





xšnaoθrahe ahurahe mazdā

Detail from above the entrance of Tehran's fire temple, 1286š/1917–18. Photo by © Shervin Farridnejad

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The 6th volume of DABIR is a Gedenkschrift to honour Hanns-Peter Schmidt (1930-2017), an excellent German scholar of Indo-Iranian studies, who mainly worked on the Vedas and the Gāthās, as well as Indian mythology and the Zoroastrian religion.

This volume of Dabir was supported by Ms. Mary Oloumi in memory of her father, Iradj Oloumi

The Zoroastrian Nīrangdīn Ritual and an Old Pahlavi Text with Transcription and Translation

Daṣtur Firoze M. Kotwal

Paper read at the Fifth European Conference of Iranian Studies, Ravenna, Italy held from
October 6 to 11, 2003

The Zoroastrian ritual of Nīrangdīn, as performed in Zoroastrian places of worship, involves the rite of consecrating pure water and bull's urine and is the foundation of all purity connected with the life of a devout Zoroastrian. The ritual has been transmitted from ancient Iran to the present day and is performed in the traditional Zoroastrian strongholds of India. In order to drive his point home, the author introduces an old Pahlavi text with exhaustive study.

Of all Zoroastrian ceremonies, the *Nīrangdīn* ceremony is considered to be the most exalted by devout Zoroastrians. It involves taking of the *barašnūm* by two full-fledged priests, followed by the performance of the *Yasna* in honour of *Mīnō Nāwar* for six consecutive days, both acting alternatively as *Zōt* or *Rāspīg* three times (*yašt ī 3 paywand*) in memory of the living or departed soul, and consecrating on the last day the clean running water (*āb*) and bull's urine (*gōmēz/pādyāb/nīrang*) in the night service of the *Vendīdād* celebrated in honour of *Srōš Yazad*. The bull's urine (*nīrang*) which is elevated through religious practices and observances (*dēn*) is known to be the consecrated bull's urine (*nīrangdīn*) as is understood by the learned Irani and Parsi priests. The ceremony has come down to this present day since time immemorial and is referred to briefly or in detail in Avestan and Pahlavi literature, e.g., in Vd. 9.32 (Pahlavi Commentary); Vd. 19.21-22; Ep. Man. I,

7.16-18 and II, 3.12; West 1882, Vol. 18:308-9, 340. Because of the importance attached to the ceremony which is called fittingly the “foundation of all ritual purity (*bun hamāg pādyābīh*)” in the Pahlavi text (para.15) under discussion, the learned priests of the Sasanian times seem to have given a comprehensive account of it in Pahlavi. The ritual priests of Iran were eager to preserve and transmit this beautiful piece of ritual for future generations, and hence they had appended it faithfully to the Avestan manuscripts of the *Vendīdād Sāda* as is borne out by ms. no. 58 of the Mullā Fīrūz Library written by Khusru Noshīrwān Ruštom Shahryār Māhwīndād Bahrām Mihrābān in 987 AY (see Dhabhar 1923:15, item vi; Jāmāsp-Āsā and Nawābī 1976, Vol. 36:51; for genealogy, see Unvala 1940:193) and the one in the private library of Mobed Jamshēdjī Pēshōtanjī of Bulsār written by Farēdūn Marzbān Farēdūn Bahrām Ruštom Bundār Shāhmardān Dīnyār in 986 AY (see Dhabhar 1923:15, item I; Jāmāsp-Āsā and Nawābī 1976, Vol. 36:13-14; for genealogy, see Unvala 1940:191). The indefatigable Parsi scribe whose zeal for preserving any old stuff knew no bounds, viz., Daštūr Erachji Sohrabji Meherjīrānā, has included the Pahlavi texts written by Irani priests in the ms. F23 which is housed in the First Daštoor Meherji Rana Library of Navsari (see Dhabhar 1923:15; Jāmāsp-Āsā and Nawābī 1976, Vol. 36:1-14 and 38-51). The texts of both mss. have been collated and designated in the apparatus as K from the original scribe’s name Khushru Noshīrwān and as F from that of Farēdūn Marzbān. The Pahlavi text of the Zoroastrian *Nīrangdīn* ceremony as handed down to the present day has once again indicated the authenticity and genuineness of Parsi priestly tradition preserved by Zoroastrian priests in their places of worship.

Transcription

0. Nērang nērangdēn yaštan az nibištāg ērān.

1. Nērang āb ud pādyāb yaštan.

Fradom kār ēd kū ōy *kē āb¹ ud pādyāb gīrēd naxušt xvēštan pad
barašnūm be abāyēd šuštān ud ka-š 9 šabag xūb² dāšt āb pad
karbās ī pad pādyāb pārūdan pad *jām³ ī pad pādyāb andar⁴ kunišn.

2. Gōmēz az gāw ī gušn ka nē hān ī *baxtag⁵ šāyēd be gīrišn ud andar *jām³ ī pad pādyāb xūbīhā andar
kunišn u-š sar be nihumbišn ud az xrafštar ud abārīg rēmanīh pad pahrēz dārišn.

3. Awēšān kē āb ud gōmēz kāmēd⁶ yaštan tan pad barašnūm be šōyišn⁷ ka 9 šabag xūb dāšt ēgišān 30 gām
frāz gīrišn ud yašt ī 3 paywand abāg kas huxēmtar ī awēštārtar ī rāšt abestāgtar ī warm abestāgtar xūb
nērangtar ud āgāhtar be kunišn.

4. Hān kas kē zōtīh kunēd šabīg ud kuštīg nōg pad pādyāb ōyiz kē rāspīg srōš-barišnīh kunēd ham-gōnag
jāmag nōg kuštīg nōg⁸ abāyēd ōy tan kē abestāg warmtar zōtīh kunēd.

1- F om.

2- K om.

3- F, K y'mk^l

4- F om.

5- F, K wčtk^l

6- F YDBXWN-d

7- K XLWN-šn^l

8- F om.

5. Ōy hayyār azišān ēk abāyēd kū-š jud-dēw-dād⁹ warm¹⁰ ud ēk-bār pad zōtīh xwēš¹¹ yašt estēd nōg sāzišn ud pādyābīh hān cim rāy mādagwarīhā abāyēd.
6. Ka yazišn sāxt āb ud gōmēz kē be āwarišn az kušt ī dašn zōt ud az sar ī barsom tah ī ādišt andarag be nihišn.
7. Ōy kē zōtīh kāmēd kardan dašt pad pādyāb be kunišn ēk-bār gōmēz ud āb be nigērišn hamāg gyāgīhā pēš gōmēz ud pas āb nigērišn hamāg gyāgīhā hān ī wāzag kē ō pēš nibēsam be gōwišn be estīšn gōmēz ud āb nigērišn pas abestāg be rāyēnišn.
8. Dudīgar bār pad gāh¹² ātarwaxšān hān gyāg kū *humāiiehe pairi jašnō* be estīšn u-š war andar hamāg sāzišn kunišn *ašəm* be gōwišn dudīgar bār hamāg xūb be nigērišn.
9. U-š ātaxšgāh šuštān u-š dašt pad pādyāb abāg kardan *yaθā ahū vairiō* 2 andar rāh-ē¹³ be gōwišn ō pas barsom šawišn u-š tarsgāhīhā¹⁴ be estīšn.
10. Sīdīgar bār sāzišn gōmēz ud āb xūb be nigērišn u-š *frastuiē* be gōwišn u-š cahārom bār xūb be nigērišn. Bawēd kē guft¹⁵ kū pad *yatāhuweryō*¹⁶ pad *šiiāoθananqm*¹⁷ 4-gānag¹⁸ pad harw ēk bār be nigērišn pas abestāg be rāyēnišn.
11. Pad *niuuāēḍaiiem*¹⁹ bun be nigērišn pas abestāg be rāyēnišn pad hān ī *ašēmwohū* 3-gānag²⁰ pad bun²¹ hōm*-kōftan²² be nigērišn pas *barəsmāna* bun kunišn. Bawēd kē 6 gyāg gōwēd 4²³ kē azabar nibišt ud 2 kē ō pēš gōwam. Panzom pad hān ī wāz-gīrišnīh ī pad hōm*-kōftan²⁴ sar hamāg xūb be²⁵ nigērišn.
12. Pas pad bun ī fragard wāzag-ē pad bun ī jud-dēw-dād *mraot* be gōwišn be estīšn hamāg xūb be nigērišn hamāg gyāg pēš gōmēz ud pas āb nigērišn pas ka nihuft estēd wehiz bawēd²⁶ tā yazišn sar hān ī gyāg dārišn. Pad šāyēšt nē-šāyēšt hamāg *wizand²⁷ ī andar yazišn rasēd hamciyōn²⁸ yašt nōg-nāwar.
13. U-š xšnūman srōš kunēd ā šāyēd u-š jāmag 2 pad pādyāb kē az hān ī āb ud gōmēz pad pādyāb kard²⁹ estēd andar awišt kunišn.

9- KywdtšDY'dt^l

10- K om.

11- K repeats

12- K om.

13- F, K 1'sXN'

14- K tly'k'yhsyh'

15- K gwptn^l

16- F yt''hwkwylywk^l

17- F šiiāoθinanqm

18- F 4gynk^l

19- K niuuāēḍaiiem

20- K 3

21- K BR'

22- F hwm'ST, K hwm'STW

23- F om.

24- F, K hwm'STW

25- K om.

26- F byt'

27- K td

28- K hmcyn

29- K 'BYDWNtn'

14. Harw gyāg kū andar yazišn ēd nigēridan³⁰ abāyēd az hān gyāg *jām³¹ kē āb ud gōmēz pad pādyāb andar andak-ē pad didār ī zōt aōn kē wēnēd andar hān ī gōmēz gōmēz ud andar hān ī āb āb³² rēzišn kū xwārtar bawēd.
15. Ka yazišn ī xūbīhā ud *frazāmihā³³ abar āyēd³⁴ hān āb ud gōmēz yaštag ō gyāg-ē kū xwēškārih ašt barād ud pad karbās ī nōg pad pādyāb kard eštēd hān *jām ī āb ud gōmēz andar ašt sar xūbīhā baštan kū tisiz az³⁵ bēron andar awiš nē šawēd. Pad ēc rāh ud pad ēc tis sūdaghīh nē kardan ce-š bun hamāg pādyābīh padīš ašt hamāg tisiz nigērišnīg padīš kardan.
16. Mēdyōmāh ēniz guft kū pad fragard 19-om³⁶ jud-dēw-dād hān gyāg kū yatāhūwēryō 200-gānāg ud ašēmwohū 100-gānāg ašt³⁷ kū 300 sa(n)g ī pad pādyāb bawēd pad harw ašēmwohū ēk³⁸ ud pad harw yaštag ahū vairiō ek³⁹ san(n)g andar gōmēz ud āb abganēd u-š baxšišn nē āmār be agar ō gōmēz wēš abganēd šāyēd. Pad cāštag ī abarag guft⁴⁰ sa(n)g ī nē abāyēd abganēd. Pad cāštag ī mēdyōmāh⁴¹ abāyēd abganēd⁴². Pad yazdān ud amahraspandān kāmag⁴³ bawād.

Translation

- o. The Ritual Direction⁴⁴ for consecrating the Nīrangdīn (ceremony)⁴⁵ from the writing of Iran.
1. The ritual direction for consecrating water and bull's urine⁴⁶: The first duty is this: He who takes the water and bull's urine should wash himself first with the *barašnūm*⁴⁷, and when 9 nights were kept well⁴⁸ by him, the water being purified through a ritually pure (piece of) muslin should be poured into a ritually pure vessel⁴⁹.

30- K nkyłšn^l

31- K om.

32- K om.

33- F plc'myh, K 'plc'myh

34- F YXMTWNYt^l

35- F om.

36- F 3.3.3.10wm, K 10.3.3wm

37- F lytw

38- K om.

39- K lywwk^l

40- K gwptnn

41- F mytywm'h

42- F LMYTWyt

43- F k'm

44- Phl. *nērang* "rite, ritual, ritual direction; incantation, chant, spell," see Dhabhar 1932:347-57, 362-68; Bailey 1934:275-98.

45- For a brief account of the ceremony, see Modi 1986:241-2, 419; for a detailed description, see Pavri 1995:192-201; Kotwal 1994:26-45; Unwala 1922:125-33; Meherjirana 1941:12-22.

46- Phl. *pādyāb* "pure, clean"; it is used here in a technical sense for bull's urine (*gōmēz*) as the chief purifying element. Dari *pājōw*, see Boyce 1977:92-3.

47- Phl. *barašnūm* "a purificatory bath lasting for nine nights. As the purificatory process begins with the head (Av. *barāšnauu-*), the whole ritual is known by the term *barašnūm*, see Vd. 8.40; 9.15." For various types of *barašnūm*, see Modi 1986: 97-149; Pavri 1995:1-38.

48- I.e., through due observances.

49- Phl. *jāmag*, a scribal mistake for *jām* "bowl, vessel".

2. The *gōmēz*⁵⁰ from a bull is proper if he is not castrated⁵¹; it should be taken and poured properly into a ritually pure vessel; and its top should be covered and kept protected against vermin and other impurities.
3. They who desire to consecrate water and bull's urine should wash their bodies with the *barašnūm*; when they have kept well (the *barašnūm* of) 9 nights, then they should take forth 30 steps⁵²; and the Yasn (in honour of Mīnō Nāvar) in combination, 3 (times)⁵³, should be performed with a priest of very good disposition, more reliable, reciting the Avesta most correctly, who has committed to memory most of the Avesta, most well-versed in rituals and most intelligent.
4. The priest⁵⁴ who performs the office of Zōt (should put on) a new sacred shirt and cord (made) ritually pure⁵⁵; he too who is (to act as) Rāspīg does the *srōš-barišnīh*⁵⁶; he should likewise have a new (sacred) garment⁵⁷ and a new cord; the person who has committed to memory the Avesta must perform the office of Zōt.
5. One of them is required as his helper⁵⁸; that is, he has learnt the Vendīdād by heart⁵⁹ and has once consecrated it himself in the office of a Zōt⁶⁰. For this reason new ritual utensils and ceremonial apparatus⁶¹ are specifically required.
6. When the prefatory service⁶² has been prepared, (the containers of) water and bull's urine should be brought and placed on the right side of the Zōt and at the end of the *barsom*, downwards (on the floor) in between⁶³ the firestand (and the ritual table)⁶⁴.
7. He who wishes to perform the office of the Zōt should make his hands ritually pure and should look at

50- Phl. *gōmēz* < Av. gaomaēza "bull's urine".

51- Phl. *baxtag* "divided, bruised (said of testicles), castrated, gelded".

52- I.e., after the retreat of 9 nights the priests are allowed to go near the fire, water and other ritual objects, and the restriction to keep away from them at a distance of 30 paces does not apply, see Vd. 3.17.

53- Phl. *yašt ī 3 paywand*: a partnership of priests for the performance of the Yasna of Mīnō Nāwar for six consecutive days, each priest acting as Zōt and Rāspīg three times alternatively. On the sixth day, they both perform a *drōn* service in separate *pāwīs* after the last Yasna ceremony and exchange each other's *cāšnī*. This makes both priests *ham-kalām*, i.e., united in Word and thus qualified to perform the final major ceremony, see Modi 1986:242; Pavri 1995:195; Kotwal 1994:38-9.

54- Lit. "a person", a term here used for "priest". For *mard* "priest", see Kotwal and Kreyenbroek 1995:63 n.147.

55- I.e., ceremonially cut with the sacred formula for cutting the *kuštīg* (*nērang ī kuštīg burīdan*).

56- Phl. *srōš-barišnīh* "chanting with scansion, recitation with metred pauses" referring to melodious recitation by the Rāspīg at certain points in the Visperad and Vendīdād liturgies, see Kotwal and Kreyenbroek 1995:101 n.339.

57- Phl. *jāmag* "(sacred) garment" used for *šabīg* "sacred shirt".

58- I.e., an assistant priest called Rāspīg.

59- About 150 years ago, a good number of priests could recite the Vendīdād from memory. This ancient practice had helped salvage the whole Nask in its entirety after the Arab conquest of Iran in the 7th century CE.

60- It is traditional in the old Vadi Dar-I Mihr of Navsari for a new candidate to perform the Nērangdīn ceremony in the capacity of a Zōt.

61- Phl. *pādyābīh* "ritual purity"; used in a technical sense for all ritual implements required to perform high liturgies, see Dhabhar 1932:211 n.5.

62- Phl. *yazišn*, like *yašt*, is here used in the sense of *paragnā* "prefatory service", see Kotwal and Boyd, 1991:61-85.

63- Phl. *andarag* "(place) in between (the *ādišt* and *urwīs*)", see Kotwal and Boyd, 1991:64 (diagram).

64- Since the Phl. Text does not specify the exact place on which each of the two containers ought to be set, later priestly opinions are at variance regarding their locale, see Dhabhar 1932:348-9; 353, 357; Unwala 1922:128; Pavri 1995:197.

the bull's urine and the water once ⁶⁵; at all places, they should look at the bull's urine first, and then the water; at all places, they should recite the words which I am about to write, pause (a little), look at the bull's urine and water, and then carry on with the Avesta.

8. For the second time, at the seat of the Ātarwaxš, the place where (the words) *humāiiehe pairi jaθnō*⁶⁶ (are recited), he should face all preparations (on the ritual table), recite *ašəm*⁶⁷ and look well, for the second time, at all (items, i.e., *gōmēz* and *āb*).
9. He (that is the Zōt) is to purify the seat of the fire and again make his hands ritually pure; he should recite *yaθā ahū vairiō-2* on his way⁶⁸ and stand up (on the *zōt-gāh*) in a reverent manner.
10. For the third time, preparations of the bull's urine and water should be properly looked at and they should recite *fraštuiē*⁶⁹; and for the fourth time, they should look at properly. There is one who said: during the four-fold (recital of) *yaθā ahū vairiō*, they should look at (them) once at each *šīiaoθananqm*⁷⁰ and then carry on with the Avesta.
11. They should look at the beginning of *niuuāēdaiemi*⁷¹ (section) and then carry on with the Avesta; at (the recital of) three-fold *ašəm vohū*⁷² at the commencement of the Hōm-pounding⁷³ (section), they should look at them; later, they should begin *barəsmana*⁷⁴. There is one who speaks of 6 places; 4 which I have written above and 2 which I am about to speak later. Fifthly, they should look at all (items) well during the taking of the *wāz*⁷⁵ in the last part of the Hōm-pounding (section)⁷⁶.

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- 65- This tallies well with the priestly practice in India. Before the commencement of the prefatory service (*paragnā*) by the Rāspīg who is seated on the seat of the Zōt (*zōt-gāh*), the Zōt enters the *pāwī*, uncovers the metal pots of *gōmēz* and *āb*, one after another, and both priests cast a glance together at the contents, see Pavri 1995:198 n. 1.
- 66- Cf. Vsp. 9.2. The words refer to a priest "of good wisdom (*humāiiehe*), one who travels abroad (*pairi jāθnō*)" for executing the good commandments of the Zoroastrian religion. The reference serves a dual purpose. It not only eulogizes the noble characteristics of a good priest with missionary spirit, but also indicates the place where the Rāspīg stands and recites alone with scansion (*srōš-barišnih*) Vsp. 9 in the Visperad and Vendīdād liturgies, see n.13 above.
- 67- Referring to *xšnaoθra ahurahē mazdā ašəm vohū* – 1 which the Zōt recites while purifying his left hand with water after the appropriate recitation of five *yaθā ahū vairiō* required for the Vendīdād ceremony in honour of Srōš. This accords well with the ritual enacted in the Vadi Dar-ī Mihr at Navsari.
- 68- The Zōt occupies his seat while reciting y.a.v. 2, see Kotwal and Boyd 1991: 90-91; Pavri 1995: 199; Bhesania 1943: 4.
- 69- I.e., while reciting the passage beginning with the word *fraštuiē* in the introduction (Ar. *šurū'āt*) to the Vendīdād ceremony, both priests look at the *gōmēz* at the word *fraštuiē*, and *āb* at the next word *humatōibiūascā*, see Kotwal and Boyd 1991: 90-91; Pavri 1995: 199; Bhesania 1943:4.
- 70- Before commencing Yasna 1 in the Vendīdād ceremony, both priests recite a.v.(10) and y.a.v. (10). According to the practice of Bhagaria priests of Navsari, *gōmēz* is seen at word *ašəm*, and *āb* at *vohū* during the recital of last three a.v.; in the same way, *gōmēz* is seen at the word *šīiaoθananqm*, and *āb* at the next word *apḥauš mazdāi* during the recital of last three y.a.v., see Pavri 1995: 199-200; Bhesania 1943:4.
- 71- I.e., the first section comprising Y 1 in which both priests look at the *gōmēz* and *āb* at the recital of the words *niuuāēdaiemi* and *hankārāiīemi* respectively, see Kotwal and Boyd 1991: 92-3; Pavri 1995: 199; Bhesania 1943:5.
- 72- After Y 21, Vsp. 9 beginning with a.v.(3) is recited in the Vd. Ceremony. While reciting each of the three a.v., the priests look at the *gōmēz* at the recital of *ašəm*, and *āb* at the recital of the next word *vohū*, see Pavri 1995: 199-200; Bhesania 1943:57.
- 73- For emendation to Phl. *hōm-kōftan*, see Kotwal and Boyd 1991: 104 n.112; Kotwal and Kreyenbroek 1995: 45 n.74.
- 74- I.e., Y 22 recited after Vsp. 9 in the Vd. high liturgy, see Bhesania 1943: 59.
- 75- For various formulae of y.a.v. recited in the high liturgies, see Kotwal and Kreyenbroek 1995: 29-30 n.17.
- 76- I.e., the *wāz* that occurs before Y 27 in the Vd. Liturgy, see Bhesania 1943: 74. The *hōm*-pounding section covers Y 22-27, see Kotwal and Boyd 1991: 104-9. It is the Zōt who recites alone the *wāz* appropriate to him with the words *aθā ratuš* and *ašātciṭ*, and both priests look at the *gōmēz* and *āb* respectively, see Pavri 1995: 200.

12. Thereafter, at the commencement of (the first) *fragard* they should recite the word *mraot*⁷⁷ in the beginning of the Vendidad, should pause (a little) and look at all (items) properly; in all places they should first look at bull's urine and then water; finally, it is indeed better if (containers) have been covered and kept there until the end of the service. According to what is proper and what is not proper⁷⁸, all harm that happens to the service is in the same manner as in the service of Nōg-Nāwar.
13. It is proper if it (i.e., the Vendidad) is performed with a dedication⁷⁹ to Srōš; 2 (pieces of) cloth⁸⁰, ritually pure, should be put on to them (i.e., the containers)⁸¹ of water and bull's urine which have been made ritually pure.
14. At every place where (the contents) ought to be observed in the service, from that place (the Rāspīg) should pour, within the sight of Zōt in the manner that he sees it, a little (drop) into (two separate) vessels which (contain) ritually pure water and bull's urine, (i.e.) bull's urine into (the vessel) of bull's urine and water into that of water, so that it becomes easier.⁸²
15. When the service has been passed through properly and completely, the consecrated water and bulls' urine may be carried to a place where it is (their) proper function; and with a new (piece of) muslin which has been made ritually pure, the tops of the vessels in which there is water and bull's urine should be tied properly so that nothing whatever from outside goes into them. Negligence in any way and in anything ought not to be practised, since they are the foundation of all ritual purity; all things, indeed, should be done attentively.
16. This, too, was said by Mēdyōmāh: "In the 19th *fragard* of the Vendidad the place where there are 200-fold *yaθā ahū vairiō* and 100-fold *ašəm vohū*⁸³, that is to say, 300 pebbles have been made ritually pure, he (that is, the Zōt) casts one pebble each into (the vessels of) bull's urine and water at every (recital of) *ašəm vohū* and at every (recital of) *yaθā ahū vairiō*;⁸⁴ and (the ratio of their) distribution is not to be considered,

77- I.e., the first word of Vd. 1.1. The Parsi priestly practice is to look at *gōmēz* while reciting *mraot* and *āb* while reciting the following words *ahurō mazdā*, see Pavri 1995: 200.

78- Referring to the knowledge of ritual with its intricacies and niceties.

79- For the term *xšnūman*, see Kotwal and Boyd 1991: 138.

80- Two pieces of white cotton cloth, three thick cotton threads and some fifteen pebbles (*sangrēza*) are made pure and consecrated by the Rāspīg during the time when the Zōt begins to read the initial *fragards* of the Vendidad. All these articles are kept safely in a large and consecrated silver vessel and made use of at their proper time.

81- After the ceremony is over, each container is covered with a threefold piece of cloth, encircled three times by the thread like the sacred cord (*kustī*) and tied with a reef knot. This process completes the ceremony. See Kutar, 1929, II: 1073-89, nos. 1-120; Meherjirana 1941:17.

82- This refers to the ancient Iranian method of augmenting the quantity of consecrated *gōmēz* and *āb* within the purview of ritual. About 200 years ago, the Bhagaria priests of Mumbai were augmenting the quantity of consecrated *gōmēz* by pouring a drop (*qatra*) from the consecrated *gōmēz* into the unconsecrated *gōmēz*. The devout Parsis of Mumbai complained about their practice to the elders who directed priests to abandon it, see Modi 1930, vol. 1:127; Meherjirana 1941:12-3, 19-20. The first *Nīrangdīn* ceremony was performed at the Maneckji Seth Dar-ī Mihr in Mumbai in 1791 CE. Before this time, the consecrated *gōmēz* was brought on foot from the Vadi Dar-ī Mihr of Navsari, see Modi 1930, vol.1:113.

83- Cf. Vd. 19.22.

84- In Parsi priestly practice, a total number of nine pebbles are cast into the vessels of *gōmēz* and *āb* at the recital of the last nine out of 200 *y.a.v.* At the word *šiiāoθananqm* in the first two *y.a.v.* the Zōt casts the two pebbles in *gōmēz*, in the third *y.a.v.* one pebble in *āb*, in the fourth and fifth *y.a.v.* again two pebbles in *gōmēz*, in the sixth *y.a.v.* one pebble in *āb*, in the seventh and eighth *y.a.v.* two pebbles in *gōmēz*, and finally in the ninth *y.a.v.* he casts one pebble in the vessel of *āb* at the recital of the word *šiiāoθananqm*, see Pavri 1995: 200-201.

but is permissible if more (pebbles) are cast into *gōmēz*. According to the teaching of Abarag it has been declared that one ought not to cast pebbles (into the vessels). According to the teaching of Mēdyōmāh one ought to cast (into them)⁸⁵. May it be according to the will of the Yazads and Amahraspands⁸⁶.

85- Here the author seems to refer to the teachings of *Abarag* and *Mēdyōmāh* culled from their commentaries of the *Vendīdād*, see Kapadia 1954:180. According to Parsi priestly practice, six pebbles are cast into the pot of *gōmēz* and three into that of *āb*, see Pavri 1995:200-201.

86- According to the custom of Bhagaria priests, the Zōt and *Rāspīg* infuse the libation (*zōhr*) into the well at the end of the *Vendīdād* ceremony and immediately do the *pādyāb-kusṭī* and *farziyāt* of the morning *gāh* before entering the *pāwī*. They both put on full priestly robe (*jāma-pīchhōdī*), enter into the sacred precincts and are ready to tie the two metal pots. The *Zōt* covers the top of the vessel containing *gōmēz* with a threefold cotton cloth and ties a reef knot with the cotton thread previously consecrated and dried over the blazing fire. The *Rāspīg* follows the same pattern with the vessel containing *āb*. After tying the two vessels, the *Nīrangdīn* ceremony is considered to be successfully accomplished. The two priests then perform the ritual of hand-clasp (*hamā-zōr*) with one another, and thereafter with the high priest supervising the ceremony. They then untie the vessels and fill the previously consecrated bottles with the prepared *nīrangdīn* and *āb*. Finally, they take the consecrated pieces of muslin, fold them into a tight wad and put them in the neck of the bottles to act as stoppers. The priests are permitted to uncork the bottle, whenever it is required, with due ritual 'amal only. The consecrated *nīrangdīn* may remain unspoilt for decades if handled in a ritually prescribed manner.

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