



## ZĀDSPRAM

**ZĀDSPRAM**, a 9th-century Zoroastrian scholar and author. He was one of the four sons of Gušn-Jam (or Juwānjam, according to Boyce and Cereti). Among his brothers Zurvāndād, Manušcihr, and Ašavahišt, the second is well known for his *Epistles* and the book of the *Dādestān ī dēnīg*. According to an unverifiable tradition, Zādspram was a descendant of *Ādurbād ī Mahraspandān*, the famous *mōbed* under Šāpur II (r. 309-79). In Fārs province, and especially at Širkān, Zādspram must have had major responsibilities as a theologian, since he was described as coming “from the South” (*nēmrōz*)—a possible allusion to the fact that he exercised authority over the area which had formed one of the four regions of the empire as divided under Kōsrow I (r. 531-79) and Hormozd IV (r. 579-90), as witnessed by the bullae of the *spāhbeds* (Gyselen, 2001). Zādspram’s brother Manušcihr, the high priest of Fārs and Kerman, reproached him for wanting to simplify the purification ceremonies (*baršnūm*), as he stated in two letters and an edict (*Nāmagīhā ī Manušcihr*). As for Zādspram’s father, he is quoted in several Pahlavi works, along with numerous commentators, which give an indication of an intense religious reflection, especially regarding rules of physical and moral purity, owing to the need to face the development of Muslim ideas and practices during the early centuries of Islamic rule.

Zādspram wrote several works: The *Anthology* (*Vizīdagīhā ī Zādspram*) and “The Book of the Enumeration of Races” (*nibēg ī tōhmag-ošmārišnīh*), a treatise which has not survived but must have contained description of animal species, in the manner found in the *Dāmdādnask*. The recent edition of the *Anthology*



by Gignoux and Tafazzoli is based on the Copenhagen manuscript K35 (fols. 233v-254r, of the 16th century), and on the edition by Anklesaria (see below), which was itself based on three manuscripts (K35, BK, and TD), all of them incomplete, as shown by the abrupt lacuna at the end of chapter 35. BK is an old copy of K35 and contains parts that are missing in the latter, and both TD and K35 may have come down from a one and the same original version.

E. W. West translated several parts of the *Anthology* in the Sacred Books of the East series (chap. 1-3 in vol. 5; chap. 4-27 in vol. 47; chap. 28 in vol. 37; see also in West, 1904). R. C. Zaehner translated the first and the twenty-fourth chapters, and Sir H. W. Bailey (1943, pp. 209-16) transliterated the important medical chapters 29 and 30. Other authors, such as M. F. Kanga, have translated passages of the book. Several scholars have pointed out the origin of certain passages as derived from the Zand (Commentary) of lost Avestan texts. In fact, Zādspram quoted these lost sources, as was shown by Menasce (*Camb. Hist. Iran* III/2). The latter drew attention to the following references made by Zādspram: chapters 3.43 and 57 of the *Dāmdād nask*; chap. 9.6 of Gāthā 31; chap. 35.18 of the *Spand nask*; as well as the mention of a book on “the explanation of the Yasna ceremony” (chap. 6.1) and a book on “the work of the Ancients” (chap. 4.8). M. Boyce (1984, pp. 74-75) believes that chapters 13, 16, 20-22 may be based on some Zand texts, and G. Gropp (1991, pp. 79-89) has pointed out the originality of Zādspram’s comment on the *Ahunavairiia* prayer in the first chapter (par. 13-23).

Three or four complete or partial editions of the *Anthology* are noteworthy. The edition entrusted first to M. B. Davar (1908) and then to B. T. Anklesaria (1909) was finished only in 1943, but, with a few exceptions, the printed copies were lost in a fire which destroyed the Fort Press in 1945. Unvala finished the work after Anklesaria’s death in 1944 and published its first volume in 1964, which contained the introduction and the Pahlavi text. Volume II, which was to provide the transliteration and the translation, has never appeared. The introduction contains very long extracts of the *Epistles of Manuščih*r. In Iran, Mehrdād Bahār published a glossary of the *Anthology* in 1972, and M.-T. Rāšed Moḥaṣṣel provided a Persian translation of the text in 1987. F. Sohn presented in 1980 a very detailed study of the medical data described in chapters 29 and 30 and supplemented them with chapter 18 of the *Bundahišn*, which deals with human reproduction, a field in which Zādspram was also interested. A critical review of this work (Gignoux, 1998) demonstrated that, although a professional physician, Sohn may have made too much use of modern medical



science rather than appropriately putting Zādspram's theories into their historical and religious context. Finally, a complete edition of the *Anthology*, with transliteration, transcription, translation, and commentary, was prepared by Gignoux and Tafazzoli in 1993. The close cooperation of these two scholars has provided the Pahlavi text with a critical apparatus and a complete glossary, and has made a major text for the history of Mazdean thought readily accessible in a precise and intelligible translation.

The *Vizīdagthā īZādspram* has often been compared with the *Bundahišn*, which deals with the same subjects but shows less unity of thought and wording than the *Anthology*. In the opinion of Mary Boyce, the latter, in contrast to the *Bundahišn*, can have been written by a single author. Comparison of the two texts does lead to solution of linguistic difficulties and facilitates a better understanding of points of doctrine. The *Anthology* has been divided by some scholars into three parts, by others into four. Tavadia (1956) believed that the purpose of the book was to illustrate the three periods of the history of the world: a cosmological phase at the beginning, the life of Zoroaster forming the central epoch, and the closing phase of Renovation. This threefold division, as Tavadia explained, suggests the view of history in Christianity and the teaching of Māni about the Two Principles and the Three Moments—before the mixture of the Two Principles, after their mixture, and following their separation. Here we have in effect a cosmological scheme common to those great religions.

According to Gignoux-Tafazzoli and others, the *Anthology* can be divided into four parts in terms of its contents. The first part, formed by chapters 1 to 3, deals with Mazdean cosmogony and different phases of creation. Chapter 1 is devoted to the state of mixture and the bargaining between Ohrmazd and Ahriman regarding the creation of material beings, in which Zurvān is also involved. Chapter 2 describes the arrival of Ahriman in the world and his successive misdeeds against the good creation of Ohrmazd, with various astrological references. Chapter 3 recounts the different fights between the waters guarded by Tištar and Ahriman, followed by the latter's aggression against the mountains, the land, the plants, the livestock, and the slaying of the Uniquely-created Bull, whose body parts gave rise to various plant and animal species. A classification of animals according to their species and prototypes forms an attempt at a zoological treatise and is also attested in the *Bundahišn*, where it might be interesting to trace back the sources. Finally, the five kinds of fires are analyzed in accordance with their Avestan names and their



implantation in the cosmos.

The second part, covered by chapters 4 to 26, is devoted to the legendary events in Zoroaster's life: the attempts to kill him, his miraculous escape from death, his remarkable qualities, and his conversations with Ohrmazd.

Chapters 27 and 28 describe the five characters of priests, the ten counsels for the pious man, and the three divisions of religion discerned in the *Ahunawar*, the *Gāthās*, and the *nasks* (see list s.v. [AVESTA](#)).

Chapters 29 and 30 may be considered as a separate, third section, as they are introduced by a special title. Zādspram here discusses his concept of the composition of the human person, according to a fourfold scheme: the parts pertain, respectively, to the body (*tanīg*), the life breath (*gyānīg*), the knowledge (*dānišnīg*), and the soul (*ruwānīg*). The underlying theories go back to Greek thought or Syriac ideas: micro-macrocosmic doctrine (see [MICROCOSM AND MACROCOSM](#)), the teaching of four cosmic elements forming the human body, relations with the astrological seven planets, and the medicine of [Hippocrates](#) and [Galen](#); these have been analyzed from a comparative point of view by Gignoux (2001, chap. 2). Equally interesting is the doctrine of the multiplicity of souls, which is more original, being based on ancient Iranian data. Zādspram distinguishes three souls: the corporal soul or the soul in the body (*ruwān ī tanīg/andar tan*), the external soul or the soul on its way (*ruwān ī bērōn/andar rāh*), and the soul destined to be immortal (*ruwan ī pad mēnōgān axwān*). As has been argued (Gignoux, 1996, 2001, p. 23), this theory may explain the Shamanic type of the journey to the beyond, which is attested in ancient Iran (by the journeys of Vištāspa, Ardā Vīrāz, and Kirdēr; see [SHAMANISM](#)). Chapter 30 also describes the situation of the soul after death, which has to achieve its extra-terrestrial journey. This journey is the ultimate one, with which the other journeys (such as the above-mentioned) implicitly alluded to in Zādspram's discussion are analogous; significantly, the author insists twice (30.32 and 30.37) on the existence of the three *ruwān*. The post-mortem condition takes up a major part in this chapter, with an enumeration of the twelve prototypal forms of creatures within the framework of individual eschatology.

The final chapters, 34 and 35, form the fourth part and are devoted to general eschatology and to the events of the end of time and Renovation (*frašgird*, elsewhere spelled *frašegerd*), which will take place according to a rhythm which is, in a way, opposite to that of creation (see [COSMOGONY AND](#)



COSMOLOGY i. and FRAŠŌ.KĒRĒTI). The resurrection of the just and that of the damned, who are meanwhile purified, is described at length, as are the different ways of life which they will enjoy in the beyond.

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