

## fravahr-cihr, fravaši-nature

If we don't regard the Iranian ideas on fravaši, we must accept that they spoke of a number of *fravašis*. Av. *fravaši*, Pers. *fravahr*, Sogd. *fravart(i)* are all used in different meanings.

One Avestan meaning of the fravaši is an example or form of all (righteous) people existing together with Ahura Mazdā; This fravaši precedes the *dahišn* 'material creation'. These fravašis are divided into the three Indo-European functions<sup>1</sup>. The fravaši festival (Pers. *fravardīgān*, which the Parsis call *muktād*) is bound to the Hamaspaθmaēdaya gāhāmbār, which corresponds to the Summer Solstice<sup>2</sup>, that is, the five additional days after the end of Spəntā Ārmaiti's month (*panzag* 'epagomena')<sup>3</sup>; Perhaps this could explain why the first month of summer was called *fravardīn* (< Av. *fravašinām*) by the Persians. The Sogdian magi named this month *navasardic*, Xvārizmian magi *nāvsārci*<sup>4</sup> (both meaning 'new year'), and Sakastānian magi *gvād* (< Ir. *vāta-* 'wind'; In Gujarati of Parsis we find *guvād* 'wind'). Bērōnī correctly identifies the Sogdian festival on the five stolen (Ar. المسترقة) days at the end of the Xšumic month (equal to Spəntā Ārmaiti month) with the fravardīgān of Persians: "At the end of the Xšumic month, the Sogdians weep and cry for their ancestors and bring them bread and wine."<sup>5</sup> This must be compared with the despise of Mazdayasnians for 'weeping and crying'<sup>6</sup>. Perhaps from this association of fravardīgān and the dead Sogd. *fravart* took the meaning 'corpse, grave' (*fravart-katē* 'grave, graveyard'). This word is found only in Christian texts<sup>7</sup>, and its meaning must be understood in the context of Christian 'soul' and death.

Fravahr finds a new meaning in Manichaean literature: Ether. If the Sakastānian magi place the month of 'wind' instead of fravardīn, they must equate wind and fravaši. Mani names one of the five elements as fravahr 'ether' (Gr. *ἄῆρ*, Lat. *aer*,

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<sup>1</sup> Bd. 60-61 speaks of the fravahr ī arteštārān ahlavān 'fravaši of the righteous charioteers'. Cf. VZ 3.3, Yt. 13.17.

<sup>2</sup> See: Asha, [The Avesta Periods of the Year](#), pp. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Yt. 13. 49 speaks of *dasa ... xšafnō* 'ten nights'.

<sup>4</sup> The first month of the Armenian calendar is also called *navasard*. Cf. Karst (1948), *Mythologie arméno-caucasienne et hétéro-asianique*, pp. 84.

<sup>5</sup> *Vestiges of the Past*, 1.8.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Dk ix. M 799.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Sims-Williams (1985), *The Christian Sogdian Manuscript C2*, word index.

Syr. ܐܪܝܪܐ, Ar. نسيمة, Uygh. *tintura*, Ch. 氣 (qì)<sup>8</sup>. Pers. (*ardāv*) *fravahr* ‘element’<sup>9</sup> descends from Av. *ašaonī- fravaši-*.

In the here we’re not dealing with those previous meanings, though all descend from *\*pra-ur̥ti-*.<sup>1</sup> We deal with a *fravaši* that’s inside the peoples’ bodies, and we must identify its function. *urvan* and *fravaši* are two individuals (Pers. *stī*) in the body. *urvan* is free-willed, and it functions freely. This *fravaši* is natural, and it functions instinctively.<sup>1</sup> This explains why the Dēnkird calls it *fravaši-nature* “*fravahr-cihr*.” The Rāsta also says that “*fravahr* is called *ṭab* ‘(nature)’ in Arabic.”

Next we shall see the diagram of the human and the universe according to the Dēnkird iii. 263 (M 278-279) to find the place of *fravahr-cihr*.

*abar gēhān tan, u-š amēzišnīg tan ristagān; hān ī-š ruvān-z arāyēnāg ud sūdēnāg; u-š višōbāg ud zyānēnāg; ud arāyišn ud sūd, višōbišn ud zyān cēth ud bun.*

*1. gēhān tan, ātaš, āb ud zamīg ud ayoxšust ud urvar ud gōspend ud mardōm. cōn mardōm tan: mazg ud xūn ud rahag ud pay ud ast ud pid ud mōy.*

*2. ud gēhān amēzišnīg tan ristagān: ādur, vād ud ×nam ud gil. cōn mardōm tan: vād, xūn, viš ud ×rīm.*

*3. ud gēhān ristagān rāyēnāg ud kārīgēnāg: cihr ātaš ud vād, ped peymān sāzišnīh ud hamīh.*

*cōn mardōm tan hamēnāg ud kārīgēnāg ristagān: fravahr-cihr <ud> vād -gyān-, ped <peymān sāzišnīh ud> hamīh.*

*4. ud gēhān zīvēnāg: abargār vāy, ī ped ēvāz ī gēhān xvānend-iz vāy; ud dēn, mēnōg ī vāy ī-z rāyēnīdār gōbed.*

*cōn mardōm tan zīvēnāg: ×uštānomand vād, ī ast gyān.*

*5. gēhān ×rāyēnāg: ruvān-cihr svāš, ī rah-iz, <ud> ped gēhānīg ēvāz spihr-z xvānīhed.*

*cōn mardōm tan ×rāyēnāg bōyomand ruvān.*

*6. ud gēhān arāyēnāg ud sūdēnāg: rah-ravišn rošn bayān.*

*cōn mardōm arāyēnāg ud sūdēnāg: vahman ped-ox-mehmānīh.*

<sup>8</sup> Henning (1977), Selected Papers II, pp. 28-29.

<sup>9</sup> Manichaean Parth. *ardāv fravardīn*, Manichaean Sogd. *artāv fravarti* (and in one occasion, *frān*.)

<sup>1</sup> For older studies, Cf. Lonfmeil (1930), Die Religion Zarathustras, pp. 160; Bailey (1943). Zoroastrian Problems, pp. 107-109; Malandra (1971) The 'Fravaši Yašt', pp. 8. From newer studies, see: Pirart (2001), *Avestan* ʃ, pp. 126-131.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dk iii. 123 (M 122) *juđ hend ruvān ud fravahr ēk az did, pad hān ī ruvān kāmagomand ud kāmīkkar, fravahr cihromand ud cihrikkār.*

7. *ud gēhān višōbāg ud zyānēnāg: azēr-rah-ravišn-bayān pe-šān kārīh pedyāragān: dvārīg gayōg, ī abāxtar-z xvānīhed.*  
*cōn mardōm višōbāg ud zyānēnāg: akōman ped rāhdārīh ī andrag ox ud menišn.*
8. *gēhān ×ārāyišn ud sūd: bayīg peymān, zāhag ī zīndagīh ud drustīh, ud rōyišn, ud vaxšišn, ud pezāmišn.*  
*cōn mardōm ārāyišn ud sūd: vahmanīg dānāgīh ud kirbag ud husravīh ud ahlavīh.*
9. *ud gēhān višōbišn ud zyān: gayōgīg frāybūd ud abēbūd, vēmārīh ud margīh ud nirfišn ud pūdagīh ud gennāgīh cardār.*  
*cōn mardōm višōbišn ud zyān: akōmanīg dušāgāhīh ud bazag ud durvandīh ud dušsravīh.*
10. *ud gēhān ud mardōm ārāyišn ud sūd bun: dādār ī gēhān ped frāxīh ud vazurgīh, ud mardōm ped hangirdīgīh ī gēhān ēvēnag.*
11. *ud gēhān ud mardōm višōbišn ud zyān bun: abar-rasišnīh ī jud-gōhr, ī dēnīg 'ebgad' nām.*
12. *ēd ī gēhān az xvēš ham-gōhr ārāyišn, ud nē višōbišn, astīh pēdāg az dādār ī gēhān ped frāxīh ud vazurgīh, ud mardōm ped hangirdīgīh ī gēhān ēvēnag, gēhān ud mardōm višōbišn būdan guftan-z nē sazed.*
13. *ud kēšdārān kē-šān anī bun ī anāgīh aziš nēstīh kēš ī-šān anāgīh bun ō hān ī nēkīh bun peyvast, ham bun az hamāg anāg anāgdar, ud az harv vad vattar guft baved.*

Translation:

“About the body of the universe, and the elements of (that) body in the mixed state; those which regulate and render useful the soul, and those which disturb and damage it; the essence and origin of regulation and use, and the essence and origin of disturbance and damage.

1. The universe’s body: fire, water, earth, metal, plant, cattle and humans  
Like the human body: brain, blood, vein, nerve, bone, flesh and hair.
2. The elements of the universe’s body in the mixed state: fire, wind, water and earth.  
Like the human body’s elements: wind, blood, bile and phlegm.
3. The governor and abler elements of the universe’s body: fire-natured and wind-natured, in temperate harmony and unity.  
Like the equalizer and abler elements of the human body: fravaši-nature and wind - vyāna-, with temperate harmony and unity.

4. The life-giver of the universe's body: *vayaoš uparō.kairyehē*<sup>1</sup>, which the people<sup>2</sup> call wind, and also the Daēnā (= Avesta) calls it the Governor Wind Spirit.

Like the life-giver of the human body: animated wind, that is *vyāna* (breath-soul).

5. The leader of the universe's (body): the urvan-natured firmament<sup>1</sup>, also called chariot<sup>1</sup>, and called by the people sphere.

Like the leader of the human body: perceptive urvan.

6. The regulator and useful-maker of the universe: bright-souled fixed-stars<sup>1</sup> that are moving in the chariot.

Like the regulator and useful-maker of humans: *Vohu Manah* that is guested in the *Ahu* (chest).

7. The disturbers and harmers of the universe: Those who are moving under the chariot against the fixed-stars, the wandering thieves<sup>1</sup> that are called 'planets'.

Like the disturbers and harmers of humans: *Aka Manah* that infiltrates *Ahu* and *Manah* (chest and heart).

8. Regulation and benefit of the universe: *Baya*-like temperance, the mother of life, health, blossom, growth and maturation.

Like the regulation and benefit of humans: knowledge, good deed, well fame and righteousness by *Vohu Manah*.

9. Disturbance and harm of the universe: thief-like extravagance and extra-restraint, the mother of sickness, death, decrease, rot and fester.

Like the disturbance and harm of humans: misinformation, bad deed, wickedness and bad fame by *Aka Manah*.

10. The origin of regulation and benefit of the universe and humanity: the creator of the universe in greatness and eminence, and the creator of humanity as the sum of the universe (microcosm).

11. The origin of disturbance and harm of the universe and humanity: the arrival of the opposite substance, which's religious term is 'Assault.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Y. 22.24. Cf. Yt. 15.4 *vayuš yō uparō.kairyō*. Aside from *Vayu*, in the Avesta this epithet is applied to the *fravašis*, Kayanian glory and *Tištrya*.

<sup>1</sup> Av. *θβāša*- 'firmament' <<sup>3</sup>\**tyarta*-

<sup>1</sup> Pers. *rah*, Av. *raθa*, Skt. *ṛátha*.

<sup>1</sup> Av. *baga*/*baya*-

<sup>1</sup> Pers. *gayōg*/*gayag* render<sup>§</sup> Av. *gaða*- 'thief, robber' (Sogd. *γad*, Pasht. *γal*.)

<sup>1</sup> Av. *aiβi.gaiti*, Pers. *ebgađ*, Zand: *abar-rasišnih*. Cf. Vd. 9.6.

12. That the universe gains regulation and not disturbance from something of the same substance is evident from the creator of the universe in greatness and eminence, and creator of people as the sum of the universe: It cannot be said that from him is any disturbance of the universe and humanity.

13. The sectarians who do not accept another origin, that is an origin for evil, unifies the origin of good with the origin of evil. Such origin is called more evil than all evil and worse than all the bad.”

Thus the material world is composed of the four elements fire, wind, water and earth, comparable to:

	Manichaeian	Sanskrit	Greek
Fire	ādar	jvalaná/agní	πῦρ
Wind	vād	vāyú	αἴρ
Water	āb	jalá	ὔδωρ
Earth	rošn	pr̥thivī	γῆ

Only Mani, out of despise for the world, replaces earth with ‘light’. The fifth element is the sphere, which resembles the urvan of the universe: Av. *θβαῖσα* ‘firmament’; Pers. *rah* ‘chariot’; Skt. *ākāśa* ‘sky’; Gr. *αἰθήρ* ‘ether’; the same thing Mani calls *fravahr*.

The human body is also made up of four humors (Ar. *خلط*): Wind, Blood, Bile and Phlegm. This is different from the doctrine of Hippocrates and Ayurveda. The Greek medic identifies four “waters”. Blood (*αἷμα*), Phlegm (*φλέγμα*), Yellow Bile (*μέλαινα χολή*), Black Bile (*ξανθη χολή*)<sup>1</sup>. The Indian medic identifies three *doṣa*: Wind (*vāta*), Bile (*pitta*), and Foam/Phlegm (*kapha / śleṣman*)<sup>1</sup>. Another fragment<sup>9</sup> of that Iranian notion is found in the Preface of Burzōy to his translation of Pañcatantra.<sup>2</sup>

In the world, the wind and fire of nature regulate and make able the elements by temperate harmony. The Dēnkird separates the wind and fire as humors from the natural wind and fire. Two are the material principles of the world itself, while the

<sup>1</sup> *χυμός* has been loaned to Šyriac as *kwmws*, and translated by *ḥlṭ*. In Pārsīg it has been glossed by *āb*. Cf. VZ 30.14.

<sup>1</sup> Zādspram takes ‘foam’ to mean ‘phlegm’. Cf. VZ 30.16: *pēšōbāy az amēzišnān, xūn ō dil šaved, ud pas andar ayārdēnišn ×kaf bē dil abganed...* ‘before the mixing, the blood goes to the heart, and after boiling throws foam out of the heart.’

<sup>2</sup> See: Asha, [Burzōy and the Persian Medicine](#), pp. 3.

two other are natural phenomenon in the world itself. Accordingly, in the human body the wind and fravaši-nature equalize and make able the elements. This wind is not the same humor wind, it is the breath that humans inhale and exhale. In the heart, the wind is given life (animated) by the power of the fire in the heart. In the stomach too fire digests food and water. The Avesta speaks of the Vohu Fryāna fire in humans and animals (Y. 17.11 ātrəm vohu.fryānəm). Bundahišn (123) explains it thus:

*ātaš ī vohufryān ī vizāred veh-franāftār hān ī andar tan ī mardōmān ud gōspendān... az avēšān panz ātaš ēk <āb ud> xvarišn harv dō xvared. cōn hān ī andar tan ī mardōmān, ī ped kumīg dād ēsted. u-š xvarišn ud āb gugārdan xvēškārīh.*

“The Vohu Fryāna fire, which is translated ‘well advancer’ is in the body of humans and animals... from those five fires, one eats both water and food, like the one in the body of humans, given in the stomach, and its function is digesting food and water.”

Comparing with the Ayurvedic terminology, that wind resembles the *vyāna* and this fravaši(-nature) resembles the *samāna*.<sup>2</sup> 1

Comparing with Greek medicinal terminology, natural wind is inhaled and enters the heart’s left chamber, the place of implanted heat (ἔμφυτον θερμόν). Here it becomes life-wind (πνεῦμα ζωτικόν, روح حیوانیة), and circulate the blood through the veins to the whole body.<sup>2</sup> 2

It could be said that *vyāna* is wind-natured, and fravaši(-nature) fire-natured. Then the fire in the heart, the fire in the stomach and the fire in the head are all fravaši-nature (against the view of Zādspram)<sup>2</sup>. Wind keeps fire alive, and fire is the fravaši and runner of wind. *Vyāna* is the body’s life-giver, and this fravaši is the body’s keeper.<sup>2</sup> 4

<sup>2</sup> On the bodily winds in ancient India see: Zysk (1993), *The Science of Respiration and the Doctrine of the Bodily Winds in Ancient India*; — (2007), *The Bodily Winds in Ancient India Revisited*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Sigerist (1961), *A History of Medicine: Volume 2: Early Greek, Hindu, and Persian Medicine*, pp. 326.

<sup>2</sup> VZ 30.23 believes *Vyāna*<sup>3</sup> to be of the same substance as fire. Surely, Dk iii. 123 (M 123) is more correct:

*fravahr, ped ātaš-cihr, uštānēnag ī vād; ped vād-uštānīh zīvēnīdār ī tan.*

<sup>2</sup> Mardānfarrokh calls fravaši “keeper and grower of the body”. Cf. ŠGV 5.87 *fravahr ī xvad cihr ī dāštār ī tan.*

8.60: *zōr ī dārāg ud parvarāg ī cihr hamkār, ī dēnīg fravaši xvānīhed.*

If the temperate harmony of natural wind and fire is interrupted, the world is disturbed, the earth quakes and volcanos erupt. Accordingly, if the temperate harmony of the fravaši(-nature) and wind is interrupted, the body is disturbed and sicknesses become common.<sup>2</sup>

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Manušcihr calls vyāna the “life-giver” and fravaši the “keeper”. Cf. DD 2.13. *gyān ī zīvēnāg ud fravahr ī dārāg. ud vīr ayābāg, ud uš ī pāyāg, ud xrad ī vizīnāg.*

Zādspram (VZ 30.35) incorrectly translates fravaši by *frāz-vaxšēnīdār* and gives an incorrect view of it.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dk iii. 93 (M 89.)<sup>5</sup>