An Avesta grammar in comparison with Sanskrit and The Avestan alphabet and its transcription

by

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AN

AVESTA GRAMMAR

IN COMPARISON WITH SANSKRIT

AND

THE

AVESTAN ALPHABET

AND ITS

TRANSCRIPTION

AMS PRESS

NEW YORK
AN

AVESTA GRAMMAR

IN COMPARISON WITH SANSKRIT

BY

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OF COLUMBIA COLLEGE, NEW YORK CITY

PART I

PHONOLOGY, INFLECTION, WORD-FORMATION

WITH AN INTRODUCTION ON THE AVESTA

STUTTGART

W. KOHLHAMMER

1892
Inscribed

to

Professor K. F. Geldner

with gratitude and regard.
PREFACE.

The present Grammar is a work of no pretensions; it is offered as a small contribution toward advancing the Avesta cause. It is written in part fulfilment of a design formed when I first began to study the Avesta and became deeply interested in the true value and importance of that monument of antiquity.

The end for which the book is intended would perhaps have been better accomplished, however, if the work had been a mere grammatical sketch. This was my first design; and it may at another time be carried out. But as the work grew under my hands, it seemed desirable to enlarge it somewhat further, and to embody additional material which for reference might be serviceable to the general philologist, not to the specialist alone. The linguist may thus find in it useful matter and fresh illustrations, especially in the new readings from Geldner's edition of the Avesta texts.

No attempt, on the other hand, has been made to secure absolute completeness. Numerous minor points have been purposely omitted. These may perhaps later be taken up in a more extended work including also the Old Persian by the side of the Avesta and the Sanskrit. Little of im-
portance, however, it is believed, has been overlooked. A fairly symmetrical development has been aimed at, although at times certain less familiar points have received fuller illustration than those that are well-known. This was intentional. They are chiefly matters that had not as yet been sufficiently emphasized elsewhere, or points which are peculiarly individual to the Avesta. They will easily be recognized.

The method of treatment is based throughout on the Sanskrit grammar; a knowledge of Sanskrit is presupposed. At every step, therefore, references have been made to Whitney’s Sanskrit Grammar 2 ed. 1889; and it is a pleasure here to express thanks to the author of that work for the abundant suggestions received from it.

In the Grammar it might have been easier and more practical in many respects to use the Avesta type itself instead of employing a transcription. On the whole, however, it seemed best under the circumstances to transliterate. For general reference at present this method appears more convenient, and is useful in showing grammatical formations. The original type, it is expected, will be employed, as hinted above, in a little book Avesta for Beginners, planned for a date not far distant.

In regard to the transcription here adopted, my views have already been given in The Avestan Alphabet and its Transcription, Stuttgart, 1890. The phonetic and palaeographic character of each of the Avestan letters is there discussed. Reasons are likewise presented for transliterating Av. ū, ū by the ‘turned’ ū, ӯ, so familiar in phonetic works. The composite ӯ (ӯ) for ū (ʊ) is also
there explained (p. 13). The choice of the old Germanic
characters $\mathcal{H}, \mathcal{J}, \mathcal{B}, \mathcal{C}$ for the spirants $\mathcal{b}, \mathcal{u}, \mathcal{b}, \mathcal{c}$, and for
the nasal $u$ (i), as well as the method of transliterating
$\mathcal{m}$ (i+$u$) by $\mathcal{h}$ ($h+u$) is defended (pp. 14, 21). The ‘tag’
(\_\_) appearing in the letters $\mathfrak{f}, \mathfrak{v}, \mathfrak{n}, \mathfrak{h}, \mathfrak{q}$ is an attempt at
systematically representing the ‘derivation stroke’ $\mathcal{L}$ \_ \_ by
which many of the letters palaeographically are formed.
Thus, $\mathfrak{v} \mathfrak{v}$, $\mathfrak{v} \mathfrak{v}$, $\mathfrak{v} \mathfrak{v}$, $\mathfrak{v} \mathfrak{v}$, $\mathfrak{v} \mathfrak{v}$, $\mathfrak{v} \mathfrak{v}$ etc,—the dotted
line denoting the ‘derivation stroke’. See Av. Alphabet
pp. 16—17. The same ‘tag’ appears in the transcription
of $\mathfrak{m}$ (\_+$u$) by $\mathfrak{m}$ (\_+$\mathfrak{m}$). See Av. Alphabet p. 20. In
the case of $\mathfrak{m}$, $\mathfrak{m}$ (beside $\mathfrak{m}$), the ‘subscript’ tag is merely turned
in the opposite direction so as to correspond with the
hooked part (\_\_) of the letter. The threefold differentiation
$\mathfrak{m}$, $\mathfrak{m}$, $\mathfrak{m}$ for $\mathfrak{u}$, $\mathfrak{u}$, $\mathfrak{u}$, is not necessary, however, except in
transliterating a text for purely scientific purposes. In
practise, $\mathfrak{m}$ may everywhere be written. A ‘substitute alphabet’ to be used in popular articles is offered in the same
monograph p. 28. I wish again to repeat my thanks to
the authorities there quoted (Av. Alphabet p. 7) who so
kindly aided me with advice and suggestions in regard to
the transcription adopted.

In reference to the transliteration of Sanskrit, the
familiar system (cf. Whitney, Skt. Gram. § 5) is followed;
but be it observed that for comparison with the Avesta
it seems preferable to transcribe the palatal sibilant by $\mathfrak{s}$
(Whitney $\mathfrak{s}$), the palatal nasal by $\mathfrak{n}$ (Whitney $\mathfrak{n}$), the
guttural nasal by $\mathfrak{w}$ (Whitney $\mathfrak{w}$).

A word may now be added in regard to my mani-
fold indebtedness in the present book. The general gram-
mathematical works from the early contribution of Haug (*Essays*, 1862), through Hovelacque (*Grammaire*, 1868) down to the present date have been on my table. Justi’s *Handbuch der Zendsprache* (1864) was of course consulted continually. Constant reference has been made also to Bartholomae’s *Altiranische Dialekte* (1883) and to his other admirable grammatical contributions. Spiegel's *Vergl. Gram. der altiran. Sprachen* (1882) was often opened, and will be specially acknowledged with others under the Syntax (Part II). C. de Harlez’ *Manuel de l’Avesta* (1882), Darmesteter’s *Études Iraniennes* (1883), W. Geiger’s *Handbuch der Awestasprache* (1879) furnished more than one good suggestion, for which I am much indebted.

Acknowledgment is also due to some special contributions on grammatical subjects. In the Phonology, selections were made from the rich material collected by Hübschmann in *Kuhn’s Zeitschrift* xxiv. p. 323 seq. (1878). My indebtedness to that well-known standard work Brugmann’s *Grundriss der vergl. Gram.* (= *Elements of Compar. Grammar of the Indg. Languages*, English translation by Wright, Conway, Rouse, 1886 seq.) may be noticed from the citations below. Under Declension, frequent reference was made to Horn’s *Nominalflexion im Avesta* (1885) and Lanman’s *Noun-Inflection in the Veda* (1880). Under Verbal Inflection, in addition to Bartholomae’s contributions below cited, acknowledgments are due to other authors to be mentioned in connection with Syntax (Part II). Caland’s *Pronomina im Avesta* (1891) unfortunately came too late for the Inflections, but is cited under the Syntax of the Pronouns. I also regret that the work of Kavasji Edalji Kanga,
A Practical Gram. of the Av. Language (1891) was not received in time. My indebtedness to Whitney’s Skt. Gram. is noticed above. For grammatical training in Sanskrit, moreover, I shall always thank my teachers in America and Germany—Professors Perry, Hopkins, and Fischel.

To my honored instructor and friend, Professor K. F. Geldner of Berlin, I owe, as I have owed, a lasting debt of gratitude. The book was begun when I was a student under his guidance; since I returned to America it has progressed with the aid of his constant encouragement, suggestion, and advice. He has been kind enough, moreover, not only to read the manuscript, as it was sent to Stuttgart, but also to look through the proof-sheets before they came back to me in America. The work I may call a trifling expression of the inspiration he gave me as a student. Let what is good in it count as his; the faults are my own.

It is a pleasure to add my cordial thanks to the publisher, Herrn W. Kohlhammer, for the characteristic interest which, with his usual enterprise, he has taken in the work. Special praise is due to his compositor, Herrn A. Säuberlich, whose accuracy is in general so unfailing that I fear I must say that the misprints which may have escaped notice are probably due to original slips of the author’s pen, and not to inaccuracies on the part of the type-setter—a thing which cannot always be said. I should like also to express to Messrs. Ginn & Co., of Boston and New York, my appreciation of their willing co-operation in advancing the Iranian as well as other branches of the Oriental field in America.
Preface.

The present part of the Grammar (Part I) is confined to the Introduction, Phonology, and Morphology. The prefatory sketch of the Avesta and the Religion of Zoroaster may perhaps prove not without use. The second volume (Part II), a sketch of the Syntax, with a chapter also on Metre, is already half in print, and is shortly to appear. The numbering of sections in the second part will be continued from the present part; the two may therefore be bound together as a single volume if preferred.

With these words and with the suggestion to the student to observe the Hints for using the Grammar, given below, and to consult the Index, the book is offered to the favor of Oriental scholars. Any corrections, suggestions, or criticisms, which may be sent to me, will be cordially appreciated and gladly acknowledged.

A. V. Williams Jackson

October 1891.

Columbia College

New York City.
INTRODUCTION.

Avesta: The Sacred Books of the Parsis.¹

The Avesta as a Sacred Book.

§ 1. The Avesta, or Zend-Avesta, as it is more familiarly, though less accurately called, is the name under which, as a designation, we comprise the bible and prayer-book of the Zoroastrian religion. The Avesta forms to day the Sacred Books of the Parsis or Fire-Worshippers, as they are often termed, a small community living now in India, or still scattered here and there in Persia. The original home of these worshippers and of their holy scriptures was ancient Iran, and the faith they profess was that founded centuries ago by Zoroaster (Zarathushtra), one of the great religious teachers of the East.

§ 2. The Avesta is, therefore, an important work, preserving as it does, the doctrines of this ancient belief and the customs of the earliest days of Persia. It represents the oldest faith of Iran, as the Vedas do of India. The oldest parts date back to a period of time nearly as remote as the Rig-Veda, though its youngest parts are much later. The religion which the Avesta presents was once one of the greatest; it has, moreover, left ineffaceable traces upon the history of the world. Flourishing more than a thousand years before the Christian era, it became the religion of the great Achaemenian kings, Cyrus, Darius, and Xerxes, but its power was weakened by the conquest of Alexander, and many of its sacred books were lost. It revived again during the first centuries of our own era, but was finally broken by the Mohammedans in their victorious invasion. Most of the Zoroastrian worshippers were then compelled through persecution to accept the religion of the Koran; many, however, fled to India for refuge, and took with them what was left of their sacred writ-

¹ This sketch, with additions and some alterations, is reprinted from my article AVESTA, simultaneously appearing in the International Cyclopaedia; for which courtesy I am indebted to the kindness of the Editor, my friend, Professor H. T. Peck, and that of the Publishers, Messrs. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York.
ings. A few of the faithful remained behind in Persia, and, though persecuted, they continued to practise their religion. It is these two scanty peoples, perhaps 80,000 souls in India, and 10,000 in Persia, that have preserved to us the Avesta in the form in which we now have it.

§ 3. The designation Avesta, for the scriptures, is adopted from the term Avistāk, regularly employed in the Pahlavi of the Sassanian time. But it is quite uncertain what the exact meaning and derivation of this word may be. Possibly Phil. Avistāk, like the Skt. Veda, may signify 'wisdom, knowledge, the book of knowledge'. Perhaps, however, it means rather 'the original text, the scripture, the law'. The designation 'Zend-Avesta', though introduced by Anquetil du Perron, as described below, is not an accurate title. It arose by mistake from the inversion of the oft-recurring Pahlavi phrase, Avistāk va Zand ('Avesta and Zend'), or 'the Law and Commentary'. The term Zand in Pahlavi (cf. Av. āsatīti-), as the Parsi priests now rightly comprehend it, properly denotes 'understanding, explanation', and refers to the later version and commentary of the Avesta texts, the paraphrase which is written in the Pahlavi language. The proper designation for the scriptures, therefore, is Avesta; the term Zend (see below) should be understood as the Pahlavi version and commentary.

Allusions to the Avesta; its Discovery and History of Research.

§ 4. Of the religion, manners, and customs of ancient Persia, which the Avesta preserves to us, we had but meagre knowledge until about a century ago. What we did know up to that time was gathered from the more or less scattered and unsatisfactory references of the classic Greek and Latin, from some allusions in Oriental writers, or from the later Persian epic literature. To direct sources, however, we could not then turn. Allusions to the religion of the Magi, the faith of the Avesta, are indeed to be found in the Bible. The wise men from the East who came to worship our Saviour, the babe in Bethlehem, were Magi. Centuries before that date, however, it was Cyrus, a follower of the faith of Zoroaster, whom God called his anointed and his shepherd (Isaiah 45:1,13; 44:28; 2 Chron. 36:22,23; Ezra 1:1—11) and who gave orders that the Jews be returned to Jerusalem from captivity in Babylon. Darius, moreover (Ezra 5:13—17; 6:1—16), the worshipper of Ormazd, favored the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem as decreed by Cyrus. Allusions to the ancient faith of the Persians are perhaps contained in Ezek. 8:16; Is. 45:7,12. See also Apocryphal New Test., The Infancy, 3.1—10.

§ 5. The classical references of Greek and Roman writers to the teachings of Zoroaster, which we can now study in the Avesta itself, may be said to begin with the account of the Persians given by Herodotus
Early Allusions to the Avesta.  xiii

(B.C. 450) in his History 1.131—141. To this account may be added references and allusions, though often preserved only in fragments, by various other writers, including Plutarch ‘On Isis and Osiris’, and Pliny, down to Agathias (A.D. 500).

§ 6. After the Mohammedan conquest of Persia, we have an allusion by the Arabic writer, Masüdi (A.D. 940), who tells of the Avesta of Zerdusht (Zoroaster), and its commentary called Zend, together with a Pasendi explanation. The Abasta (Avesta) is also mentioned several times by Al-Biruni (about A.D. 1000). The later Mohammedan writer, Shahrastani (A.D. 1150), sketches in outline the creed of the Magi of his day. An interesting reference is found in the Syriac-Arabic Lexicon of Bar-Bahal (A.D. 963) to an Avastah, a book of Zardsuht (Zoroaster), as composed in seven tongues, Syriac, Persian, Aramaean, Segestanian, Marvian, Greek, and Hebrew. In an earlier Syriac MS. Commentary on the New Testament (A.D. 852) by ’Isho’dad, Bishop of Hadatha, near Mosul, mention is made of the Abhást inz as having been written by Zar- dusht in twelve different languages. These latter allusions, though late, are all important, as showing the continuity, during ages, of the tradition of such a work as the Avesta, which contains the teachings of Zoroaster, the prophet of Iran. All these allusions, however, it must be remembered, are by foreigners. No direct Iranian sources had been accessible.

§ 7. From this time, moreover, till about the 17th century we find there was little inquiry into the sacred books of the Persians. One of the first series of investigations into the Greek and Roman sources seems then to have been undertaken by a European, Barnabé Brisson, De Persorun Principatu (Paris 1590). The Italian, English, and French travelers in the Orient next added some information as to the religion and customs of the Persians. Among them may be mentioned the works of Pietro della Valle (1620), Henry Lord (1630), Mandelso (1658), Tavernier (1678), Chardin (1721), Du Chinon. Most important, however, was the work of the distinguished Oxford scholar, Thomas Hyde (1700). It was written in Latin, and entitled Historia Religionis veterum Persarum. Hyde resorted chiefly to the later Parsi sources; the original texts he could not use, although an Avesta MS. of the Yasna seems to have been brought to Canterbury as early as 1633. Hyde earnestly appealed to scholars, however, to procure MSS. of the sacred books of the Parsis, and aroused much interest in the subject. In 1723 a copy of the Vendidad Sàdah was procured by an Englishman, George Boucher, from the Parsis in Surat and was deposited as a curiosity in the Bodleian Library at Oxford.

§ 8. No one, however, could read these texts of the Avesta. To a young Frenchman, Anquetil du Perron, belongs the honor of first de-
ciphering them. The history of his labors is interesting and instructive. Happening, in 1754, to see some tracings made from the Oxford MS., and sent to Paris as a specimen, du Perron at once conceived the spirited idea of going to Persia, or India, and obtaining from the priests themselves the knowledge of their sacred books. Though fired with zeal and enthusiasm, he had no means to carry out his plan. He seized the idea of enlisting as a soldier in the troops that were to start for India, and in November, 1754, behind the martial drum and fife this youthful scholar marched out of Paris. The French Government, however, recognizing at once his noble purpose, gave him his discharge from the army and presented him his passage to India. After countless difficulties he reached Surat, and there after innumerable discouragements, and in spite of almost insurmountable obstacles, he succeeded in winning the confidence and favor of the priests, with whom he was able to communicate after he had learned the modern Persian. He gradually induced the priests to impart to him the language of their sacred works, to let him take some of the manuscripts, and even to initiate him into some of the rites and ceremonies of their religion. He stayed among the people for seven years, and then in 1761, he started for his home in Europe. He stopped at Oxford before going directly to Paris, and compared his MSS. with the one in the Bodleian Library, in order to be assured that he had not been imposed upon. The next ten years were devoted to work upon his MSS. and upon a translation, and in 1771, seventeen years from the time he had first marched out of Paris, he gave forth to the world the results of his untiring labors. This was the first translation of the Avesta, or, as he called it, Zend-Avesta (Oeuvrage de Zoroastre, 3 vols., Paris 1771), a picture of the religion and manners contained in the sacred book of the Zoroastrians.

§ 9. The ardent enthusiasm which hailed this discovery and opening to the world of a literature, religion, and philosophy of ancient times was unfortunately soon dampened. Some scholars, like Kant, were disappointed in not finding the philosophical or religious ideas they had hoped to find; while others missed the high literary value they had looked for. They little considered how inaccurate, of necessity, such a first translation must be. Though Anquetil du Perron had indeed learned the language from the priests, still, people did not know that the priestly tradition itself had lost much during the ages of persecution or oblivion into which the religion had fallen. They did not sufficiently take into account that Anquetil was learning one foreign tongue, the Avesta, through another, the modern Persian; nor did they know how little accurate and scientific training du Perron had had. A discussion as to the authenticity
of the work arose. It was suggested that the so-called Zend-Avesta was not the genuine work of Zoroaster, but was a forgery. Foremost among the detractors, it is to be regretted, was the distinguished Orientalist, Sir William Jones. He claimed, in a letter published in French (1771), that Anquetil had been duped, that the Parsis had palmed off upon him a conglomerate of worthless fabrications and absurdities. In England, Sir William Jones was supported by Richardson and Sir John Chardin; in Germany, by Meinert. In France the genuineness of the book was universally accepted, and in one famous German scholar, Kleuker, it found an ardent supporter. He translated Anquetil’s work into German (1776, Riga), for the use of his countrymen, especially the theologians, and he supported the genuineness of those scriptures by classical allusions to the Magi. For nearly fifty years, however, the battle as to authenticity, still raged. Anquetil’s translation, as acquired from the priests, was supposed to be a true standard to judge the Avesta by, and from which to draw arguments; little or no work, unfortunately, was done on the texts themselves. The opinion, however, that the books were a forgery was gradually beginning to grow somewhat less.

§ 10. It was the advance in the study of Sanskrit that finally won the victory for the advocates of the authenticity of the Sacred Books. About 1825, more than fifty years after the appearance of du Perron’s translation, the Avesta texts themselves began to be studied by Sanskrit scholars. The close affinity between the two languages had already been noticed by different scholars; but in 1826, the more exact relation between the Sanskrit and the Avesta was shown by the Danish philologist, Rask, who had travelled in Persia and India, and who had brought back with him to the Copenhagen library many valuable MSS. of the Avesta and of the Pahlavi books. Rask, in a little work on the age and authenticity of the Zend-Language (1826), proved the antiquity of the language, showed it to be distinct from Sanskrit, though closely allied to it, and made some investigation into the alphabet of the texts. About the same time the Avesta was taken up by the French scholar, Eugène Burnouf. Knowing the relation between Sanskrit and Avestan, and taking up the reading of the texts scientifically, he at once found, through his knowledge of Sanskrit, philological inaccuracies in Anquetil’s translation. Anquetil, he saw, must often have misinterpreted his teachers; the tradition itself must often necessarily have been defective. Instead of this untrustworthy French rendering, Burnouf turned to an older Skt. translation of a part of the Avesta. This was made in the 15th century by the Parsi Naryosang, and was based on the Pahlavi version. By means of this Skt. rendering, and by applying his philological learning, he was able to restore
sense to many passages where Anquetil had often made nonsense, and he was thus able to throw a flood of light upon many an obscure point. The employment of Skt., instead of depending upon the priestly traditions and interpretations, was a new step; it introduced a new method. The new discovery and gain of vantage ground practically settled the discussion as to authenticity. The testimony, moreover, of the ancient Persian inscriptions deciphered about this time by Grotefend (1802), Burnouf, Lassen, and by Sir Henry Rawlinson, showed still more, by their contents and language so closely allied to the Avesta, that this work must be genuine. The question was settled. The foundation laid by Burnouf was built upon by such scholars as Bopp, Haug, Windischmann, Westergaard, Roth, Spiegel—the two latter happily still living—and to day by Bartholomae, Darmesteter, de Harlez, Hübschmann, Justi, Mills, and especially Geldner, including some hardly less known names, Parsis among them. These scholars, using partly the Sanskrit key for the interpretation and meaning of words, and partly the Parsi tradition contained in the Pahlavi translation, have now been able to give us a clear idea of the Avesta and its contents as far as the books have come down to us, and we are enabled to see the true importance of these ancient scriptures. Upon minor points of interpretation, of course, there are and there always will be individual differences of opinion. We are now prepared to take up the general division and contents of the Avesta, and to speak of its Pahlavi version.

Contents, Arrangement, Extent, and Character.

§ 11. The Avesta, as we now have it, is but a remnant of a once great literature. It has come down in a more or less fragmentary condition; not even a single manuscript contains all the texts that we now have; whatever we possess has been collected together from various codices. All that survives is commonly classed under the following divisions or books:

1. Yasm, including the Gāthās
2. Vispered
3. Yashts
4. Minor texts, as Nyāshtes, Gāhās etc.
5. Vendidad
6. Fragments, from Hādhokht Nāst etc.

§ 12. In the first five divisions two groups are recognized. The first group (i) comprises the Vendidad, Vespered, and Yasna; these as used in the service of worship are traditionally classed together for liturgical purposes and form the Avesta proper. In the manuscripts, more-
over, these three books themselves appear in two different forms, according as they are accompanied, or not, by a Pahlavi version. If the books are kept separate as three divisions, each part is usually accompanied by a rendering in Pahlavi. On the contrary, however, these three books are not usually recited each as a separate whole, but with the chapters of one book mingled with another for liturgical purposes, on this account the MSS. often present them in their intermingled form, portions of one inserted with the other, and arranged exactly in the order in which they are to be used in the service. In this latter case the Pahlavi translation is omitted, and the collection is called the Vendidad Sādah or 'Vendidad pure' i.e. text without commentary. (ii) The second group comprising the minor prayers and the Yashts which the MSS. often include with these, is called the Khordah Avesta or 'small Avesta'. Of the greater part of the latter there is no Pahlavi rendering. The contents and character of the several divisions, including the fragments, may now be taken up more in detail.

§ 13. (1) The Yasna, 'sacrifice, worship', is the chief liturgical work of the sacred canon. It consists principally of ascriptions of praise and prayer, and in it are inserted the Gāthās, or 'hymns', verses from the sermons of Zoroaster, which are the oldest and most sacred part of the Avesta. The Yasna (Skt. yajñā) comprises 72 chapters, called Hā, Hāiti. These are the texts recited by the priests at the ritual ceremony of the Yasna (Izashne). The book falls into three nearly equal divisions. (a) The first part (chap. 1—27) begins with an invocation of the god, Ormazd, and the other divinities of the religion; it gives texts for the consecration of the holy water, zooster, and the barema, or bundle of sacred twigs, for the preparation and dedication of the Haoma, haoma, the juice of a certain plant — the Indian Soma — which was drunk by the priests as a sacred rite, and for the offering of blessed cakes, as well as meat-offering, which likewise were partaken of by the priests. Interspersed through this portion, however, are a few chapters that deal only indirectly with the ritual; these are Ys. 12, the later Zoroastrian creed, and Ys. 19—21, catechetical portions.— (b) Then follow the Gāthās lit. 'songs', 'psalms' (chap. 28—53), metrical selections or verses containing the teachings, exhortations, and revelations of Zoroaster. The prophet exhorts men to eschew evil and choose the good, the kingdom of light rather than that of darkness. These Gāthās are written in meter, and their language is more archaic and somewhat different from that used elsewhere in the Avesta. The Gāthās, strictly speaking, are five in number; they are arranged according to meters, and are named after the opening words, Ahunavaiti, Ushtavaiti etc. The Gāthās comprise 17 hymns (Ys. 28—34; 43—46; 47—50; 51—53), and,
like the Psalms, they must later have been chanted during the service. They seem originally to have been the texts or metrical headings from which Zoroaster, like the later Buddha, preached. In their midst (chap. 35—42) is inserted the so-called Yasna of the Seven Chapters (Yasna Istapanghātī). This is written in prose, and consists of a number of prayers and ascriptions of praise to Ahura Mazda, or Ormazd, to the archangels, the souls of the righteous, the fire, the waters, and the earth. Though next in antiquity to the Gāthās, and in archaic language, the Haptanghaiti represents a somewhat later and more developed form of the religion, than that which in the Gāthās proper was just beginning. Under the Gāthās also are included three or four specially sacred verses or formulas. These are the Ahuna Vairya or Honovar (Ys. 27.13), Ashem Vohu (Ys. 27.14), Aryan Īshyo (Ys. 54.1) and also the Yenghe Hātām (Ys. 4.26), so called from their first words, like the Pater Noster, Gloria Patri, etc., to which in a measure they answer.—(c) The third part (chap. 52, 55—72) or the ‘latter Yasna’ (apārā yasna) consists chiefly of praises and offerings of thanksgiving to different divinities.

§ 14. (a) The Vispered (Av. viśpē ratavō) consists of additions to portions of the Yasna which it resembles in language and in form. It comprises 24 chapters (called Kārde), and it is about a seventh as long as the Yasna. In the ritual the chapters of the Vispered are inserted among those of the Yasna. It contains invocations and offerings of homage to ‘all the lords’ (viśpē ratavō). Hence the name Vispered.

§ 15. (b) The Yashts (Av. yē̄ti ‘worship by praise’) consist of 21 hymns of praise and adorations of the divinities or angels, Yasatas (Isads), of the religion. The chief Yashts are those in praise of Ardvi-Sura, the goddess of waters (Yt. 5), the star Tishtrya (Yt. 8), the angel Mithra, or divinity of truth (Yt. 10), the Fravashis, or departed souls of the righteous (Yt. 13), the genius of victory, Verethragna (Yt. 14), and of the Kingly Glory (Yt. 15). The Yashts are written mainly in meter, they have poetical merit, and contain much mythological and historical matter that may be illustrated by Firdausi’s later Persian epic, the Shāh Nāmāh.

§ 16. (c) The minor texts, Nyāshes, Gāhās, Straitokhs, Afrīngāns, consist of brief prayers, praises, or blessings to be recited daily or on special occasions.

§ 17. (d) The Yasna, or ‘law against the daevas, or demons’ (viśdā̄na dāna), is a priestly code in 22 chapters (called Fargard), corresponding to the Pentateuch in our Bible. Its parts vary greatly in time and in style of composition. Much of it must be late. The first chapter (Farg. 1) is a sort of an Avestan Genesis, a dualistic account of creation.
Chap. 2 sketches the legend of Yima, the golden age, and the coming of a destructive winter, an Iranian flood. Chap. 3 teaches, among other things, the blessings of agriculture; Chap. 4 contains legal matter — breaches of contract, assaults, punishments; Chap. 5—12 relate mainly to the impurity from the dead; Chap. 13—15 deal chiefly with the treatment of the dog; Chap. 16—17, and partly 18, are devoted to purification from several sorts of uncleanness. In Chap. 19 is found the temptation of Zoroaster, and the revelation; Chap. 20—22 are chiefly of medical character. In the ritual, the chapters of the Vendidad are inserted among the Gathas.

§ 18. (6) Besides the above books there are a number of fragments, one or two among them from the Hadhokht Nask. There are also quotations or passages from missing Nasks, likewise glosses and glossaries. Here belong pieces from the Nirangistan, Agemadattca, Zend-Pahlavi Glossary, and some other fragments. These are all written in the Avesta language, and are parts of a once great literature. Under the Zoroastrian religious literature, moreover, though not written in Avesta, must also be included the works in Pahlavi, many of which are translations from the Avesta, or contain old matter from the original scriptures.

§ 19. From the above contents, it will be seen that our present Avesta is rather a Prayer-Book than a Bible. The Vendidad, Vished, and Yasna were gathered together by the priests for liturgical purposes. It was the duty of the priests to recite the whole of these sacred writings every day, in order to preserve their own purity, and be able to perform the rites of purification, or give remission of sins to others. The solemn recital of the Vendidad, Vished, and Yasna at the sacrifice might be compared with our church worship. The selections from the Vendidad would correspond to the Pentateuch when read; the preparation, consecration, and presentation of the holy water, the Haoma-juice, and the meat-offering, described in the Yasna and Vished would answer to our communion service; the metrical parts of the Yasna would be hymns; the intoning of the Gathas would somewhat resemble the lesson and the Gospel, or even the sermon. In the Khordah Avesta, the great Yashts might perhaps be comparable to some of the more epic parts of our Bible; but as they are devoted each to some divinity and preserve much of the old mythology, they really have hardly a parallel, even in the apocryphal books.

§ 20. Such, in brief outline, is the contents of the books known to-day as the Avesta; but, as implied above, this is but a remnant of a literature once vastly greater in extent. This we can judge both from internal and from historical evidence. The character of the work itself in its present form, sufficiently shows that it is a compilation from various
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sources. This is further supported by the authority of history, if the Parsi tradition, going back to the time of the Sassanidæ, be trustworthy. Pliny (Hist. Nat. 30.1.2) tells of 2,000,000 verses composed by Zoroaster. The Arab historian, Tabari, describes the writings of Zoroaster as committed to 12,000 cowhides ( parchments); other Arabic references by Masudi, and Syriac allusions to an Avesta, which must have been extensive, have been noted above § 6. The Parsi tradition on the subject is contained in the Rivāyats, and in a Pahlavi book, the Dinkard. The Dinkard (Bk. 3) describes two complete copies of the Avesta. These each comprised 21 Nasks, or Nosks (books). The one deposited in the archives at Persepolis, as the Arda Viraf says, perished in the flames when Alexander burned the palace in his invasion of Iran. The other copy, it is implied, was in some way destroyed by the Greeks. From that time the scriptures, like the religion under the Graeco-Parthian sway, lived on, partly in scattered writings and partly in the memories of the priests, for nearly 500 years.

§ 21. The first attempt again to collect these writings seems to have been begun under the reign of the last Arsacidæ, just preceding the Sassanian dynasty. Pahlavi tradition preserved in a proclamation of King Khusr Anoshirvan (6th cent. A. D.), says it was under King Valkhash, probably Vologeses I., the contemporary of Nero, that the collection was begun of the sacred writings as far as they had escaped the ravages of Alexander, or were preserved by oral tradition. Valkhash was among the last of the Arsacidæ. The Sassanian dynasty (A. D. 226) next came to the throne. This house were genuine Zoroastrians and warm upholders of the faith, and they brought back the old religion and raised it to a height it had hardly attained even in its palmiest days. The first Sassanian monarchs, Artakhshir Pāpakān (Ardeshir Bābagān, A. D. 226—240) and his son Shahpuhar I. (A. D. 240—270), eagerly continued the gathering of the religious writings, and the Avesta again became the sacred book of Iran. Under Shahpuhar II. (A. D. 309—380) the final revision of the Avesta texts was made by Atur-pāť Māraspand, and then the king proclaimed these as canonical, and fixed the number of Nasks or books.

§ 22. Of these Nasks, 21 were counted, and a description of them, as noted, is found in the Rivāyats, and in the Dinkard; each received a name corresponding to one of the twenty-one words in the Ahuna-Vairya (Hovnun), the most sacred prayer of the Parsis. Each of these Nasks contained both Avesta and Zend, i.e. original scripture and commentary. This tradition is too important to be idly rejected. Its contents give an idea of what may have been the original extent and scope of the Avesta. The subjects said to have been treated in the 21 Nasks may practically be described in brief, as follows: Nask 1 (twenty-two sections), on virtue
and piety; 2 (likewise twenty-two sections), religious observance; 3 (twenty-one sections), the Mazdayasian religion and its teachings; 4 (thirty-two sections), this world and the next, the resurrection and the judgment; 5 (thirty-five sections), astronomy; 6 (twenty-two sections), ritual performances and the merit accruing; 7 (fifty sections before Alexander, thirteen then remaining), chiefly political and social in its nature; 8 (sixty sections before Alexander, twelve after remaining), legal; 9 (sixty sections before Alexander, fifteen later preserved), religion and its practical relations to man; 10 (sixty sections before Alexander, only ten afterwards surviving), king Gushtasp and his reign, Zoroaster’s influence; 11 (twenty-two sections originally, six preserved after Alexander), religion and its practical relations to man; 12 (twenty-two sections), physical truths and spiritual regeneration; 13 (sixty sections), virtuous actions, and a sketch of Zoroaster’s infancy; 14 (seventeen sections), on Ormazd and the Archangels; 15 (fifty-four sections), justice in business and in weights and measures, the path of righteousness; 16 (sixty-five sections), on next-of-kin marriage, a tenet of the faith; 17 (sixty-four sections), future punishments, astrology; 18 (fifty-two sections), justice in exercising authority, on the resurrection, and on the annihilation of evil; 19, the Videvdâd, or Vendidâd (twenty-two sections, still remaining), on pollution and its purification; 20 (thirty sections), on goodness; 21 (thirty-three sections), praise of Ormazd and the Archangels.

§ 23. During the five centuries after the ravages of Alexander much, doubtless, had been lost, much forgotten. The Parsi tradition itself acknowledges this when it says above, for example, that the seventh Nask consisted originally of 50 sections, but only 13 remained ‘after the accursed Iskander (Alexander)’. So says the Dinkard and so the Rivâyats. Like statements of loss are made of the eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh Nasks. The loss in the five centuries from the invasion of Alexander, however, till the time of the Sassanian dynasty, was but small in comparison with the decay that overtook the scriptures from the Sassanian times till our day. The Mohammedan invasion in the seventh century of our era, and the inroad made by the Koran proved far more destructive. The persecuted people lost or neglected many portions of their sacred scriptures. Of the twenty-one Nasks that were recognized in Sassanian times as surviving from the original Avesta, only one single Nask, the nineteenth—the Vendidâd—has come down to us in its full form. Even this shows evidence of having been patched up and pieced together. We can furthermore probably identify parts of our present Yasna and Vishederd with the Staat Yasht (stōta yēmya) or Yasht (yēmya), as it is also called. The two fragments Yt. 21 and 22 (as printed in Westergaard’s edition) and Yt. 11, in its first form, are recognized in the MSS. as taken
from the 20th, or Hādhokht Nāsk. The Nirangistān, a Pahlavi work, contains extensive Avestan quotations, which are believed to have been taken from the Hūspāram, or 17th Nāsk. Numerous quotations in Pahlavi works contain translations from old Avestan passages. The Pahlavi work, Shāyaštā-Shāyast, quotes briefly from no less than thirteen of the lost Nāsks; the Bundahish and other Pahlavi works give translations of selections, the original Avesta text of which is lost. Grouping together all the Avesta texts, we may roughly calculate that about two-thirds of the total scriptures have disappeared since Sassanian times.

§ 24. The present form of the Avesta belongs to the Sassanian period. Internal evidence shows that it is made up of parts most varied in age and character. This bears witness to the statement that during that period the texts, as far as they had survived the ravages of Alexander, and defied the corrupting influence of time, were gathered together, compiled, and edited. According to the record of Khusro Anoshirvān (A. D. 531—579), referred to above, King Vakhash, the first compiler of the Avesta, ordered that all the writings which might have survived should be searched for, and that all the priests who preserved the traditions orally should contribute their share toward restoring the original Avesta. The texts as collected were re-edited under successive Sassanian rulers, until, under Shahpuhr II. (A. D. 309—379) the final redaction was made by his prime minister, Atur-pāt Māraspend. It is manifest that the editors used the old texts as far as possible; sometimes they patched up defective parts by inserting other texts; occasionally they may have added or composed passages to join these, or to complete some missing portion. The character of the texts, when critically studied, shows that some such method must have been adopted.

§ 25. Parts of the Avesta, therefore, may differ considerably from each other in regard to age. In determining this the text criticism by means of metrical restoration is most instructive. Almost all the oldest portions of the texts are found to be metrical; the later, or inserted portions, are as a rule, but not always, written in prose. The grammatical test also is useful; the youngest portions generally show a decay of clear grammatical knowledge. The metrical Gāthās in this respect are wonderfully pure. They are, of course, in their form the oldest portion of the text, dating from Zoroaster himself. The longer Yashts and metrical portions of the Yasna contain much that is very old and derived doubtless from the ancient faith of Iran; but in their form and in general composition, they are probably some centuries later than the Gāthās. The Vendidad is in this regard most incongruous. Some parts of it are doubtless of great antiquity, though corrupted in form; other parts, like younger
portions also of the Yashts, may be quite late. The same is true of
formulaic passages throughout the whole of the Avesta, and some of the
ceremonial or ritual selections in the Vispered and Nyāishes, etc. Roughly
speaking, the chronological order of the texts would be somewhat as follows:

i. Gāthās (Ys. 28—53) and the sacred formulas Ys. 27, 13, 14,
Ys. 54, including also

ii. Yasna Hapatanghāti (Ys. 35—43) and some other compositions,
like Ys. 12, 58, 426, in the Gāthā dialect.

iii. The metrical Yasna and Yashts, as Ys. 9, 10, 11, 57, 62, 65;
Yt. 5, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19; portions of Vd. 2, 3, 4, 5, 18, 19,
and scattered verses in the Vispered, Nyāishes, Afringāns, etc.

iv. The remaining prose portions of the Avesta.

In the latter case it is generally, but not always, easy to discover by the
style and language, where old material failed and the hand of the redactor
came in with stupid or prosaic additions.

§ 26. Considerable portions, therefore, of our present Avesta, espe-
cially the Gāthās, we may regard as coming directly from Zoroaster him-
self; still, additions from time to time must have been made to the sacred
canon from his day on till the invasion of Alexander. The so-called copy
of the Zoroastrian Bible which it is claimed was destroyed by that invader,
doubtless contained much that was not directly from the founder of the
faith, but was composed by his disciples and later followers. The Parsis,
however, generally regard the whole work as coming directly from
Zoroaster; this is a claim that the Avesta itself hardly makes. The
Gāthās, however, undoubtedly came directly from the prophet; the Avesta
itself always speaks of them as 'holy' and especially calls them the 'five
Gāthās of Zoroaster'. We may fairly regard many other portions of the
Avesta as direct elaborations of the great teacher's doctrines, just as the
Evangelists have elaborated for us portions of the teachings of our Lord.

§ 27. In regard to the locality in which we are to seek the source
of the Avesta and the cradle of the religion, opinions have been divided.
Some scholars would place it in the West, in Media; the majority, how-
ever, prefer to look to the East of Iran, to Bactria. Both views probably
have right on their side, for perhaps we shall not be amiss in regarding
the Avesta as coming partly from the East, and partly from the West.
The scene of most of it doubtless does belong in the East; it was there
that Zoroaster preached; but the sacred literature that grew up about the
Gāthās made its way, along with the religion to the West, toward Media
and Persia. Undoubtedly some texts, therefore, may well have been com-
posed also in Media. The question is connected also with that of Zo-
roaster's home which may originally have been in the West. On the native place of Zoroaster, see Jackson in *Amer. Or. Society's Journal*, May 1891 pp. 222 seq. The language itself of the texts, as used in the church, became a religious language, precisely, as did Latin, and therefore was not confined to any place or time. We may regard the Avesta as having been worked upon from Zoroaster's day down to the time of the Sassanian redaction.

**Religion of the Avesta.**

§ 28. The religion contained in the Avesta is best called Zoroastranism, a name that gives due honor to its founder and which is thus parallel with Christianity, Buddhism, Mohammedanism. Other designations are sometimes employed. It has often been termed Mazdaism, from its supreme god; or again Magism, from the Magi priests; sometimes we hear it styled Fire-Worship, or even Dualism, from certain of its characteristic features. The designation Parsiism, from the name of its modern followers, is occasionally applied.

§ 29. Beyond our own Bible, the sacred books perhaps of hardly any religion contain so clear a grasp of the ideas of right and wrong, or present so pure, so exalted a view of the coming of a Saviour, a resurrection and judgment, the future rewards and punishments for the immortal soul, and of the life eternal, as does the Avesta, the book of the scriptures of ancient Iran.

§ 30. In Zoroastranism, however, as in other religions, we recognize a development. In the older stage of the Gāthās, we have the faith in its purity as taught by Zoroaster (Zarathushtra) himself, more than a thousand years perhaps before our Lord. But later, and even before the invasion of Alexander had weakened the power of the religion, we find changes creeping in. There was a tendency, for example, to restore many of the elements of the primitive faith of Iran, which Zoroaster had thrown into the background. Traces of the different stages are plainly to be recognized in the Avesta.

§ 31. The most striking feature of Zoroaster's faith, as taught in the Gāthās, is the doctrine of Dualism. There are two principles, the good and the evil, which pervade the world. All nature is divided between them. These principles are primeval. Good and evil have existed from the beginning of the world. Ahura Mazda, the Lord of Wisdom (the later Persian Ormazd) is Zoroaster's god; Angra Mainyu, or the Spiritual Enemy (the later Persian Ahriman) is the devil. The evil spirit is also called Druj 'Deceit, Satan'. The good spirit and the evil are in eternal conflict. The good, Zoroaster teaches, however, will ultimately
Religion of the Avesta.—Dualism.

triumph. Man, a free agent, will bring the victory by choosing right and increasing the power of good. Evil shall be banished from the world. This will be the coming of the 'kingdom' or 'the good kingdom'—vohu 𐏁𐏇𐏃—as it is called. To the right choice Zoroaster exhorts his people. The question whence Zoroaster derived his idea of dualism, and how far he was a reformer, will not here be entered into.

§ 32. According to the prophet's teaching, Ahura Mazda, the god of good, is not without the aid of ministering angels. These are called Amesha Spentas, 'Immortal Holy Ones', the later Persian Amshaspands. They correspond in a measure to our idea of Archangels. They are six in number and constitute, with Ahura Mazda, the heavenly host. Their names are personifications of abstractions or virtues, Righteousness, Goodness, or the like. The seven-fold group, or celestial council, is as follows.

Ahura Mazda

aided by
Vohu Manah
Asha Vahishta
Khshathra Vairya
Spenta Armaiti
Haurvatat
Ameretat
also
Saosha.

These abstractions or personifications may be noticed more in detail.

§ 33. Vohu Manah (lit. 'good mind', Plutarch σοφος) is the personification of Ahura Mazda's good spirit working in man and uniting him with God. In the later development of the religion, this divinity was specialized into the good mind or kindliness that is shown toward cattle. He thus became the guardian genius of the flocks.

§ 34. Asha Vahishta (lit. 'best righteousness, Plutarch ἀληθις) is the next divinity in the celestial group and is the personification of right (Skt. rta), the divine order that pervades the world. In the heavenly court Asha stands almost in the relation of prime minister to Ormazd. To live 'according to Asha' (Right, or the Law of Righteousness e.g. Ys. 31.2) is a frequent phrase in the Avesta. The attribute Ashavan is the regular designation of 'the righteous', as opposed to Dragvant 'the wicked', or one that belongs to Satan or the Druj. In later times Asha Vahishta came to preside as guardian genius over the fire, a symbol of perfect purity.
§ 35. Khshathra Vairya or Vohu Khshathra (lit. ‘the wished-for kingdom, the good kingdom’, Plutarch σαυρωμα) is the personification of Ahura Mazda’s good rule, might, majesty, dominion, and power, the Kingdom which Zoroaster hopes to see come on earth. The establishment of this kingdom is to be the annihilation of evil. In later times, Khshathra Vairya, as a divinity, came to preside over metals. The symbolic connection may have been suggested by the fact that the coming of the Kingdom (khshathra) was presumed to be accompanied by a flood of molten metal, the fire that should punish and purge the wicked, and which should purify the world. The metals thus became emblematic of Khshathra.

§ 36. Spenta Armaiti (lit. ‘holy harmony, humility’, Plutarch σωθικα) is the harmony, peace, and concord that should rule among men. She is represented as a female divinity; the earth is in her special charge. She plays an important part at the resurrection. The earth is to give up its dead.

§ 37. Haurvatat (Plutarch πλοδης) literally means ‘wholeness, completeness, the saving health, the perfection’, toward which all should strive, in short ‘Salvation’, with which word it is etymologically cognate. This divinity is always mentioned in connection with Ameretat. In the later religion, Haurvatat came to preside as guardian angel over the health-giving waters.

§ 38. Ameretat literally means ‘immortality’, and is always joined with Haurvatat. In later Zoroastrianism, Ameretat presides over the trees. The pair of Haurvatat and Ameretat together seem to symbolize the waters of health and the tree of life.

§ 39. To the number of the celestial council also is to be added the divinity Sraosha (lit. ‘obedience’). This genius completes the mystic number seven when Ahura Mazda is excepted from the list (cf. also Ys. 57.12). Sraosha is the angel of religious obedience, the priest god, the personification of the divine service that protects man from evil.

§ 40. Beside the above deities in the Gathas, mention is also made of Geush Tashan, the creator of the cow, and Geush Urvan, the personified soul of the kine. We sometimes also find Spenta Mainyu, the Holy Spirit of Ormazd, the will of God, represented practically as a distinct personage. Lastly, the Fire, Astar, is personified in the Gathas as one of God’s ministering servants, and is a sacred emblem of the faith.

§ 41. Such is the heavenly hierarchy, and such the faith of Ormazd in which Zarathushtra exhorts the people to believe. The faithful are
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called A§havans 'righteous', or later more often Mazdayaevians i.e. 'worshippers of Mazdā'. This is the true religion in contradistinction to the false. The false religion is the worship of the Daevas 'demons' (Av. daeva opposed to Skt. deva 'god'). The Daeva-worshippers are misguided and live in error. They are the wicked Dregvants (lit. 'belonging to the Druj, Satan'), 'the children of the wicked one' (St. Matt. xiii. 38—43). The two religions themselves are a part of the dualism.

§ 42. In juxtaposition to Ahura Mazda, Zoroaster sets the fiend Druj 'Deceit, Satan' or Angra Mainyu (Ys. 45.2). The spirit of evil in co-existent withOrmazd (Ys. 30.3), but is less clearly pictured in the Gāthās. In later times, to carry out the symmetry of dualism, Angra Mainyu is accompanied by a number of Arch-Fiends, in opposition to the Archangels of Ormazd. The number of the infernal group is not sharply defined, but the chief members are

Angra Mainyu
aided by
Aka Manah
Indra
Saurva
Taro-maiti
Tauru
Zairica
also
Aeshma.

Each is the opponent of a heavenly rival. Aka Manah or 'Evil Mind' is the antagonist of Vohu Manah; Taro-maiti, the demon of 'Presumption', is the opponent of Armaítī or humility; Aeshma, 'Fury, Wrath', the foe of Sraoeha or holy obedience. The antagonism in the case of the others is less marked, and the connection somewhat more mechanical.

§ 43. In the final struggle between the two bands, the powers of light and the powers of darkness, the good eventually shall triumph. That was an ethical idea which Zoroaster inculcated. But the warfare that rages in the world between the two empires and between the true religion and the false, the belief in Mazda and the Daeva-worship, pervades also the soul of man and leaves the way uncertain. Yet on his choice the ultimate triumph of right or of wrong depends. Each evil deed which man commits, increases the power of evil (e.g. Ys. 31.15); each good deed he does, brings nearer the kingdom of good. As Ahura Mazda's creature, man should choose the right. Zoroaster's mission, as shown in the Gāthās (e.g. Ys. 31.2 et al.), is to guide man's choice. A summary of the prophet's moral
and ethical teachings may best be given in the triad, so familiar later, 'good thoughts, good words, good deeds'. This forms the pith of the whole teaching. Purity alike of body and soul, and the choice of the good Mazda-religion rather than the wicked Daeva-worship, are inculcated. Zoroaster enjoins also the care of useful animals, especially the cow, and commends the good deeds of husbandry. He is the teacher of a higher and nobler civilization, as may be judged from the Avesta creed Ys. 12.1 seq.

§ 44. Man's actions, according to Zoroaster, are all recorded in Ormazd's sight as in a life-book (e.g. Ys. 31.13,14, Ys. 32.6). By his own actions man shall be judged, and rewarded or punished. The doctrine of a future life, the coming of the Kingdom, the end of the world, forms a striking feature in the teachings of the Avesta. This is the tone that Zoroaster himself constantly strikes in the Gāthās. This very doctrine, and a belief also in a resurrection of the body characterises the entire Persian faith. The resurrection is to be followed by a general judgment when evil shall be destroyed from the world. This general division and new dispensation is called the Vidātī (vi + Vādā ‘dis-pose’).

§ 45. The views in regard to a future life, though incomplete in the Gāthās, are carried out in the Younger Avesta, and are fully given in the Pahlavi books. That the belief in a resurrection and a life hereafter was common among the Persians, some centuries before our Saviour, we have evidence in the early Greek writers, such as Theopompos, Herodotus, etc. The belief in an immediate judgment of the soul after death, the weighing in the balance, the leading of the soul across the Cinvat Bridge and through the mansions of paradise to bliss, or through the grades of hell to torment, or again in special cases to an intermediate state to await the final judgment—are all to be recognized in the Zoroastrian books and have their prototypes in the Gāthās.

§ 46. In the Yasna of the Seven Chapters, though not much later than the Gāthās, we find in some respects a slight descent from the lofty level on which the religion had been placed by its founder. There is a tendency to revive ancient ideas and forms from the old worship, in which nature had played a prominent part. The elements, earth, air, fire, and water, receive adoration; the Fravashis, or guardian angels of the righteous, are worshipped and praised together with Ahura Mazda and the Amesha Spentas. The deity Haoma, the divinity of the plant which produced the intoxicating Soma drink, again finds place in the religious rites.

§ 47. In the Younger Avesta, especially in the Yashts, we find still further restorations or innovations. The gods of the ancient mytho-
logy, like Mithra, Verethraghna, once more appear in honor by the side of the supreme deity; the divinities of the stars, moon, and sun have their share of pious worship. In the later parts of the Yasna, the sacrifice is developed into a somewhat elaborate ritual. The Zoroaster presented in certain portions of the Vendidad, moreover, is evidently no longer a living, moving personage as in the Gathas; he has become a shadowy figure, around whom time has thrown the aureola of the saint. These passages differ widely from the old hymns; they show unmistakeable signs of lateness. They present a religion codified in the hands of the priests; superstitious beliefs and practices have found their way into the faith; intricate purifications in particular are enjoined to remove or to avoid the impurity arising from contact with the dead. The spirit of the Gathas is gone. It is only here and there that passages in late texts are old and have the genuine Zoroastrian ring. They must not be overlooked. In general, a distinction must be drawn between what is old and what is young. We must recall, as above (§ 27), that the Avesta was probably worked upon from Zoroaster's own day down to the time of the Sassanian redaction.

The Pahlavi Version of the Avesta.

§ 48. To the period of the Sassanian editing of the texts belongs the Pahlavi translation and interpretation of the Avesta. At the date when the texts were compiled and edited (§ 21), the general knowledge of the Avesta and the understanding of the sacred texts was far from perfect. The preparation of a translation or version became necessary. Accordingly, the great body of the texts was rendered into Pahlavi, the language used in Persia at the time of the Arsacidae and Sassanidae. The Pahlavi version and interpretation of the entire Yasna, Vispered, and Vendidad, with some portions of the other texts, has been preserved. We have not as yet a thorough enough understanding of this version, as the Pahlavi question is still a vexed one; but as our knowledge of this translation increases, we see more and more its importance. Owing to a somewhat imperfect knowledge of the Avesta texts at the time when the version was made, and owing to the unskilfull and peculiar manner in which the Pahlavi translation is made, this version abounds in numerous errors and inaccuracies. Its renderings, however, are often of the greatest value in interpreting allusions, particularly also in giving hints for the meanings of obscure words, and in such matters it is many times our best and only guide. When more fully understood and properly used in connection with the 'comparative method', referring to the Sanskrit in interpreting the sacred texts, the 'traditional method' or native explanation is destined to win great results. The 'traditional' and the 'comparative' methods must go hand in hand.
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Manuscripts of the Avesta.

§ 49. The manuscripts of the Avesta are quite numerous. Some of our specimens were copied down over five hundred years ago. They are written on parchment. The oldest was copied about the middle of the 13th century. From that date onward we have a considerable number of codices still extant. They come to us from India and from Yezd and Kirman in Persia. A number of the manuscripts are deposited in the libraries at Copenhagen, Oxford, London, Paris, Munich. The Parsi priests, especially the Dasturs, Dr. Jamaspji Minocheherji and also Peshotanji Behramji, have shown princely generosity in aiding Western scholars in editing texts by putting valuable MSS. in their possession. It is thus that the new edition of the Avesta texts by Professor Geldner of Berlin, is able to be presented in so critical a manner. No codex is complete in containing all the texts (§ 11). The different MSS. themselves, moreover, show certain variations in reading; but these chiefly affect the form and construction of single words, rather than entire passages and the sense. As a rule, the older the MS. is, the better is its grammar; and the later, the more faulty. Notable exceptions, however, must be made, especially in favor of some later MSS. from Persia.

Importance of the Avesta.

§ 50. The importance of the Avesta, as stated above (§ 2), lies not alone in the field of philology, ethnology and early literature, but especially also is it of importance from the standpoint of comparative religion. Resemblances to Christianity in its teachings become significant when we consider the close contact between the Jews and the Persians during the Babylonian captivity. These are beginning more and more to attract the attention of students of the Bible.

Language of the Avesta.

Grammatical Summary.

§ 51. The language in which the Avesta is written belongs to the Iranian branch of the Indo-Germanic tongues. With the Ancient Persian of the inscriptions it makes up the Old Iranian division. The later Iranian languages, New Persian, Kurdish, Afghan, Ossetish, Baluchi, Ghalcha, and some minor modern dialects, complete the younger division. The intervening Pahlavi and Pāzand, or Parsi, do not quite complete the link between the divisions. The extent of its relationship with the Armenian is not yet defined with sufficient exactness. On the positive kinship between the language of the Avesta and Sanskrit, see below § 55.
§ 52. The language in which the Avesta is written may best be termed Avesta or Avestian. The designation Avesta for the language, as well as the book, is in keeping with the Pahlavi Avistāk, which is used both of the tongue and of the scriptures. The term Avestian, both for the language and as an adjective, is preferred by some scholars, in order to distinguish the speech from the work itself. This is sometimes found very convenient. The term Zend for the language, as noted above (§ 3), is a misnomer. The designation Old Bactrian, occasionally used for the tongue, has little to recommend it.

§ 53. The alphabet in which the Avesta is written is far younger than the language it presents. The characters are derived from the Sassanian Pahlavi, which was used to write down the oral tradition when the texts were collected and edited under the dynasty of the Sassanidēm. The writing is read from right to left. What the original Avestan script was we do not know.

§ 54. Two dialects may be recognized in the Avesta: one the ‘Gāthā dialect’ or the language of the oldest parts, the Gāthās, or metrical sermons of Zoroaster; the other ‘Younger Avesta’ or the ‘classical dialect’. This latter is the language of the great body of the Avesta. The Gāthā dialect is more archaic, standing in the relation of the Vedic to the classical Sanskrit, or the Homeric Greek to the Attic. Possibly the Gāthā language may owe some of its peculiarities noticed below, also to an original difference of locality. The Gāthā dialect was the speech of Zoroaster and his followers. Its grammatical structure is remarkably pure. The younger Avesta, but only in its late compositions, owing to linguistic decay, shows many corruptions and confusions in its inflections. All that is old or is written in meter, however, is correct and accurate. Inaccuracies that have there crept in, we must generally attribute to the carelessness of the scribes. In its forms, as a rule, the Avesta is extremely antique; it stands in general on the same plane as the Vedic Sanskrit, and occasionally, though not often, it even shows more ancient forms.

§ 55. The language of the Avesta is most closely allied to the Sanskrit, though individually quite distinct from the latter. Together they may be classed as making up an Indo-Iranian group. Almost any Sanskrit word may be changed at once into its Avestan equivalent, or vice versa, merely by applying certain phonetic laws. As example may be taken the metrical stanza Yt. 10.6 in the Avesta:

\[
\text{īm amavaṃtāṃ yastām} \\
\text{sūrām dānōhu svaśītam} \\
\text{mīprāṃ yādā zaḥprāhēva—}
\]
Introduction: The Avesta.

‘Mithra that strong mighty angel, most beneficent to all creatures, I will worship with libations’—becomes when rendered word for word in Sanskrit:

\[ \text{tam ānavantam yajatām} \\
\text{sĀrām dhāmasu śāviśtham} \\
\text{mitrām yajāi kātrabhyaḥ}. \]

§ 56. In its phonology the Avesta agrees with the Sanskrit in its vowels in general, but the Avesta shows a greater variety in using \( ē \) and \( ā \)-sounds instead of \( a \). Final vowels, except \( ō \), are shortened as a rule. The Skt. diphthong \( ō \) appears in Av. as \( a t \), \( ō i \), \( t \) (final). Thus Av. \( vas̄nājke ‘they two are seen’ = Skt. \( vēn-ē-tē \). Skt. \( ō \) appears as Av. \( ao \), \( ū \), \( ō \) (final), thus Av. \( aojō ‘strength’ = Skt. \( ējō, ējas; Av. \( hrattuṣ ‘of wisdom’ = Skt. kṛdōs. A striking peculiarity in Av., moreover, is the introduction of epenthetic vowels and help sounds, giving rise to improper diphthongs, Av. \( bavati ‘he becomes’ = Skt. bhāvati; Av. \( hāṃvā ‘whole’ = Skt. śārvā; Av. \( vakrā- ‘word’ = Skt. vaktra-; Av. \( hvar- ‘sun’ = Skt. svār. The Skt. voiceless stops \( k \), \( t \), \( p \) generally become spirants \( ṭ \), \( ḍ \), \( ḍ \) in Av. before consonants. Thus, Av. \( ḍjāpra- ‘rule, kingdom’ = Skt. kṣatrā-; Av. \( frā ‘forth’ = Skt. pra. The original voiced aspirates \( gh \), \( dh \), \( bh \), become in Av. simply voiced stops \( g \), \( d \), \( b \). They are so preserved in the old Gāthā dialect; the younger dialect commonly resolves them again before consonants and between vowels into voiced spirants. Thus, GAv. \( adā, YAv. \) ada ‘then’ = Skt. ādha. Similarly spirantized in YAv. the voiced stops YAv. \( ugra-, GAv. \) ugra- ‘mighty’ = Skt. ugra-. The sibilant \( s \), when initial in Skt., becomes Av. \( h \), as in Greek. Thus, Av. \( ḍhāpra ‘seven’ = Skt. saptā. When internal, Skt. \( s \) may also appear as \( wh \). Thus, Av. \( sawhāna- ‘vesture’ = Skt. vāsana-. Final -as of Skt. appears regularly as -ō. Thus Av. \( aprō ‘horse’ = Skt. āśvas. \]

§ 57. The Gāthā dialect regularly lengthens all final vowels. It frequently inserts the anaptyctic vowels: GAv. \( frā, YAv. \) frā = Skt. pra. Original \( ū \) appears in GAv. as \( ūg \). Thus GAv. \( dāvōng (acc. pl.), YAv. \) dāvun ‘demons’ = Skt. dēvōn; GAv. \( māṅghā ‘I shall think’ = Skt. māṇāi. \]

§ 58. In inflection the Avesta shows nearly the richness of the Vedic Sanskrit. There are three genders, masculine, neuter, feminine; likewise three numbers, singular, dual, plural. The dual is not extensively used. There are eight well-developed cases of the noun and the adjective; the normal endings are: Singular. Nom. -s; Acc. -sm; Instr. -d; Dat. -t; Abl. -aṭ; Gen. -ō (as); Loc. -i; Voc. —. Dual. Nom., Acc., Voc. -ā; Instr., Dat., Abl. -āyā; Gen. -ō; Loc. -ō, -yō. Plural. Nom., Voc. -ō (as), -ō; Acc. -ō (as, -m); -d; Instr. -ōt; Dat. -āyō (āyaṇ); Gen. -qm; Loc. -sm, -hu, -jva. The classes of declension agree exactly with the
Sanskrit; the method of forming comparison of adjectives likewise corresponds. The numerals answer to Skt. forms, except Av. ātva- 'one', opposed to Skt. ēka-, Av. bātvar- '10,000', but Skt. asuṣṭa. The Av. pronouns closely resemble the Skt., but show also individual peculiarities. Noteworthy is the remote demonstrative Av. ātu, ādū 'that, yonder', contrasted with Skt. amū, asū. The verbal system in Av. and in Skt. are in general identical. The roots are chiefly monosyllabic and are subject to the same modifications as in Skt. In voice, mode, and tense, and in their conjugation-system the two languages quite agree. The endings show equal antiquity with the Sanskrit. The primary active endings in Av. are: Sing. 1, -mi, 2, -hi, 3, -ti; Dual. 1, -vahī, 3, -tō, -phō; Plur. 1, -mahi, 2, -pa, 3, -ntī. The other endings also are parallel with the Sanskrit.

§ 59. The Av. possesses like facility with the Sanskrit in forming words by means of prefixes, and by adding suffixes of primary and secondary derivation. The same classes of compounds may be recognized in both tongues. The rules of external Sandhi, or joining together of words in a sentence, so universal in Skt., are almost wanting in Avesta. The Avesta separates each word by a dot. The vowels are fully expressed as in Greek etc., by individual letters. No diacritical points or accents are written in the texts. The meters in which the Gāthās are composed have analogies in the Veda. Almost all the metrical parts of the younger Avesta are in eight-syllable lines. The syntax, however, differs from the Sanskrit in certain points, and shows some marked individualities, especially in the later portions.
Specimens of the Avesta Text.

I. From the Gathas.

Yasna 45.1—2.

Zoroaster preaches upon The Two Spirits.

Now shall I preach, and do you give ear and hear,
Ye who hither press from near and from afar,
Therefore lay ye all these things to heart as clear
Nor let the wicked teacher your second life destroy—
The perverted sinner your tongues with his false faith.
Transliteration of the same.
(See opposite page.)

1 at frayasiya nū guṣṭaṃ nū sraotā yaecā asnaṭ yaecā durāṭ iṣṭā
nū īm vispa cipti śi masāṇahōdūm noīt doḥitaṃ duṣ.astiś ahūm mruṣyaṭ
akā varṇa dvṛgvā hisva āvṛṣṭō.

2 at frayasiya avhūs maṇyū purvuyē
yayaṃ sparyē uti mrvat yēm angrēm
noīt nā manō noīt sōṅhā noīt ḫratavo
naēdā varṇa noīt uḍā naēdā śyaopōṃ
goīt daēnō noīt urvānō kacintē.

Ys. 45.2 translated.
Now shall I preach of the world’s Two primal Spirits
The Holier One of which did thus address the Evil:
‘Neither do our minds, our teachings, nor our concepts,
Nor our beliefs, nor words, nor do our deeds in sooth,
Nor yet our consciences, nor souls agree in aught.’
II. From the Younger Avesta.

a. Yasna 9.5 (metrical).
The Golden Age of Yima.

5 yimahe ḫaŋre auruha
nōi t aotm awha nōi t garanimal
nōi t sauruva awha nōi t mēryuš
nōi t araskō daēvō.dātō;
apa.ca.dasa fracaroṣhe
pita puḥrasca raodaēžva [katarasci]
yavate ḫayōit kvāḥwō
yimō vívawhatō puḥrō.

In the reign of princely Yima
There was neither cold, nor heat
Old age was not, death there was not,
Nor disease, the work of Demons,
But the son walked with the father
Fifteen years old each in figure;
Long as Vivanghvat's son, Yima
The good shepherd, ruled as sovereign.
b. **Vendidad 6.44—45 (prose).**

**Disposal of the Dead.**

```
[mud tas m quit i a v ts a m qua fa a g sr a t a d]

aśāum astvaitinām gaēpanām dātar

O holy One  material of beings  O Creator
```

```
[øruh a  a mār a b mūn a t m na t s i ri m a ran a avk]

ahura barāma tanūm iristanām naraṃ kva

O Ahura  shall-we-bear  body  dead (gen.)  of men where
```

```
[æruh a  f o a rm  f a a  a mā p a din a avk  a daam]

ahurō mraot āat nidaṃāma kva mazda

Ahura  spake  Then  deposit  where Mazda
```

```
[a ca v i l u t a g i ti a p  a ca v i t a l i s r a b  a daam]

gātiuśvaca paiti baresiśmaca mazdā

and-on-beds upon the heights Mazda
```

```
[mot s i d a b  m i d  s i d d a y  a r t s u p a r a z  a m a t i p s]

bādiśtram dim yadoīt saraphuśtra spitama

always  it  where  Zarathushtra  O Spitama
```

```
[āv  ō v a v  ōr ah  s for kh āv  ōn as  m n a s a v a]

vā vayō kərifs hərō vā sūnō avazanān

or  birds  corpse-eating  either  dogs  may-see
```

```
[ør a h  s for kh]

kərifs hərō
corpse-eating.
```
TRANSCRIPTION OF AVESTAN ALPHABET.

(Compared with Justi, *Handbuch der Zendsprache*).\(^1\)

A. Vowels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short</th>
<th>æ</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>i</th>
<th>ī</th>
<th>u</th>
<th>ū</th>
<th>o</th>
<th>ō</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ī</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>ū</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>ō</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Consonants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guttural</th>
<th>g</th>
<th>k</th>
<th>ñ</th>
<th>h</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palatal</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>j</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labial</td>
<td>ρ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semivowel and Liquid</th>
<th>m</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sibilant</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspiration</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>k</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ligature</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Forms in parentheses ( ) show where Justi has been deviated from.

\(^2\) The signs \(i, y\) need only be employed for purely scientific purposes; the letters \(y, v\) for both initial and internal \(w\), \(y, v\), answer fully for practical purposes.

\(^3\) The differentiation \(i, j, ñ\) need only be made in scientific articles.

The single sign \(ñ\) is ordinarily quite sufficient for the three \(w, ñ, ſ\).
SUGGESTIONS.

The following hints may be helpful to the student in using the Grammar. The chief points on which stress should be laid, and which it will be sufficient for the beginner to acquire, are:

1. In the Preface, the remarks on Transcription, pp. vi—vii.
2. In the Introduction, the sketch of the language of the Avesta, pp. xxx—xxxiii.
3. Throughout the Grammar, the large print alone need be studied. Every thing marked 'GAv.' (Gāthā Avesta), and all that is in small type, may be practically disregarded.
4. Under Phonology, only the sections (§§) referred to in the Résumé pp. 60—61.
5. Under the Declension of Nouns and Adjectives, the following sections should suffice: §§ 236, 243, 251, 262, 279, 291, 300, 322, 339, 362, 363.
6. Under Numerals, note merely the Cardinals § 366.
7. Under Pronouns, compare the Av. and Skt. forms in the case of §§ 386, 390, 399, 409, 417, 422, 432. No attempt need be made to commit the paradigms to memory.
8. Under Verbs, the following sections relating to the Present-System are important: §§ 448, 466, 469, 470, 478—481, 483—488. The remaining conjugations, and the Perfect, Aorist, Future, etc., may be learned as needed.
9. The rest of the book may be overlooked by the beginner.
10. In consulting the Grammar, the Index will be found of service for reference.
Suggestions.

A FEW OF THE BOOKS MOST NECESSARY FOR THE BEGINNER.

The following list contains a few books that the beginner will find most useful. The list is very brief; the student as he advances will see how rapidly it may be enlarged.

a. Texts.

GELDNER—Avesta, or the Sacred Books of the Parsis.—Stuttgart 1885 seq.
The new standard edition.

WESTERGAARD—Zendavesta, or the Religious Books of the Zoroastrians.—Copenhagen.
Hard to procure, but useful until Geldner's edition is complete.

W. GEIGER—Aogemadaēca, ein Pärsenttract in Pāzend, Altbaktrisch und Sanskrit.—Erlangen 1878.
Useful for the brief Av. fragment it contains.

Good for comparative purposes.

b. Dictionary.

JUSTI—Handbuch der Zendsprache, Altbaktrisches Wörterbuch.—Leipzig 1864.
The only dictionary at present, and indispensable for reference. Possible to obtain second-hand.

c. Translation.

This translation is complete. Translations of separate portions are to be found in the works mentioned under (d) and (e).
d. Grammar and Exegesis, including also Translations of selected portions.

(Books specially mentioned above in Preface, are not repeated here.)

**Bartholomae**—*Arische Forschungen* i-iii.—Halle 1882-7.
Grammatical and metrical investigations, with translations of selected Passages.

**Geldner**—*Über die Metrik des jüngeren Avesta.*—Tübingen 1877.
A useful treatise on Metre. Also contains translations.

— *Studien zum Avesta.*—Strassburg 1882.
Grammatical contributions, and numerous translations.

— *Drei Yasht aus dem Zendavesta übersetzt und erklärt.*—Stuttgart 1884.
Translation of Yt. 14, 17, 19, with Commentary.

**Spiegel**—*Commentar über das Avesta.* Bd. i-ii.—Wien 1864-8.
Useful for occasional reference.

e. Literature, Religion, Antiquities.

**Darab Peshotan Sanjana**—*Civilization of the Eastern Iranians.* Vols. i-ii; being a translation from the German of W. Geiger’s *Ostiranische Kultur im Alterthum.*—London 1885-6.
Useful for reference.

By all means to be consulted.

**Haug and West**—*Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings, and Religion of the Parsis.* 3 ed.—London 1884.
Contains much useful information.

**Firoz Jamaspji**—Casartelli’s *Masdayasnian Religion under the Sassanids.*—Bombay 1889.
Treats fully of the later development of Zoroastrianism.