



## AYĀDGĀR Ī WUZURGMIHR

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**AYĀDGĀR Ī WUZURGMIHR**, a popular-religious *andarz* composition in Pahlavi, attributed to one of the best-known sages of the Sasanian period, Wuzurgmihr (Bozorgmehr) ī Buxtagān, who was active at the court of Kōsrow I Anōšīravān (531-79 A.D.). Nothing in the work itself is at variance with such a dating, and the unity of the composition points to a single author.

The work is preserved in what seems to be its original Pahlavi form (ed. J. M. Jamasp-Asana, *Pahlavi Texts*, Bombay, 1897-1913, pp. 85-101), as well as in an Arabic version of a fairly early period, which reflects quite closely the Pahlavi original (in Meskawayh's [Meskūya] *Jāvidān kerad*, cf. Abū 'Alī Aḥmad b. Moḥammad Meskawayh, *al-Ḥekma al-kāleda*, ed. 'A. Badawī, Cairo, 1952, pp. 29-41). The substance of the composition occurs also in verse form in Ferdowsī's, *Šāh-nāma* (ed. Borūkīm, VIII, pp. 2448ff.). Several other later elaborations and versifications are found both in Arabic and in Persian; most of them are unpublished. Many short quotations from the work are found scattered throughout the Arabic and Persian *adab* works, mostly deriving, as it seems, from the version known through Meskawayh but some are culled from other redactions. One of the more interesting independent versions of the work in Arabic was published from a manuscript by Louis Cheikho under the title *Ḥekam Bozorjmehr* (see *Machriq* 6, 1903, pp. 203-07, 250-54). Meskawayh's book itself contains other collections of sayings attributed to Wuzurgmihr, and several further such collections are known from other Arabic sources (e.g., Pseudo-Aṣmā'ī, *Nehāyat al-'arab*, Ms. British Museum Add. 23.298, fol. 193bff.), but their literary relationship to this composition is not easy to establish. Short



anecdotes and sayings, as well as short collections of sayings attributed to Wuzurgmihr are scattered in the Arabic and Persian *adab* works (Mas'ūdī's *Morūj*, Ṭa'ālebī's *Ġorar*, etc.) as well as in medieval works in Ethiopian (*Maṣḥafa falāsefa ṭabībān*, cf. F. Altheim, *Geschichte der Hunnen*, Berlin, 1963, V, pp. 215f.), Syriac (e.g. Bar Hebraeus, *The Laughable Stories*, ed. E. A. W. Budge, London, 1897, p. 17), and other languages.

The clearly structured composition begins with a short introduction, in which the author is described by a series of titles and epithets, some of which are not entirely clear: *wēnān* (or *nēwān*?) \**pad \*tan šabistān*, a chief courtier, of the town of Ōstīgān-Xusraw (cf. *Monumentum H. S. Nyberg II*, Acta Iranica 5, Leiden, Tehran, and Liège, 1975, pp. 223f.; also *Irano-Judaica*, ed. S. Shaked, Jerusalem, 1982, pp. 299f. Differently, H. W. Bailey, *Zoroastrian Problems in the Ninth-Century Books*, 2nd ed., London, 1971, introd. p. xliii). An unconvincing attempt was made by A. Christensen (*Acta Orientalia* 8, 1930, pp. 81-128) to identify Wuzurgmihr with the physician Borzūya, the reputed Sasanian author of the introduction to Ebn al-Moqaffa's version of *Kalīla wa Demna*.

The opening section of the work states that it was written at the command of Kōsrow the King of Kings for the instruction of those “who, by accepting the [decree of] those above, have been created in a well-fashioned and worthy manner.” The treatise was deposited, according to the opening section, in the royal treasury.

The next section, which constitutes the beginning of the treatise itself, is devoted to the theme of the futility and transience of the things of this world. The bulk of the treatise consists of an exposition of the main tenets of the Zoroastrian religion in the form of questions and answers. This part of the treatise contains, among other things, a list of the worst demons created by Ahriman to mislead man, and the faculties of wisdom and virtue which were created by Ohrmazd in order to counter the demons.

There follows a long section which consists of questions concerning abstract notions, such as what is the best nature, which custom is best, and so on. The answers, like the rest of the treatise, display a sort of pragmatic piety: Although the main tenor of the work is pious, there is little emphasis on observance and ritual; the main concern is with the moral and personal qualities connected with the religious life.

See also [ANDARZ](#).



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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M. Nawabi, *Revue de la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Tabriz (MDA Tabriz)* 11/3, 1338 Š./1959, pp. 302-33 (the Pahlavi text with a translation into Persian; Arabic tr. of Nawabi's Persian tr. A. Tarjānizāda, *ibid.*, 11/4, 1338 Š./1960, pp. 377-89).

On the relationship of the Pahlavi and the Arabic text of Meskawayh cf. W. B. Henning, *ZDMG* 106, 1956, pp. 76f.

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