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HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE

Jalalian, M. (2019). Relationship of Wind God (Vay) and Sassanid Waving Ribbons. *Journal of art & civilization of the orient*, 6 (22):5-18.

DOI: 10.22034/jaco.2019.81917

URL: http://www.jaco-sj.com/article_81917_en.html



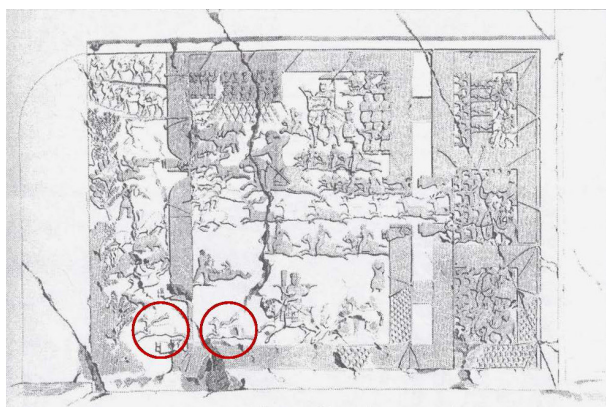


Fig. 13. Hunting ground- Taq-e Bostan. Source: Javadi, 2010.

universe while it is on the wind. Wind is passing through its flames throughout the day (Rig Veda, 1988: 84&98).

Existence of ribbons on the body of some of the fire pots as well as the backside of the Sassanid coins is the symbol of the connection of the glory of fire which represents the glory of Ahura Mazda and the glory of kingdom which is a reflection of the glory of Ahura Mazda and the wind is the intermediary of these two.

The moon crescent and pomegranate are the symbols of Anahita. Gods enjoyed special glories. The connection between the glory of Anahita and the glory of kingdom is the sign of support of this god of the king.

Conclusion

Sassanids who were struggling to establish a centralized and powerful government like the Achaemenid era changed the symbol of glory due to their enmity with Parthians. This symbol which has been always associated with wing changed into a ring with ribbons. These ribbons were replaced by the mane undertook the relationship with the heavenly forces. The repetition of these ribbons on clothes, crown, horse and bow of the king is a symbol of the importance that kings attached to their glory. The condensation of various symbols of gods and even the appearance of Ahura Mazda and Mehr and Nahid on reliefs is due to this very reason. Given the goal

of creations of these works one can say that the used symbols were familiar to the people of those times. Waving ribbons which remind us wind in the first place could have been associated with the relationship of wind god with glory and other features of it in the minds of the beholders and establish relationship with them as a new symbol. The selection of this symbol seems to have been due to some reasons:

1. Vay in the form of "Vay Dirang Khoday" is related to fortune and destiny.
2. Vay as divine breath can be bringer of glory or its promoter.
3. Vay is related with the glory and gods who are bringer or protector of the glory.
4. Vay as the god of war is related with the tasks of king as warrior who ensures defense, security, peace and bounties.
5. Vay as the god of rain and bounty is related with the king as bounty bringer.
6. Vay as the hero who battles with the evil creatures and brings bounty by destroying them is related with king as hunter.

Generally speaking, "Vay" with its features is related with the glory and whatever that would promote it and seems to be a proper symbol that could have realized the goal of kings. Moreover, they would have resorted to the powerful and angry and enemy breaker face of wind in order to blackmail the rivals and enemies.

Endnote

*. The present article is based on the "Relationship of Wind God (Vay) and Sassanid Waving Ribbons" workshop which has been held by the author's lecture in 2018 at Nazar Research Center.

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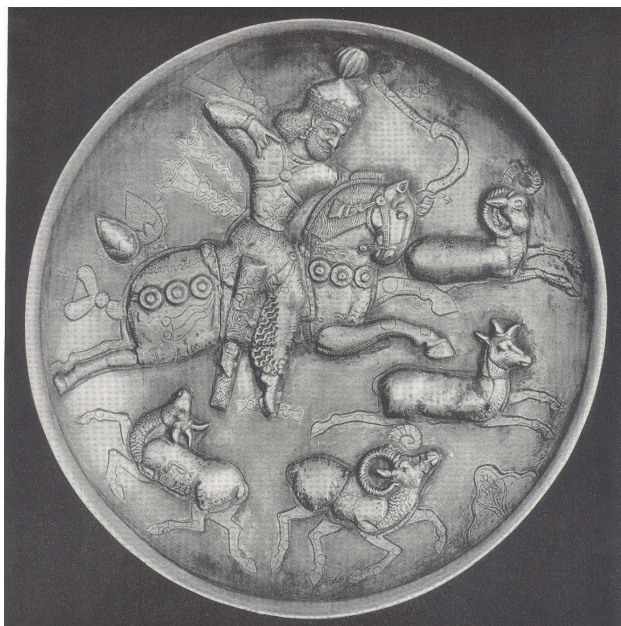


Fig.12. The king is hunting. Source: Pope,1960.

Horse – After king most of the ribbons can be found on the body of horse. Horse besides its being a means for transition is in fact a significant eternal example and in all myths and stories it bears sometimes death and sometimes the life on its back. Horse is a twofold symbol. It is simultaneously representing reason and tamed instinct and also untamed instinct. Horse is the vehicle of man and for this reason its destiny is intertwined with the destiny of man (Fazayeli, 2008: 23).

There is also an interconnection between horse and wind. Wind is the fastest of all gods and horse is the fastest roadster. The existence of Pegasus proves this point. In myths horse is once associated with wind once with water once with fire and once with soil. It is related with all four elements (Ibid: 24).

As to Pegasus that carries the chariot of Mitra on the Ossuary of Bishapur, Girshman writes: the waving ribbons that is seen on its neck and knees and the crescent on its forehead and represents its sacred nature all stand for the royal power that has been consecrated by its god (Girshman, 1992: 245). Therefore, existence of ribbons on the body of horse is a reflection of the glory, sanctity, and legitimacy of

the power of rider.

Other animals – all animals that carry ribbons are the symbols of divine glory of gods. Birds are always the symbol of air and at the same time can be considered as the godly symbol, e.g. Varghan or falcon that is the symbol of glory and Bahram which endorses its glorious nature and essential relation with wind.

• **Weapons – Bow** : Kingdom is related with power and power exertion is not possible without weapons. A weapon without glory is useless. In Mehr Yasht we read: the spears decorated with the feathers of eagles, sharp spears and best shields at the hands of liars and traitors will not touch the target (Ibid: 445).

The appearance of ribbons on the bow in Sassanid era could be an emphasis on the glory and legitimacy of the power of king and support of gods particularly the god of war insofar as in the story of Arash Kamangir we read: Arash throw the arrow with all his power in order to determine the border of Iran and Turan and then died. The arrow traversed a long path with the assistance of Vayu the air god and finally reached a tree in Marv and thus the border of Iran became wider (Farahvashi, 1976: 37).

Fire Pot: The sacred nature of fire and its glory is clear. Azar is one of the gods of Mazdaism. Some has considered fire to be part of the existence Ahura Mazda and his son. In nineteenth Yasht in the battle between Azar and Azhidahak the fire is depicted to be the final conqueror (Gaviri, 2006: 116). The collaboration of Azar and Vay in battling with the devils and bringing rain has also been related in Zoroastrian texts. The other relation and collaboration of wind and fire in Mazdaist myths is through the fire of “Vazasht” (forward carrying, being more beneficial), i.e. a fire that moves on the cloud with the wind. Thunderbolt is also a combination of wind and fire (Zomorodi, 2003: 121).

In Indian myths Agani has been considered to be one of the Maroots (gods of storm and children of Vayu). Its chariot is carried by red horses and its wheels are heptafold winds. Ageni traverses the corners of the

Firuzabad becomes revealed in the look of Naqsh-e Rostam: Ahura Mazda and Ardashir are both on the back of horse while Ahriman is under the hooves of the horse of Ahura and Ardvan is under the hooves of the horse of Ardashir (Fig. 11).

Hunter King

Hunting was one of the interesting activities of kings, elites and aristocrats. When there was no war they went to hunting and this was indeed a drill that kept them prepared for battle (Daryaei, 1999: 16).

Successful hunting was tantamount to the continuation of royal glory in the king that promoted the glory. Mehrdad Bahar writes: in Parthian times hunting was so important that if a king did not love it he would



Fig. 9. The victory of Shapur over the Roman emperors. Source: Purbahman, 2008.

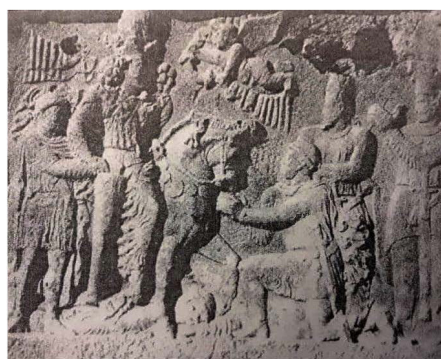


Fig. 10 .The victory of Shapur over the Roman emperors with the motif of angel of victory on the top-Tang-e Chogan. Source: Javadi, 2009.

have been dethroned (Bahar, 2011: 92).

Victory in war and hunting was also in line with the bounty giving feature of the king. Noruz and Mehregan fests had been connected with fertility

and bounty endowing. In Achaemenid era every year the king should have taken part in the hunting and

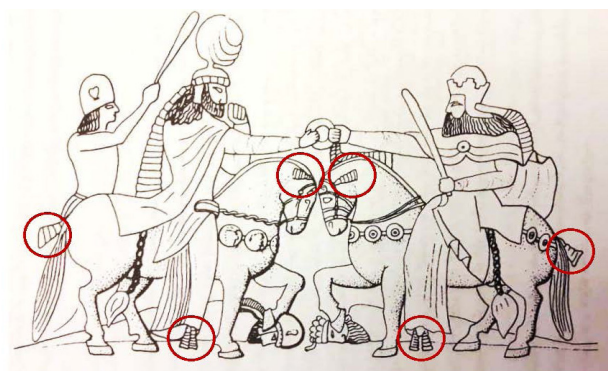


Fig. 11. Ardeshir I and his coronation by the hands of Ahuramazda-Nagsh-e Rostam. Source: Purbahman, 2008.

traditional archery fests and if he couldn't take part he would be no longer the king (Bahar, 2011: 271).

Then, hunting scenes in Sassanid era are symbolic. Insofar as in Mashhad relief (Fig.12) Bahram is fighting with the wild lions. This picture that depicts the king in a very concentrated mode where he keeps the hand of the queen with one of his hands while he is killing the lion with the other hand could be a symbol of the power of king for defending his family and nation. The lions are symbolizing the evil forces that are defeated by the royal glory. His victory results in the bounty promotion. The waving state of the king's scarf can be a sign of this bounty endowing, fortune and glory.

The other example of hunting scene can be found in Bostan Arc (Fig. 13). Sudavar believes that this scene in Bostan Arc with shades of light behind the king towards the end of hunting is a symbol of royal glory that has been promoted by hunting the wild animals (Sudavar, 2004: 21). But there is also another point in this relief and it is the existence of two deer with ribbons which are distinguished from the rest of deer and animals. These deer can be the symbol of glory that has been acquired by the king through hunting and the shade of light behind the king endorses this. The entities and objects that have ribbons besides king and gods consist of:

Existence of waving ribbons is the sign of glory and good fortune of the king and in an implicit way they are referring to the support and role of the god in preservation and promotion of glory and bounties resulted from the victory in war.

There are two cases in Sassanid reliefs that can cast doubts. One is the relief related to the scene of battle of Ardashir and Ardavan in Firuzabad of Fars (Fig. 7) and the other is the Sassanid gem that is preserved in the Library of National Museum of Paris (Fig. 8) that pictures the battle of Shapur and Roman Emperor.

In both scenes Ardavan and Roman Cesar have ribbons. One can provide a number of reasons for explaining the existence of ribbons on the clothes of the enemy. In single combat the more powerful and famous is the rival the more glorious will be domination over him and the glory of the victorious person will be promoted. Ardavan was the Parthian king and he should have glory. But this glory could be taken back from the incapable king and given to the competent person. The battle of Ardashir as a local ruler with Ardavan took a long time until the defeat of Ardavan and his death. The story of glory departure from Ardavan and its transfer to Ardashir has been related in the record of Ardashir Babakan in which the glory is depicted as a ram that is walking after Ardashir who is escaping to prepare the ground for riot until it reaches him and sits on the back of

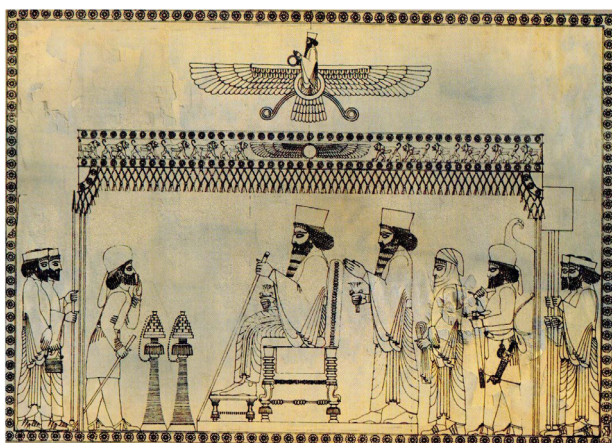


Fig. 7. Faravahar. Source: <http://www.beytoote.com>.



Fig. 8. Battle of Shapur with the Roman Emperor. Source: Purbahman, 2008.

horse. In the relief the number and magnificence of ribbons of Ardashir is more than that of Ardavan. Furthermore, Ardavan is seen falling from the back of horse which is the sign of his fall of power and disappearance of his glory. The defeat of Ardavan the Parthian king by his local ruler Ardashir is so glorious and great that Ardashir has carved its scenes on three independent reliefs.

The same reason is the case with the domination of Shapur over Valerian the Roman Cesar. Rome was the most powerful and the only enemy and rival of Iran in those times and victory over it was considered a major event. In the gem Shapur has got the wrist of rival without even unsheathing his sword and thus announces his decisive victory over Valerian. In a relief which depicts the victory of Shapur over Romans this picture is seen too (Fig. 9). Roman Emperor has still his crown on as well as the royal cloak in order to show his identity but other features depict his defeat. The king is on the horse while Cesar is on his feet and kneed before the horse and raising his hands as a sign of supplication and more importantly there is a picture of the victory angel flying towards the king who bears the glory (Fig.10). If we pay sufficient attention to the role of wind in fortune and destiny as well as its twofold nature one end of which is benefit while the other end is harm and also the task of wind as the guard of the creation of Ahura Mazda against the enemies, we can easily find its substantive example. The result of the wind blow on the ribbons of Ardashir and Ardavan in

air Vay (Vakili, 2011: 258). Furthermore, scholars have alluded to the intermediary situation of Mehr that sets him that puts him in the situation of Vay. Vindishman in a significant essay (1875) identifies Mehr with Vay. His main reference is Banhesh in which “Vay” is depicted as a god in-between of earth and sky (Ibid: 330). Plutarch had also written in his work long time ago that Ahura Mazda is pure luminosity and Ahriman is pure darkness and Mehr stands in sphere between these two. The intermediary between light and darkness which was called by Iranians “Mediatory Mitres” (Rezaei, 1989: 41, 256).

Bahram- Vay is the god of war and Bahram is the god of victory. The close relationship of these two is shown via the relationship of Vay and Indirah. In Rig Veda Vay and Indirah both have been the gods of air and the ruler of the space between sky-air-earth. As to them it is told that they are both powerful and attack together and help Aryans. Andra and Vayu are the kings who do not tolerate oppression and are the sultans of both worlds (Rig Veda, 1988: 47). The best clue to Bahram’s root is its name. Bahram in Persian is the evolved form of Vartharghanah which means resistance breaker and dragon killer. Varthaghnah in Avesta is Veriterhen in Veda which is the title of the courageous god of air Andirah (Vakili, 2011: 101). One should say that Vay is divided into good and bad Vays in Zoroastrianism. Its Indian counterpart Indirah has also two manifestations. Its good, heroic and enemy breaker side has become manifested in Bahram and its enraged and cursed side has remained in the form of a devil in Indirah.

Two of the tenfold embodiments of Bahram are manifested in the form of storm and also Varghan bird which is directly related with the wind. In its other embodiments all are associated with verbs driven from Vez, veztin and vazidan. Bahram has clear relationship with Fareh and is the close associate of Mehr and Ram (Vay). As it was mentioned earlier, Bahram came to Zoroaster in the form of wind and brought glory to him.

Nahid- Anahita the goddess of water and fertility is one of the most beloved gods and owns numerous temples. In Aban Yasht the chariot of Anahita is driven by four horses consisting of wind, rain, cloud and hail. In Tir Yasht we read that it is wind that drives cloud, hail and rain to seven countries. In Ram Yasht it is told that Vay is the creator of waves. This is to say that it is a creature that moves the water. In the relief of Nersi’s coronation by Anahita besides the waving ribbons the cloth of Anahita and the water that is poured from the container are all waving and depict these features of the wind (Fig. 6).

Given the features of wind god and its relation with glory, fortune and its role as the god of war and bounty bearer one can study the scenes of war and individuals and creatures that have ribbons.

Militant King

The virtues of military service are always part of the characteristics of Iranian kings for demonstration of their legitimacy. Then, Sassanid kings used to lead the army in wars in order to prove their courage and military skills as signs of monarchical glory and the beneficence of gods (Wiesehofer, 1999: 246). War besides battling with the enemy has a symbolic religious meaning. From the very beginning of the universe there was a war between Ahura Mazda and



Fig. 6. Anahita- Tagh-e Bostan. Source: Purbahman, 2008.

Ahriman and man has had a significant role in this clash. As a soldier of Ahura he should devote his life to the battle against evil and pursuing the good.

spirit means wind and Ravan in Persian is used as featuring adjective of wind and water. But it is wind that moves the water. Then the goddess of wind appeared in the form of a white tall man on earth ... as the spirit in order to move the body and by its force the body moves upward. Wind moved the water and brought it to earth. Thus, sea came to existence (Bahar, 2002: 121).

In Ram Yasht Vay describes itself as follows: I am the one who makes the water wavy. My name is wave bringer. Flaming is my name (Purdavood, 1978: 154). The movement of the flames of the fire is from the wind. In Rig Veda we read: wind everyday passes through the flames of the fire like an arrow that is shot by a bow (Rig Veda, 1988: 67). Soil does also move upon the order of the wind and rises to the air in the form of dust. Besides moving the objects the wind can move intangible and invisible forces. The wind as the "breath" the blown air that is the source of life and words plays a key role.

Mehrdad Bahar in his interpretation of the story of Kyumarth where Ahriman decides to take the life of Kyumarth and Ahura Mazda puts him to sleep in the form of a fifteen year old young man [ideal age] in order to prevent from his death. Here one can easily conclude that the young man with his features represents the wind and heavenly blow which is breathed by Ahura Mazda in whomever he wants. This blow is usually reinforcing and helpful; in the same way that in primitive societies when a fifteen year old young man was added to the society the latter would turn stronger (Bahar, 2011: 90). The phrase Christ's Breath and wind as the message bearer are interconnected with this sacred relationship. Insofar as according to the definitions of glory as light, force and divine luminosity that has been endowed upon every human individual by Ahura Mazda can bring about such potencies as presidency, kingdom, heroism and powerfulness. Then, it is not surprising to see this invisible force is described as wind. This turns more interesting when we see that it is related

with fruhar being consisted of fara, i.e. forward, and har, i.e. mover. Thus, Fruhar means moving forward and development. In Zoroastrian culture the world is continuously moving. Physical movement in the form evolutionary, essential and psychic dynamicity in Avestaeian culture is noted by Fruhar (Rezaei, 1993: 174).

To show an invisible entity like wind whose earthly embodiments are even invisible (natural wind, breeze, storm, inhaling and exhaling) and for depiction of the concept of movement we need a visible object and waving ribbons are the best signs for representing wind and movement.

Relationship of Wind God with Bahram, Mehr and Anahita

Mehr- The quadruple gods in Sassanid era had strong relationships. Mehr was primarily the god of first class that hosted clerics and statesmen. His mission was shared by the god of war (Vartharaghnah) and later turned to the god of army men (Maskoob, 2015: 78). The collaboration of Vay and Mehr in war becomes revealed in the following verse of Mehr Yasht: those competitors who are worshipping Mehr out of goodness follow the paces of victorious and strong wind (Purdavood, 1978: 427). The other relationship of Mehr with Vay is through "Ram". The name of Ram is always associated with the name of Mehr and its title is the endower of the vast pasture. But in Banhesh Vay and Ram have been identified. In western religion of Mehr worshipping air and wind play an important role. Besides baptism with air which was conducted as to the those one who have reached the state of crow in many of the pictures of Mehr in its four corners there are pictures of quadruple gods (Vermazern, 1996: 75). Moreover, Stark in 1869 noted for the first time that the cave of Mitra could be the symbol of air and the space between earth and sky. This view was later endorsed by Beck and Olazi. Olazi believes that the inner space of cave can be considered as the symbol of

The king as the commander in chief of the army wore purplish cloth and purple was considered to be royal color. Greek Ctesias the physician of Achaemenid court writes that Iranian kings wore a purple robe in Mehregan fest and took part in the ritual (Rezaei, 1993: 256).

In all heroic myths of war and hunting wind has a significant role and the weapons of these heroes and gods is thunderbolt and various winds. Vay is associated with thunder and rain bringing: since wind is the means of rain making the rain making goddesses load the clouds with the water by the assistance of wind and make them rain (Bandhesh, 2016: 96).

Vay is collaborating with Tishtar to make rain: when Tishtar brought about the clouds the angel of wind rose to assist it. It moved the wind in the air with its breath. The wind started to blow all over the earth and rain started to fall. Ahriman shouted: this wind should be killed. Kill this strong wind if you kill it you would have killed the whole creatures (Bahar, 2017: 557).

Relationship of Vay with Meaning of Fortune and Destiny

Vay which is in fact the god of space represents Tan Zirvan versus Sepehr in the later Zoroastrian myths and is called “Vay Dirang Khoday” (long life) (Bahar, 2011: 72). Vay in the form of Dirang Khoday is associated with fortune and destiny and is responsible for fortune, destiny and accidents. Such terms as “Ey Vay” or “Vay bar Man” which are used in Persian in cases of bad events or proverbs like “what is brought by wind is taken by the wind” which is still of currency in Persian is a sign of the lasting role of Vay in fortune.

One might say that Vay like its Mesopotamian counterpart “Anlil (air god)” is in charge of writing the slate on which the destiny of humans and gods are written (Mccall, 1994: 35). In Bandhesh we read: the wind of these higher and lower lands protects the life of humans and sheep (animals). Everything’s order is secured by wind. If it is beneficial it is called Fara

Run Bad while if it is harmful it is called Jan Hanjed because it destroys everything (Bandhesh, 2016: 94).

Relationship of Wind God with Faravashies

Worshipping the ancestors as one of the religions of the early human communities has no place in Zoroastrianism but later in Yashta the glorification of Faravashies (the spirits of one’s ancestors) is replaced with it. In Bandhesh, spirit is intertwined with wind (breathing and inhaling and exhaling) and after death the spirit joins wind. The faravashi of good people after death remains between the earth and sky [kingdom of Vay] until the Day of Judgment and can help people. Faravashies are the spirits of the renowned dead ones who have managed to retain their influence and forces and are depicted as warriors who are interconnected with wind and in battle grounds help their grandchildren (Vakili, 2011: 298).

Relationship of Wind with Glory

Glory is the divine glowing luminous light which has been referred to along with Tishtar the bright star of rain and Iranian glory in Avesta. Wind moves Tishtar towards waters in early morning (Vakili, 2011: 65). Ahura Mazda has created the good glory which brings medication and force (Ibid: 120). Wind is not only glorious rather it is a collaborator of Iranian glory Tishtar and is involved in bringing glory for the people.

Movement the Essential Feature of Wind

Vayu is driven from “Va”. This name refers to the ever-moving nature of wind. In Rig Veda we read: wind is not like sun and moon to go down (Rig Veda, 1988: 44). Not going down means never stopping to work or move. Among the four elements of water, wind, fire and soil each one of which has had a particular relationship with spirit wind due moving things and its essential relation with breathing is consecrated like the essence of life. It is due to spirit that the body moves. Ruh as Arabic equivalent of

used instead of Vay (Vakili, 2011: 55).

Vay is a space god with two faces who is also very powerful and fast like other space gods and is associated with rain bringing and bounty endowing and help offering and likewise with mortality and deadly termination. This twofoldness is due to its kingdom, i.e. somewhere between the kingdoms of Ahura Mazda and Ahriman. The twofold feature of wind can be understood based on the eleventh Kardeh of Ramyasht:

- Anduray is my name and I govern both creatures of Sepandminu and Angeraminu.
- All Overcoming is my name because I overcome both creatures of Sepandminu and Angeraminu (Purdavood, 1978: 153).

After its coming and turning to a part of Zoroastrianism Vay was divided into two good and evil parts, “Vay Vah” (Vay Beh – Vay Nik) which lies in the front of Ahura Mazda and “Vay Vat” (Vay Bad) which is active in the front of Ahriman. Then, all powers and features of Vay are mobilized for the domination of Good over the evil forces.

Vayu is beautiful, fundamental and like imagination it has thousands of eyes. Its bright chariot is driven by red horses whose numbers sometimes is more than thousand. The feature that is always attributed to Vayu in Avesta is “dexterous”.

• Vay’s Role in Creation

Before Ahriman’s attack to this world and the beginning of clash Ahura Mazda adopted a strategy for victory and it was the creation of a sphere and framework of space and time in which the material creation of world and the good/ evil clash should take place. Vay as the god of middle space and also as the Vay Dirang Khoday (limited time of the world) turns to the scene of clash of Ahura Mazda and Ahriman.

In Bandhesh we read: then the body of Vay was created in the best form as deserved “Vay”. It is expected to be called “Vay Dirang Khoday”. Then the creation was completed with the assistance of Vay Dirang Khoday because when the creation was created Vay

served it like a means (Bandhesh, 2016: 36). Vay Dirang Khoday is the weapon of Zirvan by which Ahura Mazda is supposed to overcome the evil (Ibid: 111). Wind constitutes the existence of place where the both creations occur. However, Vay is superior to both of these. It is beyond the contradiction of the two worlds like Zaman Dirgan Khoday (Moleh, 1998: 37). Such titles as Zirvan Dad (Child of Time), Thuvasheh Javidan (Eternal Place), Khuzateh (Self-created) all show the unity and interconnectedness of Vay with time and space and its role in creation. Here the relationship of Vay with fortune becomes clear to which we will later turn.

• Vay the god of war

Vay is not only the scene, space and time of the clash of Ahura Mazda and Ahriman rather it is the god of war. In Ram Yasht which is thoroughly glorification of Vay the latter has been depicted as a courageous warrior with golden shield, golden crown, golden chariot and golden sword. It calls itself the sharphead spear, flathead spear, and unsheathed spear. Some of the mythical kings and heroes like Ahura Mazda himself ask help from Vay for victory in their clash with Ahriman and devils and also for having an ideal kingdom and this request is accepted by Vay and they become prosperous.

In Bandhesh Vay has been described vividly as the “god of war and symbol of the warriors class”:

“Vay is good-natured with golden, silver, gemmed and scarlet cloth that is worn by the warriors because it is one of its essential tasks to overcome the enemy and destroy the evil and protect the creation.

One needs to take it into account that three colors of white, red and blue in Iran and India were the symbols of three parts of the universe (sky-air-land) and three social classes (clerics-army men-farmers). Clerics wore white cloth and Ahura Mazda was their heavenly symbol. The warriors wore colorful cloth in red and purple and their heavenly symbol was Vay. The farmers wore blue cloth and their heavenly symbol was the sky (Bahar, 2002: 74).

3. Affluence and security of the society and borders are owing to the glory of the king. The king without glory and splendor represents a king who is not trusted by gods led by Ahura Mazda (Bahar, 2002: 503).

Thus, a major part of divine power is for the king and it is this very esoteric force that ensures the interests, bounties, resources, peace and triumph of the country and nation. Disappearance of each one of these interests was considered to be a sign of absence of divine grace and this would have even resulted in choosing new king. The continuation of a king's glory was revealed by his victory over the enemies (Pope, 1960: 53).

Sassanid artworks were all created in order to show the glory, good fortune, power and majesty of the kings and they were implicitly supposed to beware the plotters and rioters that any disobedience of the king will fail because the king is protected by Ahura Mazda and gods.

The belief in royal glory has an ancient root in religion and culture of the residents of Iran and Mesopotamia. In Avesta glory and majesty is signified by Khurneh. The glory of Ahura Mazda and Emshaspandan, glory of goddesses and Saoshyants, glory of kings and heroes. In Bandhesh, royal glory is specially for the kings and it is tantamount of immaculacy of the king (Gaviri, 2006: 150).

Farreh (glory) in Avesta and Pahlavi literature refers to prosperity, majesty and magnificence and it is related with fortune.

Victory in war and hunting by the kings was not only the sign of existence of royal glory rather it also ensured the promotion of the glory. This is noted as "glory promoter" on the backside of the Sassanid coins. The coins of Sassanid Khosrow II are different from the previous coins. Besides the addition of three graded circles around the torso of king on the coin and two other circles around the fire pot along with the phrase "glory promoter" on the backside of the coin. The graded circles of the coins and the pearl

ring are the symbols of glory (Ibid: 19).

• Symbols of Glory

Glory was the symbol of divine support of the king's power. The ruler who required the stabilization of his own situation continuously struggled to show the divine support in the highest degree. Thus, various symbols of glory became popular (Sudavar, 2004: 136). Pearl and lotus are considered to be two symbols of the glory of Mehr.

Sudavar claims that the long and fluttering straps of the turban are denoting a more important glory, i.e. Iranian glory. Because in Shtat Yasht the movement of the "upper hand wind" is in line with it and this is referring to their mutual relations (Ibid: 39).

As to the historical record of these waving ribbons, Sudavar believes that it should be traced back to Egypt where they are used to symbolize the "life giver breath" that is issued from Aton along with the sun beams and blows right unto the faces of Akhenaton and his family (Ibid: 89). To further explain one should say that "Shu" the Egyptian god of dry air which was born out of the coughing of Atem the creating god and as a vocabulary it means empty. Shu in its nature is a powerful sun beam. It referred to the air associated with the sun beams. Pharaoh Akhenaton (Sun-God) used to say: you have to live as a happy man in the name of Shu which is in the Aton (Sun Disk); (Bran, 2005: 348).

In order to cast light on the relationship of Iranian air god "Vay" and the symbol of glory and also show the fact that the wind goddess besides Iranian glory is also associated with army glory, heroic glory, glory in the sense of fortune and the goddesses that bring this glory and protect it we need to study the essential features of wind god.

Vay (Vayu-Vyu) the Wind God

"Vay" or "Vayu" is one of the most ancient and mysterious gods of India and Iran. It had been the god who ruled the space between heavens and the earth. In ancient texts usually "Andora" [empty space] is

goddesses and creatures and other objects including 1: such animals as royal horse, ovis, deer, lion, and so on and so forth, 2- such objects as power ring, royal bow, fire place, moon crescent and such plants as pomegranate and palm (Figs. 3 to 5).

Seeing these straps and ribbons raises the question why these ribbons are of so popularity in this era. Pope and Girshman have suggested that these straps are imitations of the cloud streaks in order to symbolize the connection of the king with the heavenly forces (Pope, 1974: 38). Girshman has also provided a specific reading of the ribbons of the Pegasus of the Ossuary of Bishapur: "The waving ribbons which have been tied around its neck and blow its knees and the crescent on its forehead as well as its "holy appearance" all show that it is the symbol of the power of the king who has been consecrated by heavenly forces" (Girshman, 1992: 229).

Some scholars are of the view that these ribbons are the symbol of the glory of kingdom. Existence of strap on royal ring and crown reinforces this theory. But the question as to why these ribbons have also repeatedly used in the clothes of goddesses and other entities and more importantly why they are waving is something that should be assayed via classification of the scenes and elements that have such ribbons. These scenes include: 1. the king on his throne, 2. king's coronation by the gods, 3. the king's war with the enemy and his triumph, 4. royal hunting, 5. royal ring and individual animals and objects like fire place, moon crescent, pomegranate and palm.

To understand the goal and intention of Sassanid kings from creation of such works one should refer to the role of king in Sassanid era:

One can enumerate the following as the features of kingdom in Sassanid era:

1. King is of a divine nature and chosen by gods because the glory of kingdom belongs to him and it is the work of destiny.
2. King is sacred and superior over the ordinary people and his orders should be observed.



Fig.3. Coin of Hormizd I and the fire altar behind it. Source: Mohammadpanah, 2007.

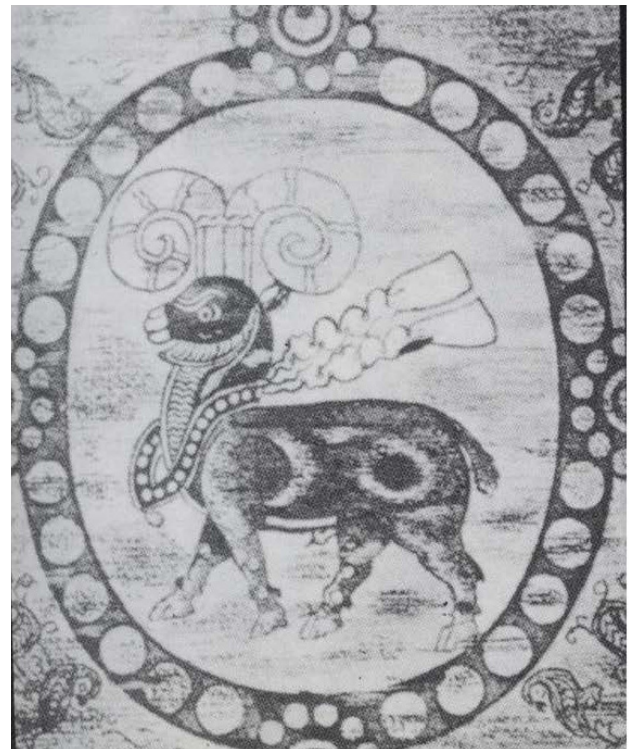


Fig.4. The ribbon attached to the rum. Source: Girshman, 1992.

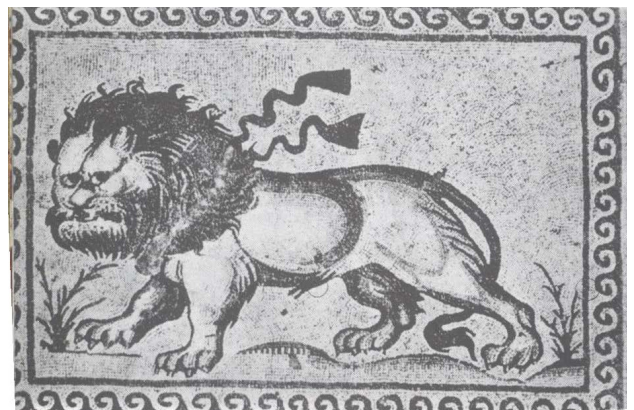


Fig.5. The ribbon attached to the lio. Source: Girshman, 1992.

which are seen in an exaggerated form in many places. No reason has been proposed yet as to why the waving state of these ribbons. The first thing that comes to one's mind when s/he sees these waving ribbons is wind blow. But given the following points: 1. Sassanid art is symbolic and idealist and realism does not have any place in it and 2. waving ribbons in a place where no wind blow would ever happen like a king on his royal throne (Fig. 1) and also the ribbons that wave in the opposite directions (Fig. 2) cannot be due to natural wind. Then, one can feasibly propound the hypothesis that the waving ribbons are the symbol of wind and the relation with the wind goddess "Vay".

To this end, we struggle to provide substantive evidences and reasons in order substantiate the latter hypothesis via dividing the scenes, characters, entities and objects that have these ribbons and studying the features of wind goddess and its relation with glory and what promotes the glory as well as in view of the role of king in Sassanid era.

Sassanid Waving Ribbons

One of the features of Sassanid art is the widespread, long and waving ribbons that are repeated in an exaggerated way and are often fluttering upwardly. The history of these ribbons that were once just found on hats dates back to Medes who used to bind their



Fig.1. The king sat on the bed. Source: Purbahman, 2008.



Fig. 2. Forsi and his coronation by the hands of Anahita- Naghsh-e Rostam. Source: Purbahman, 2008.

hairs with red fillets. Wilcox notes that the members of the royal family wore various hats like Tiara, Miter and white edgeless hats. Diadem was also popular in those times. It is a golden ring whose length reaches five centimeters and is decorated with golden leaves and flowers and is used by the king or princes and crown prince as the symbol of victory and glory. Cortius says that Alexander also chose a purple and white diadem following the Persian monarchs (Gheybi, 2008: 122 & 123). Parthians used a long hat made of felt with ribbons decorated by gems (Ibid: 169). The designs of hats and crowns in Sassanid era were of high diversity.

Every king had a special crown of his own that was distinguished with certain symbols. The features of a crown depended on such factors as king himself, court power and the domination of the clerics. The prevailed one of these aforementioned factors was influential on the form of the crown and crowns were mostly a symbol of the prevailing factor.

Crown is indeed a symbol of the connection between the Emperor and heavenly forces and the features and decorations endorse this issue too. Falcon wings, sun beams, stars and moon crescent are among these symbols (Javadi, 2009: 37).

Despite the diversity of crowns in Sassanid era most of them are carrying long, widespread and waving straps which can be found also on the crown and head of the king, his waist and ankle, in the clothes of the

that last and are reproduced in new forms and finally emerge in the light of other goddesses and time and space (Gaviri, 2006: 44).

Combination of beliefs and worldviews in the form of syncretism results in the emergence of the ancient goddess with new names like Bahram and Anahita.

When Aryans came to Iran the tribal and cultural relations of indigenous nations except Iran and Mesopotamia dated back to almost six thousand years ago and this had led to the emergence of such a cultural connection that even with the arrival of Aryans it did not break (Bahar, 2017: 400).

The nomadic Aryan tribes had a particular moral system in tune with their own life styles in which power, violence and every other attribute related to war was considered to be valuable. Their worshipped goddesses were powerful and enjoyed strong weapons.

Thus, Andra, Vayu, Mehr and Hum as goddesses related to war and bounty endowing were of higher stature and value (Vakili, 2011: 380 & 387). The new form of life in a fixed place changed the previous orders. Aryans learned farming, government system, world class and social class from Sumerians. But these adopted things were all used for reaching one goal: triumph and trophy (Campbell, 2004: 183).

The emergence of Zoroaster and his bipolar system in which Ahura Mazda represents the Good superior to all other goddesses while Ahriman stands for the Evil caused certain modifications to be made to ancient gods. Some changes were required to be made to the ancient gods in order to make them proper enough to be accepted in the Zoroastrianism and accommodated with the latter's moral norms. Most times a group of gods undertake the accomplishment of a task. For example, Vay, Mehr, Bahram, Frushihā and even Hum and Anahita are collectively involved in war and victory in war. Tishtar, Vay, and Apam Nīpat are cooperating to bring rain. In the essential features of the gods some changes occur and most of the changes belong to the climatic goddesses.

Andra and Vayu the powerful goddesses of storm and wind due to their twofold essential aspects – being simultaneously the sources of help, triumph and rain and at the same time mortal unstoppable terminator– required major changes in order to be included in Zoroastrianism. Andra was denied as a devil and his features of resistance-breaking and triumphing were both transferred to Bahram. Vayu was also divided into two good and evil parts. But even these accepted ancient goddesses in Zoroastrianism who were also planned to be weakened by the prophet show how deep were their roots in public rituals. Vital goddesses in Zoroastrianism consist of Mehr, Nahid, Bahram, Vay, Tishtar and Soroush. Meanwhile Mehr, Nahid and Vay have become more important and hugely interconnected inasmuch as in the era of Vedas nothing could be found like them (Bahar, 2011: 45). Among the three aforementioned goddesses Vay is relatively more unknown and this could be due to two reasons: first, Mehr and Nahid had certain privileges and represented all three social classes, and for this very reason they had more followers and temples and numerous monuments and symbols have remained from them and as a result more researchers are willing today to study on them. Secondly, being an ethereal and mysterious entity is an essential feature of Vay itself and this is why it does not have any material or natural manifestation to be used as a basis for building a tangible symbol for it. However, if today we do not have sufficient knowledge of this goddess and the rituals related to it this is not necessarily to say that this was also the case with those times either. There are some evidences that show that Vay's specific rituals were popular before and after the emergence of Zoroastrianism in Iran. This had been particularly the case with Sassanid era, according to scholars, Vay-Zirvan religion had a renaissance in these times.

Hypothesis

Ancient Iranian art is a symbolic art. One of these symbolic elements is the Sassanid waving ribbons

Persian translation of this paper entitled:
ارتباط ایزد باد (وای) با نوارهای در حال اهتزاز ساسانی
is also published in this issue of journal.

Relationship of Wind God (Vay) and Sassanid Waving Ribbons*

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Received; 2018/10/02

revise; 2018/11/01

accepted; 2018/11/21

available online; 2019/02/13

Abstract

Long waving ribbons are one of the specifications of art in Sassanid era which besides power ring and royal crown can be found also on clothes and shoes, horse and king's bow and the cloth of goddesses as well as some animals, objects and plants. The ribbons have been replaced by wing in the power ring and they should be associated with heavenly forces. The goal of Sassanid antiquities was showing power and triumph of the king and its legitimacy via royal glory. The continuity of glory in the king and its promotion depended on victory in war and hunting. Glory in Sassanid era was understood as fortune and destiny. Wind Goddess better known in Sassanid era as "Vay Dirang Khoday" was one with the time and space and had deemed to have a key role in the creation. It was also considered to be united with the sphere. Thus it was intertwined with fortune and destiny. "Vay" is associated with the glory and goddesses who bring glory and sustain it. "Vay" was the goddess of war and terminator of diabolic entities. It was also rain bringer and bounty endower. Then, it helped the king in his war, hunting, personal affairs and bounties. Thus, "Vay" had been related with glory, its preservation and promotion and was considered to be a proper symbol to be replace by wing.

Keywords: *Sassanid Ribbons, Wind Goddess (Vay), Glory, Glory Promoter, Bounty Endower.*

Introduction

Myth represents a set of interactions of socio-human and natural factors which leave their impact on human soul and make themselves in tune with the psychological-social needs of man and emerge through certain rituals. Myth aims at bringing about a balance between human psychic complications and surrounding nature (Bahar, 2017: 411). To study the antiquities of every nation one needs to know its

myths, rituals and religious beliefs and struggle to explain and interpret them in view of their origin's political, economic and geographic conditions.

It is necessary to note that basically no myth could be put into an eternally unchanging form. Myths are often revealed in various contradicted and continuously changing forms. They emerge in a certain period and then disappear from the minds but despite their changing nature they have some features