

THE INTRODUCTION TO THE *DĀDESTĀN Ī DĒNĪG*

Compared to the major Pahlavi texts composed in the ninth and tenth centuries C.E.—not least the work of Zādšparam wjth which Professor Philippe Gignoux has been so deeply concerned—the importance of the Introduction to the *Dādestān ī Dēnīg* (hereafter *DD*) is of course very limited. It is a short text, whose existing translation<sup>1</sup> adequately conveys its introductory character. Some aspects of the text, however, are less than clear in that early translation, and could easily be overlooked.

The text as a whole is interesting because it is, if not precisely a letter, a text containing several features more characteristic of an epistolographic tradition than of a work of religious instruction. There are repeated passages, for example, of humble self-disparagement, and compliments are elaborately returned. Apologies for delay in writing are accompanied by the kind of reasons which are found in tardy letters the world over; in this case, however, they afford a valuable glimpse into the situation of Zoroastrian communities in the late ninth century.<sup>2</sup>

Manušcihr's protestations in § 10 show that his correspondents regarded him as the supreme source of spiritual authority; in the following paragraph the prelate rejects any such praise, arguing that a superior person may exist somewhere. This figure, however, appears to be hypothetical, and it seems fair to assume that Manušcihr in fact regarded himself in much the same light as his correspondents; this is conformed by his reference to "the Wise

Leader of the Religion" in § 25, where he can only mean himself.

This Leader of the Faithful states that the Zoroastrians of his time are "scattered like jewels" (§ 25), and complains of "heavy destruction and ill-treatment" by the Islamic establishment (§§ 8, 15), of an excessive workload and of lack of time to ponder theoretical questions. The practical side of his office apparently includes dealing with exorbitant tax-demands made on his community, and of keeping his lower priesthood<sup>3</sup> in order (§ 15). He seems to travel a good deal, as befits the leader of what must still have been a complex priestly organisation (§ 8).<sup>4</sup> His home, which must have been the administrative centre of the Zoroastrian world of the time, was probably Shiraz (§ 15).<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps the most interesting parts of the text are the passages where the high-priest gives a summary of the factors and considerations which form the basis of his judgements. First of all, there is the combination of the wisdom of the current Leader and the corpus of judgements of the *Pōryōtkēšān*, the great Leaders of old, whose insights are almost by definition superior to the conclusions of the moderns (§ 24). Where contradictory or dissimilar traditions exist, Manušcihr generally follows the views of "the *Dastwars* of our time and family" (§ 20), which may mean the tradition followed by priests of his family within living memory.

<sup>1</sup> E. W. West, *Pahlavi Texts*, Part 2, Oxford 1882 (= F. Max Müller ed., *The Sacred Books of the East*), pp. 3-11.

<sup>2</sup> On Manušcihr's *floruit* see West, *op. cit.*, p. 3, n. 1, and Kreyenbroek, "The *Dādestān ī Dēnīg* on Priests", *Indo-Iranian Journal* 30, 1987, pp. 185-208, with n. 1.

*Au Carrefour des religions. Mélanges offerts à Philippe Gignoux.* Res Orientales. Vol. VII.

<sup>3</sup> On the meaning of the word *hāwišt* in the *DD* see Kreyenbroek, *art. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> See Kreyenbroek *art. cit.*, and "The Zoroastrian Priesthood after the Fall of the Sasanian Empire", *Transition Periods in Iranian History*, ed. Gignoux, Paris 1987, pp. 151-66.

<sup>5</sup> See also West, *op. cit.*, p. 8, n. 6.

However, Manušcihr also respects the learning of others, and feels free to accept a wise judgement by a properly qualified *Dastwar* who does not belong to his family (§ 21). Imperfections or obscurities in religious judgements are necessarily due to the shortcomings of the modern *Dastwar*, the religious tradition itself being perfect (§ 22). It is clearly inadvisable for the laity to apply their own judgement in case of doubt,<sup>6</sup> and Manušcihr is to be approached again if his answers prove inadequate (§ 25).

The ponderous unwieldiness of Manušcihr's style suggests that the art of composing original written texts in Pahlavi had not reached a high level of sophistication in the ninth century. Its wordiness and obscure syntax must on occasion have baffled later scribes and led them to 'improve' the text as they saw fit. The modern translator, in turn, is sometimes forced to emend, to guess, or to add explanatory phrases. Moreover, as in several other Pahlavi texts, parentheses are much used in the *DD*, whose author of course had no way of indicating in a written text that a clause was not part of the main sentence; this task is therefore left to the translator.

The numbering of paragraphs follows T.D. Anklesaria's edition of the text,<sup>7</sup> even where this appears to run counter to the sense of the passage. For a detailed survey of variant readings the reader is referred to Anklesaria's edition; variants and transliterations of words or phrases as they occur in the MS tradition are given here only where serious uncertainties seem to exist.

#### PAHLAVI TEXT<sup>8</sup>

Pursišnihā i cand-dar i Mihr-Xwaršēd i Ādur-mahān az anōšag-ruwān Manušcihr i Gōšn-Jamān kard ud abāriḡ hudēnān, u-š passox i \*gōwizārenid.<sup>9</sup>

(0) Pad nām ud nērōḡ ud hayyārīh i Dādār Ohrmazd ud wispān yazdān, hamāḡ yazdān i

<sup>6</sup> For a detailed account of questions of Zoroastrian religious authority see Kreyenbroek "On Priestly Authority in Zoroastrianism", to appear in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* in 1994.

<sup>7</sup> T.D. Anklesaria, *The Datistan-i Dinik, Part I: Pursišn I-L*, Bombay n.d., pp. 1-8.

<sup>8</sup> In our transcription of the Pahlavi text the following signs are used:

<> to be deleted  
(\* ) conjectural addition to the text  
\* uncertain reading

<sup>9</sup> BK: gw'c'lynyt'; TD: wgw'c'lynyt'.

mēnōgān ud yazdān i gētīgān ud hamāḡ dām ud dahišn i Ohrmazd ō dahišn i xwēš wāspuhragāniḡ wāspuhrenid.

(1) Hudēnān i ēd-pursidārān az štāyišnig nērōḡ i cihr ud \*zōr<sup>10</sup> i gōhr i daxšag i xrad ud nišan i hunar, i az-iz xrad-xwāhišniḡ ud kirbag-uskārīšniḡ ud dēniḡ-wizōyišnihā pursišn paydāḡ, (2) az Manušcihr i Gōšn-jamān āfrin.

(3) Passox ēd kū cē-tān purr-dōšāramihā ud wuzurg-abardomihā andar ēd pursišnig nāmāḡ ō man āfrinēnid, cand-tān āfrinēnid ud ciyōn-tān āfrinēnid, purr-paymānihā ud bōwandag abzōn-padēxihā \*ōh-iz<sup>11</sup> ašmāh hamist ham-paywandān jud-jud pad xwēš niyābag spurr rasād, ud dagr pattayād, ud ō nek-frazāmiḡ paywandihād.

(4) Hān i-tān framūd nibištān abar \*ayāsišn<sup>12</sup> i ō ham-wēnišniḡ ud ham-pursagih i man, ud mihr-pānagih ud dēn-dōstih i xwad (5) ud amāh hamist kē yazdān-bandag pad kōxīšn i druz, ud ham-spāh pad \*āstawānih<sup>13</sup> i abar wēh-dēn i madzdēsn ud ham-ēstišn pad ek, hān i ahlāyih rāh, ud ham-toxīšn ō gāh i andar hān i pašom axwān, ud ham-arzōḡ pad hāzišn i ō hān i pašom axwān, ud frašgird ham-ēmēd hēm, hān-mān kām i ham-wēnišniḡ ud ham-pursagih cimig, u-š sāl. Hān-iz i dēn nigēzēd kū kē abāḡ ōy i dānāḡ ud ahlaw pad ham-wēnišniḡ ud ham-pursagih nazdig, ēḡ-iš kirbag i ahy ud waxšīšnig-tar, ud hān i meh pattāyišnig-tar.

(6) Ud štāyišn i-tān man rāy wēš az sāmān ud meh-pāyag framūd nibištān cim mādayān purr-dōstih ud nigērišn i pad lucašmiḡ, u-m pad-iš rāh i ō spāsdāriḡ. (7) Hān i-tān pad dānistān ud šnāxtan rāh be man ēnyā ō any kas nē būdan framūd nibištān, az ašmāh dōšāramih ō rōn i lucašmiḡ, be mādagwarīh ud rāstih rāy cimig-nigērišn dādiḡ-tar ud ō-z abāriḡ mōgmardān i pad hunar i-šān bōwandag-meniḡdāriḡ-tar sazēd nibištān. (8) Cē abāḡ-iz škēft-kōxšidāriḡ i druz ud grān wišōbišn ud zōriḡ i ō dēniḡān mad ēstēd, pas-iz pad yazdān xwābarih nun-iz radān mōbedān dastwarān ud abāriḡ-iz dēniḡān ud dēniḡbedān kustag-kustag, ud ani-z hērbedān ud mōgmardān i ōšmurd-mānsar i dranjenid-zand i uskārd-dādestān i āgāh i dēn i nimudār i cim i wizidār i kirbag pad cand gyāḡ hēnd, kē pad-iz ōwōn dādestān šnāxtan ud dānistān rāh \*awišān<sup>14</sup> wišādāḡ.

<sup>10</sup> So all MSS except TD, BK, which have *zwht*.

<sup>11</sup> MSS: *Lc*.

<sup>12</sup> MSS: *'byd' dšn'*.

<sup>13</sup> So TD (*'stb' nyh*); others: *'wstw' nyh*.

<sup>14</sup> MSS: *'wbš š'n*.

(9) Hān i-tān kāmag ud abāyistan ud xwaš-menišnih az hān i man abar būdan framūd nibištān, ā-m nišan i dōstih ud hucašmih, u-tān az yazdān ham-paymān i dōstih ud hucašmih i xwēš bawēd.

(10) Hān i-tān andar wēš-dōstih stāyidārīh-frehbūdihā man rāy pad kišwar-dastwarīh ud ekīh i \*abē<sup>15</sup> dudigarīh ud tāgih ud judih az ham-sāmān framūd nibištān, agar ōh-iz ašmāh dōstih rāy nibišt, pas-iz man dušwār sahēd az ēd ōwōn stāyišn.

(11) Agar andar ēn zamānag ud šahrān \*i-mān<sup>16</sup> šnaxtag ud ašnag abar kas \*ast<sup>17</sup> i pad ōy dagr-wurōyišnih dēn-pešōbāy i frāzag, man xwēš-tan rāy nē ābrōyig<sup>18</sup> dārēm ka hān stāyišn i salār-mān i ēwāzig-niyābag abar man srawāgihēd, ud nē-z ramišniḡ bawēm ka-m meh az xwēš salār nāmēndēn. Cē-m stāyišn i hān kāmag i pad xwēš payāg ud \*t'yk<sup>19</sup> ud wimand, u-m ābrōyig sahēd ērih andar xwēš abariḡ ud hāwand ud mehīh abar kehān.

(12) Hān i-tān wistāxihā ud wistāxgarīhā abar drāz nibištān i pūrsišn (\*framūd nibištān), ēn-iz nimūd kū passox pad hangām nibēsēm i-m andar pardazišn bawēd ud hān i ašmāh pad hucīhr-pūrsišnih wistāxih cimig. Ud man abar gōkāniḡ-passoxih ud spōz-az-gāhīh kām i tāftiḡ, cē spōz ayāb abowandagihā-passoxih aniyābag \*ast.<sup>20</sup> Az hān i škeft-kōxšīšnih i druz rāy awištāb, ud \*wizōyišniḡ<sup>21</sup>-menišnih az hān i awizirišniḡ ud frēzwāniḡ kār kem pardazišnih ast.

(13) Abar passox hangām ud pardazišn i-mān zamān dād i-tān andar nāmag paydāgēniḡ, jud-iz az hucašmih i dōstihā nišan i \*āgāhīh<sup>22</sup> i-tān az hān i man kem-pardazišnih az-iš paydāg. (14) U-m ēn-iz wistāxih ast kū-tān pūrsišn dēniḡ-wurōyišnihā ud dēniḡ-wizir-abāyišnihā nibišt. Ud andar passox cim-paydāgih i az dēn was \*ōh<sup>23</sup> nimāyišn i pad dānāgih \*hu-ēwāz<sup>24</sup> ud az \*harw<sup>25</sup> ēwēnag abar xwāhišnih abē-bim.

(15) Ud im nāmag andar māh i Tir, pad \*dawr i ōwōn mad ka xwāstārih i az šāhigān pad sē-sālaḡ bahr sālaḡ-ē, ud hūdēnān must frāx. Ud ašānih pad-iš awizirišniḡ ud cārag-garīh i-m cand ādūgih abar hān must ud spōzišnih frēzwāniḡ-tar. Ud cār i abar

bōxtārih ud frayādišnih i hāwištān i cand wiḡān handāxt ēstād rāy-am \*ōh<sup>26</sup> xūbihā nigērdjan i im pūrsišn nē ayyāft tā māh i Šahrewar ka ō Širāz mad hēm, u-m hangām <hangām> i andak i pardazišn būd, u-m im pūrsišn nigēriḡ.

(16) Ka-m im jādāgihā nibēsišnih dād, \*ēg-am<sup>27</sup> pūrsišn dar-dar judāg ud daxšāgihā-tar kardan cimig-tar sahišt. (17) U-m ō dabir-ē dād. Pūrsišn i pad im paccēn i-tān framūd nibištān, dar-dar harw pūrsišn-ē nibišt ud hangirdēniḡ.

(18) Cand-\*am<sup>28</sup> az dēn āgāhīh u-m pad ōy-ayyādih i az pešēniḡan dastwarīh ud pad xrad sahišn ast, passox i azēr i pūrsišn nibištān kāmēm. (19) Ka ciyōn pūrsēd tis andar nēšt hān rāy juttar, ōwōn saḡēm ciyōn nibēsēm (20) az hān ciyōn hān i amāh āgāhīh ud az hān i pešēniḡan dastwarān kē weh ud dānāg-tar ud axw ud rad ud dastwar i amāh būd hēnd. (\*Ka-z) āgēnēn jud-dādēstānih būd, hān i man <ka-z> wizir i abar im dar ēdōn ciyōn-mān dastwarān i zamānag ud dūdāg pad mādagwār dāšt, nibišt. (21) Pas-iz abar gōwišn i hān dastwar kē any-ēwēnag ast jud-dādēstānih nēšt, ud agar \*ast<sup>29</sup> i-m sahišn i ō šnāsišn i druz rāy ayyāft az mard i dēn-āgāh kē šnāsēd ud dēn<sup>30</sup>-āgāhīhā wirāst, pad spās dārēm. Ud mādayān rāstih i pešēniḡan dastwarān gōwišn, hān cē pad cim andar passox, ud ēd cē pad rōšngarīh wizir nibišt.

(22) Agar ēdōn cim rāy bōwandag \*ayāb<sup>31</sup> wizir rāy rošn nē wēniḡēd, nē parḡast az abōwandagih i dēn wizir pad rōšnihā-nimūdārīh ud drust-cimih, be az abōwandag-nimūdārīh i amāh ō šnāsišn i hān i dēn nigēz, ud parḡūd-az-ōših, ud hān-iz i-mān xwāst āgāhīhā \*padēx,<sup>32</sup> awištāft-menišnih i az āwām sēz-dēnih.

(23) Ōh-iz nūn jud az cihrag-dānišn,<sup>33</sup> baxšāyišnih i wēh-menišn ud mānsar-\*wizārišnih ud nigēzišn i dēn rōšn-tar nimāyišn, i abar dēniḡ warzišn, az dō bun abar-tar az-iš paydāgihēd: ēk az mādayān nimūdārīh i \*asn-xrad i dēn-pešōbāy, ud ēk mādayān-tar \*az<sup>34</sup> nihādāḡ i hufraward pešēniḡan pešōbāyān i mēh-pōryōtkēšan. (24) Az hān (\*kū) ciyōn hān i awēšan nibēgān abar cim-nimāyišnih ud

<sup>15</sup> MSS: BR'.

<sup>16</sup> MSS: zm'n.

<sup>17</sup> MSS: WXT (for \*YT).

<sup>18</sup> MSS: 'pww'yk.

<sup>19</sup> So all MSS; Anklesaria suggests reading t'kyh.

<sup>20</sup> MSS: 'ny'pg'yt.

<sup>21</sup> MSS: wcyšnyk.

<sup>22</sup> MSS: k'syh'.

<sup>23</sup> MSS: 'L.

<sup>24</sup> MSS: hw'y'c.

<sup>25</sup> MSS: ht; TD: nmwt'l (for WMN hl).

<sup>26</sup> MSS: 'L.

<sup>27</sup> MSS: 'YN'm (for 'DYN'm).

<sup>28</sup> MSS: cnd 'Pm.

<sup>29</sup> TD om.

<sup>30</sup> All but TD om.

<sup>31</sup> So Anklesaria. Text: 'yw'c.

<sup>32</sup> MSS: ptyš.

<sup>33</sup> TD: yčšn.

<sup>34</sup> So Anklesaria but the MS tradition offers little support: TD, BK, K<sub>35</sub> om.

zōfrīh ud bārīg-saxwanīh rāy \*ōh-iz<sup>35</sup> bārīg-wēnišnān ud \*dārmag<sup>36</sup>-dānišnān nē \*hudān: pad andak ud frāz-iz padēxih ī saxwan škeft gumān ī kem agāhīh-\*šān<sup>37</sup> šāyēd būd.

(25) Owōn abar cim ī im pursīšnīhā agar ast ī-tān rōšn-tar paydāg ud cimīg-tar abayēd, nazdik-tar rāh ō rāst nigēzišn ī rōšn nē jud ō wizir ī frazānag pēšōbāy ī dēn. Man cand-am dānišn ud ādūgīh hamē ka pūrsēd u-m tuwān pāsoxēnēm. (26) Ka wehān gohrān-ēwēnag \*wistarīd<sup>38</sup> wizirēnīdār wuzurg sūd xwēš: xwēšagān dōstīh ud drōdīh ud ahlāyīh-paymōgīh ud druz-nihānēnīdārīh. Cē-m ašmāh kām kunišn man agāhēnīdān framāyēd.

(27) U-tān nōg-nōg-iz āfrīn. Hān ī-tān xwad andar nāmāg pad bun ud sar-iz nibišt, jud-jud pad xwēš niyābag, spurīg,<sup>39</sup> šād ud burzišnīg frazāmīhād, abāg \*a-brīd<sup>40</sup> paywastagīh ī az bun ō frazām ud wēhm-xākān-iz burzišnīg.

(28) Paccēn ī pursīšn ciyōn pāsox. Ēd kū ka-š tis andar nēst hān cim rāy jut-tar, owōn sahēm ciyōn<sup>41</sup> nibēsihēd.

#### TRANSLATION<sup>42</sup>

Questions on a number of topics which Mihr-Xwaršēd son of Ādur-Māh, and other members of the Good Religion, asked of Manušcihr son of Gōšn-Jam, of immortal soul, and the answers which he gave in detail.

(0) In the name, and with the strength and help, of the Creator Ohrmazd and all the *Yazads*, all spiritual and earthly *Yazads*, and all creatures and creations which Ohrmazd has made courtiers in charge of his creation.

(1) To those of the Good Religion who asked this, for the commendable strength of character and fortitude of nature (the signs of wisdom and proofs of virtue) which are evident from the very desire for wisdom and the preoccupation with good deeds and the questions enquiring into the religion, (2) praise from Manušcihr son of Gōšn-Jam.

<sup>35</sup> MSS: 'Lc.

<sup>36</sup> MSS: 'šmk'.

<sup>37</sup> TD: 'k'syhšn; others: k'sšn.

<sup>38</sup> J: 'wstryt'; others: 'wsbyt'.

<sup>39</sup> TD adds 'š' dyt.

<sup>40</sup> TD: 'hblyt'; others: 'sblyt.

<sup>41</sup> TD: 'cygwmn.

<sup>42</sup> In the translation:

[ ] additions by the translator

( ) phrases occurring in the text which qualify part of the main sentence.

(3) The answer is as follows. The blessings which you sent me in this letter of questions, full of love and with great superiority, as many as you sent and in the same way as you sent them, in full measure and with complete beneficent abundance, so may [blessings] reach all of you, [my] coreligionists, fully according to the need of each one; and may they last long and result in a good outcome.

(4) As to that which you ordered to write concerning the memory of [your] meeting and discussion with me, and that you seek refuge with Mithra, and [about] your love of the Religion; (5) since we are all of us servants of God in the fight against the *Drug*, and fellow-soldiers in that we profess the Good Mazdayasnian Religion, and stand together on the one path, that of righteousness, and strive together for a place in the Last Existence, and are united in our desire for guidance to the Best Existence and our hope for the Renovation—that desire of ours to meet and have discussions together is reasonable, and [has continued for] a year. And [there is]<sup>43</sup> that which the religion teaches, viz that he who is close to the wise and righteous one in meetings and discussions, his is the first and most-increasing merit, and the most greatly enduring.

(6) And the reason for the praise which you ordered to convey to me in your letter, which was more than is proper and of a high order, was mainly love and benevolent regard, and I have reason to be grateful for it. (7) And what you ordered to write about there being no access to anyone but myself for knowledge and instruction, that [you wrote] out of love and in the way of benevolence, but it is more legitimate to have a reasonable regard for actuality<sup>44</sup> and truth, and it is proper to write also to other priests of accomplishment, which they have acquired through great right-mindedness. (8) For in spite of the harsh assault of the *Drug* and the heavy destruction and ill-treatment which have come to the faithful, even now, through God's beneficence, there are *Rads*, *Mōbeds*, *Dastwars* and other followers and leaders of the religion in all regions, and also other *Hērbeds* and *Mōghmards* (who have studied the Sacred Word, recited the Zand and examined the Religious Law, who are learned in the Religion and are demonstrators of reasons and discerning as to good deeds) in several places, and the road to them

<sup>43</sup> A possible alternative would be to regard the word *šNT* in the previous sentence as a very corrupt variant of *YKWNWyt* (*bawēd*), and to read *ud az-iš bawēd hān-iz ī dēn nigēzēd*, "and even that which the Religion teaches refers to it, ..."

<sup>44</sup> Lit. "particularity".

is open for [acquiring] knowledge and cognizance of such religious judgements.

(9) As to that which you ordered to write about your desire and need and pleasant anticipation<sup>45</sup> being superior to mine, that is a sign of your friendship and benevolent regard for me, and may you receive the same measure of friendship and benevolent regard from the *Yazads*.

(10) As to that which you ordered to write in great friendship and excess of praise, [namely] that I am the supreme *Dastwar* of the country, and unique and without peer, and matchless and without equal—even though you wrote thus in friendship I am not happy with such praise. (11) If at this time and in these lands which are known and familiar to us, there is a superior person who is the foremost leader because of his long-enduring faith, then I do not regard it as honourable for myself when this praise of “our uniquely-needed leader” is broadcast about me, and I am not comfortable when those who are greater than I call me leader. For I wish to be praised for that which is in accordance with my status and ... (?)<sup>46</sup> and my limitations; and it seems to me honourable to be humble towards those who are superior to oneself and to one’s equals, and to act as a superior towards one’s inferiors.

(12) As to that which you ordered to write confidently and boldly about writing your questions at length, that<sup>47</sup> showed that I should write my reply as soon as I had free time;<sup>48</sup> and your boldness in your fair request is reasonable. I have an ardent desire to answer in detail and [to do so] without delay,<sup>49</sup> for either dilatoriness or incomplete answers are not suitable. There is pressure because of the harsh assault of the *Drug*, and because of unavoidable and obligatory work there is little free time for an enquiring frame of mind.

(13) As regards the time for answering and the leisure which time allowed us, to which you referred in your letter — apart from your friendly benevolence there is clear evidence there of your awareness of my lack of free time. (14) And I for my part am confident that you wrote your questions in a spirit of religious belief and need for religious judgements. And in the reply the explanations of meaning which are abundantly present in the

religion should be shown in such a way that it is eloquent with wisdom and there is no fear of any kind of further need [to enquire].

(15) And this letter arrived in the month of Tir, at a time<sup>50</sup> when the demands of the tax-collectors (?)<sup>51</sup> were for the amount for three years in a single year, and the complaints of the Zoroastrians were numerous. And it was absolutely necessary to ease this, and it was more imperative for me [to use] my few capabilities to remedy those complaints and that imposition.<sup>52</sup> And because of the affair<sup>53</sup> of delivering and helping *Hāwišts*<sup>54</sup> who were misguided on some points,<sup>55</sup> I did not find [an opportunity] to look at these questions properly until the month of Shahriwar, when I came to Shiraz and I had a little spare time, and I [then] examined these questions.

(16) When I saw this writing [describing] various cases, then it seemed more reasonable to me to divide the question into several chapters and to mark them more clearly. (17) And I gave them to a scribe. The questions which were in that manuscript which you ordered to write, each question has been discussed<sup>56</sup> in a separate chapter and completed.

(18) Whatever knowledge I have of the religion, which I remember from the authority of the ancients and which seems good to [my] reason, I wish to include in<sup>57</sup> the following answers to the questions. (19) If there is nothing different [about the problem] from the way you have asked it,<sup>58</sup> my opinion is such as I write, (20) on the basis of our knowledge and that of the earlier authorities, who were better and wiser, and who were our lords, preceptors and authorities. [When] they disagreed with each other, I have written my judgement on that subject as it was generally held by the *Dastwars* of our time and

<sup>50</sup> The reading *dawr* (MSS: *dwl*) assumes that the word, which is of Arabic origin, was so much part of everyday Persian speech in the late ninth century that its foreign provenance was forgotten.

<sup>51</sup> A guess, based on the context and the basic meaning of *šāhigān*, “those of the king”. MacKenzie (*A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary*, London etc., 1971, p. 79) translates the word as “palace”.

<sup>52</sup> Lit. “disobedience, overstepping”.

<sup>53</sup> Lit. “the remedy”.

<sup>54</sup> Lit. “disciple”, i.e., a practising priest who is not well-versed in the *Zand*, see Kreyenbroek “The *Dādestān i Denig* on Priests”.

<sup>55</sup> Lit. “who planned some pretexts”.

<sup>56</sup> Lit. “written”.

<sup>57</sup> Lit. “write”.

<sup>58</sup> Meaning, presumably, “if the way your question is formulated adequately represents the problem”.

<sup>45</sup> Lit. “thought” or “mentality”.

<sup>46</sup> \*r’yk.

<sup>47</sup> Lit. “that also”.

<sup>48</sup> Lit. “that I write at the time in which there is freedom for me”.

<sup>49</sup> The literal meaning is, approximately, “having delay away from the place”, “absence of delay”.

family. (21) Even so there is no dispute with the pronouncements of that *Dastwar* who thinks differently; if there are [pronouncements] which have won my approval for their awareness of what is right, from a man who knows the religion and is aware of it and who is adorned with religious knowledge, then I [have accepted] them gratefully. But generally I have written the truth of the pronouncements of the earlier *Dastwars* — that which is reasonable as an answer, and that which is obviously the [right] judgement.

(22) In case a reason is not fully, or a judgement not clearly understood, it is not — Heaven forbid — because of any imperfection in the religious judgements as to clear guidance and true judgements, but it should be put down to our imperfect guidance in the matter of <sup>59</sup> awareness of the teachings of the faith, and lack of understanding, and [to the fact that] even that which we wished [to be] abundant in knowledge [shows] hasty thinking because of the opposition of the times.

(23) Thus even now — apart from intuitive knowledge <sup>60</sup> — the clearer interpretation of the gifts of Good Thought, of the exposition of the Sacred Word and of the teachings of the religion (which is an eminently religious work) mostly derives from two sources: first, from the interpretation of essentials by the innate wisdom of the [current] Leader of the Faithful; and then, more importantly, from the foundations [laid down by] the earlier blessed Religious Leaders, the Great Pristine Teachers.

(24) Because, as regards the exposition of reasons, and depth, and subtlety of expression, even people of subtle views and delicate knowledge [of today] are not as well-informed as their [the ancients'] books: in their [the moderns'] lesser or greater exuberance of words there may be a strong hint of their lack of knowledge.

(25) Therefore if there is something about the arguments [given in answer to] these questions which you need to have revealed more clearly and with more arguments, the most direct way to [obtaining] a clear and true exposition is none other than [to seek] a decision from the wise Leader of the Religion. Whenever you ask and I am able I shall always answer according to the best of my knowledge and capability. (26) Now that the faithful are scattered like jewels, one who gives religious decisions has great advantages: the love of his people, and well-being, and wearing the cloak of righteousness, and causing the *Drug* to disappear. Let me be informed what it is your wish that I should do.

(27) Blessings upon you again and again. May that which you yourself wrote in the letter from beginning to end be achieved, in a manner suitable to each one of you, fully, happily, and in a praiseworthy way, with an unbroken link from beginning to end, and worthy of praise in wide realms.

(28) A copy of the questions as well as the answers. If there is nothing about it [i.e., the case] that runs counter to that argument, then it seems right to me as it is written.

<sup>59</sup> Lit. "to".

<sup>60</sup> Lit. "natural knowledge" (*cihrag-dānišn*), which is probably distinct from the "innate wisdom" (*āšn-xrad*) of the Leader of the Faithful which is referred to below.

Philip G. KREYENBROEK  
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#### RÉSUMÉ

L'Introduction du *Dādestān ī Dēnīg* semble appartenir à une tradition épistolographique pehlevie plutôt qu'à la littérature didactique. En outre, elle nous montre quelques aspects de la vie mazdéenne à la fin du IX<sup>e</sup> siècle.

#### SUMMARY

The Introduction to the *Dādestān ī Dēnīg* is interesting because it appears to belong to a Pahlavi epistolographic tradition rather than to didactic literature. Moreover, it affords some fascinating glimpses into the realities of Zoroastrian life in the late ninth century.