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# The *Wizirgerd ī Dēnīg* and the Evil Spirit: Questions of Authenticity in Post-Classical Zoroastrianism

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*ekam apy akṣaram yas tu guruḥ śiṣyaṃ prabodhayet  
pṛthivyāṃ nāsti tad dravyaṃ yad dattvā so 'nṛṇī bhavet*  
For even a single syllable which a guru teaches the pupil,  
No treasure exists on Earth the gift of which can cancel such debt.  
– *Vṛddhacāṇakyanīti* 15.2

## The Curious History of the *Wizirgerd ī Dēnīg*

When the *Daftar ī Wizirgerd ī Dēnīg*<sup>1</sup> “Book of Religious Judgments” (henceforth referred to as WD) was published by the twenty-year-old Ervad (later Dastur) Pešotan Behrāmjī Sañjānā in 1848, it was the first complete Pahlavi text ever to be printed in Pahlavi script. Despite this, it is one of the least studied of Pahlavi texts, with no complete editions or translations in any language to date. This is largely because the text’s “authenticity” was called into question soon after its publication by one of the Sanjana family’s chief rivals in Bombay, Dastur Minocherjī Edalji Jāmāspāsānā. Writing in Gujarati under the pseudonym of Rāstjoe (Persian *rāst-jūy* “Truth-seeker”), Dastur Minocherji demanded in his *Šekastār-e Darogī* (“Destroyer of Falsehood”) that the 300 printed copies of the text be withdrawn from circulation. The Parsi Anjuman did just that and apparently destroyed most of the copies of the book.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the 1848 printing of the WD has become extremely rare, only a handful of excerpts from the text have been published,<sup>3</sup> and no re-examination of the claims against the text’s authenticity has been initiated. The following discussion is divided into two parts. In the first part, I will give a brief overview of the history of this text. Though I cannot give any definitive an-

swers about the text’s origins, I hope to illuminate some of the more interesting aspects of the text and the reaction it caused. In the second part of this article, I discuss a passage of the WD concerning the origin of the Evil Spirit, which I hope will illustrate the usefulness of this text for the study of the post-classical<sup>4</sup> Zoroastrian religion.

The published text was prepared according to a manuscript bound in three volumes which belonged to the library of the late Dastur Edalji Dārābjī Sañjānā (commonly known as Edal Daru), Peshotan’s uncle and mentor, who was the high priest of the Shahanshahi Parsis of Bombay during the first half of the 19th century. According to the Pahlavi colophon of the text (WD, 189–91), this manuscript was written by Edalji Darabji’s uncle Mōbed Nōwrōz Rustam Warahrām Sañjānīg on Rōz Rām Māh Amurdād A.Y. 1123 (A.D. 1753) from a manuscript found in the library of the Modi of Surat. This manuscript in turn bore a colophon dating to Rōz Wād Māh Ardwhišt A.Y. 609 (A.D. 1239), written by Dādpayrāy (d’tpyl’y), son of Dastwar Šāpur, son of Dastwar Mihrayār Kirmānīg. Unfortunately for verifying the authenticity of the text, the present whereabouts of Edalji Darabji’s manuscript is unknown, and the Surat manuscript was probably missing by the time of Martin Haug’s visit to the Modi’s library in 1864.<sup>5</sup> The only known manuscripts of the text, found both in the Meherjirana Library in

Navsari and in the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute in Bombay, are nothing more than hand copies of the printed text, written due to the paucity of the original printed copies.<sup>6</sup>

Considering that the Pahlavi *Wizirgerd ī Dēnīg* has been relegated to virtual obscurity for the past 160 years, a brief re-examination of the criteria by which it has been dismissed as inauthentic is in order. It is thus necessary to contextualize the publication of the text within the community for whom the publication was intended. In the middle of the 19th century, there was a great deal of conflict between the Sanjana family, who tended the Wadia Atash Behram, and the Jamaspasa family, who became the dasturs of the Parsi Anjuman. After the death of the Shahanshahi high priest Dastur Edalji Darabji Sanjana in 1847, the Sanjanas and the Jamaspasas were in competition for the high priesthood of Bombay and enmity between the two families escalated in the coming decades.<sup>7</sup> This competition, in which members from each family attacked the other's priestly legitimacy, ultimately reached such an extent that a relative of the Jamaspasa family was sent to jail for libel, before the situation was finally resolved after the establishment of the Anjuman Atash Behram in 1897.<sup>8</sup>

The *Wizirgerd ī Dēnīg* was published in the midst of this contention, one year after the death of Dastur Edalji, by his young successor Peshotan. Though this publication should have brought him prestige, the 1855 publication of the *Šekastār-e Darogī*, in which Dastur Minocherji Jamaspasana purported that large parts of the WD were composed by Dastur Edalji Darabji himself, resulted in scandal. Most of Dastur Minocherji's objections involve those passages of the text which do not conform to contemporary orthodox Parsi belief and practice. For instance, Dastur Minocherji's first proof (pp. 13–15) concerns WD chapter 19 (pp. 21–23) on the supposed three wives of Zarathustra. According to Dastur Minocherji, someone had come to Dastur Edalji wanting to marry a second wife while his first was still living, and as a result, Dastur Edalji fabricated the passage concerning Zarathustra's three wives in order to convey legitimacy to this marriage. Curiously, Dastur Minocherji does not mention the very similar passage occurring in the *Bundahišn* (35.56–61), which was first published in Gujarati translation by his own father Edalji Dārābji Jāmāspāsā in 1819. Though the

Pahlavi *Bundahišn* does not explicitly state that Zarathustra had three wives, the 1819 Gujarati translation, which interpolates a great deal into the text, does: *bīju Zartoštne orat 3 hatī* "Also, Zarathustra had three wives," (cf. WD 19.7 *ud Zarduxšt <ī> ahlaw rāy sē zan būd*). The translation then proceeds to list their names in the same fashion as the WD: Orvej, Arnej Baredā, and Huove (cf. WD 19.8 *ēk-ēw Hūuōv didīgar Urvij sidīgar Arnij.barādā nām būd hēnd*).<sup>9</sup> Whatever the source of this tradition, it seems therefore that it was not an invention of the author of the WD. Minocherji's second proof (pp. 15–16) concerns WD chapter 27 (p. 56), about the case of a child born from a Zoroastrian man and a *jud-dēn* woman, an issue still contentious in modern-day Parsi orthodoxy. Further proofs proceed along the same lines. At any rate, such polemics are not useful for determining when the *Wizirgerd* was composed.

Though the original criticisms of the WD do not delve much into linguistic matters, more recent criticisms have. The language and style of the WD are clearly unusual when it comes to Pahlavi literature. The text claims to be the writing of Mēdyōmāh, the disciple of Zarathustra, and the story of Zarathustra's life, found in chapter 21 (pp. 26–49), is narrated by Mēdyōmāh in the first person. This literary device, more than anything else, has been used to support the claim that the text is inauthentic. More substantial claims concern the language of the text, most markedly that the text makes use of a great many heterograms not normally used in the extant corpus of Pahlavi literature, implying that the author of the text made extensive use of the *Frahang ī Pahlawīg*.<sup>10</sup> Forms with New Persian phonology or syntax indicate a relatively late date,<sup>11</sup> though one cannot state with any certainty when these entered Pahlavi.<sup>12</sup> Unlike some other late Pahlavi manuscripts (such as K27 and MU29), Arabic loanwords via New Persian do not appear frequently in the text,<sup>13</sup> but without a linguistic and orthographic chronology of late Pahlavi, it is quite difficult to make any speculation about the date of the text from this evidence.<sup>14</sup>

Despite this confusion, there is some definitive evidence that a Pahlavi *Wizirgerd ī Dēnīg* did in fact exist prior to the 18th–19th centuries. In an unpublished Persian *Rivāyat* from A.Y. 924 (A.D. 1554), a short citation from the Pahlavi *Wizirgerd ī Dēnīg* is given:

**First Dastur Meherjirana Library (Navsari) MS T-31, f. 60v.**

ʔthš wlʔhlʔm TLYN LA šʔyt krtn' BRA štr' HT  
BRA OBYDWNt mlglc'n' YHWWNt. ZNE dptl  
wclklt dyn[n]yk npštk AYT'.

ātaxš <ī> warahrām dō nē šāyēd kerdan andar  
šahr.

agar bē \*kunēd margarzān \*bawēd.

ēn daftar wizirgerd <ī> dēnīg nibištāg ast.

One must not construct two Warahrām fires in  
(one) city.

If one does (this), he is *margarzān*.

This has been written in the book *Wizirgerd* <ī>  
*Dēnīg*.

Though this passage is not found in the published text of the Pahlavi WD, it does seem conceivable that it may have once been part of the text. A great deal of the published WD concerns the consecration of Warahrām fires. Further, if the original text of the WD really were tampered with by Dastur Edalji Darabji Sanjana, it is not surprising that this passage should be omitted, since Sanjana was the high priest of the Wadiaji, Bombay's second Atash Behram, (consecrated in 1830, many years after Bombay's first Atash Behram, the Dadyseth, consecrated in 1783).<sup>15</sup>

Thus, in the absence of a working chronology of late Pahlavi, there is no *a priori* reason to dismiss the possibility that the underlying manuscripts of the printed text may have existed at one point and to conclude, with West, that "the work may be little older than Dāt-pīrāi's [i.e., Dādpayrāy's] MS."<sup>16</sup> However, given the variable contents and even style of the text, it is quite possible that different parts may have been composed by different people at different times. Regarding the claims against the text's authenticity, it should be remembered that what constituted the Pahlavi canon was quite debatable during the early and mid-19th century. For instance, in his letters to the Bombay weekly *Halkāru tathā Vartamān*, the Kadmi priest Navrojī Dorābjī Chāndāru stated under the pseudonym Narron Goosequill that the *Bundahišn* was not an authentic Zoroastrian book.<sup>17</sup> Likewise, when Peshotan Behramji Sanjana published the first translation of the *Kār-nāmag ī Ardaxšēr ī Pābagān* in 1853, he was accused of "misrepresenting some of the actions of so virtuous a prince as Ardaxšēr."<sup>18</sup> Obviously, both of these texts have been rehabilitated into the tradition, but the *Wizirgerd* has never been re-

examined. Whether or not the text is "old," it remains useful for its copious material on Zoroastrian law, ritual, and textual exegesis, as well as the life of Zarathustra and cosmogony. As such, it is a valuable source for the religious history of post-classical Zoroastrianism.

### *Wizirgerd ī Dēnīg* 8 and the Reason for the Creation of Ahrimen

One of the earliest chapters of the *Wizirgerd* provides an interesting counterpoint to the notion of the dualistic creation of the universe found in other Pahlavi texts. The text of the *Wizirgerd* begins with a version of the *Handarz ī dastwarān ō weh-dēnān* "Advice of the Dasturs to those of the Good Religion" (HDWD),<sup>19</sup> a short Pahlavi treatise which exists in several other manuscripts along with many of the other "Pahlavi Texts." The WD diverges from the established text of the HDWD in several places, notably interpolating a long passage about the reason for the creation of the *xrafstarān* between HDWD 17 (about who creates souls in the *xrafstars*) and 18 (about the disposal of a \*toothpick). After the conclusion of the HDWD, the *Wizirgerd ī Dēnīg* proceeds with a question about how the Evil Spirit appeared in the world. As is well known, in the version of Zoroastrian cosmogony which Shaul Shaked (1994b) has termed "classical," Ohrmazd and Ahrimen are coeval, neither being created.<sup>20</sup> The present chapter, in which Ahrimen is created by Ohrmazd to expiate sinners in hell,<sup>21</sup> seems to be almost unique within the medieval and early modern Zoroastrian corpus. To my knowledge, the passage has only been mentioned once in the West, by Friedrich Spiegel, who speculates that the author of the text sought to initiate a monotheism "akin to the rigid monotheism of the Muslims" ("ähnlich dem starren Monotheismus der Muhammadaner").<sup>22</sup> A parallel to this passage can be found in chapter 3 of the unpublished *Vajar-e Ōrmazd* ("Judgment of Ohrmazd"), a poetic composition in New Persian dating from A.Y. 1190/A.D. 1820, written by Edal Darab Sanjana (the same priest accused of forging the *Wizirgerd*), which details the creation of the world, the punishments of the different grades of sins, and various other religious matters.<sup>23</sup> This work is obviously dependent on the WD, which the author cites as a source.

This passage from the WD was reprinted in Jamaspasana 1913, 43, who states that “it seems to have formed part of the *Andarz-ī Dastōbarān*.” In the printed text of the WD, it directly follows the last sentence (35) of the HDWD with no indication of it being a separate chapter.

**WD 8.1** *About the Creation of the Gannāg Mēnōy by Ohrmazd*

[p. 11] pwr̥sy̥t̥ AYK gnn̥'k̥ mynwd̥ dlwnd̥ cygwn̥ PWN ME 'dwy̥n' PWN py̥t̥'kyh̥ YHMTWN̥t̥ YKOYMWN̥yt̥ PWN bwndh̥šn̥' d̥m̥ 'whrm̥zd̥ AYT 'ywp̥ PWN BNPŠ̥Eyh̥ PWN py̥t̥'kyh̥ YATWN̥t̥ YKOYMWN̥yt̥.  
*purs̥īd̥ k̥ū gannāg̥ mēnōy̥ druwand̥ čiyon̥ pad̥ čē ēwēn̥ pad̥ paydāg̥īh̥ ras̥īd̥ estēd̥  
 pad̥ bundahišn̥ dām̥ <ī> Ohrmazd̥ ast̥ ayāb̥  
 pad̥ xwadīh̥ pad̥ paydāg̥īh̥ āmad̥ estēd̥.*  
 He asked, “How and in what way did the wicked Evil Spirit become manifest?  
 Is he the creation of Ohrmazd in the original creation, or did he become manifest on his own?”

**WD 8.2**

gwpt̥ HWE't̥ 'hlmn̥ dlwnd̥ PWN ZK bwndh̥-šn̥yh̥ d̥m̥ 'whrm̥zd̥ AYT AYT MNW 'twb̥'n̥' W twmtwmk̥ W MN hlt̥ b'hl-1 LA YHSNN̥yt̥ AHL cygwn̥ W PWN ME 'dwy̥n' W PWN \*kd̥'m̥<sup>a</sup> 'pz̥'l̥ W pl̥c̥'nkyh̥ PWN BNPŠ̥Eyh̥ BNPŠ̥E PWN py̥t̥'kyh̥ YHMTWN̥tn̥' W d̥m̥ W dh̥šn̥ NPŠ̥E 'plytn̥' twb̥'n̥'.  
*guft̥ hād̥ Ahrimen̥ <ī> druwand̥ pad̥ ān̥ bunda-  
 hišn̥īh̥ dām̥ <ī> Ohrmazd̥ ast̥  
 ast̥ kē a-tuwān̥ ud̥ tom-tō<h>mag̥<sup>b</sup>  
 ud̥ az̥ xrad̥ bahr-ēw̥ nē dārēd̥  
 pas̥ čiyōn̥ ud̥ pad̥ čē ēwēn̥ ud̥ pad̥ \*kadām̥  
 abzār̥ ud̥ frazānag̥īh̥ pad̥ xwadīh̥ xwad̥ pad̥  
 paydāg̥īh̥ ras̥īdan̥ ud̥ dām̥ ud̥ dahišn̥ <ī> xwēš̥  
 āfrīdan̥ tuwān̥!*  
 He said, “It is through that original creation that wicked Ahrimen is the creation of Ohrmazd.”  
 Some say that he is not powerful and from a dark seed,  
 And he doesn't have a single share of wisdom.  
 So how, and in what manner, and with what means and foresight could he himself come into existence on his own and create his own creation?

a. Printed as KHDE. b. *tōm-tohmag* is an epithet of the *dēws* and *druwands*, translating Avestan

*tāmasciθra-*. The spelling *twmtwmk* is attested as a variant in the Pahlavi *Xwaršēd Niyāyišn* 14 (MSS U<sub>3</sub>, D, and DR, cf. Dhabhar 1927, 283, n. 9–10).

**WD 8.3**

't̥ pwr̥syn̥'nd̥ AYK ME l̥d̥ W PWN \*kd̥'m̥<sup>a</sup> cym̥ gnn̥'k̥ l̥d̥ \*bryhynyt̥<sup>b</sup> [p. 12] YKOYMWN̥yt̥.  
*ā-t̥ pursēnānd̥<sup>c</sup> k̥ū čē rāy̥ ud̥ pad̥ \*kadām̥ čim̥  
 gannāg̥ <mēnōy̥> rāy̥ \*brēhēnīd̥ estēd̥.*  
 Thus, they will ask you, “Why, and with what reason has he fashioned the foul <spirit>?”

a. Printed as KHDE. b. Spelled *br'hynyt*, a very frequent scribal error. c. Interpreting this as “Thus, they will make you ask” seems rather unlikely. As is frequently the case in the WD, the causative/denominative stem is employed with no discernible difference from the unaugmented stem. Similarly, the use of the subjunctive ending -'nd̥ in the 3rd person plural is quite common throughout the WD.

**WD 8.4**

gwpt̥ HWE't̥ HNA l̥d̥ ME HT 'whrm̥zd̥ hwt̥ 'hlmn̥ LA d̥'t̥ HWEyy̥ BYN dwšhw̥ lwb̥'n̥'n̥ dlwwnd̥'n̥ twcšn̥ MNW krt̥ HWEyy̥ W KRA p̥'tpl̥'s̥ MNW QDM rwb̥'n̥'n̥' BYN dwšhw̥' OBYDWN̥yt̥ PWN plm̥'n̥ Y 'whrm̥zd̥ AYT MNW MN wcl̥ 'whrm̥zd̥ PWN kyn̥' NPŠ̥E wyš̥ OBYDWN̥yt̥ wzl̥ Y hwwht̥ QDM LOYŠ̥E 'hlmn̥ drwnd̥ YHMTWN̥yt̥ W PWN km̥'l̥ [OL] <Y> OLE znyt̥ p̥'tpl̥'s̥ wyš̥ krtn̥' LA twb̥'n̥' AHL MN hlt̥ 'pygwm̥'n̥' YDOYTWNTN̥' AMT gnn̥'k̥ mynwd̥ plm̥'n̥' bwlt̥'l̥ W d̥m̥ 'whrm̥zd̥ AYT MN 'pst̥'k̥ h'twht̥' **dāta ahura spənta mazdā** py̥t̥'k̥ W hm̥ 'ydw̥n' **dāta nam ahmi** lwšn̥' znd̥ ZNE AYK d̥'t̥l̥ ŠM HWEm̥ AYK hm̥'k̥ d̥m̥ W dh̥šn̥ L d̥'t̥.  
*guft̥ hād̥ ēd̥ rāy̥ čē agar̥ Ohrmazd̥ xwadā Ahrimen̥ nē dād̥ hē andar̥ dōšox̥ ruwānān̥ <ī>  
 druwandān̥ tōzišn̥ kē kerd̥ hē<sup>a</sup>  
 ud̥ har̥ pādīfrāh̥ kē abar̥ ruwānān̥ andar̥ dōšox̥  
 kunēd̥ pad̥ framān̥ ī Ohrmazd̥  
 ast̥ kē az̥ wizir̥ <ī> Ohrmazd̥<sup>b</sup>  
 pad̥ kēn̥ <ī> xwēš̥ wēš̥ kunēd̥  
 wazr̥ ī hu<n̥i>wixt̥<sup>c</sup> abar̥ sar̥ <ī> Ahrimen̥ dru-  
 wand̥ rasēd̥ ud̥ pad̥ kamāl̥ <ī> ōy̥ zanēd̥  
 pādīfrāh̥ wēš̥ kerdan̥ nē tuwān̥<sup>d</sup>  
 pas̥ az̥ xrad̥ abēgumān̥ dānīstan̥ kḁ gannāg̥  
 mēnōy̥ framān̥-burdār̥ ud̥ dām̥ <ī> Ohrmazd̥  
 ast̥  
 az̥ abestāg̥ <ī> hādōxt̥ **dāta ahura spənta  
 mazdā** paydāg̥*

*ud ham ēdōn dāta nqm<a> ahmi<sup>c</sup> rōšn  
zand ēn kū dādār nām ham ud hamāg dām ud  
dahišn man dād.<sup>f</sup>*

He said, "For this reason, since, if Lord Ohrmazd had not created Ahrimen, who would exact punishment on the souls of the wicked ones in hell?"

Every punishment which is done to the souls in hell is according to the command of Ohrmazd.

There are some (who say it is) from the judgment of Ohrmazd.

(If [?]) he acts too much through his own hatred,

(then) the well-brandished mace comes over the wicked Ahrimen and strikes him on the head,

(so that) he cannot exact more punishment.<sup>c</sup>

Then, regarding (his) wisdom, one should know without doubt that the Evil Spirit is the servant and creation of Ohrmazd.

It is manifest from the Avestan of the *Hādōxt*, "The life-giving creator, Ahura Mazdā"

And likewise it is clear from "I am called the creator."

The Zand is this: "I am called the creator, and I created all the creation."

a. The use of the optative to express irrealis is seemingly an old feature, but it is perhaps patterned on the archaic New Persian optative ending in *-ī*. b. Alternately, one could read *pad framān ī Ohrmazd ast. \*ka az wizir ī Ohrmazd pad kēn <ī> xwēš wēš kunēd*. "... is according to the command of Ohrmazd. When he exceeds the judgment of Ohrmazd through his own hatred . . ."

c. = Avestan *vazrō huniuixtō* "the \*well-brandished mace." Pahlavi Xwaršēd Nyāyīšn 15 renders this as *wzl Y hwnh'm*, perhaps confused with the Persian gloss *xūb-nehāde* (Dhabhar 1927, 21 and 284, n. 47). Likewise, MU 29, p. 72 renders it as *wzl Y hwnhmk*. d. Compare the description of the mace of Mihr in the *Miθra Yašt* (Yt. 10.96, 10.132), the Persian *Rivāyats* (cf. MU I, p. 257, Dhabhar 1932, 260) and in the late Pahlavi manuscript MU 29 (p. 72, Mazdāpūr 1999, 261–64). For the interpretation of these lines, I follow the interpretation found in the following lines of the Persian *Vajar-e Ōrmazd* (described above) in the third chapter, entitled "A description of the circumstances of the Accursed One, who is the servant of God the exalted (*āyīn-e seyyom dar gozāreš-e ahvāl-e gojaste ke farmān-bordār-e haqq-e ta'ālā ast mīfarmāyad*).

K. R. Cama Oriental Institute R-304, f. 17v

بود هونوخت نامش کن تو باور	یکی گزریست پیش مهر داور
که از بیمش بوند دیوان غریوان	معلق داشتش بر فرق دیوان
دهد از وزن جرمشان زیادت	که چون شیطان بدروندان عقوبت
پسندد بر روانان سیه کار	همان بیداد و ظلم و جور بسیار
فرود آید بیک ضربش کند دور	بفرق وی هم آنگه گرز مذکور
پس آنگه باز بر چنود بتازد	دهد تادیب و اورا منع سازد

Mihr the judge has a mace named *Hūnivikht*—believe it!

He keeps it dangling above the heads of the demons, so that they lament out of fear from it, For when Satan punishes the sinners more than the weight of their sins,

And he approves such excessive injustice, tyranny, and oppression for the souls of those with black actions,

Thereupon, the aforementioned mace comes down upon his head and knocks him away with one whack.

It chastises him and stops him. Then it rushes back to the *Chinwad* (bridge).

e. Yt. 1.13. f. Many chapters of the *WD* refer to the *Zand* in this fashion. Pahlavi Yt.1.13 has only *dādār nām ham* without the gloss.

As is well known, the "classical" expression of a dualistic opposition between Ohrmazd and Ahrimen found in the *Bundahišn* and *The Selections of Zādspram* is not the only version of cosmogony found in the Zoroastrian tradition. In addition to the much debated "Zurvanite" version of cosmogony,<sup>24</sup> another scenario is known which is similar to that which is described here. In the version of Zoroastrian cosmogony which Zaehner problematically terms "monotheist," found, for instance, in the works of Muslim heresiographer al-Baghdādī, Ohrmazd created Ahrimen so that he himself could manage the good aspects of the world, and Ahrimen the evil.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, in al-Shahrastānī's discussion of the sect he terms the *Kiyūmartiya* ("Gayōmardians"), Yazdān created Ahrimen by thinking, "If I had an adversary, how would he be?" (*law kāna lī munazi'un kayfa yakūn*).<sup>26</sup> As Skjærvø (forthcoming) has shown, the idea that Zarathustra was a revolutionary monotheist reformer reacting against a pre-existing polytheism is largely the construct of Western scholars, but the impact that the adoption of Islamic-era monotheistic discourse had upon Zoroastrian cosmogony throughout the post-classical period is something that still has to be

assessed. Already in the 13th century *Zarātusht-nāma*, one encounters an entire chapter entitled *dar tawhīd-e yazdān ‘azza va jalla* (“On the unity of God, may he be exalted and glorified”), and subsequent catechisms invariably reassert this unity of God, though rarely discussing the problem of Ahrimen. By the 19th century, this had continued to such an extent that some Parsis seem to have been genuinely surprised by the “classical” account of cosmogony when the *Bundahišn* was published.<sup>27</sup> Thus, one is tempted to connect the scenario in the WD to the “monotheist” accounts of the Muslim heresiographers in stating that Ahrimen is the creation of Ohrmazd, but because of the aforementioned problems dating the text, one cannot state with any certainty whether this is because of a continuity of belief, a subsequent development in medieval Zoroastrian theology, or simply an idiosyncrasy.

In the absence of a definite conclusion about the composition of the WD, I hope to have shown that simply ignoring such texts masks the complexity of the authors and communities which produced them; instead, these texts should be re-examined as sources for later Zoroastrian religious history, reflecting both continuity and change in the older traditions. As is sometimes overlooked, Pahlavi and Pazand continued to be used in compositions by learned priests even during modern times. This continuous tradition is something that ought to be studied in its full scope, rather than dismissing the latter part of it as inauthentic.

## Notes

\* This article is dedicated to my mentor, Profs Oktor Skjærvø. During our eight-year friendship, Oktor has been a constant source of scholarly inspiration, advice, and support, and it is with his guidance that I have begun to work on the *Wizirgerd*. Throughout this paper, I have employed MacKenzie’s system (with some modifications) for the transcription of Pahlavi, even though by the time of the composition of the *Wizirgerd*, the pronunciation of the language had evolved in the priestly tradition (reflected in the frequent confusion between *-ig/-īh*, *ka/kū/kē*, etc.) Thus, I have provided transliterations as well. Boldface has been used for text written in Avestan script. Parsi names have been transcribed with diacritics when they first occur, and subsequently without. I have tried to emend as little as

possible so as not to obscure the original text. All chapter numbers are my own. This article is a small portion of a larger project to bring out a complete edition of the Pahlavi *Wizirgerd ī Dēnīg* in the near future. My thanks to Yuhan S.-D. Vevaina for his comments and suggestions.

1. The title of the text is spelled *wclkt dnyk*. In other texts, the normal orthography is *wcyl*, but the spelling *wcl* is attested elsewhere. Additionally, since Zoroastrian New Persian transcribes this word as *vajar*, (hence, the traditional pronunciation of this text’s title, the *Vajarkard-e Dīnī*), I have retained a short vowel. The Pahlavi *Wizirgerd ī Dēnīg* is not to be confused with the so-called “Persian” *Vajarkard-e Dīnī* which was brought to India by Jāmāsp Velāyatī (see Ursula Sims-Williams, in this volume), nor with the Pahlavi text which is entitled *Dīnī Vajarkard* in Persian script, about which see E. W. West, *Pahlavi Texts*, vol. 4, p. 438 n. 1.

2. For an account of these events, see Madan 1901, 218 and Katrak 1974.

3. Molé 1967 provides an edition of the story of Zarathustra’s life (ch. 21), Bartholomae (1900 and 1901) gives Avestan passages, Anklesaria 1882 (pp. 49–50) provides a passage about a child born from a *jud-dēn* woman becoming the *stur* “proxy” (glossed as *puhl-widār*) of his father (ch. 27), Bharucha 1917 discusses several chapters concerning death rituals, and Anklesaria 1913 and Mirza and JamaspAsa 1980 both discuss the passage about the three wives of Zarathustra (ch. 19), though with different conclusions.

4. By the post-classical period, I mean the period following the time of the redaction of most of the Pahlavi books (the 9th–10th centuries A.D.), encompassing the medieval and early modern periods.

5. Haug 1864 notes that while “there was formerly a very large number of Zend and Pehlevi books in Surat,” the majority of them had been destroyed in the infamous fire of 1837.

6. Cf. KRCOI D-57 & MRL F-32. Both manuscripts were copied by Eracjī Sohrābjī Meherjī Rāpā, in A.Y. 1234 and A.Y. 1237 (A.D. 1864 and 1867), respectively.

7. See Hinnells 2007, 107–8.

8. In 1869, things had reached such a state that a Sanjana had published a letter in the Gujarati weekly *Yazdānparast* under the pseudonym *ek dīndār* claiming that Kharshedjee Jamshetjee, a relative of the Jamaspasas in Pune, had married a non-Zoroastrian. This was in turn met by a letter published in the *Sanḍe Rivyu* (i.e., the *Sunday Review*, another Gujarati weekly) by Jamsetjee Sohrabjee Madun (a relative of the Jamaspasas, writing under the pseudonym *rānī Saṅjānionī amjānī tadbīrone hāmki kāhādnār nezo* “The spear that expels the unknown tricks of the wild Sanjanas”) alleging that Dastur Peshotan Sanjana’s relative, Nowrojee Shapoorjee Sunjana, had kept a Hindu prostitute named Papajee

and that he had eaten food prepared by a Muslim cook. The resulting libel case saw Madun imprisoned for nine months. See Tata 1870, v–vii.

9. Jāmāspāša 1819, 405–7. It is interesting to note that the question of the three wives of Zarathustra has continued to be one of the main rallying points against the authenticity of the WD. See Mirza and JamaspAsa 1980 and Katrak 1974, 73, who claim that this passage was fabricated by Edalji Darabji Sanjana in order to legitimize bigamy. A second passage on taking a second wife is indeed found in the *Wizirgerd* (p. 176), which pertains to the case when the first wife is unable to produce children, similar to a passage from the *Rivāyat of Narīman Hūshang* (MU I, p. 189, Dhabhar 1932, 204). For a more nuanced opinion, see Anklesaria 1913, whose view that “the time is now ripe for doing justice” to the *Wizirgerd* (p. 243) has unfortunately not been heeded.

10. Use of such heterograms occurs however in texts from the *Zand ī Xwardag Abestāg*. See de Jong 2003, 73.

11. Words exhibiting New Persian phonology include *guwāhīh* (gwwʹsyh) for *gugāyīh* (cf. NP *guvāh*). Likewise, New Persian syntactical constructions are also found, such as the use of *xwāstan* with a short infinitive for the synthetic future tense. WD 21.13: *ay Lohrāsp šāh hunsand bāš kū čārag <ī> ranj ud bēš ī tō ahlāyīh-ārāstār Zarduxšt ī Spitāmān ast kē pad xwādāyīh ī pus ī tō Wištāsp pad \*waxšwarīh \*xwāhēd mad*. “O King Lohrāsp, be happy, for the cure for your pain and toil is the adorning of Righteousness, Zarathustra Spitama, who shall come into prophethood during the rule of your son Wištāsp.”

12. Similar forms are quite common in texts like the *Zand ī Xwardag Abestāg*, parts of which exist in manuscripts dating to the 14th century.

13. Pace Mirza and JamaspAsa 1980. All eight of the supposedly Arabic/New Persian forms in the WD they cite (p. 207) are rather dubious: 1) *daftar* (attested elsewhere in Pahlavi, and abundantly in colophons). 2) *murdār* (attested elsewhere in Pahlavi). 3) *abardār* (which the authors state is the Pahlavi form of Persian *bardār*, i.e., *bordār*; if this were the case, one would expect the author of the WD to simply use Pahlavi *bur-dār*. From its context *abardār* seems to mean “fertile” rather than “bearing”). 4) *karbās* “muslin” (attested already as Old Testament *karpas* [Esther 1.6] and in Sanskrit as *karpāsa*). 5) ʹlk (a ritual implement used in the consecration of the *wars*, probably also attested in the Pahlavi Videvdad 14.7, where it glosses the Pahlavi translation of Av. *vaδəm tiži.dārəm tiži. žnūtəm*. It surely has nothing to do with Turkic *alak* “sieve” as the authors claim). 6) KTA (an ideogram for *nāmāg* in the *Frahang ī Pahlawīg*, not from Arabic *qaṭʿ* “cutting, a reed-pen [the latter meaning does not occur in Arabic]”), 7) *solik* (actually written llʹswlk, something

that if a purifier [*yōzdahrgar*] has, he can no longer practice purification; apparently having nothing to do with Persian *solik* “canal”). 8) dlmʹly (apparently not meaning “heart-death” as the authors, who read *dil-marg*, imply, but rather concerning the inheritance of a *pādixšā* wife). The authors’ conclusion that “the book is unreliable and it cannot be regarded as an authentic book” (p. 208) should be reconsidered. One unambiguous word of Arabic origin, *ḥarb* “war” (spelled hlp), can be found in the *Mādayān ī Sīh-Rōzag* (WD 61.26, p. 123): *razm ud harb ud kārezār ud paykār . . .* However, since a fragment of this text is also found in the old manuscript MK, this would appear to undermine the author’s claim that the use of Arabic words imply a very late date.

14. Against the late dating of the WD, see now Macuch 2009, 148. For a recent discussion on the subject of Neo-Pahlavi, see the treatment in de Jong 2003. Though some of his conclusions are speculative, one can only agree that these texts are “crucial for the study of late medieval and early modern Zoroastrianism.” (p. 77).

15. The establishment of two Atash Behrams in Surat (one Kadmi, one Shahanshahi) was the subject of debate in the early 19th century, which ultimately had to be resolved in the Surat High Court. In Surat, it was the Shahanshahis who were trying to prevent the Kadmis from building their temple. Ultimately, because of the different rites of the Kadmis and the Shahanshahis, the court ruled that both temples should be consecrated, which they were, in 1823. This ruling gave legal precedence for the construction of the Wadia Atash Behram in Bombay, but again became problematic at the time of the consecration of the Anjuman Atash Behram (another Shahanshahi temple), which the Sanjana family opposed. See Hinnells 2007, 104 and *Pārsī Prakāś* v. 1, pp. 161–63.

16. West 1896, 90.

17. “I beg to inform you, that this Book Boondeshné is not one of our religious books. Nor is it the work of any of our Dustoors. This Book Boondeshné, some enemy of our religion has probably got up about 1000 years after our holy Prophet Zurtošht—because what is written in the Boondeshné is entirely false—and is far removed from our religion and faith. [ . . . ] Henceforth it will not be becoming in any one of our religion, or of any other, to call this a religious work.” (Wilson 1831, 383).

18. West 1904, 2. Dastur Peshotan published his Gujarati translation of the *Kārnāmāg* in the June and July 1853 issues of the monthly *Jagat Premī* (“Friend of the World”). On the controversy surrounding this, see Apu 1853 for letters exchanged between Jāmsēdji Limjībhai Apu (who would later become Honorary Secretary for the Rahnumā-e Mazdayasnān Sabhā) and the editor of the Gujarati weekly *Rāst Goftār*. Like the

criticisms made of the *Wizirgerd*, the criticisms of the *Kārnāmag* are largely based on contents rather than language; it is for instance alleged that because it is not befitting for Ardaxšēr, as a good Zoroastrian, to sleep with Ardawān's wife, the work cannot be authentic.

19. The Pahlavi text is found in Jamaspasana 1913, 121–27. For editions and translations, see Chunakova 1991, 56–58 and Jamaspasana 1914.

20. For further references concerning the essence of the Evil Spirit, see Shaked 1967.

21. On changing conceptions of hell within Zoroastrian communities, see Stausberg 2009.

22. Spiegel 1857, 194–95.

23. The only manuscript I have come across of the *Vajar-e Ōrmazd* is the autograph manuscript KRCOI R-304.

24. For the current state of the discussion on Zurvanism, see Shaked 1994b, with some additional source material found in Skjærvø 1997.

25. See the problematic discussion in Zaehner 1961, 180.

26. For a thorough discussion of this passage, see Shaked 1994a.

27. Among the subjects of the *Bundahišn* objected to by Narron Goosequill are a great many concerning the dual creations of Ohrmazd and Ahrimen. See Wilson 1831, 420–21.

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