

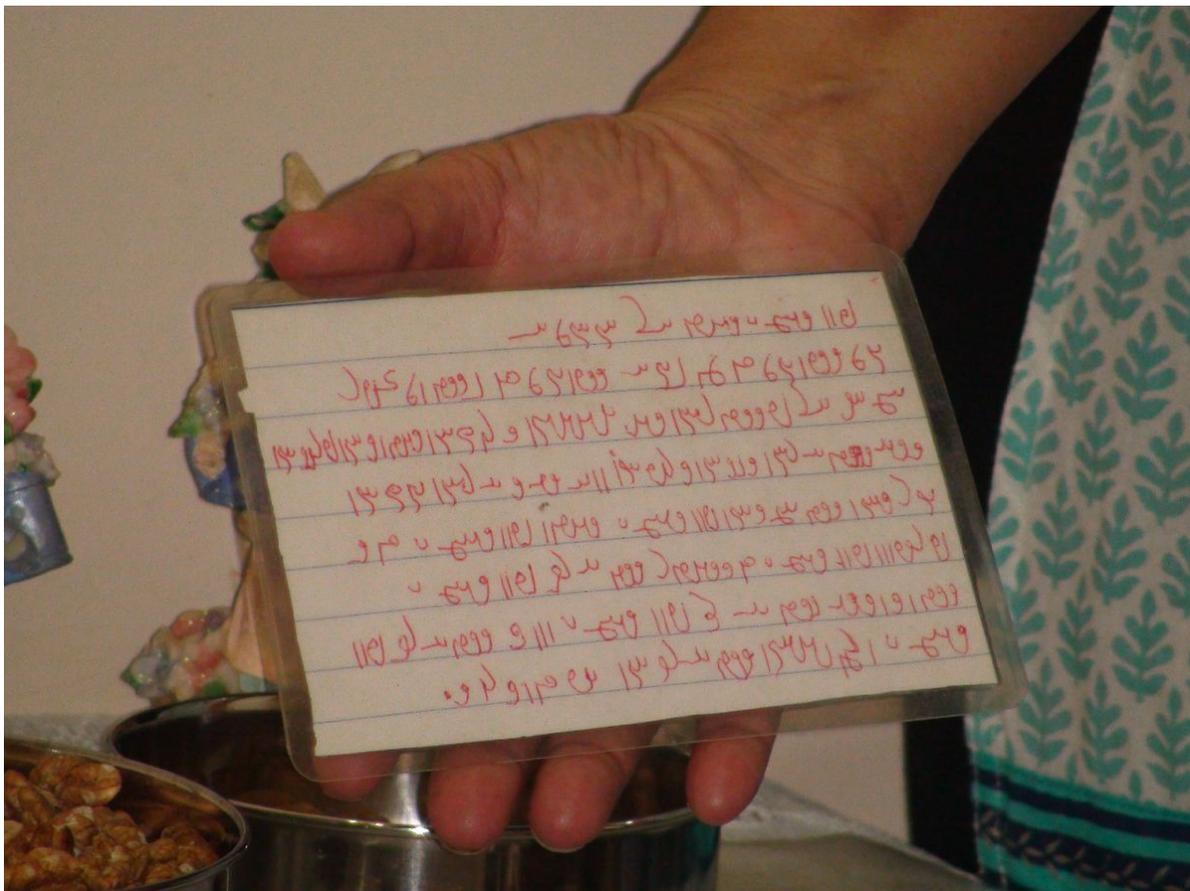
Pahlavi Nirang for the Home Front Door

Ervad Soli P. Dastur

Traditionally, in all Parsi homes especially in Gujarat villages, on the fifth day Asfandardmad and the twelfth month Asfandardmad, the local Mobed would pray a special Nirang (Prayer) and then write a special Nirang in Pahlavi script, and then finish the prayer and give the paper with the hand written Nirang to each family to stick it at their front door of their home. I have seen this done year after year in my little village Tarapore and my father, Mobed Pirojshah Kawasji Dastoor, the Tarapore Panthaky, will write the Nirang for any family who wanted it for their front door.

I always wanted to know how to read that Pahlavi writing of the Nirang and what is the meaning of the Nirang prayer. I have seen this in many homes even today. Last March, I was at an Irani flat in Salsette Colony in Andheri, Mumbai, next door to my niece's flat and was surprised to see this Nirang. I immediately asked how she obtained that Nirang and who wrote it. The lady informed me that this was the tradition from her Iranian families and she has this every year on her front door.

On closely examining, I found that the Nirang was affixed upside down! Anyway, I took a photo of this written Nirang, of course in red ink, and am presenting it below:



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This started my curiosity going and just recently Behram Pastakia requested me to restart our search for the meaning of the Pahlavi Inscription on St. Thomas Crosses found near Chennai in South India. I have asked many of my Pahlavi Scholar friends about it in the past but of no avail. Finally, I thought about requesting the Pahlavi Scholar, Dr. Pallan Ichaporia about it and he was very helpful in deciphering the Pahlavi inscription on the crosses. Thank you so much Pallan for the same.

This made me think about the above Nirang and I requested Pallan again about the script and meaning of this Nirang. In the meantime, Pallan found in his library a very old Khordeh Avesta book printed in 1804 in which many Nirangs were included in Pahlavi and Gujarati. The Khordeh Avesta belonged to his Grand Dad Ervad Meherjiibhai Patel/Ichaporia of village Ichapore, near Surat Taluka.

The condition of this Khordeh Avesta was very bad and Pallan could not decipher this Nirang from this book. This reminded me of an old Khordeh Avesta gifted to me by our very good Parsi friends Roda and Pesi Amaria living in North Port, FL, for which I am eternally grateful.

The title page in Gujarati says (see the photo below in Gujarati):

“Tamaam (complete) Khordeh Avesta, Big Printing, Third Printing, published by Ervad Ratanji Nosherwanji Antia, based on Avesta books printed by well-known Avesta scholars Westergaard and Geldner, printed in Bombay in 1284 YZ (1914 CE) in Gujarati Printing Press, Sasoon Buildings, Fort, Bombay.”

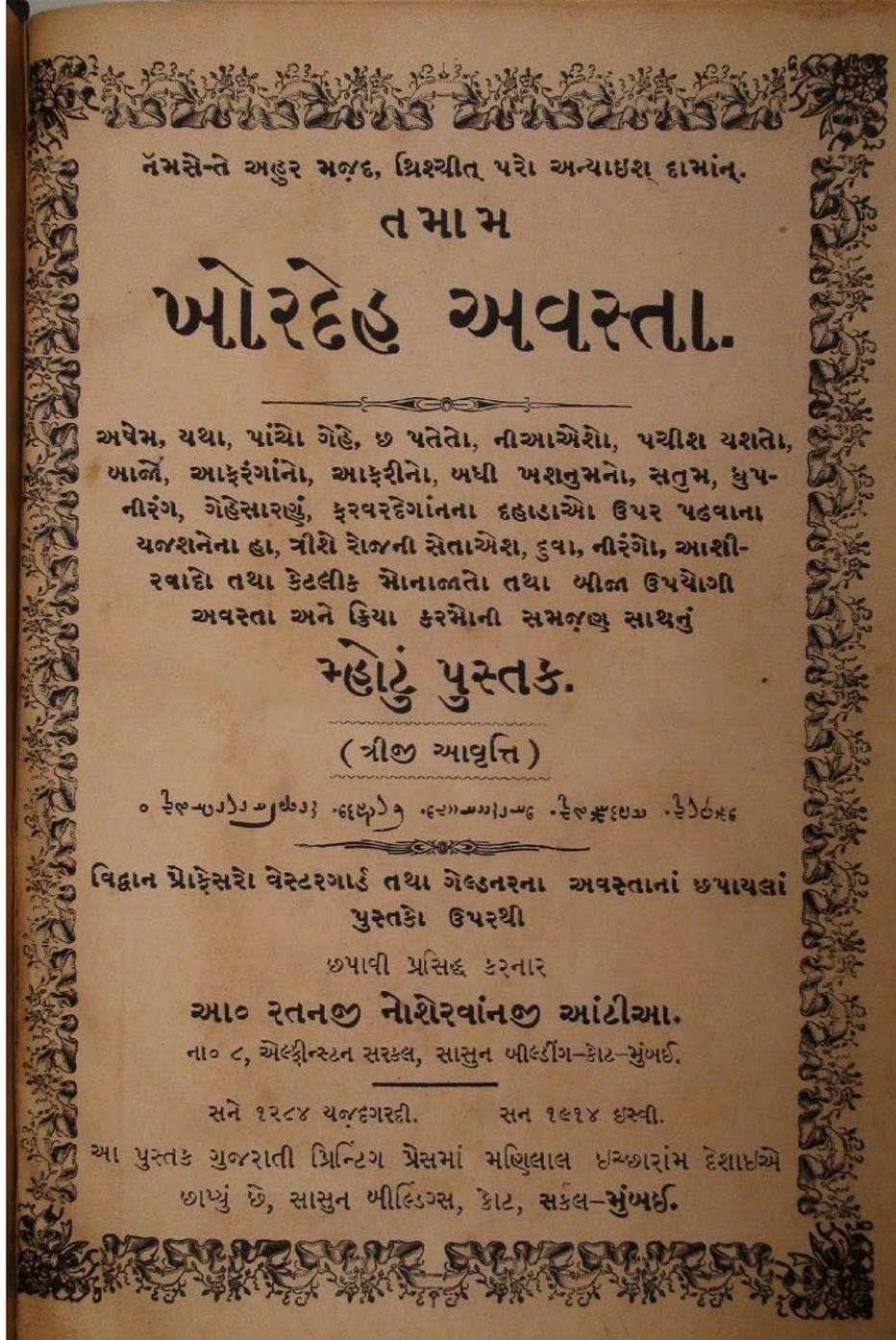
This is a very well preserved Khordeh Avesta and I could take a photo of the pages so as not to damage the original book. I found the Nirang we were looking for in Gujarati and it is presented in two photos below.

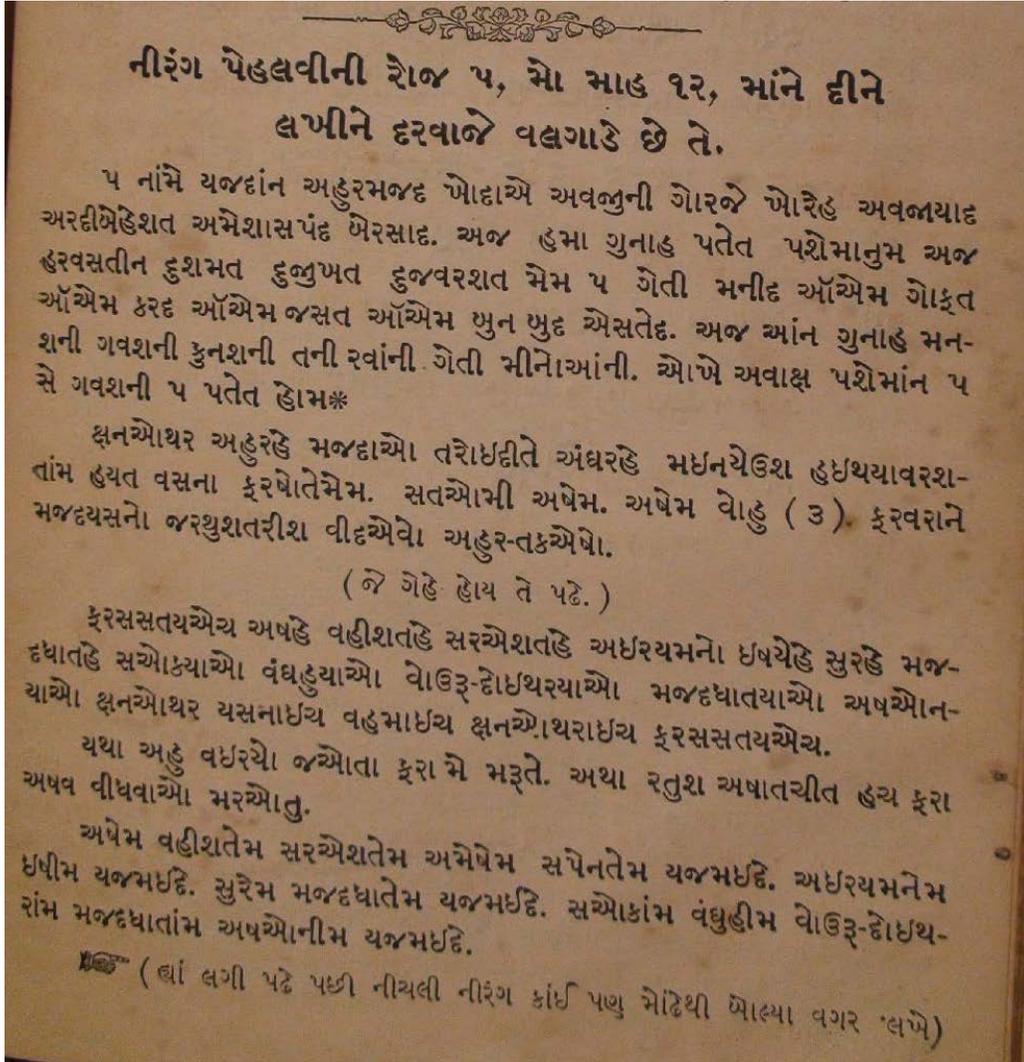
I sent this Nirang to Pallan and he was very helpful in deciphering the Pahlavi Nirang, transliterating it and translating it in English, for which I am very grateful.

The Nirang consists of a prayer that a Mobed has to recite first then start writing the Pahlavi script of the Nirang without reciting it and then leave the Nirang Baj until the end and then give the Pahlavi script Nirang written by him to whoever wants it to affix it at their front door.

The Nirang Prayer to be recited first by the Mobed, the Pahlavi script he has to write and the final Baj he has to pray are given in Gujarati in the two photos below from this Khordeh Avesta.

I will give the English transliteration of the prayers, Pahlavi script transliteration and its meaning of the Nirang deciphered by Pallan below:





The English Transliteration of Nirang Prayer:

Pa nām-e yazdān, ahuramazda khodāe awazunī gorje khoreh awazâyād, Ardibehesht Ameshāspand bêasad. Az hamâ gunâh patet pashemānum, az harvastīn dushmata duzhukhta duzhvarshta, mem pa gētī manīd, oem goft oem kard oem jast oem bun bûd ested. Az ān gunâh manashnī gavashnī kunashnī, tanī ravānī gētī minoānī ôkhe awâkhsh, pashemān pa se gavashnī pa patet hōm.

Khshnaothra ahurahe mazdāo tarōidīte angrahe mainyêush, haithyâvarshtām hyat vasnâ ferashōtemem staomi ashem. Ashem vohu 3

Fravarāne Mazdayasno Zarathushtrish vidaevo Ahura-tkaesho, *(Recite here the appropriate Gāh)* yasnāicha vahmāicha khshnaothrāichā frasastayaecha,

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Yathā ahu vairyo zaotā frā me mrute,
Aathā ratush ashāitchit hachā frā ashava vidhwāo mraotu.

Ashem vahisstem sraesstem ameshem spentem yazamaide. Airyamanem ishim yazamaide. Surem mazdadhātem yazamaide. Saokānm vanghuhim vouru doithrānm mazdadhātanānm ashaonim yazamaide.

(After this, Mobed starts writing the Pahlavi Nirang on a piece of paper in Red ink without reciting it.)

English transliteration of the Pahlavi Nirang is as follows (courtesy Pallan Ichaporla):

Pad nām ī Dādār Ohrmazd!

Rōz Spandarmad Māh Spandarmad,
Bastom zafar hamāg xrafstarān,
Dēwān drōzān jādūgān perīgān,
Sāstārān kayagān karbān wināhgārān uzān gurgān stahmagān;
Pad nām ī Yazdān,
Pad nām ī Nēw-Frēdōn,
Pad nām ī Tištar-stārag,
Pad nām ī Sadwēs-stārag,
Pad nām ī Wanand-stārag,
Pad nām ī awēšān stāragān Haftōring.
Ashem vohū 1.

English Translation of the above Pahlavi Nirang (courtesy Pallan Ichaporla):

In the name of the Creator (Dādār) Ohrmazd.
Day (roz) Spandārmad. month (mah) Spandārmad.
Bind together all the mouths of obnoxious creatures,
Demons, liars, sorcerers, witches,
Tyrants, Kavis (bad rulers), enemies hostile to Zarathushtra, sinners, idol-worshippers,
wolves, oppressors.
In the name of Yazdan(God).
In the name of brave Fredon.
In the name of star Tishtar.
In the name of star Satwas.
In the name of Star Wanant.
In the name of stars Hapataring (Great Bear).
Ashem Vohu 1.

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(After this, the Mobed completes the Nirang Bāj Prayer as follows:

(Recite in low tone) Ahuramazda Khodāe awazuni-e-mardum mardum sardagān, hamā sardagān, hambāyaste vehān oem Behdin Māzdayasnān, āgāhi, āstavāni neki rasānad; aedun bād.

(Recite aloud)

Yathā Ahu Vairyo...2.

Yasnemcha vahmemcha aojascha zavarecha Āfrināmi,
Ashahe Vahishtahe sraeshtahe airyamano ishyahe surahe mazdadhātahe saokayāo
vanghuyāo vouru-doithrayāo mazdadhātayāo ashaonayāo,
Ashem Vohu 1.

Ahmāi raêshcha, khvarenascha,

Ahmāi tanvô drvatātem,

Ahmāi tanvô vazdvare,

Ahmāi tanvô verethrem,

Ahmāi îstîm pourush-khvāthrām,

Ahmāi āsnām-chit, frazañtîm,

Ahmāi dareghām dareghô-jîtm,

Ahmāi vahisstem ahûm ashaonām,

Raochanghem vîspô-khvāthrem,

Atha jamyāt, ýatha āfrînāmi!

Ashem Vohu Vahisstem asti,

Ushtā asti,

Ushtā ahmāi,

Hyat ashāi Vahishtāi ashem.

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Hazangrem baêshazanām

Baêvare baêshazanām

Hazangrem baêshazanām

Baêvare baêshazanām

Hazangrem baêshazanām

Baêvare baêshazanām

Ashem Vohu Vahishtem asti,

Ushtā asti,

Ushtā ahmāi,

Hyat ashāi Vahishtāi ashem.

Jasa-mê avanghe mazda!

Jasa-mê avanghe mazda!

Jasa-mê avanghe mazda!

Amahe hutāshtahe huraodhahe,

Verethraghnahe ahuradhātahe,

Vanaiñtyāoscha uparatātô,

Rāmano khvāstrahe,

Vayaosh uparô-kairyehe,

Taradhātô anyāish dāmān.

Aêtat tê vayô, ýat tê asti speñtô-mainyaom;

Thwāshahe khvadhātahe,

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Zravānahe akaranahe,
Zravānahe dareghô-khvadhātahe.

Ashem Vohu Vahishtem asti,
Ushtā asti,
Ushtā ahmāi,
Hyat ashāi Vahishtāi ashem.

Kerfeh mozhd,
Gunāh guzāresh-nerā kunam,
Ashahî ravān dushāram rā,
Ham kerfeh hamā vehā ne,
Haft-keshwar zamîn,
Zamîn-pahānā,
Rud-drānā,
Khorshid-bālā,
Buñdehād bê-rasād,
Ashô bêd dêr zî!
Atha jamyāt, ýatha āfrînāmi!

Ashem Vohu Vahishtem asti,
Ushtā asti,
Ushtā ahmāi,
Hyat ashāi Vahishtāi ashem.

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The Mobed then gives the written Pahlavi Nirang to whoever wants it to be afixed to their front door.

This completes this Nirang.
