



VENDĪDĀD II. TRANSMISSION OF THE VĪDĒVDĀD IN INDIA

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ii. Transmission of the Vidēvdād in India

The number of Pahlavi Vīdēvdād (PV) manuscripts that have been copied is quite high, but their distribution in time is irregular. Among these manuscripts, we have noticed that only a few are dated for certain before the 18th century: the copy of Ardaxšīr Wahman Rōzweh in Sīstān in 1205 and an even earlier copy of its source manuscript by Homāst Wahišt; L4 in 1323; K1 in 1324; Mihrābān's copy of L4 in 1353; IM (described in Jāmāsp's edition of Vīdēvdād) in 1575; in 1594, M13. The largest number of dated manuscripts belongs to the 18th and 19th centuries: D62 (Cama Oriental Institute) was written in 1742; P5 and P10 in 1758; G25 (Meherji Rana Library) in 1794; F10 in 1817; G34 (Meherji Rana Library) before 1835; T44 (Meherji Rana Library) in 1844; R404 (Cama Oriental Institute) between 1820 and 1850. The rest of the known PV manuscripts (M3, B1, P2, RSPA 231 [British Library], E10, T44, Bh11 [Bhandarkar Oriental Institute]) are not dated, but presumably they all belong to the 18th or 19th century as well.

In the 13th century, no PV manuscript was available in India, but at that time one was brought to India from Sīstān. Around the year 1231 A.D., Māhyār Māhdād brought to India a manuscript written by Ardašīr ī Wahman ī



Rōzweh Šāhburzēn Šāhmard from a manuscript copied by Homast Wahišt. This was copied twice in India. From one of these two copies, the copy of Rōstām Mihrābān Marzabān, two other copies were made by Mihrābān Kayhusraw. These are the manuscripts L4 and K1. Fortunately, we know about the existence at the beginning of the 20th century of a manuscript independent of the copy of Rōstām Mihrābān, namely, the manuscript IM used by Dastur [Hoshang Jāmāsp](#) in his edition of Vīdēvdād. This manuscript was written in Kermān in 1575 A.D., by Marzabān Frēdōn Wahrām Rōstām Bundār. A Zoroastrian Iranian named Siyāwaxš Ormazdyār brought it to India and presented it to Mānakjī Sōhrābjī Kāwusjī Ashburner in 1853 A.D., according to a Persian colophon on the last folio. Finally, it was in Jāmāsp's possession in 1907, but we do not know where it is now.

As a matter of fact, all manuscripts copied in the 18th and 19th century are copies from L4 or K1, but none of them is a trustworthy copy of its original. In all of them the transmitted text is corrected in order to produce the best possible manuscript. The corrections, however, are carried out to a very different extent in each manuscript, and schools of copyists must clearly be differentiated. Although it is not easy to say to what extent the earlier manuscripts may have shared similar tendencies, as we do not know the source of L4 and K1, and M13 and IM are now lost, it seems that, from the oldest known copies on, there is a tendency to introduce minor changes where the copyist recognized a mistake. This procedure is already evident, for example, in the changes introduced in Vd. 19.42 by K1 and L4 as a result of the loss of a folio between Vd. 19.42 and 45 in their common source. In the 18th and 19th centuries, this tendency becomes much more obvious, but to very different degrees, in each manuscript.

We can affirm the existence of different schools of copyists with different techniques of copying manuscripts. There are conservative schools in which copyists mainly tend to reproduce exactly the manuscript they are copying, although rare corrections are made when mistakes are very obvious. There are also more innovative schools which do not hesitate to make changes in the manuscripts in order to get the best possible copies. The scope of the changes is not the same in all innovative schools: some of them limit themselves to corrections of the Avestan text according to the Sāde (see above, i) tradition; others introduce serious changes even in the Pahlavi translation.

Most probably, the triggering event for the development of these different schools was the visit of Jāmāsp Īranī from [Kermān](#) to Surat (Anquetil-



Duperron, 1771, I, pt. 1, pp. 326 ff.). Because of a dispute between traditionalists and reformists concerning the use of the *padām*, a priest named Jāmāsp came from Kermān to Surat forty years before A. H. Anquetil-Duperron wrote his travel report, that is, sometime in the 1720s (see also PARSİ COMMUNITIES i). After resolving the dispute, he decided to check the current version of the Pahlavi Vīdēvdād used in Gujarat. He concluded that it was too long and not very accurate in several passages. In order to change this regretful situation, he taught Avestan and Pahlavi to three Parsi Dasturs: Dārāb (the teacher of Anquetil-Duperron) from Surat, Jāmāsp from Nawsarī, and a third one from Broach. Furthermore he is supposed to have left a corrected Pahlavi Vīdēvdād manuscript in Surat. After he went back to Iran, his students continued teaching and correcting their Pahlavi Vīdēvdād manuscripts.

In Surat there arose a new school of copyists around the reformist Dārāb. The principal representatives of this school are the manuscripts P5 and K2. The teachings of Jāmāsp were intended to correct the transmitted Pahlavi translation (PT) and to rearrange the misplaced Avestan texts and delete unnecessary repetitions. Both characteristics are shared by these manuscripts. Both tend to leave out the long commentaries and many of the short glosses in the Pahlavi translation. In fact they tend to eliminate each word of the Pahlavi translation that is without a corresponding word in the Avestan text, such as prepositions. Comparable to this trend is the total adaptation of the word order of the PT in P5 and K2 to the Avestan word order. Furthermore, both manuscripts tend to complete the missing Pahlavi translations that have been lost in the course of the transmission or have never existed. When the translation existed in the manuscripts of the family of L4, this seems to be the source of the translations, so that these manuscripts were obviously collated with another one of the L4 family. But new translations were also created when they were not available in L4. It is in this context that the new creation of a Pahlavi translation for Vd. 12 in K2 (and in other manuscripts) has to be placed. Concerning the Avestan texts, the changes introduced are limited to the rearrangement of misplaced texts. In fact, in P5 and K2 all the big misplacements present in K1 are rearranged (Vd. 3.25 ff., 9.16 ff., and 18.7 ff.). But the most important addition was the quite systematic introduction of Avestan texts available in the Sādes, but missing in K1. Only very few texts from the Sādes that are missing in K1 are left out in P5 or K2 (e.g., the omission in Vd. 16.8-9 in K2 or the beginning of 18.6 in both manuscripts).



On the other hand, the traditionalist school continued copying manuscripts in the old way. The Pahlavi translation is copied unaltered. The disorders of the Avestan texts are reproduced as such, but small corrections are done when they are considered necessary. Sometimes even texts omitted in K1 are reintroduced owing to the influence of the Sādes (the longest is the omitted text in Vd. 16.8-9). To this school belong the following manuscripts of the family of K1: B1, M3, P10. A middle position between both schools is also attested. It is represented by the manuscripts P2, D62 and RSPA 231. They do not change the Pahlavi translation, although sometimes missing translations are added. Regarding the Avestan text, they mostly rearrange the disordered Avestan texts. It is very interesting to note that D62 shows the disordered text of Vd. 9 twice: once in the right order and once in the wrong order of folios 201 and 203 of K1. The introduction of Avestan texts from the Sādes is more frequent than in B1, M3 and P10, but less so than in K2 and P5.

In Nawsari, a new school of copyists was established as well, as a consequence of the teachings of Jāmāsp. The manuscripts from Nawsari show obvious distinctive characteristics. Most of them are copies from L4 or other manuscripts of its family, with the exception of F10. The Pahlavi translation is left unaltered, except that, as in K2 and P5, new translations are created for the Avestan texts lacking them. The addition of missing Avestan texts by comparison with the Sādes is as systematic here as in K2 and P5, but omissions in L4 are noticeably less frequent than in K1. In principle, L4 seems to be a more trustworthy copy of their common source than K1. This is probably the reason why we do not have evidence that the manuscripts of the family of L4 were collated with those of the family of K1. The best representatives of this class of manuscripts are E10, T44 and Bh11. Other manuscripts from Nawsari, such as G25 or 34, share the same characteristics but to a lesser degree. Not only texts from the Sādes but also missing Pahlavi translations are added to the transmitted text of L4, but not as frequently as in E10 and T44.

Manuscripts were collated not only while copying new manuscripts, but also in order to correct already available copies. During the 18th and 19th centuries, many Vidēvdād manuscripts were collated with other manuscripts, and the corrections and additions were made between the lines or in the margins. It is obvious that at this time in India an intensive, pre-scientific philological work was done in order to produce the best possible copy. The triggering event was most probably, as mentioned above, Jāmāsp's visit to Surat from Kermān, and such work was intensified later, probably by the



activities of Anquetil-Duperron. Although this trend was general, the amount of the pseudo-philological changes introduced into the manuscripts depended on the general position of the priests involved in copying in the community. The reformist movement showed, as expected, a more open attitude to the modification of manuscripts than the traditionalist schools.

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