

Controversial Avestan Compounds Relating to the Fire Cult

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Abstract—One of the most significant issues in the study of avestan language is the analysis of compounds which contain an extensive grammatical chapter concluding numerous sub-categories. In the other words, the juxtaposition of two words so as to construct a compound has an active and productive structure with different aspects and could be analyzed from different perspectives based on the grammatical category of the first and second part of the compound as well as the effect of each part on the other one. In various cases, the mere grammatical and structural analyses of a compound would not lead us to decipher its exact signification; hence, our target compounds *āsītō.gātu-* and *dāitiīō (.) gātu-* should be examined in different contexts which could probably indicate the implication of various crucial ceremonies and rituals concerning fire, its purification and preparation, as an important element in zoroastrian beliefs.

Index Terms—compound, Avesta, Vidēvdād, Yasna, fire

I. INTRODUCTION

In general, studying avestan compound is a productive and controversial topic depending on the type of compound so that it is not easy to realize the accurate definition and final judgment about the type of a compound in some instances. In the meantime, some of them have been repeated less in texts or in some cases the compounds recall for more discussions regarding their constituent parts in order to achieve further clear concept. For example, as for the first part, *āsītō.gātu-* is a compound requiring special scrutinizing in order to achieve a correct interpretation. This compound has been mentioned unchanged in Avesta in Yasna 62, paragraph 5, in the praise of fire, in *Ātaš Niyāyišn (Khorda Avesta)* in paragraph 11, also in paragraph 39 of Yasht 19. Despite of it being mentioned on more than one occasion, the compound can be marked as an exception or what is called in linguistic a ‘hapax’. It should be mentioned that the first part of our compound above has not been found in any other composition except with the second member *gātu-*. Indeed, the ambiguity of the first component in the compound and its plausible semantic connection with the latter is the main reason for the uncertainty of word interpretation.

The second discussed compound *dāitiīō (.) gātu-* mentioned in *Vidēvdād*, fragard 8, paragraph 81-96 and repeated in paragraph 17 (and 19) of fragard 13 deserves more analyses considering its identical second part moreover the application of two parts as two independent and free morphemes. For this compound, if it is considered merely in fragard 8 of *Vidēvdād*, it implies ‘designated position, lawful place’, related to the temple or *Wahrām* or *Bahrām* fire directly which inquires more discussions. This definition could only be applied to the latter context. Should it be mentioned that the only unequivocal element in these two compound-samples is the second part *gātu-* which means ‘location, place; position’.

II. *āsītō.gātu-* IN TEXTS

In paragraph 5 of Yasna 62 of Avesta, *āsītō.gātūm*, as well as a series of adjectives *nairiiqm*, *ərəδβō.zəngqm*, *jayāurūm*, and *ax^vafniiqm* are adjectival attributes appeared after our feminine substantive *hqm.varəitiī*. The compound *Hqm.varəitiī* is a substantive accompanied always by adjective *nairiiqm*. This Zoroastrian goddess is a substitute or an incarnation for ‘masculine bravery’ and her name has been repeatedly mentioned along with other gods and goddesses in different parts of avestan holy book.

Her name has been mentioned according to the paragraph 66 of Yasht 10 (*Mihryasht*) in the company of combatant incarnation of *Mithra*, *Aši* and *Parendi*, *X^varənah*, *θβāša*, messenger god *Nairiō.səṅha* and the *Fravašis* of righteous men and women (GERSHEVITCH, 1959, p. 104). The connection between this goddess and the sun in daytime causes her for appearing in company of *Mithra* along with of *θβāša* (GERSHEVITCH, 1959, p. 215; BOYCE, 1975/1, p. 59).

The goddess *hqm.varəitiīm* has been mentioned in paragraph 5 of Yasna 62, also in *Ātaš Niyāyišn*, paragraph 11 which both have been composed for praising of fire. Furthermore it was mentioned in paragraph 19 of *Srōsh Yasht Hādoxt*, paragraph 22 of *Sirozah* 2nd in the praise of the god of Wind, *Vāta* also in paragraph 39 of Yasht 19 (in a section concerning the myth of *Kərəāspa*), as well as paragraph 3 of *Vīspərəd* 7. But all these traits and adjectives, along with *āsītō.gātūm* has only been mentioned in Yasna 62, paragraph 5 (=paragraph 11 of *Ātaš Niyāyišn*), paragraph

39 of Yasht 19 only for describing *hqm.varəitiī*. So the ambiguous definition of this compound may only be discovered by adjectives attributed to her in the text:

dāiīā mē ātarš puθra ahurahe mazdā... nairiiqm pasčāēta hqm.varəitīm ərəδβō.zəngqm ax^vafniiqm [θrišūm asnqmca xšafnqmca] āsitō.gātūm jayāurūm tuθrušqm āsnqm frazantīm ... huuāpqm qzō.būjim huuīrəm yā.mē frādaiīāt nmānəmca vīsəmca zantūmca daxiīūmca daiḥhusastīmca. (Yasna 62:4-5)

“Grant me, Oh fire! Son of Ahura Mazda ... then, [it] *hqm.varəitīm* (masculine courage) has laid stand¹, sleepless on watch? [and] awake to [not to sleep a third of a day...] and that rises quick from bed, beneficial child in a nurturing, wise ..., righteous, releasing of anxiety, clever, one who prosper my house, family, clan and land.”

The compound *āsītō.gātu-* viz. mentioned above, has reappeared in paragraph 39 of Zamyād Yasht in a part about *Kərəsāspa* and as a trait for *hqm.varəitīm*:

yat dīm upaḥhacacat yā uṙra naire hqm.varəitiš nairiiqm yā hqm.varəitīm yazamaide ərəδβō.zəngqm ax^vafniiqm āsitō.gātūm jayāurūm yā upaḥhacacat kərəsāspəm. (19:39)

“Since the mighty manly defence accompanied him. We worship the manly defence, which is always on its feet, without sleep, which is awake even when lying on the bed, which accompanied *Kərəsāspa*”. (HUMBACH-ICHAPORIA, 1998, p. 23).

III. *āsītō.gātu-* AND ITS DERIVATION

More than a few ideas have been developed about the derivation of this compound; at first, Darmesteter translated this compound as “with rapid strides”. He concluded *āsita-* as a derivation of *āsu-* (DARMESTER, 1883, p. 359-60). It seems the repetition of *āsu-* in the preceding paragraph² (paragraph 4 of *Ātaš Niyāyišn*) was the base for Darmesteter’s theory:

dāiīā mē ātarš puθra ahurahe mazdā āsu x^vəθrəm āsu θrəitīm āsu jītīm.... “Grant me, <O> fire, son³ of Ahura Mazda!... swift comfort, rapid sustenance, <and Long> life”

Following Darmesteter’s opinion, Mills translated *āsita-* as “one who rises more rapid from throne, one who has the most rapid *Gāh* (MILLS, 1887, p. 314). None of these interpretations can be accepted as an accurate definition for *gātu-* (based on Darmesteter’s opinion) could ever be designated as “stride” and *āsita-* cannot be derived from *āsu-*. Thus, the most rational argument maintains undoubtedly that *āsita-* is a past participle of a verbal root.

According to this hypothesis, Geldner has concluded the compound as a past participle of the root *as-* signifying “to attain” and the compound as “a resting place or a resort”. (GELDNER, 1891, p. 522). Bartholomae has assumed the compound as a derivation of verbal root *sī-* ‘sleeping’ with the prefix *ā-*. Also Riechelt (1968) regarded *āsītō.gātu-* as a derivation of verbal root *sāi-* ‘to sit’ while its phrasal meaning is “to sit on the throne” (p. 222). Humbach (1998) defined the compound as ‘put in its place’ (p. 115-6) and Hintze (1994) defined it as “lying on the bed” (p. 23). Undoubtedly, the base of all these interpretations could be *āsita-* as a past participle, constructed with suffix *-ta-* as a result of grammatical analyses. Nevertheless, Lubotsky (1998) believes that the juxtaposition of root *si-* signifying “to sleep” (equivalent for ‘*Šī*’) and the prefix *ā-* “having the throne” is pointless and disharmonious with other adjectives mentioned in text, respectively “rised”, “awake”, and “watchful”. Thus the compound should be defined in a way to be compatible with the semantic field. Hence, he considered *ā-* in *āsita-* as a substitute for regular particle of negation ‘*a*’ and the correct form of compound would be **āsita.gātu* ‘the owner of an unoccupied throne’ (“or one who will never see his throne” (p. 93). In addition, it should be noted that according to a new theory and based on some evidences, the verbal root *si-* has never been mentioned with suffix *-ta-* (PIRART, 2004, p. 268).

It is necessary to highlight that *āsit(a)-* has been appeared as an independent word in paragraph 14 of Yasna 10⁴:

mā mē yaθa gāuš.draḥšō āsitō vārəm acaire.” (Airwb.338)

“Don’t let [intoxicating] beverages to move like a flag [skin of] cow as it likes.”

It seems *gāuš.draḥšō* is a compound adjective for *āsītō*; in other words, *āsītō* is the subject for a phrase that could be considered as a nominative plural of ‘*āsit*’ derived from verbal root *ās-* ‘to eat’. The above discussion is problematic and uncertain, while the trace of this verbal root has been found in an avestan term *kahrkāsa-*, in Ossetian ‘*cæ rgæ s*’

¹ The compound *ərəδβō.zəng-* literally means ‘with perpendicular (vertical) legs’ from the adjective ‘*ərəδβ-*vertical, perpendicular’; *zəng-* could mean ‘shank; leg’. This combination is always used with *ax^vafniia-* ‘awaken, watchful’ signifies ‘to convey; to stand on foot to watch’. In addition, this word may be associated with the Sanskrit ‘*ūrdhvajānu*’ and imply “to sit [on earth] with vertical knees” or “to sit with knees toward up” (LUBOTSKY, 1998, p.91). The equivalent of this compound corresponds to ‘*stēndag-zangih*’ in middle Persian.

² Cf. part of paragraph 4: “*dāiīā mē ātarš puθra ahurahe mazdā āsu h^vāθrəm āsu θrəitīm āsu jītīm....*” The equivalent of this avestan word in middle Persian is ‘*tēz*’

³ The phrase ‘*ātarš puθra ahurahe mazdā.*’ as a very common and repetitive *phrasem* in avestan verses is a subject of controversy between some scholars; its translation as “Fire, son of Ahura Mazda” is based on an ordinary meaning of the word *puθra* “son” (Sanskrit ‘*Putra*’); according to Kanga this word derives from the Sanskrit root ‘*pu-*’ meaning “to purify, to render pure, source of purifying, cleaning” and translates it as “purifier”: Kanga translates the phrase as “O Fire, the purifier (of all things) pertaining to Ahura Mazda”. For more information: (Kanga, 1953, cited in: MANECKSHAH PANTHAKI, 2006, p.3).

⁴ Pirart (2004) have corrected *āsītō* and changed it to an adverb ‘*aiβitō*’ signifying “afar”; he considered the correct form of compound as “*aiβitō.gātu*” as ‘moving in all directions’ (p. 268)

Darmesteter (1960) has stated that middle persian equivalent for ‘*āsītō vārəm acaire*’ could be ‘*tiz az vārūm rawē (sātūni)*’ and ‘*vārūm*’ is equivalent for heart in modern Persian (VOL.1, p.105)

signifying ‘eagle’ and in Sogdian ‘čarkas’ for ‘vulture’ and it had ever been mentioned for ritual drink of *Haoma* and the related terms in texts. (SCHWARTZ, 1989, p. 108). In fact, the verb mentioned with *Haoma* is always x^var- .

Due to the diversity of opinions, it is impossible to present any definitive statement about the derivation of the compound; but *āsītō.gātu-* is classified as a possessive compound and its first part is undoubtedly a past participle.⁵

IV. *dāitiiō* (.) *gātu-* IN TEXT

This compound is mentioned in *Vidēvdād* paragraphs 81 to 96 of Fragard 8, which could be a very important part implying to the preparation of a so-called *Wahrām* fire through 16 different kinds of one although there is no definitive evidence of *Wahrām* fire nor an avestan term for a fire temple or *Wahrām* fire in avestan texts ; Putting behind the avestan sources the earliest direct references to specific fires especially ‘*ādur ī Warahrān*’ were found in the inscription of Sasanian king Šābuhr I and his priest Kirdīr i.e., KKZ 2 : .. W KBYR *twry ZY wlhl n* (GIGNOUX, 1991, p.54). Here is some important evidences implying the preparation of fire of *Wahrām* as a sacred superior one;. Should it be mentioned that all the avestan terms indicating these 16 fires, were also extracted from the eighth chapter of *Vidēvdād* viz. mentioned above of paragraphs 81-96 and appeared in formulaic phrases especially at the first part of each verses, summarized e.i., *dātarā gaēthanqm astuuaitinqm ašāum yō ātrēm X dāitīm gātūm auui auua.baraiti...*

Here is the paragraph 83 chosen as an example:

dātarā gaēthanqm astuuaitinqm ašāum yō ātrēm saire.hiia dāitīm gātūm auui auua.baraiti čuuat ahmāi naire miždēm aṇhat pasča astasča baodaṇhasča viuruuīštīm: āat mraot ahurō mazdā yaθa aētahmi aṇhuuō yat astuuaiti pañca sata ātrā.saokanqm dāitīm gātūm auui auua.baraiti. (8/83)

“O Maker of the material world, thou Holy One! If a man brings to the *Dāityō-gātu* (= lawful place) the dung burning fire (fire from the kiln of a brick-maker)⁶, what shall be his reward when his soul has parted with his body? Ahura Mazda answered: ‘His reward shall be the same as if he had, here below, brought four hundred fire-brands to the *Dāityō-gātu*’.” (DARMESTER, 1880, p.113)

The table 1 shows the 16 fires viz., named before: (DARMESTER, 1880, p. 111-7; MODI, 1937, p. 169)

TABLE 1:
THE 16 FIRES VIZ

Vidēvdād/8- Avestan term of 16 kind of fires	English equivalent
8.81. <i>nasupāka-</i>	<i>Corpse-burning fire</i>
8.82. <i>uruzdipāka-</i>	<Fire in> <i>burning dirt and excrement</i>
8.83. <i>saire.hiia-</i>	<i>dung -burning fire</i>
8.84. <i>zəmaini.pačika-</i>	<i>Potter or brick maker-fire</i>
8.85. <i>yāmō.pačika-</i>	<Fire used by> <i>glass-blower</i>
8.86. <i>parō.bərajiia-</i>	<Fire used by> <i>coppersmith/reaper</i>
8.87. <i>zaraniiō.saēpa-</i>	<Fire used by> <i>goldsmith</i>
8.88. <i>ərəzatō.saēpa-</i>	<Fire used by> <i>silversmith</i>
8.89. <i>aiiō.saēpa-</i>	<Fire used by> <i>ironsmith</i>
8.90. <i>haosatnaēnō.saēpa-</i>	<Fire used by> <i>steelsmith</i>
8.91. <i>tanura-</i>	<i>Fire of Oven/<Fire used by> baker</i>
8.92.... <i>ātrēm dištāt hača...</i>	<i>Fire from under a cauldron</i>
8.93. <i>taxairiia-</i>	<i>ātrēm aoniiaṭ hača taxairiiaṭ</i> <i>Fire from tin belonging to courageous riders and warriors</i>
8.94. <i>staorō.paiia-</i>	<i>ātrēm paṇtaṭ hača staorō.paiiaṭ..</i> <i>Fire of Herdsmen and sheperds</i>
8.95. <i>skairiia-</i>	<i>Fire belonging to militaries</i>
8.96. <i>nazdišta-</i>	<i>Fire of own hearth⁷</i>

These different fires issued from different sources with different purposes would be carried each from their source and by a different tradesman related to it, and will be placed in their proper place i.e. *Dādghāh*, the middle Persian term corresponded to our compound *dāitiiō* (.) *gātu-*. Each fire must pass through several stages of purification and all the process of collecting, purifying and sanctifying would be so long and complicated as well, i.e., the subject matter of paragraphs 73-82 of the same chapter is the purification of first fire on the row, *nasupāka-* which is the most complicated one.⁸

⁵ The past participle as a first member of a compound has the role of agent in the composition. Cf.: (DUCHESNE-GUILLEMIN, 1936, p.170)

⁶ The compound ‘*saire.hiia-*’ which also signifies ‘mass of reeds’ has been usually translated as “dung burning fire” implying also hearth burning fire of dirt and excrement. Due to the respect and sanctity and high venerability of fire in Zoroastrian religion, it seems impossible to accept this definition. Therefore, based on Hoshang Jamasp’s theory (1907), the word *sairiia-* can be interpreted as “stone” Cf. (p. 303) or based on its comparison with *śarā-* in Sanskrit “grass, straw”, *sairiia-* in compound can be translated as “pile of straw” Cf. (De Vaan, 2003, p.571). The second part of the compound ‘*hiia-*’ is from the neutral noun *hiia-* “character”. This neutral noun has become ‘*xēm*’ in Middle Persian and *Khīm* in modern Persian. Here it seems the latter could refer to the fire of a brick maker too.

⁷ Modi(1937) has considered *nazdišta-* as the nearest fire and interpreted it to “fire of neighbour, fire at the neighbourhood” (p. 169).

⁸ After the collection, each of the fires named on the table above will be purified and consecrated in a particular manner and after their purification they will be united into one supreme fire and enthroned in a temple. As Modi (1937) discussed in his work the process should be: “Collection of the 16 fires. Purification of the 16 fires. Consecration of the 16 fires. Unification of the 16 consecrated fires. Consecration of the united Sacred Fire. Consecration of the Temple itself. Enthroning the united fire.” (pp. 169-170[212-3]). The process of collecting the first fire from a burning corpse

In all the sixteen paragraphs⁹, the first and second member of compound are appeared as two independent morphemes and inflected separately. It seems *dāitīm gātūm* refers to a perfect place for putting various fires and eventually preparing the coronation of *Wahrām fire* (MODI, 1937, p. 169 [212]) but not the proper place for the most important fire. However our compound implies to another matter in another chapter of *Vidēvdād*, e.i., paragraph 17 of Fragard 13:

dātarə gāēθanəṃ astuuaitinəṃ...duua asti spā pasuš.hauruuō dāitiiō.gātuš: āat mraot ahurō mazdā yō yūjiiastīm haca gāēθābiiō parāiti sraēšəmnō tāiūš vāhrkəmča.

“O Maker of the material world, thou Holy One! Which is the dog that must be called a shepherd's dog? Ahura Mazda answered: 'It is the dog that goes a Yugyēsti round about the fold, watching for the thief and the wolf.'” (DARMESTER, 1880, p.156)

Hereon, the compound *dāitiiō.gātu-* signifies a “lawful place”, simply an appointed or a proper place for dead body exposure as well as a leading hint to a specified species of corpse-eating dogs and their role in purification. It is not possible to decipher and take the significations stated *viz.* into consideration without discussing it in all the different contexts. But the only example of *dāitiiō.gātu-* with the interpretation rendering ‘proper place for dead body’ is based on *Vidēvdād*, paragraph 17 of fragard13; It seems the latter interpretation has been expanded to the next historical period probably to the Sasanian and post Sasanian era. It is noteworthy that in Indian Parsees culture, the Middle Persian word ‘*dādgāh*’ apply to a place for putting corpse to be devoured by vultures and nature’s purifiers.¹⁰ Should it be also noted that according to Kotwal (1995) this particular term has been employed instead of ‘*daxma*’ as a place of corpse exposure (p.161). *Dakhma*¹¹ (or *daxma*) is not just a simple constructed monument made of stones, bricks and limes but it is a religious institution which helps Ahura mazdā by combating and vanquishing impurity and filth produced by *Angra mainyu* or Evil Spirit (*Idem.*, p. 169). Also this term has been associated to a rite performed on behalf of the dead person among Iranians which could date back to a time before ninth century, since it is common to Iranian Zoroastrians and Indian Parsees; During this custom which called *Yašt-e-dōre-dakhma*, i.e. the act of worship at *dādgāh* (or *dāzghāh* as an alternative term), as an appointed place destined for the dead was taken place as a “comfort offering” ceremony to the spirit of the defunct by illuminating a fire or a lamp and keeping it always burning outside of *dakhma*. (BOYCE, 1977, pp. 192-3). But beside the meaning of *daxma* for our compound, there is another concept of *dādgāh* as a sort of fire.

V. DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF FIRES

Fire had been an object of cult for Iranian peoples; it seems they worshipped the hearth fire as a god within their home by paying it ritual offerings and oblations. This cult was common to Indians and Iranians and dates back to Indo-European era. Iranians had beliefs in fire as a symbol of justice and its association with *aša*, truth ((BOYCE, 1977, pp. 68-9). According to Iranian cosmogony, fire is the seventh “creation,” of Ahuramazdā (GIGNOUX-TAFAZZOLI, 1993, chap. 3.77-83). At first each man would set his own hearth fire and venerate it independently. Gradually this cult became more sophisticated and intricate for there was not merely a simple ingle or hearth fire but also higher grade burning fires set in a raised stem or stand called ‘altar’, which was placed within a chamber at the inner part of the sanctuary or temple and guarded by a priest in order to be protected from impurity. The innovation of founding this kind of temples has been inspired by a sort of fire temple existed in the palace, from the time of Cyrus the great, consecrated only by daily prayers (BOYCE, 1982, pp. 221-2). To the best of our knowledge, there is no information about the exact time of fire temple institution but it is probable these so-called fire temples, free of any man-kind statues, in which there was a holy consecrated fire were installed as a counteraction move to the magnificence cult of *Anāhitā* and her temples which were spread all over Achaemenid empire, especially during the reign of Artaxerxes (BOYCE, 1982, p. 222). It is worth noting that the temple cult of fire was an extension of that of the hearth fire. There is no information from the Achaemenid period about categories of sacred fires, or how such fires were constituted; only at post-Sasanian times a fire created from embers issued from many fires has been mentioned which were purified, consecrated and carried to be

ground is very intricate and lengthy; at least two priests should perform the ceremony of *padyāb kusti*, reciting Zoroastrian prayers and should ask from a non-Zoroastrian for a portion of the fire that burns the corpse or seek it themselves. The fire took from a burning ground would be fed with fuel and they should put the flames on windward direction, this process will usually be repeated 91 times. All of the other 15 fires are similarly collected and have their own process but not as lengthy and complicated as the first one. (MODI, 1937, pp. 170-1)

⁹ For more information, see: (FEKRI POUR, 2006, pp. 47-50)

¹⁰ The exact date of exposure method is unknown for its procedure was also existed according to Herodotus. It seems the royal Achaemenid tombs, classified as particular *astōdāns*, were also designed in order to obey the law and decrees of the *Vidēvdād*. Sasanian period, exposure of the dead body appeared to be a usual practice and totally widespread, also there were many *astōdāns* in various parts of Iran. After the conquest of Islam the establishment and conservation of *astōdāns* became difficult and resulted in the construction of monuments called *dakhma*, surrounded by high walls usually erected at the inhabitant region, in which bones would be kept intact. (SHAHBAZI, 1975, p.130).

¹¹ The so-called Parsi *Dakhmas* (Pahlavi *daxmag*) are constructed monuments made of solid and durable materials e.g., bricks, mortar or stones, which their structure are very intricate followed by extremely difficult purification rituals and numerous prayers. Usually they are made towards east, and in a desolate place far from cities and human habitation; the site would be purified and cleansed before the outset of the construction. Also a well should be dug for the religious ceremonies and all the necessary and obligatory purifications. These monuments are designed for dead bodies: after the corpse has been devoured by vultures, the bones are going to exposed to the sunlight reducing in powder. This technical term has no exact equivalent in English language; the most appropriate word which could convey *dakhma* is ‘tomb’ or ‘burial tower’ (for further information see: KOTWAL, 1995, pp. 162-5).

installed in its chamber “Victoriously” i.e., *pad wahrāmīh*. (MODI, 1937, pp. 159-160 [200]). The term of victorious for this new fire was obtained probably as a result of rivalry to the *Anāhitā* cult, for the latter was worshipped as a goddess of war and venerated by the Achaemenids for victory in battlefield. Hence the name of a high grade temple fire became *ātar- vərəθrayan* “victorious fire;” from the late Achaemenid period and continued and developed by Sasanians. Should it be also noted that the avestan adjective *vərəθrayan-* and the neuter substantive *vərəθrayan-* (*vərəθrayna-*) are exactly identic, therefore the notion of *pad wahrāmīh* or “victoriously” is transmuted to the name of Iranian god of victory, *Wahrām* (BOYCE, 1982, p. 222 & *Id.*, 1977, pp.69-74). It was perhaps in the Parthian era that the invention of other fire categories was occurred: the first important fire was *bərəzi.savah-* or “<fire> of high benefit” which could be indentified by *Ātaš ī Wahrām* (or *Ātaš Bahrām*) in middle Persian texts, second ranking belongs to, *vohu fryāna-* “loving the good” related to the fire or the force of life in human beings, and the third one is *urvāzišta* “the most joyful,” that which is in plants; fourth fire is *vazišta-* “the swiftest” which is lightning fire; and finally *spāništa* “the holiest,” is the fire which burns in the presence of *Ohrmazd* himself. The establishment of various fires were continued by Sasanians; thus ‘victorious fire’ was named i.e., *ādur ī Wahrām* and the less important fires were called simply as *ādurān*. Also there was a third category of temple fire in Sasanian era called as ‘*Ādurōg ī pad dādgāh*’ or “minor flame in an appointed place,” which was called in modern persian *Ātaš-e dādgāh*, or simply *Dādgāh*. This three categories of temple fires viz. named before remained almost unchanged during Islamic period and were also called “*Ātaš Bahrām*, *Ādor-e Ādorān* (or simply *Ādorān*) and *Dādgāh*”. (BOYCE, 1968a, pp. 52-68; *Id.*, 1968b, pp. 277-8)

VI. CONCLUSION

For the compound *āsītō.gātu-* each of the theories discussed above have some shortcomings that prevent us from reaching a final certain decision; Having considered all the evidences and reasons set out above, the first part of the compound can be assumed as a past participle made from suffix *-ita-* and verbal root *āh-* signifying “to sit” (LUBOTSKY, 1998, p.92). Since the verbal root *si-* has been mentioned in avesta, Paragraph 102 of Yasht 5 in another form with *gātu-*, (*gātu saite x^vaēui.starətəm*) and despite the opposing views it is preferable to consider *āsita-* as a past participle of verbal prefix *ā-* and verbal root *saii-*. However, it should not be forgotten that this adjectival compound and its reference *hqm.varəitīm* have no specific incarnation; other descriptive adjectives have not been exclusively mentioned for this Pre-Zoroastrian goddess for it has also been portraying other gods such as *Mithra*. A glimpse at paragraph 61 of Yasht 10 uncovers that three compounds of *ərəθβō.zəngā-*, *jayāuru-* and *ā^vvafniia-* are not the exclusive traits of *hqm.varəitīm*¹². On the one hand, the accompaniment of this goddess by *θβāša*, *X^varənah*, *Fravašis*, and *Nairiō.səṅha* could indicate her direct connection with day light; also, her companionship with *Mithra*, *Vāta* the god of wind and *Sraoša* could signify her triumphant and belligerent traits. Therefore it seems that *hqm.varəitīm* has given her characteristics to other gods over time. Since *āsītō.gātu-* has been mentioned just in two texts concerning the praise of fire and with respect to the fact that book of Avesta has not directly mentioned *Wahrām fire* (except in *Khorda Avesta*), it is probable that this compound also could imply as well as another combined word i.e., *bərəzi.sauuah-* in avestan or ‘*Barsizoh*’ in middle Persian mentioned in paragraph 11 of Yasna 17-Zand as ‘*Ātaš ī Warahrān*’ (NAVABI & JAMASP ASA, 1976/1, pp. 288; MODI, 1937, pp. 225-7) to the enthronement of king of fire and to the ceremony of *taxt-nišēnīh* (or as Modi (1937) explained “*takht-nashini* i.e., enthronement or coronation” (p.180 [270]) which indicate of putting the Sacred fire in its chamber through series of rites and ceremonies. The compound *dāitiiō.gātu-*, also mentioned with two independent morphemes in some cases, could indicate to a *lawful place*; Based on the context, it could be either a place for exposure of corpses or a perfect place to put fire, but mostly it indicates to a *lawful place* for putting different kind of fires leading to the preparation of the Victorious one.

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¹² Cf. paragraph 61 of *Mihryasht* :

mīθrəm vouru.gaoiiaoiitīm yazamaide ... jayāuruuāṅhəm ərəθβō.zəngəm zaēnaṅhūntəm spasəm taxtəm viiāxanəm ...

“*Grass-land magnate Mithra we worship.... Who stands watchful with upright shanks, the strong challenging watcher, the replenisher of waters who listens to the call....*” (GERSHEVITCH, 1959, p. 103)

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