temple with writing "Ardeshir's fire on the coin".[Sayks-1990-p.92] On the back of the coin, there were Fars rulers, the Seleucid tributary, sees the face of the fire temple. Also it sees the picture of the brazier on the coin of Shapour I. It often sees the word "fire" on the edge of the first Sassanid kings' coins to Yazdgerd II. [Kerstiansen-1994-p.115] The picture of a fire temple on the coins had been the Iranian national symbol.

### CONCLUSION

With regard to my limited studies, in addition to being added to my knowledge, I realized that four natural elements such as water, fire, soil and air which each of them are very important to continue human life, each of them had a very important place among the early humans and particularly the place of the fire has been very higher and more important so that they have used the fire at the entire

religious customs, celebrations, parties so that the national symbol of the Iranians who had chosen the Zoroastrianism was seen as the fire, however, during the time and by evolving this religion causes the error and the duality and contrary to the Zoroaster's belief and teachings who knows the fire a gift and a present from Ahura Mazda. The Iranian Zoroastrians in the Sassanid period have worshiped the fire as a god beside Ahura Mazda and they innovated the buildings and special customs to keep the fire and not polluting it.

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