

it against the attacks of enemies. After having made it safe, he poured out his seed whence then all creatures sprang (see Ait. Br. 3, 34).

Nâbhânedishṭha is, according to the verses above quoted, the heavenly guardian of all germs of generation; all, gods, men, beasts, &c. come from him. His assistance is required when the sacrificial priests are producing the new celestial body of the sacrificer. He looks down from heaven at his relative, that is, the seeds containing the germ of new life poured out mystically by the Hotars in their prayers. His navel is the centre of all births in the universe; as being nearest ('nearest to the navel' is the literal meaning of *nâbhânedishṭha*) he is the guardian of all seeds. Every seed on earth has only effect as far as he participates in it. We have here the Zoroastrian idea of the Fravashis (Frohars) who are the prototypes of all things existing.<sup>16</sup> The word *nâbhânedishṭha* must be very old; for we find it several times in the form *nabânazdista* in the Zend Avesta. It is an epithet of the Fravashis (Yas'na 1, 18. Yashts 13, 156), and signifies the lineal descendants in future generations<sup>17</sup> (Vend. 4, 5-10 Westergaard).

<sup>16</sup> See my Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings and Religion of the Parsis, page 186.

<sup>17</sup> This is the sense of *narâm nabânâzdistanâm*, in the fourth Frargard of the Vendidâd. In the passage in question the punishment consequent on the breach of a promise is said to extend to so and so many *narâm nabânâzdistanâm*, literally men who are nearest the navel of the offender, that is, his lineal descendants. The Pehlevi translation gives in its notes about the same meaning to it. So it has for instance to 4, 5 the note: 300 *sanat bîm dâresn* "for three hundred years there will be danger (for the *nabânâzdistas*).” This is also the opinion of many Desturs.