The Sacred Fires and the Social Structure of the Zoroastrian Parsis

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Preface

The three kinds of sacred fires (Ātaš Bahram, Ātaš Ādarān and Ātaš Dādghāh) of Zoroastrian Parsis stand at the very core of the community as the most significant religious symbol (1). The fires function as intermediary between the living and the dead (2) and are a ritual means to acquire the ritual power “Av.yaozdā; purity” (3).

It would be of the greatest help for understanding the function and meaning of the sacred fires of the Zoroastrian Parsis to clarify by whom and in what way the sacred fires have been maintained in the Zoroastrian Parsis community and to analyze what dimensions of social structure have been involved in the foundation and maintenance of the fires (4). To clarify and analyze the founding and maintenance of the sacred fires in connection with the social structure is to rethink the problems concerning symbol and society.

1 Materials and documents

Materials and documents referred to in this paper are strictly restricted within Navsari where the present author has been doing fieldwork since 1978. The Gujarati documents on the foundation of the sacred fires in Navsari; the documents of māći in the Ātaš Bahram; Disa-Pothi and Vanshavalichopdo (the Parsis genealogical Gujarati documents) (5); Namgaran (the Parsis death register) (6); our fieldwork data in Navsari constitute the major materials and documents for our study.

2 The sacred fires and the social structure

So far our study has concentrated on the structure of the fire temple (7) and on the very important religious practice, barašnom (Av.nine-night-purification ritual) (8) in order to understand the foundation and maintenance of the sacred fires. Now we should proceed on to study the māći in terms of genealogical factors in order to discover possible correlation between the sacred fires and the social structure of the Parsis community.

After the minute description of māći (9), the ritual of offering sandalwood to the sacred fires, we will discuss how the parsis have observed the mācīs in connection with genealogical factors.

1) The offering of sandalwood to the sacred fires

Each of the sacred fires is enthroned in its own sanctuary (gumbad), and has been kept burning because the Parsis have offered sandalwood to them. There are some fixed forms conserved in the māći. In some cases, the appointed individual or family can do the māći on the appointed date and at the appointed time. In other cases, such as life cycle ceremonies, any parsi can do it on any day and at any time he likes under several conditions (10). Only the priests are allowed to offer sandalwood for some mācīs, and any parsi is able to offer it himself for other mācīs.

The ritual offering of sandalwood to the sacred fires is called buī (Pahl.bui), the derivation of which
is from Av. baodha “fragrance”. According to the Parsi usage of “bui devi(Guj.)”, the ritual literally means “to give fragrance”. Not only the priests but also the laity(Behdin) can offer sandalwood to the sacred fires of the third degree: Ātaš Dādgāh. To the sacred fires of the second degree: Ātaš Ādaran and to that of the first degree: Ātaš Bahram, only the priest offer sandalwood. The priests who offer sandalwood to Ātaš Bahram have to be qualified with baršnom and “xūb” (some ritual power acquired through Zoroastrian Yasna and barašnom ceremonies). As the ritual power of xūb remains valid for 4 days, the priests must acquire it again when asked to do another mācī.(11)

The bui ceremony is done by the qualified priests five times a day, at the beginning of each five gāh (traditional Zoroastrian periods of time).(12) At each five gāh the prayer for the sacred fire (Ātaš Niyāesh)(13) is recited only once by the priests for Ātaš Ādaran and Ātaš Dādgāh. But for Ātaš Bahram, 11,9,7,7,9 times of Ātaš Niyāesh have to be recited at the beginning of respective gāh.

The bui ritual has preserved the Zoroastrian oldest purification ceremony barašnom, prayers, time sense and space sense whose roots are from Avesta antiquity. As described above, only the priests qualified with xūb can perform it, and the degree of xūb corresponds to the degree of sacredness of the fires.(14) The priests who tend Ātaš Bahram are to be with xūb of highest degree, and they have to offer sandalwood in the fixed form of mācī. Ātaš Niyāesh at the beginning of each gāh are respectively 11,9,7,7,9 times, while the prayer is offered only once for the sacred fires of lesser degree.

The fundamental reason for practicing mācī is for the Parsis to “worship Ahura Mazda” and to “enlighten thoughts, words, and deeds” of his own(15). To elucidate more clearly how the Parsis have observed such an old complex ritual in their actual life would require a heuristic approach to find out how they regard the sacred fires.

2) Mācī

The form of Parsis mācis as the appointed time on the appointed date may be individual, family, kutumb, group, or community mācis. The functioning units of group mācis are ‘street’, priest group, and vegetarians. Figure 1(16) shows only a small part of all the results of mācis for Ātaš Bahram in Navsari. The results are reproduced and composed by the present author from the Gujarati documents which Vada Dasturji Meherji Rana permitted him to transcribe.(17) After the transcription, inquiries were carried out into whether he/she is from the priesthood or the laity, whether he/she is alive or dead, whether he/she is living in Navsari or in any other community.

The mācī is composed of two parts: individual, family, kutumb, or group mācīs belong to the one part, and surname(family) mācīs to the other part. The surname(family) mācīs make up for the mācis of individual, family, kutumb, or group type. Though the description form of surname(family) mācis and family ones are the same, they are different from each other in function.

In the vertical left part are described the 30 names of divine beings who are believed to protect each day in Zoroastrian societies, and in the next part are the five gāhs and the individual, family, kutumb or group names who offer mācī at the appointed gāh. The five gāhs and surnames(family) are recorded in the last part of Figure 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>30 days</th>
<th>Gāh</th>
<th>1st Gāh</th>
<th>2nd Gāh</th>
<th>3rd Gāh</th>
<th>4th Gāh</th>
<th>5th Gāh</th>
<th>1st Gāh</th>
<th>2nd Gāh</th>
<th>3rd Gāh</th>
<th>4th Gāh</th>
<th>5th Gāh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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Out of the concrete data in Figure 1, the following facts can be introduced to our investigation of mācis of the Zoroastrian Parsis in Navsari today.

(1) Surname

The sacred fire of Ataš Bahram in Navsari has been kept burning for as long as 400 years by the above-mentioned several forms of appointed mācis of the Zoroastrian Parsis. When we investigate the mācis in terms of surnames, the documents show that 238 surnames have participated in them. The exact distribution of 238 surnames are 81 (1 case), 45 (2 cases), 18 (3 cases), 19 (4 cases), 6 (5 cases), 6 (6 cases), 8 (7 cases), 4 (8 cases), and the surnames with over 10 cases are as follows in Figure 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surnames</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>Total No. of repetition</th>
<th>No. of repetition</th>
<th>Mobed</th>
<th>Memory of the departed</th>
<th>Residence</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amaria</td>
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<tr>
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<td>42</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>Asundaria</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Batiwala</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here the second surname of Antia in Figure 2 is to be illustrated. Antia has done 63 mācīs in all, but this does not mean that 63 individual Antias have done 63 mācīs. In the 42 cases out of 63 the same person offer more than 2 mācīs and 42 repetitions are shared by 11 persons from Antia family. 11 out of these 42 are all Mede. Of 63 mācīs by Antia, 9 are dedicated for the souls of the departed. Out of 11 persons from Antia who are involved in the repetition cases, 10 live (or used to live) in Navsari and 1 lives in Mumbai.

37 surnames out of 238 have been in charge of 1174 mācīs of Ātaš Bahram. The total number of all mācīs in a year is 1825, and 95 cases are collective ones. The individual mācīs count 1730, and 1174 individual cases of 1730 have been performed by 37 surnames. From this outcome it follows that around 15% of all concerned with mācīs have undertaken about 68% of the Ātaš Bahram mācīs in Navsari.

(2) Trusts and religious ceremonies for the departed

Further examination into the mācīs proves that 95 mācīs have been carried out in the form of trust, which would be helpful for our study to distinguish from individual mācīs. 83 trust mācīs are of family or kutumb, 7 of 'street', 3 of Bhagariā Priest, 1 of vegetarians, and 1 of the whole Parsi community (Fallah ni mācī).

These sorts of trust mācīs are called by the Parsis in Navsari "nibhav" (Gujarati), which we should think corresponds to "yazisin nihādag" in the "Mādygān ʿHazar Daṭistan". "yazisin nihādag" is, as Mary Boyce has already demonstrated, a traditional Zoroastrian religious practice dedicated for the soul of the departed. MHD. 34 shows that there used to be practiced in the Sasanian times "ruwān yazisin rāy (remember the souls of the departed)" and this "ruwān yazisin rāy" will lead us to go in to details of the trust mācīs of the Zoroastrian Parsis today (18). The Parsis take it one of the greatest virtues to invoke the names of the dead in order to keep them in mind all the time. For this immensely meritorious deed, the Parsis have devoted themselves to the following observances: (1) the founding of a fire temple, dakhma (Tower of Silence), and other social institutions; 8 sacred fires out of 9 in Navsari, 7 Ātaš Bahrams out of 8 in India, and 118 sacred fires of lesser degree out of 133 in India have been founded to celebrate and memorize the soul of the departed persons; (2) carrying on with the mācīs for the sacred fires for the memory of the soul of the dead; (3) recording the names of the departed in the kutumb so that they can believe they remain in the genealogical lineage; (4) invoking, in the religious ceremonies on the occasions of tending the dead, all the names of the departed.

Two kinds of Gujarati documents have been preserved among the Zoroastrian Parsis. "Genealogy I" (19) has recorded all the male members within the kutumb (patrilineal descendants) and "Genealogy II" (20) has recorded both male and female members within a smaller size than a kutumb. The latter is used on the anniversary of the departed and on the days for the departed (the fravashi days), and the officiating priest invokes all the recorded names. It ordinarily takes as long as one hour for the priest to finish "Genealogy II" of kutumb size (21). This social code is regarded as most valuable by the Parsis and so it affects deeply all the aspects of their everyday life.

Including these methods, the mācīs are also offered to celebrate the soul of the departed. A
comprehensive survey of each individual person recorded in the figure 1 reveals that 921 cases (nearly 53%) have been conducted in connection with memorial services for the dead. In individual dimensions as well as in collective dimensions, the māčis have been closely connected with services for the soul of the departed.

83 trust māčis have been preserved by 31 surnames of the Parsis. Choksey is in charge of 22 trust māčis, and in descending order of number are Dordi(11 cases), Desai(9 cases), Gyara(6 cases), Bhabha(5 cases), one surname(3 cases), 2 surnames(2 cases) and 23 surnames(1 case). Three main surnames (Choksey, Dordi, Desai) have been responsible for about half of the trust māčis. Here it is noteworthy that leading surnames in the trust māčis (Choksey, Dordi, Gyara, Bhabha) are concerned only with trust māčis, not with the other forms of māčis in Navsari today.

Several surnames have been more concerned with the māčis than the other surnames in the collective māčis as well as in the individual māčis.

(3) Female names

In the Gujarati documents of māči, there are recorded 313 Parsis female names which, as described before, have not been recorded or remembered in “Genealogy I”. Further inquiries into the 313 Parsis female names prove that 81 are living alone unmarried; 53 married without any child; 29 married with an only daughter. This is the evidence that some of the māčis have been carried out for those female members of the community who were not blessed with any son for some reason.

Though the female names have not been registered in “Genealogy 1” which the Parsis find greatly valuable, there exist several occasions of religious ceremonies for the dead where the officiating priest invokes the names of female members. In this connection, we have to refer to the most remarkable feature of the Parsis “pālak” that the custom is not at all a matter of female members but a matter of male members of the community (22). But it is also the Zoroastrian Parsis practice that some female members of the community found trust māčis and wives or daughters of the family sometimes inherit the trusteeship. This is often the case with the trust māčis in which the Parsis endow some portion of their property for the trust and the concept of inheritance comes into being.

The female Parsis in some of the cases found the trust under their own will. The inheritance of the trust is descended along their own family or along the trustees. An individual or a group may set apart a piece of property for the trust by a will so that the interest from the property may be used for the maintenance and administration of the trust māči. Others may entrust with an established trust māči some amount of funds or a piece of land so that their own māči can be performed by the interest and profits from them (23). The Parsis, male or female, thus have founded and endowed the trust māčis in order to observe several religious rituals for the souls of the departed. The custom and belief that the Parsis have established the trust māčis in order to dedicate some religious ceremonies not only for his own soul but also for the soul of another person seems to have been derived from that of the Sasanian times (24).

In Navsari, by the will of Dosibhai Kotwal, Ātaš Dādgāh was founded in 1923 for Āfrīngagan Bāj (25) and Mukta (26) to be performed year after year for the souls of Dosibhai and her parents. The practice of foundation or establishment of sacred fires occurred in MHD in the Sasanian days.

The female members of the Parsis, though they are put in an inferior social position in the genealogical documents or in the custom of “pālak”, are given the right to found and maintain the sacred fires just as the male members in the community.
(4) Individuality

1404 māčis (about 77% of all) for Ātaš Bahram have been done by the Parsis living in Navsari. The backbone of Ātaš Bahram māčis is formed by the Parsis in Navsari and it does not extend to other Parsis communities like Mumbai (311 cases) and the rest.

As we have already described, the sacred fires of the Parsis, whether it is of higher grade or of lesser grade, have been individual foundations. Some of these pious foundations may be established during a person’s life time (Dadibhai Ātaš Bahram in Mumbai and Modi & Vakil Ātaš Bahram) and others may be carried out by the descendents according to the will (Wadia & Banaji Ātaš Bahram in Mumbai). That social custom can be carried out by both the male members and the female members. MHD(27:15-16) shows that a sacred fire was inherited and tended by her husband because a woman who had founded it died without any will. In another passage of MHD (29:9) appeared the fact that an adopted person had the right to inherit the trusteeship (sardārī) (27). It seems that these Zoroastrian practices handed down to the Parsis today have backed up the individuality and communal features of each sacred fire in the Parsis community.

3) Māčī and genealogical factors

The māčis by the Mobed (951 cases) are 78 cases more than those by the Behdin (873 cases). They share the individual māčis equally. To demonstrate the degree to which the Mobed and the Behdin have participated in the māčis, the research was centered on the analysis of repetition cases.

3.59 is the mean of 788 repetition cases divided by 219 persons who have participated in them. In the case of the Mobed, the mean is 3.98, which is 1.10 higher than 2.88 of the Behdin. The difference of the mean, though small it is, shows that the Mobed have concerned themselves with the māčis more than the Behdin and that the degree of repetition in the māčis of the Mobed is slightly higher than that of the Behdin.

As has been referred to in the previous chapter, only the qualified priests can tend the sacred fire of Ātaš Bahram. What is more, the Parsis from the priesthood have undertaken to serve Ātaš Bahram with the practice of māči so that they keep the sacred fire burning for the Zoroastrian community.

In this chapter we will clarify the māčis in terms of some genealogical elements. First we are to analyze the data of surname (family) māčis in Figure 1. Our minute examinations of the surname (family) māčis demonstrate that surnames of Kanga and Masani occur with remarkably higher frequency than any other surname. The percentage of frequency of Kanga/Masani (total percentage of Kanga/Masanis) per month is as follows in the ascending order of month from 1st month to 12th month: 1st 25% - 44% (69%), 2nd 30% - 54% (84%), 3rd 20% - 43% (63%), 4th 26% - 35% (61%), 5th 17% - 30% (47%), 6th 17% - 42% (59%), 7th 19% - 40% (59%), 8th 35% - 37% (72%), 9th 18% - 47% (63%), 10th 17% - 44% (61%), 11th 21% - 50% (71%), 12th 6% - 32% (38%).

The results show that in the surname (family) māčis several specific families have dedicated the Ātaš Bahram māčis to keep the sacred fire burning day and night.

When we trace out Kanga and Masani in “Genealogy I”, we come across another fact that Kanga has been derived from Kākā Dhanpāl lineage and Masani from Chándā Farēdūn lineage (28). In other words, in the case of surname (family) māčis, the Kākā Dhanpāl lineage and the Chándā Farēdūn lineage have been the nucleus of the māčis and Kākā Pāhlan, Āshā Farēdūn, Māheār Farēdūn have not contributed in large measure to the surname (family) māčis.
The parsiš who belong to the Mobed have been descended in the Gujarati documents “Genealogy I” from those stocks which are so called Bhagariā, Sanjānā, Gōdavrā, Bharuchā, and Kambātā(29). For our study it would be of greatest help to go into detail of Bhagariā, which has been originated from Navsari.

Bhagariā is composed of these 5 polys(Guj.street):


③Āshā Farēdūn(E.Shāpur Shahrīyār E.Dhaval E.Nēryōsang E.Mōbad E.Khushmastā E.Khujastā E.Bahmanyār E.Khurshed E.Bahmanyār E.Hōm E.Farēdūn E.Āshā)

④Māhyār Farēdūn(E.Shāpur Shahrīyār E.Dhaval E.Nēryōsang E.Mōbad E.Khushmastā E.Khujastā E.Bahmanyār E.Khurshed E.Bahmanyār E.Hōm E.Farēdūn E.Māhyār),

⑤Chāndnā Farēdūn(E.Shāpur Shahrīyār E.Dhaval E.Nēryōsang E.Mōbad E.Khushmastā E.Khujastā E.Bahmanyār E.Khurshed E.Bahmanyār E.Hōm E.Farēdūn E.Chāndnā).(30)

The mācis, as we have described above, consist of individual, family, kutumb or collective mācis and surname(family) ones. Our analysis of individual, family, kutumb or collective Ātā Bahram mācis in the light of a genealogical standpoint proved that Antia(63 cases), Dastur(79 cases), Deboo(85 cases), Desai(145 cases), Homji(51 cases), Kanga(109 cases), and Kotwal(76 cases) have been involved more frequently than any other.

These 8 family surnames have performed 608 Ātā Bahram mācis (nearly 52% of the total). As for the distribution of their cases, there is no meaningful inclination found in any of 12 months. Through our tracing out these surnames in "Genealogy I", it turned out that Antia has originated from Māhyār Farēdūn, Dastur from Kākā Pahlān, Desai and Kotwal from Āshā Farēdūn, Homji from Chāndnā Farēdūn and Kanga from Kākā Dhanpāl. The individual, family, kutumb or collective Ātā Bahram mācis have been conducted by Kākā Dhanpāl(Bedwar, Kanga, Madan, Mulla, Vajifdar; 180 cases 24%), Kākā Pahlān(Dastur, Karkaria; 113 cases 18%) and Āshā Farēdūn(Dadachanji, Desai, Kattrack, Kotwal; 253 cases 33%) have contributed more to the maintenance of the sacred fire.

To be more specific, when we determine whether each of these surnames is Bhagariā or not, the result is that except Deboo all are from the Bhagariā polys. 18 out of 37 surnames in Figure 2 belong to the Mobed and have dedicated nearly 66% of all Ātā Bahram mācis, the exact number of which are Māhyār Farēdūn:76 cases(Antia 63:Deboo 13), Chāndnā Farēdūn 118 cases(Bajan 27:Homji 51:Kutar 19: Masani 21), Kākā Pahlān 180 cases(Bhedwar 15:Kanga 109:Madan 21:Mullah 14:Vajifdar 21), Kākā Pahlān 134 cases(Dastur 79:Kakalia 34:Karkaria 21), Āshā Farēdūn 235 cases(Desai 145:Kattrack 14:Kotwal176).

The facts we extracted from the documents demonstrate that Ātā Bahram in Navsari has been maintained by the Parsis from the Mobed, especially from the Bhagariā priests who have exerted themselves to share individual or collective mācis and surname(family) mācis among them. Āshā Farēdūn, Kākā Dhanpāl, and Kākā Pahlān have been in charge of individual or collective mācis, while Kākā Dhanpāl and Chāndnā Farēdūn have been in charge of surname(family) mācis. Thus the Parsis from the Mobed have concerned themselves with the Ātā Bahram mācis, including the fact that only the qualified priests are permit-
Conclusions

The sacred fires of Zoroastrian Parsis are addressed as “the son of Ahura Mazda” (Av.āthra ahurahē mazdāo puthra. Ātaš Niyāēš:4-8;10;12;18) and the Parsis “adore Ahura Mazda through the (sacred) fires”. With “the offering and prayer”, the Parsis should approach the sacred fires, “infinite, immortal being” (AN:7-8;13-15). Such blessings as “life, wisdom, offspring, animate energy, courage” (AN:10-11) and “good rewards and everlasting relief of fravasā(AN:13)” are believed to be bestowed on those Zoroastrians who offer sandalwood and prayers to the sacred fires.

Each sacred fire of Zoroastrian Parsis has been founded by an individual person or family in order to be consecrated and installed in its own fire temple. Each sacred fire has its own individuality entirely different from that of any other sacred fire or any other ordinary one. This sort of traditional pious foundation of sacred fires among the Parsis is to remember the name of individual person or family and the fravasi(soul) of the departed. The religious practice of offering sandalwood to the sacred fires has been carried out by the Parsis so that they can remember the name or the fravasi of those concerned. The mācis can be done in several ways: individual, family, kutumb, group, or trust and they mean so much to the Parsis that the heirship and inheritance are involved in many cases.

The mācis, in the case of Ātaš Bahram in Navsari, have been done by the Parsis descended from the priestly class, the Mōbed. To be more specific, the Bhagariā priests derived from the Parsis priesthood in Navsari have conducted not only the individual mācis but also the family or collective ones for the perpetual maintenance of the most important sacred fire.

footnotes


(4) Some Analyses of the maintenance of sacred fires in Navsari have already been carried out in my paper “Consistency and Changes in Zoroastrian Parsis in India,” in Cooperation and Conflict among Religious Communities. Kosei Shuppansha,(1989), pp.229-246 Some of the content of the above-mentioned paper overlaps with the result of this paper.

(5) DISA-POTHI is the Gujarati historical documents in which the genealogical facts of Desai kutumb and Dastur Kutumb are recorded. The documents cover the names, the anniversary days, the days of Navar, the characteristics, the kutumbs, the causes of death, the nicknames of individual person. VANSAVAALICHOPDO is also the tree-form Gujarati genealogical documents which have been handed down to Parsis families. Individual names only of male family members are recorded along the roots,
trunk, branches, and leaves. In this paper, DISA-POTHI and VANSAVALICHOPDO are called "Genealogy I" for convenience. For further details, see "The Sacred Fires and the Structure of Family in Zoroastrian Parsis," *Nishinihon Shukyogakuzasshi*, Vol.17 (1995), p.13

6) NAMGARAN is kept in each Parsis family to record the names of family within some generations and these names are invoked on the occasions of religious ceremonies. NAMGARAN is called "Genealogy II" for convenience in this paper. For further details, see "The Sacred Fires and the Name of the Departed in Zoroastrian Parsis," *Nishinihon Shukyogakuzasshi*, Vol.18 (1996), p.25. There have been left behind a great deal of NAMGARAN in Navsari and the documents are of greatest help for us to clarify the mode of thought and behaviour of Zoroastrian Parsis. I plan to discuss NAMGARAN in another article.


9) Modi, J.J., *The religious ceremonies and customs of the Parsis*, Bombay, (1986) (reprint) pp.233-239. The description of bui in this paper is from the observance still performed in Navsari. Under the guidance of Dasturji MeherjiRana and Dasturji Firoze M.Kotwal, the data is confirmed.


Here is printed only a small part of large quantity of all data required for want of space.

The data we recomposed by computerization is such that we are forced to spare large part of the data because space forbids.


See footnotes (5)

See footnotes (6)


For further information of ①-type trust māčī, see the Ātaš Bahrām māčī and Vadi Dar-i Mihir māčī of Pirojhbhai Dhanjhbhai Pestonji Modi

For further information of ②-type trust māčī, see the Ātaš Bahrām Nibhav for the soul of Manekbhai Framji Khurshedji Dordy

For further information of ③-type trust māčī, see the Bāj Rojgār and Muktad trust of Hormusji Cowasji Gotla family. In the last case there was a will left in the family that the right of trusteeship should be transmitted to the eldest son of his daughter, Ardeshir, on the condition that he must inherit the surname of Hormusji Gotla. More than that, it is also enjoined that "if Ardeshir were not blessed with any son, Rs.1500 per year should be endowed with his daughter Awabai and that after Awabai's death Rs.1500 should be given to her eldest son or her eldest daughter unless she had no son. Those concerned with each case should inherit the surname of Gotla, for all of them are thus descendants of Ardeshir. If any female were to receive Rs.1500 annually, then her husband should inherit the surname of Gotla"


Afrīnāgān is the ceremony of blessing dedicated to the souls of the departed with the offering (miyazd) of fruits, flowers, milk, water and the like. The ceremony is performed on the occasions of 5 Gathā days at the end of year, the first 3 days at the beginning of year and 6 Gahānbdars.

Muktad is the ten-day festival of the fravaši during which the fravaši of all the departed is
welcomed and entertained in each Parsi home.

(27) Cf. Mary Boyce, “On The Sacred Fires Of The Zoroastrians,” *BSOAS* XXXI (1968), pp. 52-68

(28) Here is printed only a small part of large quantity of all data required for want of space.

(29) In around 1275 A.C., Zarthosht Mobad, grandson of Horrmazdyar Ramilyar, settled down in Navsari accompanied with his two sons, Kadmim and Mobad. Bahram Mobad, Zarthosht’s younger brother, left Sanjan for Bharuch(or Broach) Pahlam Mobad, grandson of Zarthosht Mobad, moved to Surat to be the ancestor of the Godavra priests.

The genealogy of Sanjana priest is as follows.


(30) Because of the great increase of Parsis population in Navsari toward the end of 14th century the descendants of Kadmīn Zarthosht were obliged to employ from Sanjan Hōm Bahmanyār, who came to Navsari with his only son Farēdūn in order to help the descendants of Kadmīn Zarthosht. Hōm
Bahmayār still continued to tend the Sanjan Ātaš Bahrām at that time, to which the descendants of his brother Hōrmazyār Bahmanyār in Sanjan objected, accusing them of earning their reward in two places. They asked Farēdūn and his two sons, Āshā and Māhyār to serve either Navsari or Sanjan. Farēdūn and his two sons, Āshā and Māhyār decided finally to work only in Navsari, "provided that the descendants of Mōbad Kamdīn, headed by Pahlān Ānnā and Kākā Dhanpāl, agreed to divide the share from the proceeds of ceremonies equally between themselves and the three sons of Farēdūn in perpetuity."

The family members of Pahlān Ānnā and Kākā Dhanpāl agreed that the three sons of Farēdūn Hōm should be equal partners. Hence, they came to be called Bhagariā or Bhagarsāth 'co-sharers'. The origin of the term 'bhagariā' is, as Dr. Firoze M. Kotwal argues, from the priests’ act of 'bhagar kādhvī (Guj.) to take out the Bhagar or drōn (Av.draonah-portion') which is done in the consecration of sacred breads(drōn) brought to the Vādi Dar-i Mihir. Bhagar Kādhnārā or Bhagariā (Guj.) means those priests who act 'bhagar kādhvī'.

As Dr. Firoze M. Kotwal indicates, Bhagarsāth Anjoman appointed the following fixed religious office to each stock:

The head of the Kākā Pahlān stock made the heir of a deceased person recite the formula of sosh on the third day after death, in the presence of an assembly.

The head of the Kākā Dhanpāl stock acted as custodian of the consecrated bull's urine(nirangdīn)

The head of the Āshā Farēdūn stock conducted the penitentiary prayer(patēt) in an assembly gathered to honour the departed soul on the third day after death.

The head of the Māhyār Farēdūn stock gave permission for initiations into priesthood, called Nāwār and Marātāb, and a member of his family was entitled to conduct the first day of the Nāwār ceremony.

The head of the Chāndā Farēdūn maintained records and preserved documents for the Anjomans's archives.

論文要旨

ゾロアスター教徒バーシー（Parsis）の聖なる火は、現実の生活において、どのような人たちによってどのように保持されてきているのか。聖なる火の保持の場面には、バーシーの集団構造のどの側面がどのように関与し、また反映されているのか。これらの問題を明らかにすることが、本稿の目的である。問題提起および考察は、調査地ナウサリ（Navsari）に限定し、グジャラーティ（Gjarati）の系譜史料（Disa-Pothi: Vanshavalichopdo:Namgaran）とフィールドワークのデータを基本的史料として使用した。

バーシーの聖なる火は、個人または家族によって創設され、聖別され、聖火殿に保持され、一般の火とは区別されていた。バーシーが聖なる火を創設する行為は、個人や家族の名前が記憶され、また、死者の魂（fravasi）が供養されることもある。この思考は、バーシーが祭司をとおして聖なる火に香木を捧げつつげる行為（マーチ māčī）の動因ともなっている。バーシーは、個人、家族、集団を単位にして、マーチを持続し、場合によっては信託（trust）を組む形でも継続しようとする。したがって、この聖なる火に香木を捧げ加える行為は、当事者にとっては相続継承の対象にされるほど重要な意味をもっている。

1825年のマーチの具体的事例を分析することによって、また、マーチを行っているバーシーをグジャラーティ系譜史料で追跡することによって、次のような結果を取り出すことができる。

ナウサリで最も等級の高い聖なる火アータシュ・ベーラーム（Ātaš Baharām）のマーチに関しては、祭司系譜を自発するバーシーが中心となって行われている。個人の断面でも集団の断面でも、祭司系譜を自発とする特定の家族（姓）が、また、祭司系譜の中でもバガリアー（Bhagariā）と呼ばれる特定の系譜に属する集団が、アータシュ・ベーラームに香木を捧げることによって聖なる火は永久的に燃えつづけてきている。聖なる火は、バーシー・コミュニティーにおいて、ただ単に共有されているのではなく、現実には分有されているのである。

キーワード： ボロアスター教 バーシー 聖なる火 系譜 集団構造