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DADESTAN
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DADESTAN

DĀDESTĀN (*dād* "law," with the formative suffix *–stān*), a Middle Persian term used with denotations and connotations that vary with the legal, religious, philosophical, and social context. As a legal term it has four referents. First, it refers to civil law, as distinct from *dād* (canon law) or *kardag* (traditional orthodox law). This distinction is attested in Syriac translation, where *dēnā* (*dādestān*) is defined as civil law and *nāmosā* as canon law (Sachau, p. 13). The term also refers to a legal decision or judgment. A third meaning is case or lawsuit. Finally, the term can also mean equity or lenity (in the juridical sense; *Mādayān*, I, p. 36; cf. Perikhanian, p. 105, where it has been misunderstood).

Dādestān was also occasionally used in the sense of "canon law," as in *dādestān ī dēn ī Māzdēsnān* (the canon laws of the religion of the Mazdā worshipers). In the *Dēnkard* (3.286; ed. Madan, I, pp. 295-97) *dādestān* was used in the sense of moderation and cosmic order, an equivalent to the *paymān* (mean). The *paymān* (or *dādestān*) is represented as the power of the cosmic order through which the Renovation (*frašegird*) will be brought about at the end of time (Zaehner, pp. 250-53). Personified as Mēnōg ī Dādestān, the genius of order, in association with Mihr, Zurwān, and Srōš, it opposes diabolical creatures and governs the material creation (*Mēnōg ī xrad* 7.15; *Dēnkard*, ed. Madan, I, p. 206; Zaehner, p. 132). *Dādestān* frequently occurs in close connection with *kār* (beneficial deed, *Vd.* 21.4); in the *Greater Bundahišn* (chap. 1), it commonly designates justice (e.g., *dādestānīg dādwar*, a just judge). The term may also denote a story, circumstance(s), or events (NPers. *dāstan*). It occurs in the sense of opinion in *jud-dādestānīh* (disagreement),

hamdādestānīh (agreement), and *hamdādestānōmandīh* (concord), the last an attribute of the creatures of Ohrmazd (*Bundahišn*, tr. Anklesaria, 1.39). It also appears as an element in many juridical compound terms: *weh-dādestānīh* (preemption, preferential right, *optimo iure*), *dādestānbrād* (*-xwah*, *–pus*, *–duxt*) "brother-(sister-, son-, daughter-) in-law" (Perikhanian, glossary, s.v.).

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