

Fareshgard Kardari (= Renovation of the World at the End)

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ABSTRACT

The term Fareshgard (in Avesta: -frašō-kərətay) means renovation and reconstruction of the universe which is done by Fareshgard Kardaran or Saviors at the end of the world. These saviors, are immortals and their aims are to deliver perfect beings. As mentioned in Pahlavi texts, they are 15 males and 15 females and their faces are quite clear. Based on these texts, the ultimate victory of Hormozd over demon is the day in which the world ends and no sign of evil and badness remains on earth and thanks to the saviors, the world would be clear of any suffering. Avestan texts do not provide us with a clear picture of the idealistic world and just generally name the saviors who are the builders of this world. In Gatha (a part of the ancient Avesta) the saving occurs when the truth defeats the lie and the truthful prevails up on the liar.

The Savior (Soshyant) in Gatha is the Zoroaster himself. But in the new Avesta, especially in Yashts (Farvardin Yasht and Zamyad Yasht), compared to Gatha, this subject is more extended and Soshyant is not Zoroaster or any other honest individual, but he is the last creature that his soul is praised and if the Ormazd creation starts with Kiomarth, it finishes with him as well. In this article the authors try to discuss about the Fareshgard and Fareshgard kardaran (those who play major role in the reconstruction of the world at the end) and cite examples regarding this subject from Avesta and Pahlavi texts.

KEYWORDS: Fareshgard, saviors, Soshyant, resurrection, creation

1. INTRODUCTION

Achieving a world clear of sadness and cruelty in which force and tyranny don't rule on people has always been in mind of mankind and its signs can be found in remained manuscripts of different periods. Evidence regarding this idea and a world free of misery and depression and hatred can be found in religious texts of ancient and middle ages of Iran. Based on these relics, thanks to the saviors the world, at the end, would be free of all miseries and the mankind will live in an actual world by the extent of the whole earth rather than imaginary cities with closed towers inside iron gates, and will fulfill all their good wishes (Rashed Mohassel, 2002:39).

"Fareshgard" is a term for the end of the world, i.e. the world which will be built with the advent of Oshidar, Oshidarmah, and Soshyant (three sons of Zoroaster). This term originally means the renovation of the world or mankind and is also used to refer to the doomsday (Tafazzoli, 2006:24).

In the doomsday, all people in past will be resurrected with their last body. The last body is the one which creatures will be raised in it at the doomsday and will always remain in it. The last body is also synonymous with the resurrection (Zener, 1998:140).

In the old Persian inscriptions we see the term "frašam" indicating that the Achaemenian were also familiar with this term (Rashed Mohassel, 2001:51).

Other concept for Fareshgard (fraškart/d) is "what makes evolution, growth, and integrity" (Mackenzie, 2000:73).

When the promised world comes, a world full of goodness and light, "asha"- divine spirit of truth and justice- will rule the world without a hitch. Based on Zoroastrian beliefs, a true believer and follower is the one who follows "aša" and belongs to him. Such a person is called "ašavan" and he is blessed and praised in his earthen life as well (Kabar, 2007:98).

In the "Andarz ushnardana" (one of Zoroastrian advice letters), paragraph 55, there is:

"Ormazd has created the whole universe, the resurrection and the next world. He will make all his creatures eternally clean and free of hunger and thirst and diseases and he will have victory over the demon (gannāgmēnōg) after nine thousand years.

Fareshgard has other meanings as well. Bartholome has translated this term as "renovation and completion of the world" (Bartholome, 1961:1134). Nyberg has cited "frašō.kara-" as one of the three adjectives for "Izad-

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Bahram" (victory deity) and has translated it as "to brighten" (Nyberg, 1977:73). Gershevitch translates the first part with "frāšmī" as shining and generally translates Fareshgard as "brightening the world" (Gershevitch, 1946:57).

Fareshgard embodies the glory of the final era. An era in which everywhere is full of happiness and the evil spirit has been defeated, and the world and its residents are immersed in light (Rashed Mohassel, 2006:114).

Soshyants all have good characteristics and by the help of these good qualities they can make the desirable world. The world in which all ideals and wishes have come true and goodness has reached its peak.

"They will be the Soshyants of countries. Those who acknowledge you by religious book and instructions of Asha (the angle of truth) and Bahman (the angle of good word). Hey Mazda! You are the created as pure force against satanic force" (Yasna 48, paragraph 12) (Humbach, 1991:204).

Soshyants are those whose goals are consistent with what Ormazd thinks and they try to establish the truth.

Although what can be found about the public figures at the end of the world in new Avesta is brighter and more frequent than Gatha, compared to middle Persian texts, it is ambiguous. In the new Avesta (Farvardin Yasht and Zamyad Yasht), Soshyant is no longer Zoroaster or any other creature with good idea, but he is the last creature that his soul is praised and if the Ormazd creation starts with "Kiomarh", it also finishes with him (Pour Davood, 1998:65).

"We praise the good Faravahar from Kiomarh to the victorious Soshyant" (Farvardin Yasht, paragraph 145) (Pour Davood, 1998:109).

Among adjectives dedicated to Soshyant, "victorious" is more dominant compared to others because he will free all the mankind from misery and torment and will prevail over everything (Farvardin Yasht, paragraph 142) (Pour Davood, 1998:108).

The Gatha (the old Avesta) does not give a clear image of this world and just generally names the saviors, makers of this world, and this saving that Gatha promises will come when truth prevails over lie and truthful prevails over liar (Rashed Mohassel, 2002:75).

"The one who has fought with demons and people who were against him (=Zoroaster). He is among those who are loyal to him (=Zoroaster). Such a person is your friend, brother and father with his religion (= conscience). Ahura Mazda, the Lord, will save us all" (Yasna 45, paragraph 11) (Humbach, 1991:173).

Apart from the literal meaning of Fareshgard, "Fareshgard sazan" - the saviors of the end of the world- are mentioned in Avestan and middle Persian texts.

DISCUSSION

Fareshgard Kardaran or Saviors in Avesta are known as Soshyant. This term comes from the root su/sav meaning "progress". In middle Persian texts it is seen as sūdōmand (Abolghasemi, 1997:147).

From etymological point of view, there are several theories for this term. Bartholome and Guillemin mean it as "the savior", Lumel as "the assistant" (Lumel, 1927, p. 123), Humbach as "the strengthener" and Kellens introduces it as "the advancer" (Kellens, 1989:86).

Equivalent of the root "su" is "šu", meaning to grow. Moghaddam translates the root – šu as "to release", Pour Davood as "benefit", and Abolghasemi as "the one who will save" (Rashed Mohassel, 2002:35).

Their special characteristics include: 1) they are the wisest people and their knowledge is analogous to "Asha" (God of truth), i.e. they have innate wisdom, 2) they possess "Kiani Farreh" (kingdom Farreh), 3) they are always victorious, 4) they obey the good idea, 5) they are destroyers of furious demons, and 6) they are from the race and semen of Zoroaster.

From the ironic references of Avesta can be realized that the followers of Mazda continuously are attempting to achieve a desirable world and are waiting for the day that all their legitimate desires can be met and all hostility and dishonesty, deceit and trickery does not work. Zoroaster tries to achieve such a request and seeks help from Ormazd for destroying evils (Pour Davood, 2008:78).

Soshyants- true followers of Mazda- have also the same goal and want to make a world with no corruption and to eliminate hollow and false ideas, false beliefs, and all human's weaknesses. They want to destroy the world of glamour and deceit and make a new palace on its ruins. Characteristics of this world often can be inferred from the clear signs and hints of Avesta and sometimes from Soshyants' qualities- decorators of this system (Amoozgar, 1995:79).

The world which the Soshyants make is a world that there is a Ormazd force against every evil force, and eventually these Ormazd forces win their nefarious competitors.

"Hey Mazda! The way you showed me is the way of good idea. Based on that, good religions (consciences) made by Soshyants go along with Asha towards rewards you have dedicated to those fine creatures" (Yasna 34, paragraph 13) (Humbach, 1991:113).

In fact, those goals are consistent with what Ormazd thinks and they try to establish the truth. In Gatha this term in singular form often stands for Zoroaster that sometimes asks Ormazd to give him knowledge and wisdom to realize his reward (Zener, 2009:520).

He gains this victory some times by the spiritual weapon of good thought, good deed and good word, and as "Freydoon" dominated "Zahhak", fights with the manifestation of uncleanness using an iron mace (Zamyad Yasht, paragraph 92)(Insler, 1975:131).

"and he puts away the harms of all the demons and people"(Farvardin Yasht, paragraph 142) (Pour Davood,1998:108).

Thanks to the saviors, the world will show its lovely face. A world in which wishes have come true and happiness is eternal.

"And Amshaspandan are those who will renovate the world- a world without senility and death, and full of perpetuity and happiness. When the dead rise again and the living ones are not afraid of death anymore, the world will be renovated by Soshyant (Zamyad Yasht, paragraph 19) (Pour Davood, 1998:334).

First Fareshgard was used to refer to the perfection of creatures, and Fareshgard Kardaran were immortals who assist Soshyant in renovation of the world at the end.

Their numbers in Pahlavi texts are very much. In Pahlavi Narrative, chapter 54, some of them have been named. Christiansen provides a list of immortals in his book- "Kianian". Based on this list it can be said that the number of immortals is not limited and based on various accounts new individuals have been added to this group (Christiansen,1957:220).

In Zadesparam texts, Fareshgard deed is like dark night and month and year When the dark night is over and sun will shine again and destroy the darkness. Its metaphor to year is in such a way that in the spring trees are blooming and in the fall their blossom ends and in the winter they look dry and dead (chapter 34, paragraph 27-25) (Rashed Mohassel, 2006:106).

In Zadesparam texts there are other descriptions of Fareshgard as well. According to this book, the creation of creatures, propagation of religion and Fareshgard deed are similar to building a house. As a house is made by three tools: the foundation, wall and roof, the creation of creatures is like foundation, propagation of religion is like the wall, and Fareshgard deed is like the roof(Rashed Mohassel, 2006:94).

"Pahlavi Narrative" (one of Pahlavi texts) reminds that for Ormazd renovation of the world is easier than first creation of the creatures "For Ormazd, creation of twelve things was more difficult than Fareshgard"(the renovation of the world at the end) (Mirfakhraee,1987:52).

First he created: the sky, Second: the earth, Third: the movable sun, Fourth: the movable moon, Fifth: the movable stars, Sixth: good crops, Seventh: different smells and tastes for plants, Eighth: fire inside the plants, Ninth: children inside mothers' belly, Tenth: the birds in the sky. Eleventh: the flowing waters, Twelfth: the clouds and their waters. (Bahar, 2006:40).

Bahram Varjavand, Peshutan, Oshidar, Oshidarmah and finally Soshyant¹ are those who play a role in building a new world and adornment of it.

In middle Persian texts, unlike Avestan texts, the world will not be released of corruption and adorned with goodness all of a sudden and by one person, but the world approaches the perfection step by step and the rules of the clean religion will spread everywhere (Zener, 1998:140).

In these texts, in addition to Soshyant, two other sons of the Zoroaster -Oshidar and Oshidarmah- are also mentioned that at the end of the world have the duty of destroying the badness and evil.

Each of these Mazda followers emerges at a millennium. Oshidar will be born at the end of the tenth century of Zoroastrian millennium from a maiden named "Namig Ped" that is descended from Zoroaster. In the age of Oshidar, God Mehr and the sun will stand in the zenith of the sky for ten days and nights, and plants will be ever green for three years (Amoozgar, 1995:77).

Oshidar, in his time, combats a wolf with a fictional body. He will oppresses Mazans that are from the demon' race and weaken going to extremes and strengthen moderation. Presence of the Malkos demon- the seven year old witch is another important event of Oshidar's era. This demon creates cold and rain with her magical effects at the end of Oshidar's millennium that people and sheep die. Malkos will die at the fourth winter by the curse of Mazda followers (Amoozgar, 1995:78).

Oshidarmah is "Veh ped" 's son(Mackenzie, 2000:68).

Major events in Oshidarmah's time include: the sun stands in the sky for twenty days and nights. Useless plants will not dry for six years. Sheep's milk is maximized, so that the milk of a cow is enough for thousand

1. here it refers to the name of the third son of Zoroaster

people. Senility decreases and lifetime increases. Friendship, generosity, reconciliation and happiness increase in the world (Rashed Mohassel, 2006:45).

In this millennium, Oshidarmah combats a snake 833 steps wide and 1656 steps long and that demon is melt with Yazesh (= religious rituals). In this era, Zahhak² will be released of Freydoon³ and restarts his reign over demons and people. Ormazd together with Amshaspandan provoke Garshasb⁴ and he kills Zahhak (Bahar: 2002:277).

At the end of the tenth century of Oshidarmah's millennium, a son named Soshyant will be born from a maiden named "Govag Ped" that is from Zoroaster's descended. Soshyant is bright like the sun, looks around with six eyes, and has "Kiani Farreh"⁵ (King Farreh). His life lasts only fifty seven years. His major works include: collapsing the Chichast pagoda and defeating Afrasiyab Tourani⁶. During this fifty seven years, Keykhosro is the governor and Soshyant is the leader of clerics. Before raising the dead, Soshyant prepares an army and goes to battle with Heresy demon. He throws that demon into the inferno by the help of Shahrivar Amshaspand. Soshyant's era is the time of perfection of life. All the two and four legged demons and devils will be destroyed, disease, senility, death, oppression and heresy and all evils will be gone. Plants will be always green and all creatures will live happily (Amoozgar, 1995:78).

At the end of each millenniums, the world is full of evils and sadness. a rotten world that everyone and everything are traveling to towards destruction. Misery, injustice, and inhumanity squeeze everyone's throat. A world where anyone cannot imagine.

Manifestations of chaos, ugliness, and evil symbolized as wolf and snake, will be faded away by religious forces and attempts of Fareshgardsazan (the saviors of the world at the end) and the top assistance of Ormazd (Pour Davood, 1998:300).

What is common in Pahlavi texts about resurrection and renovation of mankind after death is that ruined bodies will back again in their initial shape at the resurrection day, and Soshyant, together with his friends, adorn the "Anoosh" from the fat of "Hadyush" and " Hoom e Sepid" cows and gives it to people and as a result of it people become immortal(Kabar, 2007:164).

The world that will be built after the advent of the last saviors is same with the initial world in which there was no sign of demon and his followers. In this world, everything is based on religion and ruled by full power Ormazd. This world is adorned by the efforts of good men and this is not achieved without bloodshed. The truth has been established in the light of sharp blades and swords and manifestations of chaos, ugliness, and evil symbolized as wolf and snake, will be faded away by religious forces and attempts of Ormazd or by the sharp blade of heroes like Garshasb(Rashed Mohassel, 2006: 24).

When people pass away, their bones, vessels and fat goes to the earth, their blood is given to waters and their hair to trees for protection and Amshaspandan preserve them. As Ormazd decides to raise the dead, he commands them to bring back what they had on loan. Lives will be given to bodies again and people rise up again.

Soshyant resurrects the dead in fifty seven years. All the people will rise. Every person will be resurrected in a place where he/she dies. There everyone will see his good and bad.

The society will be based on good thought, good deed and good words and the dominant law will be the religion law. Oshidar will rule based on Hadmansari, Oshidarmah based on Dadi and Soshyant based on Gatha (Gatha is about spiritual world, Dadi is about material world and Hadmansari is the combination of these two rules)(Abolghasemi, 1996:7).

According to Zadesparam fulfillment of Fareshgard and adornment of the world depend on three main points which are mentioned in the "Ahunauuar" prayers:

1. Believing that Ormazd is all goodness without evil and demon is all evil without goodness.
2. Hoping for rewards for the righteous and dread for punishment of wicked, which leads to do good and to avoid the evil.
3. Cooperation of the creatures for doing good which leads to strengthen Ormazd and to weaken demon.

And by ultimate victory of Ormazd on demon the evils of the world finish(Rashed Mohassel, 2006: 105).

"Finally no creature will remain in the hostility state. All kinds of demons are defeated and suppressed. All the evils will be away of creatures. All creatures, who have light essence, will live in pureness, peace, comfort, satiety and full happiness" (Amoozgar, 2007:44).

2. the son of king Mardas

3. the son of Abtin

4. a divine force

5. the son of Sorite

6. a king of Tourani dynasty

CONCLUSION

The thought of achieving the ultimate victory and having a world in which all human wishes come true are clearly seen in Gatha. Ormazd, the Lord of universe, keeps this hope alive in hearts of the believers and promises to send Saviors for them. The Savior's duty is to guard and to watch the true world, the world which will be decorated shortly before the resurrection and the truth will prevail over lies. The Savior, in Avesta, is called "one who makes the progress" and the equivalent of this term in Pahlavi texts is "helpful". Soshyant has two dimensions in Avestan texts. As singular term, it represents the Zoroaster himself, and as plural term, it represents the faithful and honest friends of Zoroaster who help him in ruling countries and are staunch opponents of the wrath demon. In Pahlavi texts, this Saving is dedicated to the three sons of Zoroaster: Oshidar, Oshidarmah and Soshyant. Each of them, in every millennium, tries to achieve the ideal society, truth, honesty, reconciliation and destruction of demon. These good men strive to bring people to salvation as to leave material world and seek to reach eternal happiness. In doomsday in which the last resurrection and judgment occurs, the innocent will be separated from sinners, and all people will be resurrected in the body in which they had died, and will have eternally life in heaven or hell.

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