



SANJANA, DARAB DASTUR PESHOTAN

SANJANA, Darab Dastur Peshotan (b. Bombay, 18 November 1857; d. Bombay, 5 August 1931), Zoroastrian head-priest and scholar. He was the son of one of the most learned high-priests and best authorities on Pahlavi of his time, Dastur Peshotanji Behramji Sanjana (1828-98), who taught his son the [Avesta](#) and Pahlavi at the Sir Jamshedji Jijibhoy Zartoshti Madressa (founded in 1863) in Bombay. Sanjana utilized the fellowship awarded to him by the Madressa to study German, French, and Sanskrit. He was elected Fellow of the Bombay University and was appointed Examiner in Persian, and then in Avestan and Pahlavi. After the death of his father in 1898, he succeeded him as the Principal of the Madressa and as the [Dastur](#) ('high-priest') of the Wadia Atash Behram, the most important temple and high-priesthood for the majority of the Bombay Parsis.

Sanjana's literary and scholarly work can be grouped in several categories. His earliest work is the article "The Avesta Doctrine regarding Man in relation to his Body and Soul" that he contributed to the *Bombay Gazette* in November 1882. Some years later, he published several English translations of studies by German Iranologists such as [Wilhelm Geiger](#) (1856-1943; *Civilization of the Eastern Iranians*, 2 vols., 1885-86, plus some articles), Friedrich Windischmann (1811-61; *Zarathushtra in the Gathas and in the Greek and Roman Classics*, 1897), and [Friedrich Spiegel](#) (1820-1905). These translations make up the bulk of Sanjana's *Collected Works* published posthumously in 1932 (461 out of its



524 pages are his translations). On some issues, however, he challenged the interpretations given by Western scholars, and these refutations resulted in minor publications, such as *Observations on M. J. Darmesteter's Theory Regarding Tansar's Letter to the King of Tabaristan and the Date of the Avesta* (Leipzig, 1898), and two lectures (1887) in which he denied the existence of the next-of-kin marriage in Zoroastrianism and ancient Persia (published as a book in London in 1888). In a further lecture on a related issue, he argued that nowhere in the ancient world “man had more unselfish sympathy with woman than the Zoroastrian nation” of remote Eastern Iran (*The Position of Zoroastrian Women in Remote Antiquity, as Illustrated in the Avesta, the Sacred Book of the Parsees*, London, 1892, p. 3). Both publications are included in his *Collected Works*.

Sanjana's most enduring scholarly contribution is in the field of Pahlavi philology. He published a facsimile (with introduction) of the *Nērangēstān* (1894) and prepared critical editions of the *Mēnōg ī xrad* (1895), the *Pahlavi Vendidad* (1895), and the *Kārnamag ī Ardašīr-ī Pāpakān* (1896). The latter is provided with transliteration, transcription, translations into English and Gujarati, and annotations. His biggest achievement is the continuation of his father's legacy, that is the publication of the *Dēnkard*. Based on the papers of his late father, he published volume IX in 1900, and between 1907 and 1928 he himself published the remaining volumes X to XIX (Dk. V-IX) which contain introductions, text with critical apparatus, transcription, and translation into English as well as Gujarati. In 1925 an international Festschrift was published in his honour.

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