



## FRAŠŌ.KĒRĒTI

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**FRAŠŌ.KĒRĒTI** – (Sk.tr. *vráddhi-kráti-*, *akṣaya-*, Mid. Pers. *frašegird*, Man. Mid. Pers. *prš(y)gyrd*; probably: making wonderful or excellent), Avestan compound consisting of the adjective *fraša-* and the *ti*-abstract of *kar* (to make). It is an eschatological term referring to the final renovation and transfiguration of Ahura Mazda's creation after evil has been utterly defeated and driven away. The etymological connections of OAv. *fəraša-*, YAv. *fraša-*, OP *fraša-* are not entirely clear, neither is the basic meaning of the adjective. The Iranian forms may correspond to Vedic *prkṣá-* "strong," which, however, must then be etymologically distinct from the Sanskrit verb *prc-* (to fill, satiate, mix; Bailey, pp. 21 ff.; Mayrhofer, *Wörterbuch* II p. 159; idem, *Dictionary* II, p. 328). The strongest argument in favor of this equivalence is the use of Vedic *prkṣá-* as an epithet of horses (*árvan-*) or bulls (*vr'ṣan-*; cf. Av. *fraša-* as an epithet of camels in the name of Zarathushtra's father-in-law (?), OAv. *Fərašaoštra-*, YAv. *Frašaoštra-* "whose camels are excellent"; *AirWb.*, col. 1007; Narten, p. 202 n. 38).

The use of *fraša-* as part of a proper name in an obviously non-religious sense has a counterpart in Old Persian, where the adjective describes the most beautiful palace which Darius ordered to be built in Susa (DSf 56-57; DSa 5; DSj 6). Moreover, the syntagm *frašam akunavam*, which expresses Darius' satisfaction with his building work (DSO 3-4), corresponds to the Gathic formula (*ahūm*) *fərašəm kar* (Y. 30.9) / YAv. (*ahum*) *frašəm kar* (Yt. 19.11., 89) "to make (life) excellent." In Avestan, however, it occurs only in an eschatological context and provides the basis for the formation of the



compound *frašō.kārāti-*, attested only in the Younger Avesta (Narten, p. 202). The Old Avestan equivalent seems to be the hapax legomenon *fārašti-* found in the *Yasna Haptaṅhāiti* (Y 38.2). However, as this noun occurs only in a liturgical enumeration of religious terms (Narten, p. 197), it does not provide any insight into the concept associated with it. In a religious sense, *fraša-* also refers to Ahura Mazda's perfect initial creation in Old Persian (DNb 1.2) and Younger Avestan (Yt. 19.10; Vd. 1.20), and as a root noun in the compound *fraž-dā*, to the bounteous formulation (Y. 12.1).

*Allusions in the Gāthās.* In two out of its four Gathic attestations, the adjective *fāraša-* functions as an attribute to *ahu-* "life": *aṭcā tōi vaēm xiiāmā yōi īm fārašām kārēnaon ahūm* "and so may we be those for you who will make this life excellent" (Y. 30.9) and *xšmākā xšaθrā ahurā fārašām vasnā haiθiiām dā ahūm* "by your rule, o Lord, you made it real that life is excellent according to (your) wish" (Y. 34.15; the sense of *vasnā* is disputed, see Hintze, 1994, p. 115, n.130; Humbach, p. 115). In addition, the superlative *fārašō.tāma-* is syntactically parallel to *parāhu-* "higher existence" (Y. 46.19). The superlative occurs twice, but only in the formula *hiiāṭ vasnā fārašō.tāmam* "what is most excellent according to wish." This is governed by the verbal expression *haiθiia varāš* "to make real" (Y. 46.19) or the action noun *haiθiia-uuarāštā-* "making real" (Y. 50.11). Each of the three passages where *fāraša-* or its superlative is governed by the verb or action noun constitute the concluding stanza of a *Gāthā*.

That *fāraša-* can refer to Ahura Mazda's initial creation in the *Gāthās* may emerge from *Yasna* 34.15, where Mazda is the agent, as well as from *Yasna* 50.11, where he is addressed as the "creator of life" (*dātā aṅhəuš*) who "will promote through good thinking the realization of what is most excellent according to (his) wish" (*arədaṭ vohū manəṅhā / haiθiia-uuarāštəm hiiāṭ vasnā fārašō.tāmam*). This passage seems to allude to the idea that Ahura Mazda (q.v.), who initially created life in a perfect way (*fāraša-dā*; Y. 34.15), takes care that it will be made perfect again (*fāraša-kar*; Y. 30.9).

Even if the term *frašō.kārāti-* itself is not attested, *Yasna* 30.9 indicates quite clearly that there is in the *Gāthās* a concept of "making life *fraša-*." This is achieved by "giving falsehood into the hands of truth" (Y. 30.8), an idea which forms the central semantic component of *frašō.kārāti-* in the later tradition. Indeed, *Yasna* 48.2 *aṅhəuš vaṅvhi ākārātiš* could be a Gathic periphrastic expression for YAv. *frašō.kārāti-* (Nyberg, p. 228). The context supports this interpretation, because the preceding line mentions the defeat of the deceitful



by the truthful ones. In the *Gāθās*, Zarathushtra and his followers ( “we”; *Y.* 30.9) bring about the renovation. Being Saošiiants, they fight and defeat Evil (*Y.* 48.12; Hintze, 1995, pp. 88 f.). It is their present life (*īm ahūm*) which they wish to make *fraša-* (*Y.* 30.9). This could indicate that they expected the transformation of life and defeat of Evil to take place within their own lifetime (cf. Lommel, 1922, p. 31; idem, 1930, p. 225). Yet the near-deictic demonstrative pronoun *īm* probably refers to the corporal life in contrast to the spiritual one, as it does, e.g., in *Yasna* 43.3 (Narten, pp. 290-95; Shaked, 1971).

*Allusions in the Younger Avesta.* The only more explicit description of the events believed to take place in *frašō.kərəti* is found in the *Zamyād Yašt* (*Yt.* 19) at the end of the initial three sections as well as at the end of the final one. The agents who will make life *fraša-* are the “creatures of Ahura Mazdā” (*Yt.* 19.10), the Aməša Spəntas (q.v.; *Yt.* 19.15), the spiritual and corporal *yazatas*, the excellent makers (*frašō.carətar-*), and saviors (*saošiiant-*; *Yt.* 19.22), and above all a single savior, the “victorious one among the Saošyants” (*Yt.* 19.89), i.e., Astuuat.ərəta (*Yt.* 19.92), and his companions (*Yt.* 19.95). It is clearly indicated what making life *fraša-* implies: it will become “ageless, without decay, not rotting, not putrefying, living forever, thriving forever, ruling at will” (*Yt.* 19.11.89). The dead will rise, revived by the one who does not decay, and life will be created anew in an excellent and perfect way. Falsehood will be driven out of the good creation, back to that place whence it had come for its destructive purpose (*Yt.* 19.12.90). Astuuat.ərəta will emerge from Lake Hāmūn (Av. *kəsaōiia-*) wielding the victorious weapon, which other heroes bore before him, and drive Falsehood out of the World of Truth (*Yt.* 19.92-93; Hintze, 1995). With his gaze of insight and strength he will render the whole corporal world indestructible (*Yt.* 19.94). His companions will advance, and Rage (*aēšma-*) will flee before them (*Yt.* 19.95). Good Thought (*vohu- manah-*) overcomes Evil Thought (*aka- manah-*), the rightly spoken Word (*ərəžuxδa- vac-*) overcomes the falsely spoken Word (*miθaoxta- vac-*), Wholeness (*hauruuatāt-*) and Immortality (*amərətātāt-*) overcome both Hunger (*šud-*) and Thirst (*taršna-*), and finally Anra Mainiiu (see [AHRIMAN](#)) will retreat powerless (*Yt.* 19.96).

In *Yašt* 19 as well as in other Young Avesta passages, *frašō.kərəti-* denotes a more distant future event. It is conceived of as a turning point (*uruuaēsa-*; *Yt.* 13.58). The attribute *sūra-* “strong” (*Y.* 62.3; *Vd.* 18.51) may refer to the notion that evil is overcome at that time. Those who help to bring about *frašō.kərəti-* are called *frašō.carətar-* (*Y.* 24.5; *Yt.* 13.17, 19.22; *Aogəmadaēčā* 69; Hintze,



1994, pp. 154-55).

*Accounts in the Pahlavi Books.* In Pahlavi accounts (*Iranian Bundahišn* 30; *Iranian Bundahišn* 34, cf. Messina, pp. 269-79; *Dādistān ī dēnīg* 36; *Pahlavi Rivayat* 48; *Zādspram* 34-35; *Dēnkard* 7.11, ed. Madan, 674.22-676.14; cf. Molé, 1967, 102-5) a continuous evolution towards rehabilitation (*paywandišn ī ō frašegird*; Zaehner, p. 308; Boyce, *Zoroastrianism* I, p. 233) takes place, initiated by the revelation of the Good Religion to Zarathushtra and its subsequent dissemination. In three stages, each characterized by the appearance of a Sōšāns, the entire creation draws nearer to *frašegird*. Completion of the latter will finally be achieved by the victorious Sōšāns (*sōšāns ī pērōzgar*; *Zādspram* 35.20), helped by his companions. That the Pahlavi texts are the works of diverse theologians and commentators working on Zarathushtra's vision and teachings emerges from the fact that there is diversity in details. For example, the number of Sōšān's collaborators varies: six (*Zādspram* 35.14. 20; *Dādistān ī dēnīg* 35), 15 of both righteous men and maidens (*Iranian Bundahišn* 34.16), or 1000 companions (*Dēnkard* 7.11.8). He raises the dead in fifty-seven years (*Iranian Bundahišn* 34.9; *Dādistān ī dēnīg* 35; *Pahlavi Rivayat* 48.3; *Dēnkard* 7.11.4; *Zādspram* 34.46; Boyce, *Zoroastrianism* I, p. 291). All raised human beings are judged in the Assembly of Isadvāstar, and receive three days and nights reward or punishment in Paradise (*garōdmān*) or Hell (*dušox*) according to their deeds (*Iranian Bundahišn* 34.10-15; in *Pahlavi Rivayat* 48.97 the assembly of Isadvāstar takes place after the ordeal of molten metal). As to the ultimate fate of the deceitful ones, Pahlavi texts exhibit divergent views whose interpretation has recently been debated between Shaul Shaked (1994, p. 39) and Mary Boyce (1996, pp. 23-24). According to *Pahlavi Rivayat* (36.4), the wicked ones are damned for eternity, and the souls of those who yielded to Ahriman and demons are annihilated (*Pahlavi Rivayat* 32.5; Williams, II, pp. 186 f.). In contrast, other sources relate that the deceitful ones are, with much pain, cleansed of their sins and purified in the stream of molten metal, which all human beings have to cross. After having been purified, they, too, become able to praise Ohrmazd and the Amahrspands (*Iranian Bundahišn* 34.19-20; *Pahlavi Rivayat* 48.70-72). However, there seems to be a sense of grievance about the righteous and deceitful ones being treated alike. Hence, presumably, the increasing of end-of-time affliction on sinners (*Pahlavi Rivayat* 48.68). Sōšāns and his helpers slay the ox Haḍayanš and perform a sacrifice. From the oxen's fat and the white *hōm* they prepare the immortal food, which they give to the resurrected mortals to eat and thus render them immortal (*Iranian Bundahišn* 34.22-23). At the creator's command, Sōšāns apportions reward and



retribution, and the righteous ones are taken into *garōdmān* (q.v.) to be with Ohrmazd (*Iranian Bundahišn* 34.25).

In a final battle, the good creatures slay and defeat their dark opponents (*Iranian Bundahišn* 34.27; *Zādspram* 35.37-38; in *Pahlavi Rivayat* 48.73 the battle takes place before the resurrection). The *dēws* (q.v.) flee powerless across that bridge of the sky by which Ahriman had rushed in (*Iranian Bundahišn* 34.30). The hollow through which Ahriman had entered is closed with molten metal and the dragon Gōčīhr burnt up in it. Moreover, the purified hell also forms part of the universe which is renovated in its entirety (*Iranian Bundahišn* 34.32). The earth becomes plain and levelled (*Iranian Bundahišn* 34.33; *Pahlavi Rivayat* 31.c.7; cf. Lincoln, pp. 136-53), heaven and earth are united and the entire creation will dwell together with Ohrmazd and the Amahraspands in eternal bliss (*Pahlavi Rivayat* 48.98-102; *Sad dar Bundahišn*, ed. Dhabhar, epilogue secs. 30-45, pp. 176 f., tr. Gignoux, 1968, pp. 241 f.).

Frašegird is a return to the beginning (Boyce, *Zoroastrianism* I, p. 292) insofar as Ohrmazd's perfect creation in *mēnōg* and *gētīg* is reinstated as it was before Ahriman's assault. But there is a difference: after *frašegird*, time no longer exists and Ahriman is unable to attack ever again, because he has been defeated once and for all. Therefore, *frašegird* means the utter defeat of and final victory over all evil (*Zādspram* 1.24; *Dādistān ī dēnīg* 36.101; *Pahlavi Rivayat* 31.c7). Like the roof of a house, it is the completion of Ohrmazd's all-embracing plan (*Zādspram* 34.21-22), so that the god can rest from his work (*Iranian Bundahišn* 34.21; cf. Shaked, 1970, p. 227).

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