



# FIRST DASTUR MEHERJIRANA LIBRARY, THE

---

**FIRST DASTUR MEHERJIRANA LIBRARY, THE** ([www.meherjiranalibrary.com/](http://www.meherjiranalibrary.com/)), the second [Parsi](#) library (after that of Mulla Firoze, in 1854-57; Rehatsek, preface) founded in India, established in 1872 CE in [Navsari](#) (India) by the Meherjirana family, which has been celebrated since the 12th century CE for its religious relevance for the Parsi communities in [Gujarat](#). The library preserves one of the world's most important collections of [Zoroastrian](#) manuscripts and is named so after the famous high priest (*vaḏā dastur*) who, according to the Persian manuscript F81 of the *Mahyār-nāma*, was invited for an audience at the court of the Mughal emperor [Akbar](#) (r. 1556-1601) to explain to him the Zoroastrian religion (see Modi).

The current location of the library, by the Fire temple (*Ātaš Bahrām*) of Navsari, dates back to 1906, when Jamšedji Kavasji Dastur Meherjirana gifted the present building to the library. Thereafter several renovations were undertaken, and annexes with facilities for readers and researchers were built in 1967 with the financial support of Seth Rustomji Hormusji Kolah, and later in 1999, 2008, and 2009 with funds donated by the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust.

The library contains more than 45,000 printed books on different subjects, but it is known world-wide mainly for its collection of more than 600 [Avestan](#), Pahlavi, Pāzand, New Persian, Sanskrit, [Gujarati](#), and [Urdu](#) manuscripts, which are especially important for studying the written transmission of the



Zoroastrian literature, its languages, history, and cultural heritage in general. The original collection was composed by manuscripts belonging to priests of the Meherjirana family, among them Dastur Sorabji Framji, his sons Dastur Jamšedji Sorabji and Dastur Framji Sorabji, as well as Dastur Rustomji Kekobadji, Dastur Eračji Sorabji, and Dastur Edalji Navroji Meherjirana. Some of these manuscripts are copies transcribed by Dastur Eračji Sorabji Meherjirana (1826-1900) from originals belonging, back then, to the Mulla Firoze Library, the contents of which are currently preserved at the [K. R. Cama Oriental Institute](#) in Mumbai.

The library is currently managed by a board of trustees, composed by Miss Katy K. Antia, Mr. Jimmy M. Tata, Mrs. Zenobia T. Pestanjamasp, and Mrs. Veera Farhad Choksey, with the scientific advice of Vaḍā Dastur Firoze M. Kotwal and Dastur Kaikhushroo Navroze Dastur (chosen on 25 January 2010 the 17th Dastur Meherjirana), and with the assistance of its librarian Mrs. Bharti K. Gandhi and her team. Thanks to them, scholars have been granted access to collate the impressive collection of its manuscripts, which has been partially digitized in the last years in collaboration with international projects such as the UNESCO Parsi-Zoroastrian Project, directed by Dr. Shernaz Cama, and the Avestan Digital Archive Project, directed by Prof. Alberto Cantera. The decisive support of the trustees of the library and the intensive work of Prof. Cantera and his team with its collection of Avestan manuscripts have made it possible for the following to be digitized, electronically indexed, and made available online (at [www.avesta-archive.com](http://www.avesta-archive.com)) for scholars and general public interested in Zoroastrian cultural heritage:

*Vīdēvdād Sāde*: FK1, G42, T46;  
Pahlavi *Vīdēvdād*: E10, G10, G25, G28, G34, F10, T44;  
*Yasna Sāde*: F3a, G26, G27b, G97;  
Pahlavi *Yasna*: E7, F2, T6, T55b; Sanskrit *Yasna*: T7, T55a;  
*Vīšperad Sāde*: G18b, G27a;  
Pahlavi *Vīšperad*: G19, T12b, T39, T40; *Yašt*: F3b, G75;  
Pahlavi *Xorda Avesta*: T12;  
*Vīštāsp Yašt Sāde*: G18a, G120;  
Pahlavi *Vīštāsp Yašt*: F12a;  
*Hērbedestān* and *Nērangestān*: G42;  
*Hādōxt Nask*: F12b;  
*Vaēḍā Nask*: F3d, T38;  
*Frahang ī Ōīm*: F3c.



The collection of manuscripts in the First Dastur Meherjirana Library has been constantly increasing in the last years, thanks to generous donations by several Parsi families and private owners, especially Ervad Jamšedji Maneckji Unvala, Meherji Navroji Kutar, and Vaḏā Dastur Firoze M. Kotwal. These recently acquired treasures, some of which have to be added to the catalogue of manuscripts at the library, still await to be discovered and studied by scholars interested in Zoroastrianism.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

(online resources are available by search at Avestan Digital Archive unless otherwise specified, accessed 29 September 2015):

Elham Afzalian, *The Avestan Manuscript G34 (Pahlavi Videvdad) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 7, 2008.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscript G10\_4757 (Pahlavi Vīdēvdād) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 45, 2012.

Miguel Ángel Andrés-Toledo, *The Avestan Manuscript F10 (Pahlavi-Vīdēvdād) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 9, 2009.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscript T6 (Pahlavi Yasna) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library in Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 26, 2010.

Miguel Ángel Andrés-Toledo, *The Avestan Manuscript T7\_680 (Sanskrit Yasna) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 29, 2011.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscripts F12a\_5310 (Pahlavi Vīštāsp Yašt) and F12b (Hādōxt Nask) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 30, 2011.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscript T38 (Vaēṅā Nask) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 31, 2011.



Idem, *The Avestan Manuscript G120\_5115 (Iranian Vīštāsp Yašt Sāde) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 46, 2012.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscripts T55a\_681 (Sanskrit Yasna) and T55b\_613 (Indian Pahlavi Yasna) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 51, 2012.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscript T12, Pahlavi Xwardag Abastāg [including MS. 2630 (T12B), Visperad Pahlavi Iranian] of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 63, 2014.

Avestan Digital Archive, available at <http://www.avesta-archive.com>.

Alberto Cantera, “The Pahlavi Vīdēvdād Manuscripts of the Meherji Rana Library (Navsari, India),” in Gregorio Hinojo-Andrés and J. C. Fernández Corte, eds., *Munus Quaesitum Meritis: Homenaje a Carmen Codoñer*, Salamanca, 2007, pp. 131-40.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscript T46 (Vīdēvdād Sāde) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 1, 2008.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscript G18a\_5010 (Iranian Vīštāsp Yašt Sāde) and G18b\_2010 (Vīsperead Iranian Sāde) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library in Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 42, 2012.

Sara Circassia and Mohammad Kangarani, *The Avestan Manuscript F2\_415 (Iranian Pahlavi Yasna) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 36, 2011.

Bamanji Nasarvanji Dhabhar, *Descriptive Catalogue of All Manuscripts in the First Dastur Meherji Rana Library, Navsari*, Bombay, 1923; available at <http://www.meherjiranalibrary.com/home/collections>.

Juan José Ferrer-Losilla, *The Avestan Manuscript FK1 (Vīdēvdād Sāde) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library in Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 16, 2009.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscript G42 (Vīdēvdād Sāde) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library in Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 17, 2009.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscript G42 (Hērbedestān and Nērangestān) of the First*



*Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 33, 2011.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscripts F3a\_40 (Iranian Yasna Sāde with Pahlavi Nērangs), F3b (Yt 13), F3c (Frahang i Ōīm) and F3d (Vaēṣā Nask) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 35, 2011.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscript G26a (Paragna) and G26b\_234 (Indian Yasna Sāde) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 43, 2012.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscript G75 (Indian Yašt Sāde: Yt 14) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 47, 2012.

John R. Hinnells, "Parsi Communities i. Early History," in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, online edition, 2008, available at <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/parsi-communities-i-early-history>.

Mohammad Kangarani, *The Avestan Manuscript G25 (Pahlavi Vīdēvdād) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 6, 2008.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscript T44\_4700 (Pahlavi Vīdēvdād) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 44, 2012.

Mohammad Kangarani and Alberto Cantera, *The Avestan Manuscript E10 (Pahlavi Vīdēvdād) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 4, 2008.

Firoze M. Kotwal and Dan Sheffield, "A Treasury of Zoroastrian Manuscripts: The First Dastoor Meherjirana Library, Navsari," in Alberto Cantera, ed., *The Transmission of the Avesta*, Wiesbaden, 2012, pp. 197-206.

Firoze M. Kotwal, Dan Sheffield, and Bharti Gandhi, *Preliminary Descriptive List of the Manuscripts Donated to the First Dastur Meherjirana Library Since 1923*, Navsari, 2008; available online at <http://www.meherjiranalibrary.com/home/collections>.

Silvia Liaño-Pons, *The Avestan Manuscript 450 (E7): Iranian Pahlavi Yasna, of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series



64, 2014.

Jaime Martínez-Porro, *The Avestan Manuscript 2695\_T40 (Visperad Pahlavi) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 70, 2014.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscript 2808 (T39): Visperad Pahlavi of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 74, 2014.

Idem, *The Avestan Manuscript 2690 (G19): Visperad Pahlavi of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 78, 2015.

Daniel Martínez-Troya, *The Avestan Manuscript 4680 (G28 [MU1]) Indian Vidēvdād Pahlavi of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 67, 2014.

Daniel Martínez-Troya and Juan José Ferrer-Losilla, *The Avestan Manuscript G27\_2106 (Iranian Vīsperad Sāde) and G27b (Iranian Yasna ī Rapīθwīn and the Two-Abbreviated- Sīrōzas) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 57, 2013.

Jivanji Jamshedji Modi, “Parsis at the Court of Akbar and Dastur Meherji Rana,” *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 57, 1903, pp. 69-245.

Céline Redard, *The Avestan Manuscript G97\_235 (Indian Yasna Sāde) of the First Dastur Meherji-rana Library of Navsarī*, Avestan Digital Archive Series 34, 2011.

Edward Rehatsek, *Catalogue raisonné of the Arabic, Hindostani, Persian, and Turkish mss. in the Mulla Firuz Library*, Bombay, 1873.