



## ČANGRANGHĀČA-NĀMA

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**ČANGRANGHĀČA-NĀMA**, a narrative work in Persian verse by Zartošt or Zarātošt, son of *Bahrām-e Paždū*, a poet of the 7th/13th century. The work consists of 600 distichs (excluding the final passage) in the *hazaj* meter, 345 of which contain praises of God and the prophet Zardošt, a statement of the poet's reasons for writing, and a mention of his patron. The work ends with a lengthy passage in verse about the stories of Alexander and the Sasanian king Ardašir I.

Two manuscripts of the work are preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale: *Supplément persan* 44, fols. 1-20, and 48, fols. 72-86 (Blochet, pp. 82, 104). The part containing the main narrative was lithographed in a collection of Zardošt-e Bahrām's writings. (The library of the Anjoman-e Zartoštīān-a Īrān, Tehran, possesses a copy registered under the title *Dīnkard-nāma*; the first and last pages are missing.) There is a partial Latin translation of the *Čangranghāča-nāma* among the works of Anquetil-Duperron (Blochet, p. 107).

The story also appears in verse, with exactly the same details, in the account of Zoroaster and his miracles in the introductory part of the Persian *Mīnū-ye kerad* by Darab Sanjana, son of Hormozdyar (comp. 1046 Yazdegerdī/1089/1678).

The gist of the story is as follows. At the time of the manifestation of the Zoroastrian religion, a learned Brahmin, whose name was Čangranghāča, lived in India and had many disciples. When news of the manifestation reached him he was distressed and could not accept the reality of Zardošt's



religion. He therefore wrote a letter to King Goštāsb, Zardošt's protector, requesting permission to confront Zardošt in a public debate, to which Zardošt consented. Two years later, on the appointed day, all three met at the court, in the presence of Goštāsb's learned minister Jāmāsb. Before the questions were discussed, Zardošt requested Goštāsb to order that a chapter from the Avesta should be recited. When this chapter was recited, Čangranghāča perceived that clear answers to all the questions that he had laboriously devised were given in it, and he became a faithful Zoroastrian.

Zardošt Bahrām probably did not invent the theme of this very unimaginative work, which is likely to have been taken either from a now lost Pahlavi text or from oral tradition, although no trace of this or any similar story is to be found in Avestan or Pahlavi texts, and this leading Zoroastrian poet, who only put major traditions of his religion into verse, must clearly have had a special reason for taking up the story and choosing the solemn *hazaj* meter for it. It may be that Zardošt Bahrām felt the need for stressing the universality of the Zoroastrian religion in the face of the same claim by Manicheism and other religions, thereby refuting one of the main criticisms which they directed against it.

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