

Introduction to Avestan

6th Pavia International Summer School of Indo-European Linguistics (Sept. 2024)

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The Avestan language

- Language of liturgies and prayers of Zoroastrian religion, in antiquity as today
- Indo-Iranian > Iranian > (geographically) “Eastern” Iranian
- OAv. close to Proto-Iranian
- One of the two Old Iranian (≈ BCE) corpora besides Old Persian
- Middle Persian *abestāg*
- Most commonly accepted etymology: < **upa-stāyaka-* ‘praise’ (cf. Av. *upa.staōimi* ‘I send praises towards’)
- Composition of texts ca. 1000 BCE (?) – 400 CE
- Onset of our written transmission ca. 5th/6th c. CE
- Extant mss. 13th c. +
- Predominantly oral transmission until 18th c. CE
- By speakers of various vernaculars
- Multiple layers of redactional intervention

Zoroastrianism

- *Av. daēnā- māzdaiiasni-* (Middle Persian *dēn ī māzdēsn*).
- Emerges in later 2nd millennium BCE from the wider realm of Indo-Iranian religious traditions.
- Possible defining criterion for antiquity: use of ritual texts in Avestan language
- Dominant religion in Iranian-speaking areas up until the rise of Islam
- Then gradual transformation to minority religion in Iran and emergence of a considerable Indian (the “Parsis”) and, from 19th c. CE onward, global diaspora.

Zoroastrianism

Distinguished by certain shifts in world-view and ritual practice:

- Partial rejection of Indo-Iranian pantheon (**dai̯ua-* ‘god’ > *daēuua-* ‘bad god’ > ‘demon’)
- Replaced by newly generated pantheon of deified abstract concepts
- Cosmic “double dualism”:
 - order (*aša-*) – chaos/lie (*druj-*);
 - material world (*astuuant-*, *gaēθiia-*) – world of the mind (*manah-*, *maiñiiauuu-*)
- No libations of *haōma-* (cf. Vedic Soma) into Fire (*ātar-*); increasingly central position of Fire cult
- Ritual technique of *daēnā-*:
 - receiving of revelations (*sāngha-* ‘teaching’, *dāta-* ‘law’) from the deity Ahura Mazdā
 - in ritual context
 - context for the production of new texts
 - context of their transmission

THE WILEY BLACKWELL COMPANION TO
ZOROASTRIANISM



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Chronological layers

- Old Avestan
 - Gāthās and Yasna Haptanḥāiti
 - “Dichtersprache” with signs of deliberate use of diachronic/dialectal variant forms
 - Partly “Young-Avestanised”
- Middle Avestan
 - Some passages surrounding and/or commenting on Old Avestan material
- Young Avestan
 - Majority of the corpus
- “Late Avestan”
 - Grammatically faulty language of the latest editorial layer of the liturgies.
 - To be distinguished from faultily transmitted texts such as Vidēvdād.

The difference between OAv. and YAv. is probably purely diachronic, not dialectal.

A sample: Old Avestan (Yasna 28.11)

Transmitted:

yē. āiš. ašəm. nipāṅhē. manascā. vohū. yauuaētāitē.

tuuəm. mazdā. ahurā. frō. mā. sišā. 𐬰𐬀ahmāt. vaōcaṅhē.

maiṅiiōuš. hacā. 𐬰𐬀ā. ēāṅhā. yāiš. ā. aṅhuš. paōuruuiō. bauuaṭ.

Phonologically reconstructed Proto-Avestan:

yah āiš ertam nipāhaj manasca vahū yaūaitātai

tuuam mazdā ahura fra mā sišā 𐬰ahmāt vaucahaj

manīauš hacā 𐬰ā āhā yāiš ā ahuš parūjah bauat

(1) (You) who protect order through these (hymns),
and good thinking for
eternity,
(2–3) you, O Ahura Mazda, teach me with your
mouth to speak in accordance
with your force (the words) through which primeval
existence
comes about.

Beginning of the “Greater Frauarāne” (Yasna 12.6, Middle/Young Avestan)

frauarānē. mazdaiiasnō. zaraθuštriš. vīdaēuuō. ahura.ṭkaēšō.

staōtā. aməšanəm. spəntanəm. yaštā. aməšanəm. spəntanəm.

*ahurāi. mazdāi. vanhauuē. vohu.maidē. vīspā. vohū. cinamjī. ašāunē.
raēuuaitē. xvarənaŋvhaitē.*

/frauarāne mazdajasnō zaraθuštriš vīdaēuuō ahurakaišō

staōta amərtanām spəntanām yašta amərtanām spəntanām

ahurāi mazdāi vanhauē vohumaide vispa vohu cinahmi ertāune rajuaite
hvarənaŋvhaite/

I make my choice to be a sacrificer to Ahura Mazda, in the way of Zaraθuštra, opposed to the demons, following the teachings of Ahura; a praiser of the Beneficent Immortals, a sacrificer to the Beneficent Immortals. I attribute everything good to Ahura Mazda, the good one, the assigner of goods, the partaker in Order, the rich one, the glorious one.

Beginning of the “Greater Frauuarāne” (Yasna 12.6)

frauuarānē. mazdaiiasnō. zaraθuštriš. vīdaēuuō. ahura.ṭkaēšō.

staōtā. aməṣanəm. spəntanəm. yaštā. aməṣanəm. spəntanəm.

ahurāi. mazdāi. vaṅhauuē. vohu.maidē. vīspā. vohū. cinamī. aṣāunē. raēuuaitē. xvarənanṽhaitē.

“Converted” to Sanskrit:

*pravarai *medhāyasnō **jarathuṣṭriḥ videvō asura-...

stotā amṛtānām śvāntānām (?) yaṣṭā amṛtānām śvāntānām (?)

asurāya **medhe vasave vasu-... viśvā vasū ... ṛtāv(a)ne revate *parīṅasvate

Long and short liturgies

Long Liturgies

- Basic Long Liturgy (*Yasna*): Young Avestan liturgy designed for daily performance, dedicated to “all the deities”; chapters “Yasna 0–72”; includes the Old Avesta at its core (Yasna 28–54).
- Solemn LL (*Wīspərəd*): Yasna with extensions and modifications; especially for seasonal festivals (*Gāhāmbārs*)
- Intercalation Liturgies: *Wīspərəd* + inserted *Pargards* (sections) of *Nasks*
- Now preserved:
 - *Wīdēwdād* liturgy (incorporates *Pargards* of the *Wīdēwdād Nask*), still performed
 - *Wīštāsp Yašt* liturgy: only in manuscripts

Short Liturgies

- Large variety of minor liturgies and prayers, dedicated to single deities.
- *Yašts*, *Niyāyišns*, *Āfrīnagāns*, *Āfrīns*, *Nērangs* ...
- Loosely collected in so-called “Xorde Avesta” manuscripts.
- (Intermediary position between Long and Short Liturgies: *Drōn* ceremonies.)

Genres

In Yasna-Visperad, Yašts:

- Litanies built around “anchor verb” such as
 - yazamaide ‘we sacrifice to ...’ — niuuaēōaiemi ‘I invite ...’ — āiiese ‘I introduce ...’ etc.
- Mythological and legendary narratives (often inserted into litany frame)
- Praises of deities (*staōman-*, *stūiti-*), Requests (*yāna-*), Propitiations (*āfriti-*)
- “Formulas”, recurring building blocks (“modules”)
- Spells
- etc.

In Vidēvdād:

- Regulations for religious practice, especially around topics of purity
- Instructions for performance of purification rituals
- Mythological narratives

Nērangestān: Discussion of issues of ritual performance.

Hērrbedestān: Regulations for the training and life of priests.

Yasna 16: a litany listing the days of the month

[Static Yasna on CAB](#)

The days of the month in the Zoroastrian calendar:

<https://iranicaonline.org/articles/calendars#>

Table 23
THE DAYS OF THE ZOROASTRIAN CALENDAR

Avestan	Pahlavi	Modern Persian
1. Daθušō Ahurahe Mazdā	Ohrmazd	Hormoz
2. Vanhōuš Manaņhō	Wahman	Bahman
3. Ašahe Vahištahe	Ardwahišt	Ordibešt
4. Xšaθrahe Vairyehe	Šahrewar	Šahrivar
5. Spantayā Armatōiš	Spandarmad	Esfand(ārmod)
6. Haurvatātō	Xurdād	Ķordād
7. Amərətātō	Amurdād	Mordād
8. Daθušō Ahurahe Mazdā	Day pad Ādur	Dey be Ādar
9. Āθrō	Ādur	Ādar
10. Apam	Ābān	Ābān
11. Hvarəxšaētahe	Xwar	Ķ'or/Ķūr
12. Mānhahe	Māh	Māh
13. Tištryehe	Tir	Tir
14. Gōuš	Gōš	Gūš
15. Daθušō Ahurahe Mazdā	Day pad Mihr	Dey be Mehr
16. Miθrahe	Mihr	Mehr
17. Sraošahe	Srōš	Sorūš
18. Rašnaoš	Rašn	Rašn
19. Fravašinam	Frwardin	Farvardin
20. Vərəθraγnahe	Wahrām	Bahrām
21. Rāmanō	Rām	Rām
22. Vātahe	Wād	Bād
23. Daθušō Ahurahe Mazdā	Day pad Dēn	Dey be Dīn
24. Daēnayā	Dēn	Dīn
25. Ašōiš	Ard (Ahrišwang)	Ard
26. Arštātō	Aštād	Aštād
27. Asmō	Asmān	Āsmān
28. Zəmō hudānō	Zamyād	Zāmyād
29. Māθrahe spəntahe	Māraspand	Māraspand
30. Anayranam	Anagrān	Anirān

Date and place of Old Avesta

Long chronology (e.g. Skjærvø)	1500–1000 BCE
Middle chronology (e.g. Kellens, now most widely accepted)	around 1000 BCE
Short chronology (traditional Zoroastrian view as found in Middle Persian literature (now hardly maintained))	“258 years before Alexander”

Place:

- even less clear than for the YAv. corpus (on which in a moment)
- no geographical names or features mentioned
- no hints of urban civilization; society of cattle-breeders
- perhaps northern Central Asia (around modern-day Kazakhstan?)

Date and place of Young Avesta

Date:

- 1st millennium BCE
- Basic final redaction of the liturgies (with characteristic morphological faults) during Achaemenid period, after import to South-West Iran

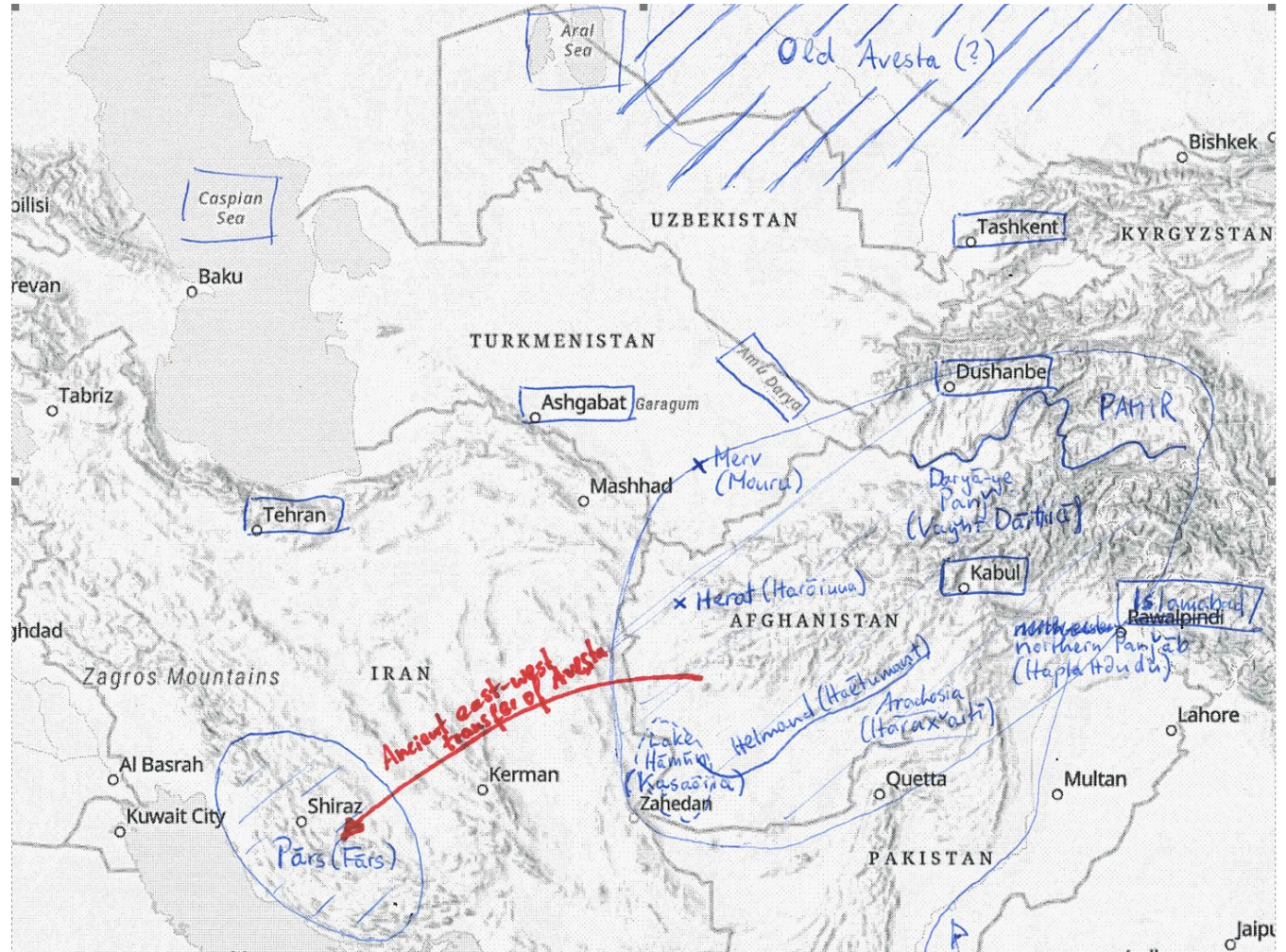
Place:

- Mythical geography centered around Pamir area
- Extension westwards to Merw-Hērāt-Sīstan line
- Certain YAv. sound changes suggest proximity to more recent Eastern Iranian languages (see later)

Grenet, Frantz. 2015. Zarathustra's time and homeland: geographical perspectives. In Stausberg, Michael & Vevaina, Yuhan Sohrab-Dinshaw (eds.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Zoroastrianism*, 21–29. Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell.

Geographical horizon of Young Avesta

(see especially Vidēvdād 1)



Achaemenid Empire (6th-3rd c. BCE)



Beginnings of Avesta exegesis

- Young Avestan era: redaction and focus on analysis/interpretation of older OAv.,, but also YAv. texts (cf. YAv. glosses).
- Spread of Avestan liturgies from (North-) Eastern Iran to Persia.
- Analysis and exegesis continues in local traditions and languages.
- One line of tradition re-emerges after a gap of several centuries, in **Middle Persian (Pahlavi) language (3rd to 10th c. CE)**.

Andrés-Toledo, Miguel Ángel. 2022. Explaining the Avesta: commentaries in historical perspective. *Journal of the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute* 76. 12–41.

Sasanian Empire (3rd–7th c. CE)



Establishment of the “Scholastic Avesta”

Sasanian Era (3rd–7th c. CE): competing views of what comprises the “Zoroastrian Tradition”:

- 1) “Dēn only” (Av. *daēnā*- ‘Vision’): entirety of revealed Avestan texts.
- 2) Dēn + personal religious experience (new revelations).
- 3) Dēn + reason & secular scientific knowledge, including foreign one (Greek, Indian)

Dēnkard (9th c.) reports priestly council at the court of Šāpūr II (309–379 CE): View 1) wins.

- Gathering and organisation of Avestan texts (*abestāg*) to be regarded as canonical.
- Extraction of “unique” text portions from their original liturgical context, equipped with systematic Middle Persian translation.
- Collection sealed by an ordeal undergone by the high priest Ādurbād ī Māraspandān.

König, Götz. 2022. Überlegungen zur Avesta-Transmission in der Sasanidenzeit. In Farridnejad, Shervin & Daryaei, Touraj (eds.), *Sasanian studies. Late antique Iranian world / Sasanidische Studien. Spätantike iranische Welt* (1), 127–156. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Canonisation of the Zand

Court of **Husraw I (531–597 CE)**:

- written fixation of the Avestan text (invention of script?) and Pahlavi translation
- canonisation of the interpretations (→ commentary) in reaction to the “Mazdakite heresy”
- work of an anonymous collective
- *Av. srauuâ zaraθuštrahe* ‘the words of Zarathustra’ explained as ‘Avesta and Zand’.

9th-c. CE texts:

- claim revealed nature of Zand (e.g. Dēnkard 5.24) and mention its memorisation;
- quote from the same translation as the one we know.

Fate and structure of the “Scholastic Avesta”

- Majority lost, but summaries – based on the Pahlavi versions – preserved in the *Dēnkard* (Books 8 & 9).
- Scattered quotations, also of Avestan fragments, throughout Pahlavi literature.
- First (or last) Nask: *Stōd Yasn Nask* = the core section of the Avestan long liturgy (Yasna).
- The other 20 Nasks:
 - *hamparšti*- ‘question-and-answer’ texts revealed in a conversation between a figure from the “circle of Zaraθuštra” (mostly Z. himself) and Ahura Mazdā
 - To be intercalated into the Long Liturgy.
- Organisational principle: the 3 lines and 21 words of the OAv. *Ahuna Vairiia* formula.
yaθā ahū vairiio aθā ratuš ašāṭ cīṭ hacā
vaṅhēuš dazdā manarhō šīiaōθananam arhēuš mazdāi
xšaθrəmcā ahurāi.ā yim drigubiiō dadaṭ vāstārem

Cantera, Alberto. 2013. Talking with god: the Zoroastrian *ham.paršti* or intercalation ceremonies. *Journal Asiatique* 301. 85–138.

Vevaina, Yuhan Sohrab-Dinshaw. 2010. “Enumerating the *Dēn*”: Textual Taxonomies, Cosmological Deixis, and Numerological Speculations in Zoroastrianism. *History of Religions* 50. 111–143.

The 3 sections and 21 Nasks of the “Scholastic Avesta”

***Gāhānīg* group (7 Nasks)**

Stōd Yasn (basic liturgy incl. Gāthās) – Sūdgar, Warštamānsar, Bay (three sets of explanations on the Gāthās) – Spand (life of Zarathustra) – etc.

***Hadāmānsrīg* group (7 Nasks)**

Dāmdād (cosmogony, parts reworked in *Bundahišn*) etc.

***Dādīg* Nask (7 Nasks)**

Vidēvdād (purity laws) – Huspāram (incl. **Nērangestān**) – Nigādom (penal law) – Čihrdād (mythical history of Iran) – **Bayān** (collection of the Yašts) – etc.

Indirect transmission of Avesta through Pahlavi (Zoroastrian Middle Persian)

- Avestan tradition (*dēn*) as constant reference point for the Pahlavi authors.
- Some texts directly **translated** from Avestan, with **glosses and commentaries**.
- Some rework contents of lost parts of the Avesta.
- Pahlavi as a “mixed” literary language with many Avestan loan words and calques..
- Bilingual presentation of translated text and complete gathering of Av. fragments and loanwords to become available through Middle Persian Corpus and Dictionary project (Bochum/Berlin/Cologne).

<https://www.mpcorpus.org/>

(Attention: currently non-citable beta version!)

Ancient exegesis of the Avesta: Some references

Cantera, Alberto. 2015. Avesta ii. Middle Persian translations. Encyclopædia Iranica Online. (http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2330-4804_EIRO_COM_11588).

Zeini, Arash. 2020. *Zoroastrian scholasticism in Late Antiquity. The Pahlavi version of the Yasna Haptanḥāiti*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

“Part IV” in Peschl, Benedikt. 2022. *The first three hymns of the Ahunauvaitī Gāθā. The Avestan text of Yasna 28–30 and its tradition*. Leiden – New York: Brill.

Vevaina, Yuhan Sohrab-Dinshaw. 2010. “Enumerating the Dēn”: textual taxonomies, cosmological deixis, and numerological speculations in Zoroastrianism. *History of Religions* 50. 111–143.

Cantera, Alberto. 2004. *Studien zur Pahlavi-Übersetzung des Avesta*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

König, Götz. 2016. Yašt 3. *Der avestische Text und seine mittel- und neupersischen Übersetzung*. Girona: Sociedad de Estudios Iranios y Turanios.

Elman, Yaakov & Secunda, Shai. 2015. Judaism. In Stausberg, Michael & Vevaina, Yuhan Sohrab-Dinshaw (eds.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Zoroastrianism*, 423–435. Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell.

Evidence for Avesta in Achaemenid Persia

Achaemenid Mazdaism shows similar features to “Avestan religion”, but their identity has been questioned.

Still, there is good evidence that from some point onwards, the Avesta was present in Achaemenid South-West Iran (Persia), and became increasingly influential.

- Old Persian phonetic imprint on Avesta text, especially:
 - Word-internal Av. /i̯, u̯/ transmitted as *ii* and *uu* — cf. OP [iy], [uv] for post-consonantal and word-final /i̯, u̯/
 - YAv. *vīnāθaya-* ‘destroy’ (= OP *vināθaya-*, Ved. *vināśaya-*), with characteristic OP θ instead of Av. s for PrIr. *ts (PrIIr. *ć) instead of expected **vīnāsaīia-*
- Replacement of early Achaemenid lunisolar calendar by Egyptian solar calendar reflected in the Avestan liturgies (12 months à 30 days + 5 intercalary days).
- Gradual emergence of Avestan day/month names in Western empire.
- Presence in Western empire of distinctly Avestan concepts in onomastics and pictorial representations of cult scenes.

Cantera, Alberto. 2017. La liturgie longue en langue avestique dans l’Iran occidental. In Henkelman, Wouter F. M. & Redard, Céline (eds.), *Persian Religion in the Achaemenid Period / La religion perse à l’époque achéménide*, 21–68. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.



Redactional compound splits (not clearly datable)

frādaṭ.gaēṭa- /frādad-gaṭṭa-/ 'who furthers (*frādat-*) the living beings (*gaēṭā-*)'
paiti.jasaiti /paṭi-jasaṭi/

Modification of first member:

daēuuō.dāta- 'established (*dāta-*) by the demons (*daēuua-*)'
gaēθō.frāḍana- + 'furthering (*frāḍana-*) livestock (*gaēṭā-*)',
zruuō.dāta- 'established by time (*zruuan-*)'

Suffixes:

daēuuō.təma- /daṭṭa-təma-/ (*daṭṭa-tama-) 'most demon-like'
pouru.tāt- /poru-tāt-/ (*paru-tāt-) 'multitude'

Errors:

ahura.ṭkaēša- (< *ahura-kajša-) 'following the teaching (*kajša-) of Ahura'
**ṭkaēša-* extracted, e.g., from something like *frādat-kajša- 'furthering the teaching' vel. sim. ... ?

Dissolution of sandhi

External sandhi mostly dissolved:

e.g. nom.sg. ending of *a*-stems PrIr. **-as* > Ved. *-ō*, *-ah*, *-as*

...> PrIr. **-ah* > normally OAv. *-ā*, *-ō*; YAv. *-ō*

Av. *yō tataša* 'who fashioned'

Cf. Rig-Veda *ví yás tastámbha* 'who stemmed apart'

But occasionally "forgotten":

nəmas^ə. tē 'reverence to you!'

yas^ə. taxmō 'who (is) valiant'

Uneven phonetic shape and inconsistency of sound laws

From: Cantera, Alberto & Redard, Céline. 2023. *An introduction to Young Avestan*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

of *huuar-* “sun”, § 16.2.4). The conditions for the evolution of *a* into *ā* or *ē* (which sometimes appears as *ō*) are not clear. After *ii*, we always find *ā* (*mašiiā* from *mašīia-* “man”, *aiiān*), after *u*, *a* changes to *ə* and the resulting group is *ū* (*hū*). For the rest, there is simply a tendency for *ā* to appear after a labial (*haōmā* from *haōma-*, *aēsma* from *aēsma-* “dry wood”, *fratəmā* from *fratəma-* “first”, *amā* from *ama-* “offensive force”, *garəβā* from *garəβa-* “womb”, *imā* from dem. pron., *barəsmān*, etc). After *k*, *ē* is more common (*yaskē* from *yaska-* “disease”). After *t*, however, we find both (*yazatē* from *yazata-* “worthy of sacrifice; divinity”, *spəntē* from *spənta-* “beneficent”, *zastē* from *zasta-* “hand”, *paiti.vərətē* from *paiti.vərəta-* “enveloped”, but *yaōždātā* from *yaōždāta-* “purified”, *mazištā* from *mazišta-* “the greatest”, *spəntā* from *spənta-* “beneficent”, *pairīštā* from *pairīšta-* “chosen”, dem. pron. *tā*, etc).

7.1.5 Oscillations of quantity between *i* / *ī* and *u* / *ū*

The quantity of *i* and *u* oscillates in the manuscripts and, in general, the quantity that appears in the manuscripts has little to do with the original quantity. This phenomenon has a relatively arbitrary character. As a result, we can only observe spelling trends. In the manuscripts, we encounter some distributional parameters which are certainly secondary. Thus, for example, the preverb *ni-* always appears with *ī* while the preverb *vī-* always appears with *ī* (§ 7.1.2). Again, a secondary distribution must be attributed to the fact that *u* very often appears as *ū* in syllables with epenthesis, for example, Av. *āstūiti-* “prayer”, Ved. *stutí-*, IE **stuti*; Av. *frasrūiti-* “recitation”, Ved. *śrúti-*, IE **kluti-*. However, *uiti* “thus, so” is always written with *u* in Young Avestan, but not in Old Avestan (Y38.4, 39.3, 45.2).

However, in some cases, the original distribution is preserved. The most frequent case is that of the nom. sg. of *i*-/*u*-stems, which appear short (for example, nom. sg. *gairiš* “mountain”, *pouruš* “many”), but as long in the acc. pl. (for example, acc. pl. *gairīš*, *pourūš*). The old difference in quantity is thus preserved: The nom. sg. of *-iš* / *-uš* from *-is* / *-us* and the acc. pl. *īš* / *ūš* from *-īs* / *-ūs* < **-iNs* / *-uNs*.

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An Introduction to Young Avestan:
A Manual for Teaching and Learning

Translated from French into English
by Richard Tahmaseb Nirouman

2023

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

**Orthography and recitation in the
Avestan manuscripts**

zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades eingereicht
am Fachbereich Geschichts-und Kulturwissenschaftender Freien
Universität Berlin im 2020
vorgelegt von Jaime Martínez Porro
Berlin, 2020

Dieses Dokument ist eine unveränderbare PDF-Kopie,
die am 22. September 2020 generiert wurde.

The Avestan Vowels

Michiel de Vaan



Amsterdam - New York, NY 2003

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Sasanian transmission and Avestan script

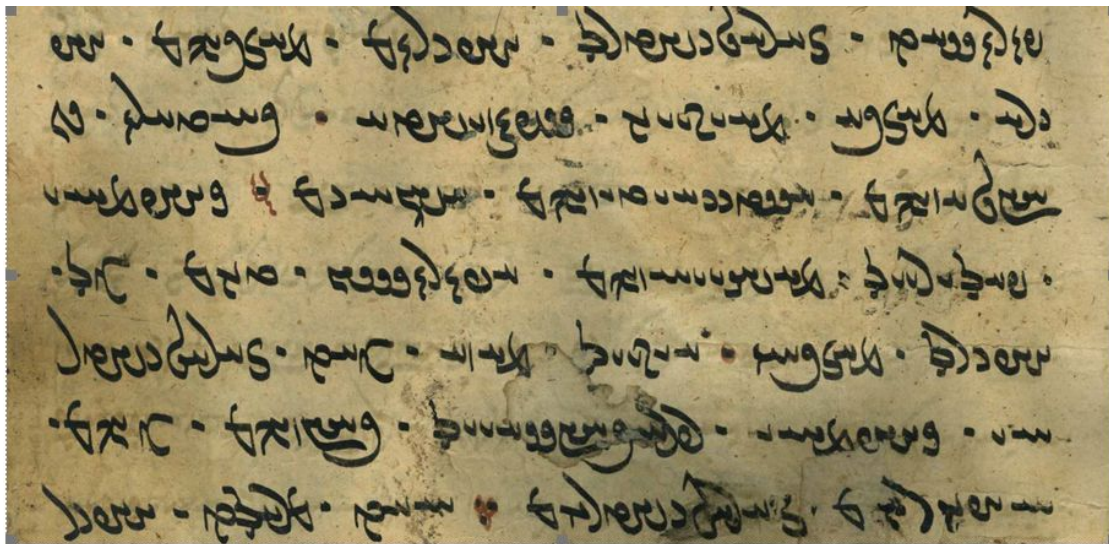
- Our Avestan texts based on the version that passed through the Sasanian-era “bottleneck”:
 - Gathering of Avestan texts and canonisation of the corpus
 - Attempt to propagate one particular school of recitation – invention of script based on late-Sasanian stage of Pahlavi (< Aramaic) script
 - High precision in depicting nuances of contemporary liturgical pronunciation
- Reconstruction of “Sasanian archetype” of texts and their phonetic shape (à la K. Hoffmann) now nevertheless considered infeasible:
 - Earliest mss. (written in India): 13th/14th c. CE
 - Renewed diversification of recitation styles already at full effect
 - Exact inventory of characters and their distribution not recoverable
- Solution adopted by Corpus Avesticum Berolinense: texts essentially edited in their phonetic shape as recoverable from earliest Iranian manuscripts (17th c.)
- Luckily, these happen to correspond quite closely to the presumed “Sasanian” Avestan reconstructed by Hoffmann

Avestan script

Beginning of Vīdēvdād 2

*pərəsaʃ. zaraθuštrō. ahurəm. mazdaqm. ah
ura. mazda. maihiiū. spəništa. dātarə. g
aēdanqm. astuuaitinqm. ašāum. kahmāi
. paōiriio. mašiiānqm. apərəse. tūm. yō.
ahurō. mazdā. aihiio. mana. yaʃ. zaraθuštr
āi. kahmāi. frādaēsaiio. daēnqm. yqm.
āhūrīm. zaraθuštrīm [etc.]*

‘Zaraθuštra asked Ahura Mazdā: “Ahura Mazdā, most beneficent spirit, establisher of the living beings with bones, proponent of order (*aša-*)! With whom among the mortals did you first converse, you who are Ahura Mazdā, other than me, Zaraθuštra? Whom did you first show the *Daēnā* (Vision, Revelation, Religion) which belongs to Ahura and Zaraθuštra?’”



Avestan script (1):
 letters taken directly from Pahlavi

MP		Av.
' , h	𐬀	a
y, d, g	𐬁	i
k	𐬂	k
t	𐬃	t
p	𐬄	p
b	𐬅	b
m	𐬆	m
n, r, w	𐬇	n
r, l	𐬈	r
L ¹	𐬉	o ²
s	𐬊	s
z	𐬋	z
š	𐬌	š

Avestan script (2):
modified Pahlavi letters

	MP		Av.
y, d, g	𐭪	𐭮	ī
t	𐭫	𐭯	ṭ
p	𐭬	𐭰	f
p	𐭬	𐭱	β
n, r, w, ' , ' ¹	𐭭	𐭲	u
n, r, w, ' , ' ¹	𐭭	𐭳	ū
j (Psalter)	𐭮	𐭴	c
s ³	𐭯	𐭵	ḡ
' , h	𐭰	𐭶	h ⁴
' , h	𐭰	𐭷	x
' , h	𐭰	𐭸	ḫ ⁵
c ?	𐭱	𐭹	ž

Avestan script (3):
Pahlavi ligatures

	MP	Av.
'y ⁶	𐭮	𐭮 ā
'yw ⁷	𐭮𐭥	𐭮 e
		𐭮 ē
hw	𐭮	𐭮 x ^v
gw ⁸	𐭮	𐭮 g
yk	𐭮	𐭮 ḡ
šy	𐭮	𐭮 š
yhr (?)	𐭮 (?)	𐭮 š ⁹

Avestan script (4): Further characters

𐬀	γ	From Middle Persian “Psalter” alphabet
𐬁	d	
𐬂	j	
𐬃	ə	< Greek ε (epsilon)
𐬄	ā	𐬄 < ā > + < ə >
𐬅		modification of } < n >

Two major Avesta editions of the 19th c.

ZENDAVESTA
OR
THE RELIGIOUS BOOKS OF THE ZOROASTRIANS

EDITED AND TRANSLATED
WITH A DICTIONARY, GRAMMAR &c.

BY

N. L. WESTERGAARD,

KNIGHT OF THE DANERBOG,
PROFESSOR OF ORIENTAL LANGUAGES IN THE UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN,
MEMBER OF THE DANISH ROYAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND HONORARY MEMBER OF THE BOMBAY
BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY &c. &c.

VOL. I.
THE ZEND TEXTS.

COPENHAGEN,

PRINTED BY BERLING BROTHERS.

SOLD BY GYLDENDAL.

1852—54.



Zendavesta

1

Zend texts

AVESTA
THE
SACRED BOOKS OF THE PARSIS

EDITED BY

KARL F. GELDNER

PUBLISHED

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

IN COUNCIL



STUTTGART
W. KOHLHAMMER
1896

19th c. view of the Avesta – dominant until 2000s

- Extant liturgies a patchwork of the debris of “Great Sasanian” Avesta described in Dēnkard 8 (9th c. Pahlavi text)
- Reduction of the liturgies to their unique components forming a “sacred book”
- Edition not of entire liturgies, but of Yasna (basic liturgy) + supplementary portions of text added to Yasna in other liturgies
- Results:
 - loss of occasional small pieces of text
 - lack of awareness of the compositional principles and logic of the liturgies
 - reduction of the corpus to basic set: Yasna, Visperad, Vidēvdād, Yašts u.a.

Late 20th- / 21st-c. revolution

- Study of the Nērangestān (Av./MP treatise on questions of ritual practice) and of ritual instructions in Av. manuscripts.
 - > Structure of liturgies already presupposed by Avestan fragments in Nērangestān;
 - > Mss. allow reconstruction of a complex system of rituals correlating with the calendar and other parameters.
- Built on the same set of basic modules but with multiple ways of combining and them.
 - > “Yasna”, “Visperad” etc. modern abstractions
- Attempts to correlate recitation text with progress of ritual actions.

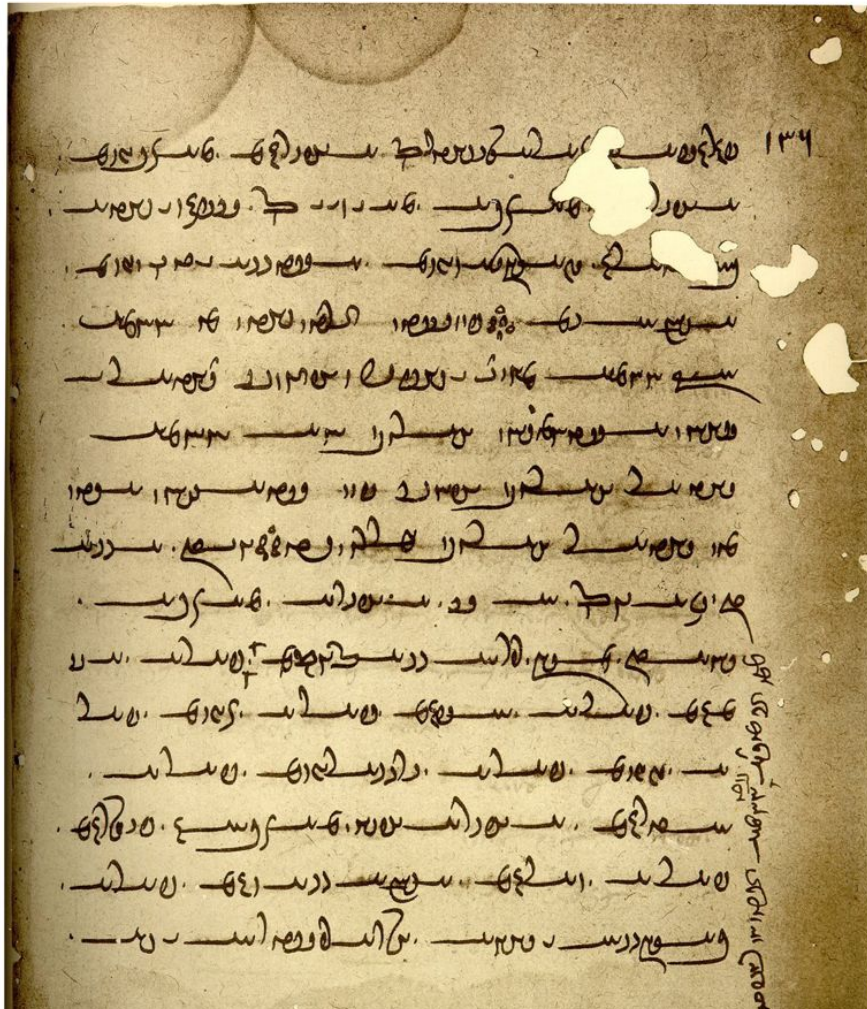
Kellens, Jean. 1998. Considérations sur l'histoire de l'Avesta. *Journal Asiatique* 286. 451–519.

Kotwal, Firoze Meherji & Kreyenbroek, Philip Gerrit. 1992–2009. *The Hērbedestān and Nērangestān*. 4 vols. Paris: Association pour l'Avancement des Études Iraniennes.

Cantera, Alberto. 2014. *Vers une édition de la liturgie longue zoroastrienne*. Paris: Association pour l'Avancement des Études Iraniennes.

Cantera, Alberto. 2016. The 'sacrifice' (*Yasna*) to Mazdā: its antiquity and variety. In Williams, Alan Vincent & Stewart, Sarah & Hintze, Almut (eds.), *The Zoroastrian flame. Exploring religion, history and tradition*, 61–76. London – New York: I.B. Tauris.

Cantera, Alberto. 2020. Litanies and rituals. The structure and position of the Long Liturgy within the Zoroastrian ritual system. In Redard, Céline & Ferrer-Losilla, Juanjo & Moein, Hamid & Swennen, Philippe (eds.), *Aux sources des liturgies indo-iraniennes*. 195–282, 377–400. Liège: Presses Universitaires de Liège.



Y19.1

Manuscript "J2" containing
the Avestan Yasna +
Pahlavi Yasna

ca. 1323 CE

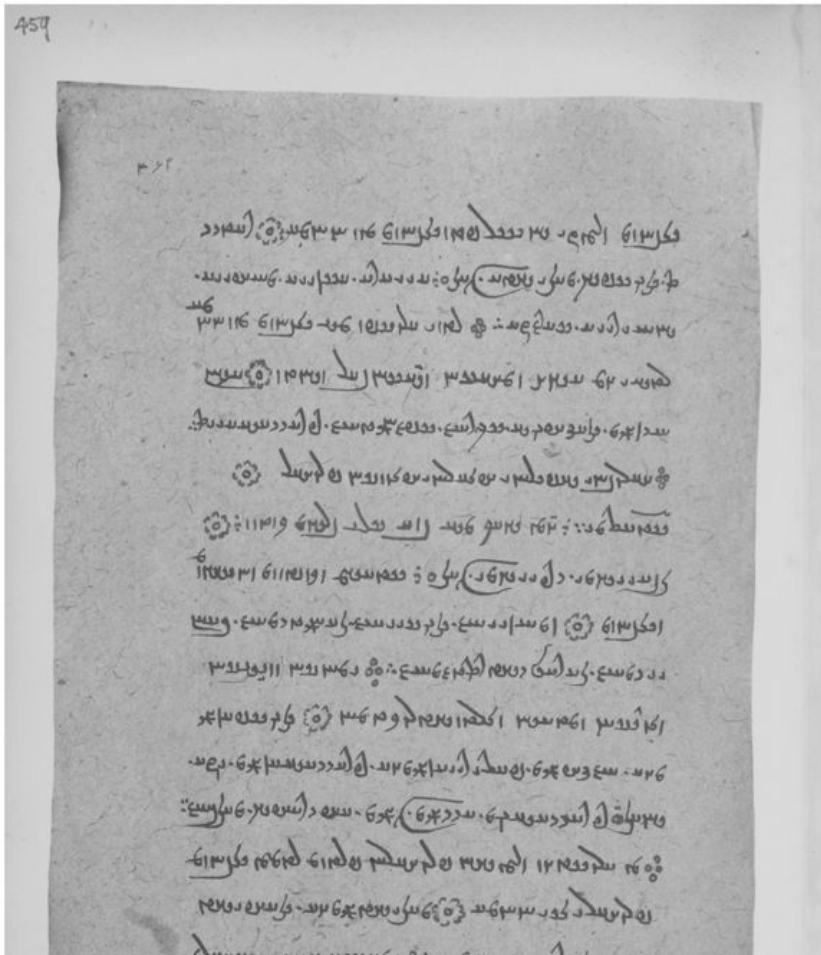
written in India, by a scribe
from Iran

ultimately deriving from
the combination of an
Avestan and a Pahlavi
manuscript ca. 1000 CE

Y19.2

ca. 380 folios = 780 pages

457



59.17

Manuscript "Pt4" containing the Avestan Yasna + Pahlavi Yasna + Ritual Directions

59.18

ca. 1780 CE

written in India

derives from the same first bilingual ms.

59.19

ca. 280 folios = 560 pages

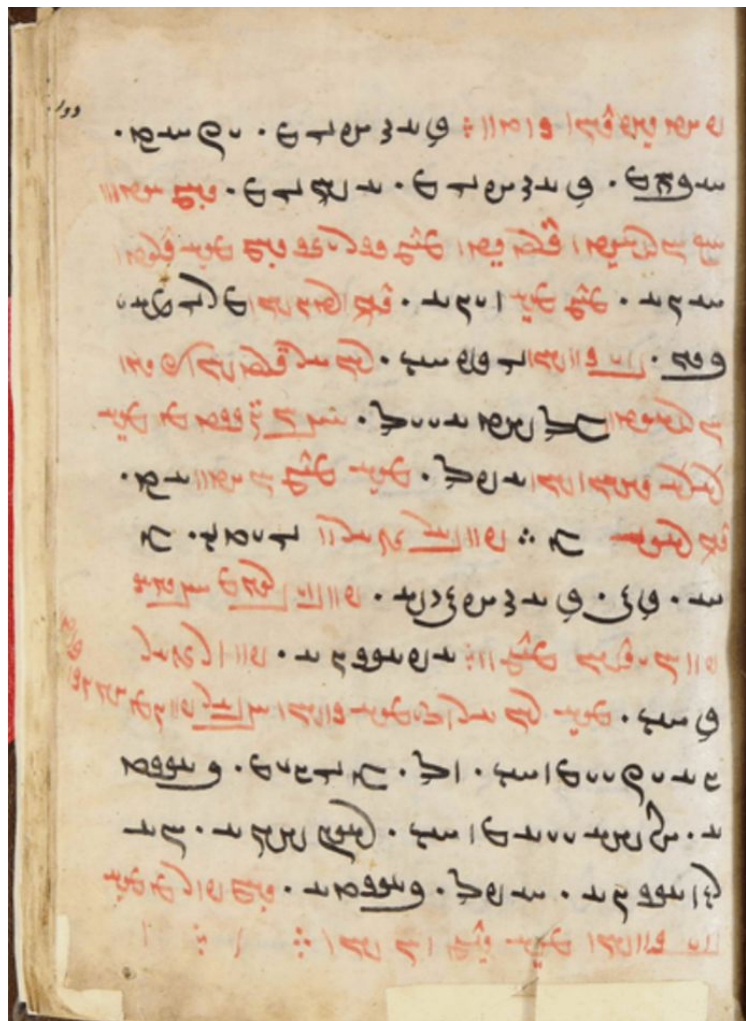
Part of **Yasna 68** in liturgical Visperad manuscript (Iran, 1607 CE)

Middle Persian ritual directions in red.

Picture and transliteration: [Avestan Digital Archive](#)

[CAB Edition](#) (jump to Y.68.16)

The actions can be watched in the [MUJA film](#).



Text and ritual action

Annotated performance of Yasna filmed in Mumbai, 2017 (Multimedia Yasna project, SOAS)

<https://muya-film.soas.hasdai.org/yasna/>

Y.27.1 Pounding of the Haōma twigs; *snaḡāi* formula

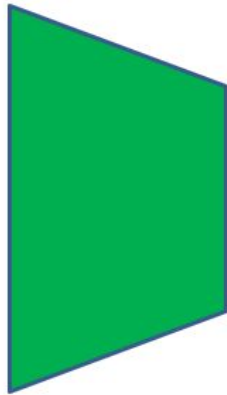
See also the encyclopedia.

(scheme after A. Cantera)

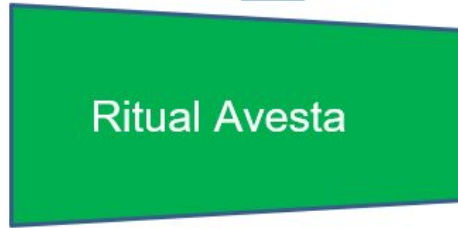


Achaemenid Period
(6th – 4th c. BCE)

Alexander



Parthian and Sasanian Periods
(3rd c. BCE – 7th c. CE)



Ritual Avesta

Islamization



Manuscripts
13th c. CE +

Modern Practice



Pahlavi version
joined with some
Av. texts

Avestan language: overview

Essential handbooks

Beekes, Robert Stephen Paul. 1988. *A grammar of Gatha-Avestan*. Leiden etc.: Brill.

Cantera, Alberto & Redard, Céline. 2023. *An introduction to Young Avestan: a manual for teaching and learning*. Translated from French into English by Richard Tahmaseb Niroumand. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz. [See also the literature listed there, pp. XVf.]

Hoffmann, Karl & Forssman, Bernhard. 2004. *Avestische Laut- und Flexionslehre. 2., durchgesehene und erweiterte Auflage*. Innsbruck: Institut für Sprachwissenschaft.

Kellens, Jean. 1984. *Le verbe avestique*. Wiesbaden: Reichert.

Kellens, Jean. 1974. *Les noms-racines de l'Avesta*. Wiesbaden: Reichert.

Martínez, Javier & de Vaan, Michiel. 2014. *Introduction to Avestan*. Leiden: Brill.

de Vaan, Michiel. 2003. *The Avestan vowels*. Amsterdam – New York: Rodopi.

Dictionaries

Bartholomae's Altiranisches Wörterbuch (1904):

<https://cab.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/exist/apps/cab/pages/tools/bartholomae.html>

For Old Avestan:

Kellens, Jean & Pirart, Éric. 1990. *Les textes vieil-avestiques. Volume II. Répertoires grammaticaux et lexique*. Vol. 2. 3 vols.
Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert.

Beyond this, the best way to go are glossaries of individual text editions.

Linguistic literature

Cantera, Alberto. 2017. The phonology of Iranian. In Klein, Jared S. & Joseph, Brian & Fritz, Matthias (eds.), *Handbook of comparative and historical Indo-European linguistics* (Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft 41), vol. 1, 481–503. Berlin – Boston: De Gruyter Mouton.

And in the same volume:

Skjærvø, Prods Oktor. 2017. The morphology of Iranian. Vol. 1, 503–549.

Jügel, Thomas. 2017. The syntax of Iranian. Vol. 1, 549–566.

Sadovski, Velizar. 2017. The lexicon of Iranian. Vol. 1, 566–599.

[Also the sections on “Proto-Indo-Iranian” in Vol. 3.]

Kümmel, Martin Joachim. Forthcoming. Avestan phonology. In Keydana, Götz & Dalpedri, Saverio & Skopeteas, Stavros (eds.), *A handbook of Ancient Indo-European grammars*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Peschl, Benedikt. Forthcoming. Avestan morphology – Avestan morphosyntactic structures. In Keydana, Götz & Dalpedri, Saverio & Skopeteas, Stavros (eds.), *A handbook of Ancient Indo-European grammars*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dialectal affiliation of Young Avestan

Certain YAv. sound changes suggest proximity to more recent Eastern Iranian languages:

- Pretonic **āja* > **aja* and **āya* > **aya*
 - Prllr. **scājā-* ‘shadow’ > YAv. *saiiā-*, Sogdian *sayā-k*, Pashto *siyā* vs. Middle Persian *sāyag*, Ved. *chāyā-*
 - Prllr. **nāyājā-* > YAv. *nauuāza-* ‘boatman’ with Sogd. *nawāz* vs. MP *nāwāz*, Ved. *nāvājā-*
- **īy* > **iy*:
 - Prllr. **jīyā-* ‘alive’ > YAv. *juua-*, Sogd. *zw-* vs. OP *jīva-*, Skt. *jīvā-*
- But not consistent in YAv.; perhaps rather effect of transmission by speakers of Sogd. or similar languages.

Phonology: vowels

Undoubtedly phonemic vowels in Old and Young Avestan:

/a/ < PIE *e, *o, (*a)

/i/ < *i

/u/ < *u

/ā/ < *eH, *oH, (*aH), *ē, *ō, *o (in open syllable)

/ī/ < *iH

/ū/ < *uH

Phonology: vowels

Previous allophones that became phonemic in YAv. or early during the transmission:

*/ē/ [e:] (</i>/e/ [e]) < *-a_i*

*/ō/ [o:] < *-ah < *-as, *-a_u*

*/ā/ [ə:] < *-anh < *-ans*

*/ã/ [ɔ:] < *āh < *ās*

Schwa (ə) commonly appears as allophone of /a/ before nasals. Phonemicity in early stages depends on one's view of *r.

A nasal vowel ą arises before N + fricative: ą became phonemic once N lost segmental status (thus in the transmitted text):

/man-s-ta/ → mąstā [mã:sta] 'he thought'

/man-θra-/ → mąθra- [mã:θrɛ-] 'formula, mantra'

(also allophone of /ā/ in some contexts)

Phonology: diphthongs (word-internal)

Bimoraic:

PIE *e_j, o_j > /ai/ — transmitted as *aē* or *ōi*

YAv.: *ōi* in closed, *aē* in open syllables; OAv.: also sometimes in open syllables

PIE *e_u, o_u > /au/ — transmitted as *aō*; in OAv. before final *š* also as *ēu*

Trimoraic:

PIE *ē_j, ō_j > *āi*; PIE *ē_u, *ō_u > *āu*

Consonants: general profile within IE

Satem-character (as Indic) (and PIE/Prllr *s > h):

satəm < Prllr. **ćatam* < PIE **ḱmtom*

azəm < Prllr. **aj^hám* < PIE **h₁eǵh₂om*

haca'ite < Prllr. **sačataj* < PIE **sek^we-toj*

Aspirated voiced merge with non-aspirated voiced stops:

YAv. *bara'ti* < **b^hereti* 'carries'

OAv. *dadā'tī* < **d^hed^hoh₁ti* 'I put' (Ved. *dád^hāti*)

YAv. *garəma-* < Prllr. **g^{wh}ormo-* (Ved. *gharmá-*)

Primary and Ilr. secondary palatals

Primary palatals (PIE *k', *g', g'h)

> Prllr. *č, *j, *j'h > Av. s, z

Secondary palatals (PIE *k^(w), *g^(w), *g^(wh) before *e, *i, *j) A

> Prllr. *č, *j, *j'h > Av. c, j

Phonology: stops and sibilants

	Labial	Dental	Palatal	Velar
Voiceless	/p/ [p]	/t/ [t]	/c/ [tʰ]	/k/ [k]
Voiced	/b/ [b]	/d/ [d]	/j/ [dʒ]	/g/ [g]

Palatal stops (< PIE $*k^{(w)}$, $*g^{(w)}$ before palatalising vowels) from some time onward affricates.

	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Palatal
Voiceless	/s/ [s]	/š/ [ʃ-ʂ]	(/ś/ [ɕ])
Voiced	/z/ [z]	/ž/ [ʒ-ʐ]	(* /ź/ [ʑ]?)

ś < $*c_j$ becomes phonemic in YAv.: OAv. /cĭāta-/ 'at ease' <šĭiāta-> > YAv. *šāta-*

Transmitted š < post-tonic $*-rt-$ (thus still in the Sogdian transmission of the Ašəm Vohū formula); loaned into Middle Persian first as *h/* (!) later as *š*.

Phonology: other fricatives

	Labial	Dental	Palatal	Velar	Labialized Velar
Voiceless	/f/ [f]	/θ/ [θ]	(x̣ [ç])	/x/ [x]	(x ^v [x ^w])
Voiced	β [β]	ð [ð]		ɣ [ɣ]	

(x̣ < pretonic *ḥj and x^v < initial *ḥɹ secondary)

/f/, /θ/, /x/ mostly < preconsonantal *p, *t, *k^(w)

but also *p, *t, *k before *H + vowel, hence phonemic

β, ð, ɣ allophones of *b*, *d*, *g* after voiced sounds (except nasals and voiced sibilants)

(in OAv. allophones of θ, x, f in limited contexts)

Phonology: Glottal fricatives and nasals

	Glottal	Palatalized Glottal	Glottal
Voiceless	<i>h, ηh</i> /h/ [h ~ h̃]	(<i>ḥh</i> /ḥi/ [ḥʲ])	(<i>hʷh</i> /hʷ/ [hʷ])

PIE *s > generally *h*

after *ā* nasalised to < *ηh* >; in transmitted YAv. also *ηh* < *Nh and *ḥh* < *ḥi and *hʷh* < *hʷi

Note that RUKI applies (as in Indic): PIE *s > Prllr. *š > Av. š following *r, *ū, *y, *k, *t̄, *j̄.

	Labial	Dental	Palatal	Velar
Voiceless	(/ṃ/ [ṃ])			
Voiced	/m/ [m]	/n/ [n]	(<i>ṇ</i> [ɲ])	(<i>n, ng</i> /ŋ/? [ŋ])

Voiceless nasal ṃ suggested by spelling of *hm with letter *ṃ* (but for which date?).

Homorganic preconsonantal nasal sign *ṃ*.

Allophone *ṇ* of *n* before /j̄/.

Phonology: other sonorants

	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal
Voiceless		(/r/ [r̥])	
Voiced	/w/ [w]	/r/ [r]	/j/ [j]

- /w/ spelled *v-* initially but *-uu-* internally; same with /j/: *y-* and *-ii-*
- (*r̥, *r̥ >) Prllr. *r̥ <ər(ə)> still phonemic? Possible counterargument from Old Avestan metre (M. Kümmel).
- Devoicing of *r after accented vowel (including ə in ər < *r̥) and before voiceless stop: *Ūrp*, *Ūrk*, *Ūrt* → spellings <hrp>, <hrk>, <š>:

*uṛko- (Ved. vṛka-) > vəhrka-

*k(w)ṛp- (Ved. kṛp-) > kəhrp-

*ṇ-mṛto- > aməša-

Laryngeal effects (1): Prllr. aspiration of voiceless stops

- 'path'

nom. *pént-oh₂-s > *paṅtā* gen. *pṛ̥nt-h₂-és > *paṅṅō*

- 'companion'

*sékw₂oj̥ > *haxa* (Ved. *sákhā*)

- 'chariot'

*roteh₂- → *roth₂o- > *raṅa-* (Ved. *rátha-*)

etc.

Laryngeal effects (2): hiatus in OAv.

PIE laryngeals not visible anymore in the Avestan texts as transmitted to us, but hiatus in the syllable-counting metres of the Gāthās still show their former presence in intervocalic position:

- e.g. nom.sg. *mazdā* < *mazdaH-h < *m̥s-d^heh₁-s: two syllables
- gen.sg. *mazdā* < *mazdaH-ah: three syllables

- 3sg. injunctive aorist *dā̃t* < *daH-t '(s)he put': one syllable
- 3sg. subjunctive aorist *dā̃t* < *daH-at '(s)he will put': two syllables

Laryngeal effects (3): Devoicing in YAv.

Table. Alternation of voiced and voiceless stops or fricatives in YAv.

	Pres. ‘to put, to give’		‘great, big’	
	Strong	Weak	Strong	Weak
(Pre-)Proto-Iranian	* <i>dadaH-</i>	* <i>dadH-</i>	* <i>majah-</i>	* <i>majh-</i>
Old Avestan	<i>dadā-</i>	<i>dad-</i>	* <i>mazā-</i>	<i>maz-</i>
Younger Avestan	<i>daδā-</i>	<i>daθ-</i>	<i>mazā-</i>	<i>mas-</i>
(Old) Persian	<i>dadā-</i>	* <i>daθ-?</i>	* <i>madā-?</i>	<i>maθ-</i>
Parthian	?	<i>dah-</i>	?	<i>mas-</i>

Kümmel, Martin Joachim. 2016. Is ancient old and modern new? Fallacies of attestation and reconstruction (with special focus on Indo-Iranian). In Goldstein, David M. et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the 27th Annual UCLA Indo-European Conference, Los Angeles, October 23rd and 24th, 2015*, 79–96. Bremen: Hempen.

“i- and u-Epenthesis”

Epenthetic *i* inserted before a consonant + *ř*, *ṛ* (and less regularly *ě*).

- Affected: *t*, *d*, *ḍ*, *n*, *r* (occasionally *p*, *b*, *β*)
- For “original Avestan”: probably allophonic palatalised consonants.
- During transmission: depalatalisation and development of a diphthong.

pa'tī < [patii] < /pati/ ‘against’

yaza'tē < [jazati:] < /ṛazai-tai/ ‘sacrifices’;

pa'rī < [parii] < /pari/

rinaxti < [rinaxti]

a'pi < [apii] < /api/ ‘over’

- Blocked by =*cā*, =*ciṭ* in the case of dental stops: *vīsa'ti=ca* /ṛisati=ca/ ‘and twenty’ vs. *vīsa'ti* ‘twenty’ /ṛisati/).

Epenthetic *u* before *r* followed by *ṣ*, *ṣ*

ha^uruua- < [har^wa-] /harṣa-/ ‘whole, all’

“Anaptyxis”

- Anaptyctic schwa inserted in various consonant clusters
- Regular after *r* but also found in other contexts (especially between stops and in clusters of three or more consonants)
- More frequent in OAv. than in YAv.

OAv. dat.sg *𐬀𐬎𐬭𐬀* /fθraj/ ‘for the father’

OAv. nom.sg *dug^ədā* /dugdā/ ‘daughter’

YAv. *dar^əya-* /darga-/ ‘long’

. (they are abundant)

Some post-Avestan vowel changes

- $\text{ə} > i$ in palatal environments:

YAv. acc.sg *vācim* / $\text{v}̥\text{ā}c\text{əm}$ / ‘voice’ (but OAv. *vācəm*)

YAv. acc.sg *mašīm* < / $\text{m}̥\text{ā}rtij\text{əm}$ / ‘man’

- $\text{ə} > u$ in a labial environment:

OAv. acc.sg *tanūm* < / tanu.əm / ‘body’

YAv. nom.sg *tūm* for < / tu.əm / ‘you’ (but OAv. *tuuēm*)

YAv. gen.sg *hū* < **huuū* for / hu.ą / (< / hu.ənh /) ‘of the sun’ (cf. Ved. *suvār-*)

- “Umlaut”

/ a / > e [ɛ] between two palatalized sounds: e.g. *uxšiiē'tī* / $\text{uxš}̥\text{jati}$ / ‘grows’

/ a / > o [ɔ] between a labial and an allophonically labialized sound (i.e. *r*, *š* preceding *u*): *po^urū* / paru / ‘much’.

Some Avestan words

caxra-	aspa-	vāxš	azaiti
ptā	fra-	dasa	brātar-
mərəti-	manah-	-ahiiā, -ahe	yākarə
nauua	ziiā	gāuš	mīžda-
dāuru	caθuuārō	xrūra-	puθra-
pasu-	duuar-	θriš	mərəzu-

Nominal declension

- Number: singular, dual, plural
- Case: nominative, vocative, accusative, genitive, dative, ablative, instrumental, locative
- Gender (mostly grammatical): masculine, feminine, neuter
- Formal criterion: thematic (stems ending in *-a-*) – athematic (stems ending in *-ǎ-*, *-ř-*, *-ǔ-*, or a consonant)
- Some special endings in the declension of pronouns

Case endings: *a*-stems

	Singular		Dual		Plural	
	m.	nt.	m.	nt.	m.	nt.
N	$-\bar{o}$ ($-as^\circ$)	$-\bar{a}m$	$-a$ ($-\bar{a}^\circ$)	$-e$	$-a$ ($-\bar{a}^\circ$) / $-\overset{\circ}{a}\eta h\bar{o}$	$-a$ ($-\bar{a}^\circ$)
V	$-a$					
A	$-\bar{a}m$	$-\bar{a}m$			$-a$ ($-as^\circ$) / $-\bar{a}$ ($-\bar{a}s^\circ$)	
G	$-a-he > -ahe$		$-aii\overset{\circ}{a}$ ($-aii\overset{\circ}{a}s^\circ$)		$-anqm$	
D	$-\bar{a}i$		$-a\bar{e}ibiia$		$-a\bar{e}ibii\bar{o}$ ($-a\bar{e}ibii\bar{a}s^\circ$)	
Ab	$-\bar{a}\bar{t}$ ($-\bar{a}a\bar{t}^\circ$) / $-\bar{a}\delta a$				$-\bar{a}i\bar{s}$	
I	$-a$ ($-\bar{a}^\circ$)				$-a\bar{e}\bar{s}u$ / $-a\bar{e}\bar{s}uua$	
L	$-e$ ($-a\bar{e}^\circ$) / $-aiia$					

Paradigm: *a*-stems

	Singular		Dual		Plural	
	m.	nt.	m.	nt.	m.	nt.
N	<i>aspō</i> (<i>aspas</i> °)	<i>šīiaōdnəm</i>	<i>aspa</i> <i>zasta</i>	<i>šīiaōdne</i> <i>saite</i>	<i>aspa,</i> <i>aspāṅhō</i>	<i>šīiaōdna</i>
V	<i>aspa ahura</i>					
A	<i>aspəm</i>	<i>šīiaōdnəm</i>	<i>aspa</i> <i>zasta</i>	<i>šīiaōdne</i>	<i>aspą</i> (<i>aspas</i> °), <i>aspō</i> (<i>aspōs</i> °) <i>haōmą(sca)</i> <i>aməṣə(sca)</i>	
G	<i>aspabe</i>		<i>aspaiiā</i> (<i>aspaiiās</i> °) <i>vīraiiā</i> (<i>zastaiiās</i> °)		<i>aspanəm</i>	
D	<i>aspāi ahurāi</i>		<i>aspaēibiia</i>		<i>aspaēibiiō</i> (<i>aspaēibiias</i> °) <i>nmānaēibiiō</i> (<i>aməṣaēibiias</i> °)	
Ab	<i>aspāt</i> (<i>aspāt</i> °) / <i>aspāda</i> <i>nmānāt</i> / <i>xšaθrāda</i>					
I	<i>aspa</i> (<i>aspā</i> °)				<i>aspāiš šīiaōdnāiš</i>	
L	<i>aspe</i> (<i>aspe</i> °) / <i>aspaiia</i> <i>nmāne</i> / <i>zastaiia</i>				<i>aspaēšu</i> / <i>aspaēšuua</i> <i>vīraēšu</i> / <i>raōdaēšuua</i>	

(Old) Avestan verbal categories

aspect stem	tense – mood	affix	endings
imperfective ("present")	unmarked ("injunctive") present indicative subjunctive optative imperative past ("imperfect")	– – -a- -iiā-/i-ř – prefix a- ("augment")	non-present ("secondary") present ("primary") either non-present imperative non-present
perfective ("aorist")	unmarked ("injunctive") subjunctive optative imperative past ("aorist indicative")	– -a- -iiā-/i-ř – prefix a- ("augment")	non-present either non-present imperative non-present
perfect	indicative perfect subjunctive optative past ("pluperfect")	– -a- -iiā-/i-ř prefix a- ("augment")	perfect either non-present non-present

OAv. aspect system: imperfective (“present”) stem

Verb *dā-* 1) ‘to put, place, create; 2) ‘to give’

prs. stem *dadā-*

aor. stem *dā-*

Present stem:

<i>paⁱri</i>	<i>x^vaētāuš</i>	<i>aⁱriiamanascā</i>	<i>dadaⁱtī</i>
/pari	h <u>a</u> i <u>t</u> au <u>š</u>	ari <u>a</u> manas= <u>ca</u>	dadati/
around	family.ABL	clan.ABL= <u>and</u>	put.IPFV.3PL.PRS

‘They are keeping (me) at a distance from (my) family and clan.’ (OAv., Y 46.1)

Past of imperfective stem

<i>yā</i>	<i>vā</i> (...)	<i>nāmąm</i>	<i>dadāt</i> (...)	<i>hiiat</i>	<i>vā</i>
/iā	=uāh (...)	<i>nāmān</i>	<i>dadāt</i> (...)	<i>iat</i>	=uāh
REL.ACC.PL.N	=2PL.DAT	name(N).ACC.PL	give.IPFV.3SG	when	=2PL.ACC
	<i>vanhudā</i>		<i>dadāt</i>		
	uāhuda.ah		dadāt/		
	providing_good_things.ACC.PL		put.IPFV.3SG		

‘the names which he gave you (...) when he was making you into providers of good things’
(OAv., Y 38.4)

Perfective (“aorist”) stem – past tense reading

<i>ahurəm</i>	<i>mazdąm</i>	<i>yā</i>	<i>gąmcā</i>	<i>ašąmcā</i>	<i>dāt</i>
/ahuram	mazdām	jah	gām=ca	ərtam=ca	dā-t/
Ahura.ACC	Mazdā.ACC	REL.NOM.SG.M	cow.ACC=and	order.ACC=and	put.PFV-3SG

‘Ahura Mazdā, who put in place the cow and (cosmic) order’ (OAv., Y 37.1)

Perfective stem + non-present ending (injunctive) – modal reading

dāⁱdī (...)

/dā-di (...)

give.PFV-2SG.IMP

dāⁱdī (...)

dā-di (...)

give.PFV-2SG.IMP

dā^ostū (...)

dā-s=tū (...)/

give.PFV-2SG=EMPH

‘Give (...) ! Give (...) ! Indeed, give (...) !’ (OAv., Y 28.7)

Perfective stem – present reading (performative)

<i>taṭ</i>	<i>aṭ</i>	<i>var^amaⁱdī</i> (...)	<i>hiiṭ</i> <i>ī</i>	<i>maⁱnimadicā</i>
/tat	at	uarmadi (...)	ḡat =ī	manīmadi=ca
DEM.ACC.N	CONN	choose.PFV.1PL.MID	that =DEM.ACC.PL.N	think.PFV.OPT.1PL.MID=and
<i>vaōcōimācā</i>		<i>var^azimācā</i>	<i>yā</i>	<i>hātqm</i>
uaucaḡma=ca		uazīma=ca	ḡā	hatām
speak.PFV.OPT.1PL=and		perform.PFV.OPT.1PL=and	REL.NOM.PL.N	be.IPFV.PTCP.GEN.PL
<i>+šiiāō^θnanqm</i>	<i>vahištā</i>	<i>ḡiiāṭ</i>	<i>ubōibiiā</i>	<i>ahubiiā</i>
ḡau ^θ nānām	uahištā	hḡāt	ubaḡbḡā	ahubḡā/
action.GEN.PL	best.NOM.PL.N	be.IPFV.OPT.3SG	both.DAT.DU	existence.DAT.DU

‘We (herewith) choose this (...): that we may think and speak and perform those actions which, of all those possible, may be the best ones for both existences.’ (OAv., Y 35.3)

Shifts in the verbal system from OAv. to YAv.

	ipfv. stem	pfv. stem (moribund in YAv.)
+ NPE	OAv. temporally unspecified ipfv. (“present injunctive”) >> YAv. simple past	OAv. temporally unspecified pfv. (“aorist injunctive”) >> moribund in YAv.
+ NPE + augment <i>a-</i>	OAv. ipfv. with explicit past tense marking (“imperfect”) – very rare >> YAv. remote past / pluperfect (rare)	OAv. pfv. with explicit past tense marking (“aorist indicative”) – rare ⁴⁹ >> unattested in YAv.⁵⁰
+ PE	OAv. ipfv. with present time reference >> YAv. aspectually unmarked present tense	(The pfv. stem is never combined with primary endings, except in the subjunctive mood.)

Participles

- Derived from tense-aspect stem:
 - active ptcp. in *-aṅt-/at-*
 - middle ptcp. in *-mna-, -āna-*
 - perfect ptcp. in *-uuāh-/uš-*
- Derived from root:
 - resultative ptcp. in *-ta-*

Samples from Old Avesta

Old Avesta: Text editions / translations

Humbach, Helmut. 1991. *The Gāthās of Zarathushtra and the other Old Avestan texts*. 2 vols. Heidelberg: Winter.

Insler, Stanley. 1975. *The Gāthās of Zarathustra*. Leiden: Brill.

Kellens, Jean & Pirart, Éric. 1988–1991. *Les textes vieil-avestiques*. 3 vols. Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert.

Kellens, Jean. 2020. *Études avestiques et mazdéennes vol. 6. Lecture sceptique et aventureuse de la Gāthâ uštāuuaitī*. Paris: de Boccard.

Kellens, Jean. 2021. *Études avestiques et mazdéennes vol. 7. Essai sur la Gāthâ spəntā.mainiiu*. Leuven etc.: Peeters.

Kellens, Jean. 2022. *Études avestiques et mazdéennes vol. 9. Complémentarité des deux dernières Gāthās (Y51 et Y53-54.1) (Persika 24)*. Leuven etc.: Peeters.

Narten, Johanna. 1986. *Der Yasna Haptanḥāiti*. Wiesbaden: Reichert. [Also: Hintze, Almut. 2007. *A Zoroastrian liturgy. The Worship in Seven Chapters (Yasna 35–41)*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.]

Old Avesta: corpus overview

The Old Avesta is embedded into the Young Avestan “Long Liturgy” (Yasna etc.).

Yasna 27.13: *Ahuna vairiia* (*Yaθā ahū vairiā*) formula: the original first stanza of the AG.

Hāitis (“sections”) 28–34: *Ahunauuaitī Gāθā* (AG)

Y35–41: *Yasna Haptaṅhāiti* (YH) (+ YAv. appendix Y 42)

Y43–46: *Uštauuaitī Gāθā* (UG)

Y47–50: *Spəṅtamaīniiu Gāθā* (SG)

Y51: *Vohuxšaθrā Gāθā* (VoG) (+ YAv. Y 52)

Y53: *Vahištōišti Gāθā* (VaG)

Y54.1: *Airiāman Išiiā* formula: formally the final stanza of the VaG, mirroring the Ahuna Vairiia formula.

Old Avesta: internal structure

Older view (e.g. Bartholomae 1905):

- Hāiti as the basic unit intended by the poet
- Hāitis secondarily arranged into Gāthās based on formal criteria (metre).

More recent view (Hintze 2002, Kellens 2007):

- Both Hāiti and Gāthā are original units.

Kellens 2013 (etc.):

- Each Gāthā is a self-contained liturgy meant to accompany a short Avestan proto-ritual (Kellens).

Also the entire Old Avesta originally intended as unitary composition (Skjærvø 2015, Hintze)? At least meaningfully arranged by later redactors to tell the history of the world from creation to final renovation (Skjærvø 2007)

Old Avestan corpus available in the present shape to the MAv./YAv. redactors (apparently besides other, now lost OAv. texts).

Collection fixated by the Young Avestan period and integrated + re-used in the context of the “Long Liturgy”.

The Gāthās: what are these texts?

Older lines of interpretation in Western scholarship:

- Texts containing the teachings as well as information about the life of the prophet Zaratuštra.
- Directed primarily to humans (e.g. Bartholomae 1905: „Verspredigten“, poetic sermons).

Humbach 1959 (similarly Insler 1975):

- Texts directed towards the gods.
- Emphasis on Indo-Iranian liturgical heritage: formal (!) and stylistic agreement with Rigvedic hymns.
- Expression of innovative teachings of historical prophet Zaratuštra.

Kellens 2013 (etc.):

- Each Gāthā originally a self-contained liturgy to accompany proto-versions of rituals similar as the YAv. ones (incl. Haōma and animal sacrifices).
- “Speculative”, innovative treatment of inherited liturgical schemes.
- Complex poetic techniques: allusive style, “kennings”, ellipsis, concatenation (see also M. Schwartz).
- Zaratuštra and other persons mentioned are symbolic characters carrying telling names

The Gāthās: linguistic problems of interpretation

Linguistic problems:

- rare words
- phonetic deformations
- difficult interpretation of verbal forms
- frequent person switches

Stylistic devices that make the Gāthās a challenging text to read:

- hyperbaton (discontinuous word-order)
- ellipsis of words
- “sleśa” (intentionally ambiguous forms)
- allusion to well-known entities by metaphors.

The Gāthās: extra-linguistic problems

- Compared to Young Avesta, stage of development of the world-view underlying the Gāthās remains elusive
- OAv. core concepts that were going to define also later Zoroastrianism:
 - double dualism (material s. mental world; order/truth vs. deceit)
 - parts of the Zoroastrian pantheon, with abstract concepts as deities
 - central position of deity Ahura Mazdā
- Points of debate:
 - presence of universal eschatology
 - mythical vs. present-tense (“psychological”) reading of many passages

Y.45.2: The fundamental difference between the two *maiñiu-*

aṭ frauuaxšiiā aṅhēuš maiñiiū pouruiiē
yaiiā spañiiā ūitī mrauuat yēm aṅgrəm
nōiṭ nā manā nōiṭ sēṅghā nōiṭ xratauuō
naēdā varanā nōiṭ uxδā naēdā śīiaōṭanā
nōiṭ daēnā nōiṭ uruuqṇō hacaiṅtē

at frauaxšjā ahauš manjū parujaj
jajāh spanjāh uti mrauat yam ahram
najt nā manāh najt sanhā najt xratauah
najdā varnā najt uxtā najdā čjauṅnā
najt dajanā najt ruānah hacantaj

Y.45.2: The fundamental difference between the two *maiñiiu-*

aṭ frauuaxšiiā aṅhāuš maiñiiū pouruiiē
yaiiā spañiiā ūitī mrauuat yām aṅgrām
nōiṭ nā manā nōiṭ sēṅghā nōiṭ xratauuō
naēdā varanā nōiṭ uxḍā naēdā śīiaōḡanā
nōiṭ daēnā nōiṭ uruuqṇō hacaintē

aṭ ‘then, now, but, next’
fra-vac- (future prs. st. *fra-uuaxšīia-*) ‘to speak out about’
ahu- (*aṅhu-*) m. ‘existence’
mañiiu- m. ‘impulse, force’, “spirit”
po^uruiia- ‘first; what is first’, n. noun ‘foundation, beginning’
ya- (m.-n.) / *yā-* (f.) rel. pron.
spañīiah- comparative of *spəṅta-* ‘bounteous, beneficent’
ūi^lti ‘thus’ (with following direct speech)
mrauu-/mru- ‘to speak’
aṅgra- ‘evil’
nōiṭ ‘not’

at frauaxšjā ahauš manjū paruṅaj
jaṅāh spanjāh uti mrauat yam ahram
naṭ nā manāh naṭ sanhā naṭ xratauḡah
naṭdā varnā naṭ uxtā naṭdā čiaṅḡnā
naṭ dajanā naṭ ruuānah hacantaj

nā unclear; particle? du. possessive pron. *na-?*
manah- n. ‘thinking’
sēṅgha- m. ‘pronouncement, teaching’
xratu- m. ‘acumen, mental power’
naēdā ‘nor’
var^ana- m. ‘preference, choice’
uxḍa- n. ‘utterance’
śīiaōḡ^ana- n. ‘action’
daēnā- f. (**dajHanā-*) ‘vision’
^uruuan- m. ‘soul’
hac- (prs. st. *haca-*) middle inflection ‘follow, join, go together’

Case attraction of relative pronouns

<i>yā</i>	<i>mōi</i>	<i>vīduuā̃</i>	<i>vaōcaṭ</i>
/i _h	=ma _i	u _i duā _h	u _a u _c aṭ
REL.NOM.SG.M	=1SG.DAT	knowing.NOM.SG.M	say.PFV.3SG
<i>haⁱθīm</i>	<i>mḡθrām</i>	<i>yim</i>	<i>ha^uruuatātō</i>
haθ _i am	manθram	i _a m	haruatātah/
true.ACC.SG.M	formula(M).ACC	REL.ACC.SG.M	wholeness.GEN

‘the knowing one who tells me the true formulation which is the one of wholeness’ (OAv., Y 31.6)

mḡθrām yim (acc.sg.m) *ha^uruuatātō* for **mḡθrām yā* (nom.sg.m) *ha^uruuatātō*

Relative pronoun as specific determiners

<i>aiiā</i>	<i>maniuuā</i>	<i>var^atā</i>	<i>yā</i>
/aiāh	manju.āh	uarta	iah
DEM.GEN.DU.M	force(M).GEN.DU	choose.PFV.3SG.MID	REL.NOM.SG.M
<i>drāguuā</i>	<i>acištam</i>	<i>vər^əziiō</i>	<i>ašəm</i>
drugūāh	acištam	uərziāh	ərtam
deceitful.NOM.SG.M	worst.ACC.SG.N	do.IPFV.PTCP.NOM.SG.M	order.ACC.SG
	<i>ma^hniiuš</i>	<i>spāništō</i>	
	manjuš	spaništah/	
	force(M).NOM.SG	most_lifegiving.NOM.SG.M	

‘Among these two forces, the deceitful one chose to do what is worst, (whereas) the most life-giving force chose order.’ (OAv., Y 30.5)

Y.44.5: Ahura Mazda as establisher of both light and darkness

taṭ ʒβā pərəsā əraš mōi vaōcā ahurā
kā huuāpā raōcāscā dāt tāmāscā
kā huuāpā xʷafnəmcā dāt zaēmācā
kā yā ušā arəm.piʒβā xšapācā
yā manaōθrīš cazdōŋghuuəntəm arəθahiiā

Y.44.5: Ahura Mazda as establisher of both light and darkness

taṭ ʒβā pərəsā əraš mōi vaōcā ahurā
kā huuāpā raōcāscā dāt tāmāscā
kā huuāpā xʷafnəmcā dāt zaēmācā
kā yā ušā arəm.piʒβā xšapācā
yā manaōθrīš cazdōŋghuuantəm arəθahiiā

ha-, *ta-* (m.-n.) / *hā-*, *tā-* (f.) dem. pron. with weak deixis
‘this, that’

ʒβā ‘you’ encl. acc.sg

fras- (prs. st. *pərəsa-*) ‘to ask’

əraš ‘straightly, truly’

mōi encl. pron. ‘for/of me’ (gen-dat.sg.)

vac- (aor. st. *vaōca-*) ‘to tell, say’

ahura- ‘lord’

ka- (m.-n-) / *kā-* (f.) ‘who, which?’

huuāpah- ‘artisan’

raōcah- n. ‘(heavenly) light’

=*cā* ‘and’

dā- (= aor. st.) ‘to put, create; give’

tāmah- n. ‘darkness’

xʷafna- m. ‘sleep’

zaēman- n. ‘awakeness’

ušah- f. ‘dawn’

arəm.piʒβā- f. ‘noon’

xšapan- f. ‘night’

manaōtar-, f. *manaōθrī-* ‘the one who reminds,
reminding’ (?)

cazdōŋghuuant- ?

arəθa- ‘goal, aim, duty’

Y.51.8: the fate of the deceitful and of the maintainers of order

aṭ zī tōi vaxšiiā mazdā vīdušē zī nā mruiiāṭ
hiiāṭ akōiiā drəguuāitē uštā yē aṣəm dādrē
huuō zī mąṣrā šiiātō yē vīdušē mrauuaitī

Y.51.8: the fate of the deceitful and of the maintainers of order

aṭ zī tōi vacšiiā mazdā *vīdušē zī nā mruiiāṭ*
hiiāṭ akōiiiā drəguuāitē *uštā yē aṣəm dādrē*
huuō zī maṣrā šiiātō *yē vīdušē mrauuaitī*

dar- (pf. st. *dādr-*)

drəguuāṭ-

huuō

maṣrān-

mrauu-/mrū-, prs. st. *mrauu-/mrū-*

šiiāta-

tōi

ušti- f.

vac- (future prs. st. *vacšiiā-*)

vīduš-

nar- m.

zī

to fix, to hold

adherent of *drūj-*

that one, he (nom.sg.m)

possessor of the sacred formula

to speak

happy, blissful, at ease

of/to/for you (encl. gen-dat.sg)

wish

to speak

knowing

man

because; namely; even if

Features of Old Avestan (vs. Young Avestan) — phonology

- (1) In OAv., all final vowels are long (not just in monosyllabic words, as in YAv.). This must be an effect of the specific way in which OAv. texts were recited by YAv. speakers.
- (2) Proto-Iranian *-ah > OAv. -ā (but YAv. -ō). Because the OAv. corpus was transmitted by YAv. speakers, -ā was mostly replaced by -ō. But -ā remains regular in pronouns.
- (3) Different treatment of diphthongs:
 - Proto-Iranian *-aj- > Av. -aē-, -ōi- depending on the context, -ōi- more common in OAv.; word-final *-aj > OAv. -ōi (or under YAv. influence -ē), YAv. -e.
 - Proto-Iranian *-au- > YAv. -aō-, but OAv. -āu- (word-finally *-au > YAv. -ō, OAv. -uuō).
 - In all cases, the YAv. diphthongs are also found in OAv. besides the distinct OAv. ones
- (4) YAv. change *-ja# > -e has not taken place in OAv.: gen. sg. of a-stems -ahiiā vs. YAv. -ahe. Under the influence of the YAv. redactors, -ahē is also found.
- (5) Voiced plosives (g, d, b) are generally preserved in OAv., unlike in YAv., where they have turned to fricatives (ɣ, ð, β) in many contexts (except at the beginning of a word, after n, m and after z, ž)

Old Avestan vs. Young Avestan (phonology)

- (6) Frequent lengthening of ə to ē. If lengthened or not may depend on the passage at hand, it is not a strict rule.
- (7) A variety of vowels incl. ə, ē, i, a, ō, u can serve as “anaptyctic vowels” (vowels inserted into groups of consonants) — in YAv. it is mostly ə and i. Generally, anaptyctic vowels are more frequent in OAv. than in YAv.
- (8) Acc.pl. ending of a-stems: Proto-Iranian *-anh > YAv. -a, -ē, but OAv. -ēng
- (9) Proto-Iranian *d̥- > YAv. t̥-, but OAv. duu- and daib- (before i)
- (10) Different representation of consonant groups involving Indo-Iranian *-s- (Proto-Iranian *-h-):

Iir.	*-asa-	*-ansa-	*-as̥ja-	*-as̥ya-	*-asra-
YAv.	-aṅha-	-aṅha-	-aṅ̥ha-	-aṅ̥ ^y ha-	-aṅ(h)ra-
OAv.	-aṅha-	-aṅgha-	-ahiia- -ax̥iia-	-ahuua- -ax ^y a ⁻¹⁵	-ṅr-

Martínez-Porro, Jaime. 2015. The Indo-Iranian group *sr/a_a in the Avestan manuscripts. *Estudios Iranios y Turanios* 2. 151–162.

- (11) “Bartholomae’s Law” retained more consistently in OAv.:
 PIE *h₁eug^{(w)h}-to > Ilr. *aug^h-ta > OAv. aōg^adā, but YAv. aōxta ‘said’ with restitution of -ta-.

Features of Old Avestan (vs. Young Avestan) — (morphology)

- (12) Systematic distinction between imperfect stem (“present stem”) of verbs (denotes extended/ongoing action) and perfective stem (“aorist stem”, denotes completed action).
- (13) “Injunctives” (verb forms with “secondary endings” 1sg -əm, 3sg -t̥ etc.) do not necessarily express past tense as in YAv. They are unmarked with regard to tense.
- (14) In OAv., the ablative sg. marker -t̥ only appears in a-stem declension (edning -āt̥); in YAv. -t̥ is used also in the abl.sg. of other stem types, e.g. u-stem abl. sg. OAv. əuš̥ (= genitive sg.), YAv. -aōt̥.
- (15) In the 1pl and 2pl personal pronouns, OAv. distinguishes between dat.-abl. nē, vē and acc. nā, vā. YAv. uses nō, vō for both dat.-abl. and acc.
- (16) 3sg masculine personal (or demonstrative) pronoun: YAv. hō < *hah, but OAv. huuō < *haṷ ‘he, that one’.

The five Gāthās and their metres

a. Ahunauuaitī Gāθā (Y 28–34): $3 \times (7 + 9 [8/10])$ syllables

yaθā ahū vairiio | aθā ratuš ašātcīṭ hacā (Ahuna Vairiia formula, line a)

b. Uštatauaitī Gāθā (Y 43–46): $5 \times (4 [3/5] + 7 [6/8])$

uštā ahmāi | yahmāi uštā kahmāicīṭ (Y 43.1.a)

c. Spəntamaiīiū Gāθā (Y 47–50): $4 \times$ the Uštatauaitī type

spəntā mainiū | vahištācā manaṅhā (Y 47.1.a)

d. Vohuxšaθrā Gāθā (Y 51): $3 \times (7 + 7)$

vohū xšaθrəm vairīm | bāgəm aibī.bairištəm (Y 51.1.a)

e. Vahištōišti Gāθā (Y 53): roughly $2 \times (7 + 5)$ followed by $2 \times (7 + 7 + 5)$

vahištā īštiš srāuuī | zaraθuštrahē ...

ašāṭ hacā ahurō | mazdā yauuōi vīspāi.ā | huuaṅhəuuīm

OAv. metre: traditional assumption

- Previous research assumed that heavy and light syllables should be counted as in Vedic and Greek:
 - Heavy: ∇.C or ∇C.C
 - Light: ∇.C
- Results in lack of recognisable patterns in the alternation

Elfsilbler

(Avestisch $\times \times \times \times \mid \times \times \times \times \underline{\underline{}} \times \parallel$ $< \times \times \times \times \mid \underline{\underline{}} \times \times \times \times \times \parallel ?$)

Vedisch $\times \cup \underline{\underline{}} \cup \mid \cup \cup \cup - \cup - \times \parallel$

$\times \cup \underline{\underline{}} \cup \times \mid \underline{\underline{}} \cup - \cup - \times \parallel$

Griechisch $- \cup - \times - \cup \cup - \cup - \times \parallel$

OAv. metre according to M. Kümmel (1)

- Hypothesis: OAv. syllabification closer to “Sogdian model” than to Vedic
 - VTC (T = obstruent) → counts as one mora (“light syllable”): e.g. V.θr, V.pt, V.xt, V.str usw.
 - VrC, VNC → two morae (“heavy”)
- Results in a much higher number of potentially light syllables in the OAv. corpus
- Emergence of some preferred patterns, e.g. in 11-syllable (4 + 7) line:
 - Closing sequence u u x
 - iambic pattern (u – u –) in four syllables before caesura
- Certain tendencies in the metre become even stronger if the “light” reading of VTC is merely optional

OAv. metre according to M. Kümmel (3)

Y. 44,3 *taṭ. θβā. pərəsā. ərəš.mōi. vaocā. ahurā.*
kasnā. zqθā. +ptā. ašahiiā. +paouruiiō.
kasnā. x^vəṅg. +strāmcā. dāt. aduuānəm.
kā. yā. mā. uxšieiti. nərəfsaiti. θβaṭ.
tāciṭ. mazdā. vasəmī. aniiācā. vīduiē.

ta_μ.t θwā_{μμ}. pə_μ.rsa_μ. | ə_μ.rš may_{μμ}. waw_{μμ}.ca_μ. a_μ.hu_μ.ra_μ. ||
ka_μ.snā_{μμ}. zan_{μμ}.θā_{μμ}. | ptā_μ. ə_μ.rta_μ.hya_μ. pa_μ.rwi_μ.yə_μ.h ||
ka_μ.snā_{μμ}. hu_μ.wəṅ_{μμ}.h | stra_μ.am_{μμ}.ca_μ. dā_{μμ}.t a_μ.dwā_{μμ}.nə_μm_μ. ||
kə_μ.h yā_{μμ}. ma_μ.ā_{μμ}.h | u_μ.xšya_μ.ti_μ. nə_μ.rfsa_μ.ti_μ. θwa_μ.t ||
tā_{μμ}.ci_μ.t ma_μ.zdā_{μμ}. | wa_μ.smi_μ. a_μ.nyā_{μμ}.ca_μ. wi_μ.dwa_μy_μ. ||

VT.C --, ̣̣ | --, -̣, ̣̣ ×
--, -- | ̣, ̣-̣, -̣ ×
--, ̣- | ̣-̣, -, -- ×
-, -, ̣- | -̣̣, -̣-, ×
--, -- | -̣, --̣, - ×

V.TC ̣, -, ̣̣ | ̣-, -̣, ̣̣ ×
̣-, -- | ̣, ̣̣̣, ̣̣ ×
̣-, ̣- | ̣-̣, -, ̣- ×
̣, -, ̣- | ̣̣̣, ̣̣̣, ×
-̣, ̣- | ̣̣, ̣-̣, ̣ ×

V.T.C ̣-, ̣̣ | ̣-, -̣, ̣̣ ×
̣-, -- | ̣, ̣-̣, ̣̣ ×
̣-, ̣- | ̣-̣, -, ̣- ×
̣, -, ̣- | ̣̣̣, -̣̣, ×
-̣, ̣- | ̣̣, ̣-̣, ̣ ×

The Gāthās and Zaratuštra (1)

Association between Gāthās and Zaratuštra in Young Avesta:

- Y.57 – “the five Gāthās of Zaratuštra” first recited in the material world by the god Sraōša:

[sraōšō] yō paōiriiō gāθā frasrāuuaiiaṭ yā paṇca spitāmahe ašaōnō zaratuštrahe

- Y9.1 (Hōm Stōd):

zaratuštrēm ... gāθāasca srāuuaiiaṇtēm

- Specific link with the OAv. *Ahuna Vairiia* formula:

tūm paōiriiō zaratuštra ahunēm vairīm frasrāuuaiiō

- V.19.10: Gāthic refrain verse (Y44) placed in Z.'s mouth

frāmraōṭ ašauua zaratuštrō taṭ θβā pərəsā arš mē vaōca ahura

The Gāthās and Zaraθuštra (2)

But:

- No “author” mentioned in the texts themselves. A figure *zaraθuštra*- sometimes speaks in first person, sometimes is mentioned in the third.
- No explicitly claimed “authorship” in Young Avesta either.
- Z. as a mythical, semi-divine figure that precedes the creation of the material world (Y.19)
- Idea of the “creation” of the Staōta Yesñiiia (which include the Gāthās) by Ahura Mazdā: Y55 *yaθa hīš fradaθaṭ mazdā*
- Gāthās themselves object of veneration (e.g., at the end of the recitation of each Gāthā, Vidēvdād 19.38 etc.).
- No mention of Gāthās in Pahlavi passages about Z.

Good summary on the topic: Jamison, Stephanie Wroth. 2007. *The R̥gveda between two worlds. Le R̥gveda entre deux mondes. Quatre conférences au Collège de France en mai 2004*. Paris: de Boccard.

<i>yim</i>	<i>vīspāiš</i>	<i>paⁱtišmarənte</i>	<i>yāiš</i>	<i>spəntahe</i>
/i ^h am	u ^h ispāiš	patišmarantai ^h	i ^h āiš	spantah ^h ia
REL.ACC.SG.M	all.INS.PL	recall.3PL.PRS.MID	REL.INS.PL	lifegiving.GEN.SG
	<i>maⁱñiiəuš</i>	<i>dāmən</i>		
	man ^h iauš	dāmān/		
	spirit.GEN.SG	creature.NOM.PL		

‘(the god Tištriia) whom all creatures of the Life-giving Spirit recall’ (YAv., Yt 8.48)

Nom-acc.pl + ins.pl concordance with

<i>yim</i>	<i>vīspāiš</i>	<i>paⁱtišmarənte</i>	<i>yāiš</i>	<i>spəntahe</i>
/i ^h am	u ^h ispāiš	patišmarantai ^h	i ^h āiš	spantah ^h ia
REL.ACC.SG.M	all.INS.PL	recall.3PL.PRS.MID	REL.INS.PL	lifegiving.GEN.SG
<i>maⁱñiiəuš</i>	<i>dāmən</i>			
man ^h iauš	dāmān/			
spirit.GEN.SG	creature.NOM.PL			

‘(the god Tištriia) whom all creatures of the Life-giving Spirit recall’ (YAv., Yt 8.48)

Reading Frawardīn Yašt (Yt.13)
(Hymn to the Frauuaši-s)

Yašts

- Hymns to (and) about individual deities
- Collection of ca. 21 Yašts: recent, secondary (in the current shape)
- Frawardīn Yašt (Yt to the Frauuāšis): longest, and one of the “great” Yašts
- Ritual usage:
 - 1) (in antiquity): “Bayān Yasn” – Long Liturgy (“Yasna”) incorporating the performance of one or several Yašts
 - 2) “Drōn Liturgy” – basically Yasna 3–8 + performance of a Yašt
- “Metre”:
 - Tendency: 8-syllabic lines, sometimes over prolonged sections
 - Interrupted, e.g., by formulaic technical phrases, epithets ...
 - “stock octosyllabique” (Kellens)
 - Stress-count also plays a role? (Lazard, connection to Parthian)
 - Not systematically investigated

Yt13.1 *mraōt̄ ahurō mazdā^o spitamāi zaraθuštrāi*
aēuua tē zāuuarə aōjasca
x^varənō auuasca rafnasca
framrauua ərəzuiuō spitama
yaṭ ašaōnq̄m frauuašinq̄m
uyranq̄m + auuiθūranq̄m
yaθa mē jasən auuan̄he
yaθa mē barən upastq̄m
uyrā^o ašaōnq̄m frauuašaiiō

Yt13.1 *mraōt̄ ahurō mazdā̄ spitamāi zaraθuštrāi*

aēuua tē zāuuarə aōjasca
xʷarəṇō auuasca rafnasca
fraḥmrauua ərəzuuō spitama
yaṭ ašaōnq̄m frauuašinq̄m
uyranq̄m +auuiθūranq̄m
yaθa mē jasən auuanḥe
yaθa mē barən upastq̄m
uyrā̄ ašaōnq̄m frauuašaiiō

aēuua ‘thus’

tē encl. pron. ‘for/of you’ (2sg. gen-dat.)

zāuuar- n. ‘strength’

aōjah- (OAv. *aōgah-*) n. ‘power’

xʷarəṇah- n. ‘glory’

auuah- n. ‘help’

rafnah- n. ‘support’

fra-mrau-/fra-mrū- (= prs. st.) ‘to speak forth, narrate’

ərəzu- ‘upright, straight’

spitama- ‘Spitama’ (“clan-name” of Zaraθuštra)

ya- m.-n. / *yā-* (f.) rel. pron.

ašaauan- ‘partaking in order/aša-’

frauuaši- f. ‘ritual choice; pre-existing part of the soul;

Frauuaši’

uyra- (f. *uyrā-*) ‘powerful’

+*auuiθūra-* ‘unshakable’

yaθa ‘how, as’

mē encl. pron. ‘for/of me’ (1sg. gen-dat.)

gam- (prs. st. *jasa-*) ‘to come’

bar- (prs. st. *bara-*) ‘to carry, bring’

upastā- f. ‘assistance’

Yt13.2 *āṅhąm raiia x^varənaṅhaca*
vīdāraēm zaraḡuštra
aōm asmanəm
yō usca raōxšnō frādərəsrō
yō imąm ząm āca pairica buuāuuu
mąnaiiən ahe yaḡa vīš aēm
yō hištaite maiṅiiu.stātō
handruxtō dūraēkaranō
aiaṅhō kəhrpa x^vaēnahe
raōcahinō aōi ḡrišuua

Yt13.2 *āṅhqm raiia x^varənaḡhaca*

vīdāraēm zaraḡuštra

aōm asmanəm

yō usca raōxšnō frādərəsrō

yō imqm zqm āca pairica buuāuuu

mḡnaiiən ahe yaḡa vīš aēm

yō hištaitē mainīiu.stātō

handrxtō dūraēkaranō

aiiaḡhō kəḡrpa x^vaēnahe

raōcahinō aōi ḡrišuuu

āṅhqm – dem. pron. *a-/i-/ima-/ana-*

raii- ‘wealth, splendour’

vī-dar- (prs. st. *vī-dārāiia-*) ‘hold apart’

zaraḡuštra- ‘Zaraḡuštra’

uuu- ‘that’ (distal dem. pron.)

asman- m. ‘sky’

us ‘up’ (adv.)

raōxšna- ‘bright’

frādər^ssra- ‘shining forth’

imqm – dem. pron. *a-/i-/ima-/ana-*

zam- f. ‘earth’

ā-, *pa^ri-bū-* (pf. st. *-buuāuu-* < **bu-bāu-*) ‘be at (*ā*),

around (*pa^ri*)’

mḡnaiiən ‘like’ (< nom-acc.sg.n of ptcp. *mḡnaiiḡnt-* of

causative st. of *man-* ‘to think’)

a- – dem. pron. *a-/i-/ima-/ana-*

vaii- m. ‘bird’

aiia- n. ‘egg’

stā- (prs. st. *hišta-*) ‘to stand’

ma^rīiu.stāta- – ‘established by the (good) spirit’

handraxta- ‘completely fixated’ (res. ptcp. of *han-drang-*

‘to fix comprehensively’)

dūraēkarana- ‘with far limits’

aiiaḡ- n. ‘iron’

kəḡrpa- f. ‘body, shape’

x^vaēna- ‘shiny’

raōcahina- ‘shining (towards)’

aōi (*auui*) ‘over’

ḡrišuuu- ‘a third’

Yt13.3 *yim mazdā vaste vanhanəm
stəhrpaēsaṅhəm maihiiu.tāštəm
hacimnō miθrō rašnuca
ārmaitica spəṅtaiia
yahmāi nōiṭ cahmāi naēmanqəm
karana pairi.vaēnōiθe*

Yt13.3 *yim mazdā vaste vaṇhanəm*
stəhrpaēsahəm maiñiu.tāštəm
hacimnō miθrō rašnuca
ārmaitica spəṇtaiia
yahmāi nōiṭ cahmāi naēmanəm
karana pairi.vaēnōiθe

mazdā- ‘Mazdā’
vah- (= prs. st.) ‘to wear (as clothes)’
vaṇhana- n. ‘dress’
stəhr-paēsah- ‘adorned with stars’
mañiu.tāšta- ‘fashioned by the (good) spirit’
hac- (prs. st. *haca-*, middle ptcp. *hacimna-*) ‘follow, join;
be followed, joined’
miθra- ‘Miθra’
rašnu- ‘Rašnu’

ārmāti- ‘Ārma’ti’
spəṇta- ‘bounteous, beneficent’
nōiṭ ka- (dat. *cahmāi*) ‘not anyone’
naēma- m. ‘half’
karana- m. ‘limit’
pa’ri-vaēn- (prs. st. *-uuaēna-*) ‘to perceive’
(ending *-ōiθe* 3du.mid < PIIr. **-aṭHai* [Ved. *-ēthē*] 2du.
mid [!])

Yt13.4 *āṅhqm raiia x^varənaṅhaca*

vīdāraēm zaraθuštra

arəduuīm sūrqm anāhitqm

+pərəθu.frākqm baēšaziiqm

vīdaēuuqm ahurō.ṭkaēšqm

yesḥiiqm aṅ^vhe astuuaitē

vahmiiqm aṅ^vhe astuuaitē

āδū.frādanqm ašaōnīm

vqθβō.frādanqm ašaōnīm

gaēθō.frādanqm ašaōnīm

šaētō.frādanqm ašaōnīm

daiḥhu.frādanam ašaōnīm

Yt13.4 *āṇhqm raiia x^varənaṇhaca*

vīdāraēm zaraθuštra

arəduuīm sūrqm anāhitqm

+pərəθu.frākqm baēšaziiqm

vīdaēuuqm ahurō.ṭkaēšqm

yesḥiiqm aṇ^vhe astuuaitē

vahmiiqm aṇ^vhe astuuaitē

āδū.frādanqm ašaōnīm

vqθβō.frādanqm ašaōnīm

gaēθō.frādanqm ašaōnīm

šaētō.frādanqm ašaōnīm

daiḥhu.frādanam ašaōnīm

arəduuī- sūrā- anāhitā- f. ‘the Conducive (?), Strong,
Unblemished/Unbound One’

pərəθu.frāka- ‘reaching out widely’

baēšaziiā- (f. -ā-) ‘healing’

vī-daēuuā- (f. -ā-) ‘against the demons’

ahurō.ṭkaēša- (f. -ā-) ‘following the teaching of Ahura’

ahū- m. ‘existence’

astuuant- ‘with bones; material’

yesḥiiā- (f. -ā-) ‘to be sacrificed to’

vahmiiā- (f. -ā-) ‘to be prayed to’

āδū.frādana- (f. -ā-) ‘furthering the canals’

vqθβō.frādana- (f. -ā-) ‘furthering the herds’

gaēθō.frādana- (f. -ā-) ‘furthering the living beings’

šaētō.frādana- (f. -ā-) ‘furthering property’

daḥhu.frādana- (f. -ā-) ‘furthering the countries’

Yt13.9 āṅhqm raiia x^varənaṅhaca
vīdāraēm zaraθuštra
zqm pərəθβīm ahuraδātqm
yqm masīmca paθanqmca
yā barəθri paraōš srīrahe
yā vīspəm ahūm astuuantəm
baraiti jumca iristəmca
garaiiasca yōi bərəzaṅtō
pouru.vāstrāṅhō āfəṅtō

Yt13.9 *āṅhąm raiia x^varənaṅhaca*
vīdāraēm zaraθuštra
ząm pərəθβīm ahuraδātąm
yąm masīmca paθanaąmca
yā barəθri paraōš srīrahe
yā vīspəm ahūm astuuąntəm
baraiti jumca iristəmca
garaiiasca yōi bərəzaṅtō
pouru.vāstrāṅhō āfəṅtō

pər^əθu- (f. *pər^əθβī-*) ‘broad’
ahuraδātā- ‘created by Ahura’
mas- (f. *masī-*) ‘great’
paθana- (f. *-ā-*) ‘wide’
bar^ətar- (f. *bar^əθrī-*) ‘carrying’
paru- (*pouru-*) ‘many, much’
srīra- ‘beautiful’

bar- (prs. st. *bara-*) ‘to carry’
juua- ‘alive’
rista- ‘dead’
gaⁱri- m. ‘mountain’
bərəzaṅt- ‘high’
po^uru.vāstra- ‘with many pastures’
āfəṅt- ‘full of water’ (?)

Yt13.12 yeidi zī mē nōiṭ daiḍiṭ upastq̄m
uyrā aṣāunq̄m frauuaṣaiiō
nōiṭ mē ida ā́hāt.təm pasuuīra
yā stō sarəḍanq̄m vahiṣta
drujō aōgarə drujō xšaθrəm
drujō astuuā aṅhuš ā́hāt

Yt13.12 *yeidi zī mē nōiṭ daiḍiṭ upastqm*

uyrā ašāunqm frauuāšaiiō

nōiṭ mē ida āñhāt.təm pasuuīra

yā stō sarədanqm vahišta

drujō aōgarə drujō xšaθrəm

drujō astuuā aṅhuš āñhāt

yeidi ‘if’

zī ‘because’

ida ‘here’

āñhāt.təm /*āñhātam/ 3du.opt of pf. st. *āh-* of *ah-* ‘to be’

pasuuīra /*pasu-uīra/ dual dvandva of *pasu-* ‘small

cattle’ and *vīra-* ‘man, hero’

stō – from *ah-*

sarəda- m. ‘species’

vahišta- ‘best’ (superl. of *vahu-*)

druj- f. ‘the Lie’

aōgar- n. ‘power’

xšaθra- n. ‘rule’

āñhāt – from *ah-*

Yt13.13 *nī aṅtarə zqm asmanəmcā*

drujā maniuuā hazdiiāṭ

nī aṅtarə zqm asmanəmcā

drujā maniuuā vaōniiāṭ

nōiṭ pascaēta vanō vaṅtāi

upa.daiiāṭ aṅrō maiḥiiuš

spəṅtāi maiḥiiauue

Yt13.13 *nī aṅtarə zqm asmanəmca*

drujā maniuuā hazdiiāt

nī aṅtarə zqm asmanəmca

drujā maniuuā vaōniiāt

nōiṭ pascaēta vanō vaṅtāi

upa.daiiāt aṅrō maiḥiiuš

spəṅtāi maiḥiiuuue

aṅtarə ‘between’

drujaṅt- ‘lying’

maiḥiiu- ‘impulse, force; spirit’

ni-had- ‘to sit down, get near’ (pf. st. *-hazd-*)

van- ‘to win’ (pf. st. *vaōn-*; prs. st. *vana-* with ptcp.

vanəṅt-; res. ptcp. *vaṅta-*)

pascaēta ‘afterwards’

upa-dā- ‘to give up’ (intr. prs. st. *-daiia-*)

aṅra- ‘evil’

spəṅta- ‘bounteous, beneficent’

Yt13.14 *āṅhḡm raiia x^varənaṅhaca*

āpō tacinṭi frātaṭ.carətō

xā paiti afrajiamnā

āṅhḡm raiia x^varənaṅhaca

zəməḡda uzuxšieinṭi uruuarā

xā paiti afrajiamnā

āṅhḡm raiia x^varənaṅhaca

vātō vāṅṭi dunmō.frutō

xā paiti afrajiamnā

Yt13.14 *āṅhqm raiia x^varənaṅhaca*

āpō tacin̄ti frātaṭ.carətō

xā paiti afrajiiamnā

āṅhqm raiia x^varənaṅhaca

zəmāda uzuxš̄iein̄ti uruuarā

xā paiti afrajiiamnā

āṅhqm raiia x^varənaṅhaca

vātō vān̄ti dunmō.frutō

xā paiti afrajiiamnā

frātaṭ.carəta- ‘flowing in advance’ (?)

xā- ‘spring, opening’

a-frajiiamna- (f. *-ā-*) ‘undiminishing’

zam-, gen. *zəm-* f. ‘earth’

uz-vaxš- (prs. st. *uz-uxš̄ia-*) ‘to grow up’

vāta- ‘wind’

vā- (= prs. st.) ‘to blow’

dunmō.frut- ‘flying with the clouds’

Vidēvdād 5.6: Is the Fire god a killer?

dātarə ātarš narəm jaiṅti vā
āaṭ mraōṭ ahurō mazdā
ātarš narəm nōiṭ jaiṅti
astō.vīdōtuš dim baṇdaiieiti
vaiiō dim bastəm naiieiti
ātarš haṇdažaiti asta uštānəmca
aθra aḍāṭ frajasaiti baxta aḍāṭ nijasaiti

dātar- m. ‘creator’ (nomen agentis in *-tar-* from *dā-* ‘to put, create; give’)

ātar- m. ‘fire’

nar- m. ‘man’

jan- (root = prs. st.) ‘smite, kill’

vā ‘or’ or emphatic particle (enclitic)

āaṭ ‘then’

mrauu-/mrū- (root = prs. st.) ‘speak’

ahura- mazdā- m. ‘Ahura Mazdā’ (deity)

nōiṭ ‘not’

astō.vīdōtu- m. ‘Bone-Dissolver’ (a demon)

dim encl. pronoun ‘him’ (acc.sg.m)

baṇd- (prs. st. *baṇdaiia-*, res. ptcp. *bastā-*) ‘bind’

vaiiu- (here: *vaiia-*) m. ‘Vayu’

naii- (prs. st. *naiia-*) ‘to lead’

haṇ-daj- (prs. st. *haṇ-daža-*) ‘to burn up’

ast- (here: *asta-*) n. ‘bone’

uštāna- m./n. ‘animating force’

=*ca* ‘and’

aθra ‘here’

aḍāṭ ‘form then on’

fra-gam- (prs. st. *fra-jasa-*) ‘to go forward’

baxta- ‘what is attributed’ (res. ptcp. of *bag-*), ‘fate’

ni-gam- (prs. st. *-jasa-*) ‘to go down’

Vidēvdād 5.6: Pahlavi commentary with Avestan quotations

|a| *“O creator,*

“O creator,

|b| *does fire kill a man?”*

does fire kill a man?”

|c| *Then Ahura Mazdā said: “Fire does not kill a man.*

And Ohrmazd said: “Fire does not kill a man.

|d| *Astō.vīδōtu (the demon “Bone-untier”) binds him, Vaiiu leads him bound.*

Astvihād binds him, the Bad Wāy leads him bound. [That same one. There is someone who (said/says) thus: ‘This implies that the Good Wāy will receive everyone.’]

|e| *Fire burns up the bones and life-soul.*

Fire burns up his body and breath-soul [bodily shape].

|f| *From here things now go forwards or downwards by fate.*

When he passes on from there [i.e., he departs], fate makes him pass after that.” [I.e., when he departs, it happens in the destined way.]

[Matters of *gētī* (are determined) by fate, and those of *mēnōy* by actions.

There is someone who says thus: 'This means, wife and child and possessions and rule and life (are determined) by fate, and other things by actions.'

The good things that are not destined to a man will never reach him. (It is) apparent from this passage: **gairi.masanḥō aētahe*.¹

Those which are destined to him reach him earlier through striving: *aniiō arəduuō.zəṅḡō xʷarənō*.²

And it happens to him by sinning that (good things destined to him) get lost to him: *āaṭ xʷarənō frapiriieiti*.³

And evil that is destined to him can be warded off through pious striving: *pouru.xʷarənanḥō ašauua zaraθuštra*.⁴

But to the sinner it is thus destined over and over again: *aēšanqmca narqm*.⁵]

¹ "(It is) of the size of a mountain for him."

² "Another one, industrious, (reaches earlier?) the *xʷarənah*-."

³ "Then he forfeits the *xʷarənah*-."

⁴ "O righteous *Zaraθuštra*, rich in *xʷarənah*-" (?)

⁵ "Of these men ..."

Vidēvdād 5.1–4: Theoreticizing purity and pollution

5.1 *nā taṭ para.iriḡiieiti auui jaḡnauuō raōnq̄m*

ā taṭ mārəḡəm uzuuazaite haca barəšnauuō gairinq̄m auui jaḡnauuō raōnq̄m

upa tq̄m kəhrpəm fraḡ^hharaiti yq̄m iristahe mašiiēhe

ā taṭ mārəḡəm uzuuazaite haca jaḡnauuō raōnq̄m auui barəšnauuō gairinq̄m

upa tq̄m vanq̄m vazaitē xraōžduuanq̄mca varəduuanq̄mca

auui dim vaḡta auui dim irita auui dim patita

nar- m. ‘man’

ha-, *ta-* (m.-n.) / *hā-*, *tā-* (f.) dem. pron. with weak deixis

‘this, that’; acc.sg.n used adverbially ‘there, then’

para-raēḡ-ⁱriḡ- (prs. st. *para.iriḡiia-*, res. ptcp. *irista-*)

‘to pass away, die’

auui prep. + acc. ‘towards’

jaḡnu- m. ‘valley’

raōn- (**rauuān-*) m. ‘(course of a) river’

mārəḡa- m. ‘bird’

ā-uz-vaz- (prs. st. *uz-uuaza-*) ‘fly up (*us*) towards (*ā*)’

haca ‘from’ (normally + abl., here + acc.)

barəšnu- m. ‘height, top’

gaⁱri- m. ‘mountain’

upa + acc. ‘at’

kəhrp- f. ‘body, shape’

fra-x^var- (prs. st. *fra-ḡ^hhara-*) ‘eat along’

ya- (m.-n.) / *yā-* (f.) rel. pron.

mašiiā- m. ‘mortal, man, human’

vanā- f. ‘tree’

xraōžduua- ‘hard’

var^əduua- ‘soft’

vaḡti- f. ‘vomiting’ (root *vam-*)

ⁱriti- f. ‘shitting’ (root *raii-*)

patita – unclear; possible emendations: **napta* from *napti-* (?) ‘act of moistening’ or **upaēta* from *upaēti-* ‘ejaculation’

Double outcome of Prllr. *sr-

(1) > r-

*sre_xon- > rauuan- (gen.pl raōnaṃ < *ra_xn-ām)

PIE *sre_x-

(2) > ʒr- (genuine Avestan?):

vīspā āpō xā paiti ʒraōtō.stātasča

/vīspāh āpah xāh pati ʒra_xta(s)-stāt-as=ca/

ʒraotah- < *sra_xtas- ‘river’ (Ved. *srótas-*)

‘all the waters (that are) in springs and that are placed (“stay”) in rivers’

5.2 *nā taṭ frašusaiti haca jaḡnauuō raōnq̄m auui barəšnauuō gairinq̄m*

upa.taṡm vanq̄m aēiti yaḡm hō mərəḡō āḡre aēsmq̄n išaiti

*auui dim janaiti auui dim ḡḡarəsaiti auui dim tāšti auui dim aiḡi.raōcaiiēiti āḡrō ahurahe mazdā̄ puḡrəm
kā hē asti ciḡa*

fra-šauu- (prs. st. *frašusa-*) ‘to go forth’

aii-/i- (= prs. st.) ‘to go’

aēsmā- ‘fire wood, incense’

išā’ti – unclear; perhaps ‘aims to go’ (desiderative *iša-* of *i-*)? ‘seeks’ (expected: *isaiti*)?

jan- (prs. st. normally *jan-*, here thematic *jana-*) ‘smite, kill; fell (a tree)’

ḡḡars- (prs. st. *ḡḡarəsa-*) ‘to cut’

taš- (prs. st. *tāš-*) ‘to fashion, cut in small pieces’

a’ḡi-raōc- (prs. st. *aiḡi.raōcaiiā-*) ‘to kindle’

puḡra- m. ‘son’

kā- (m.-n.) / *kā-* (f.) ‘who, which?’

hē encl. pron. ‘for/of him’ (gen-dat.sg.m)

ah- (**as-*) / *h-* ‘to be’

ciḡā- f. ‘punishment, atonement’

5.3 āaṭ mraōṭ ahurō mazdā

nōiṭ spō.bəṛətō nōiṭ vaiiō.bəṛətō nōiṭ vəhrkō.bəṛətō nōiṭ vātō.bəṛətō nōiṭ maxši.bəṛətō nasuṣ narəm nōiṭ
+āstāraiiēiti

spō.bəṛətā- ‘carried (*bar-*) by a dog (*span-*)’

vaiiō.bəṛətā- ‘carried by a bird (*vaii-*)’

vəhrkō.bəṛətā- ‘carried by a wolf (*vəhrka-*)’

vātō.bəṛətā- ‘carried by the wind (*vāta-*)’

maxši.bəṛətā- ‘carried by a fly (*maxši-*)’

nasu- f. ‘carrion, decay; Decay (demon)’

ā-star- (prs. st. *ā-striia-*) ‘to become sinful’; causative st.

ā-stāraiiā- ‘to make sinful’ with active ptcp.

āstāraiiant- (f. + *-ī-*; see next §)

5.4 *yezica aēte nasāuuō yā spō.bərataca vaiiō.bərataca vāhrkō.bərataca vātō bərataca maxši.bərataca nasuš
 narəṃ +āstāraiein̄tīm āṅhāt*
išarə.štāitiia mē vīspō aṅhuš astuuā išasəṃ jiṭ.ašəṃ xraōdaṭ.uruuā pəšō.tanuš
frāna āṅhəṃ nasunəṃ yā paiti āiia zəṃā irīriṅarə

yezi ‘if’

aēta- ‘this, that’

+*āstāraiein̄tīm āṅhāt* – periphrastic formation with active
 ptcp. (f.!) + opt. pf. of *ah-* ‘to be’

išar².štāitiia ‘immediately’

mē encl. pron. ‘for/of me’ (gen-dat.sg)

vīspa- ‘all’

ahu- (*aṅhu-*) m. ‘existence’

astuuəṅt- ‘with bones; material’

išasa- ‘greedy’

jiṭ.aša- ‘destroying order/*aša-*’

xraōdaṭ.uruuān- ‘with trembling soul’

pəšō.tanu- ‘whose body is forfeited’ (someone in the
 state of the highest grade of sin)

frāni- f. ‘multitude, plenitude’

a- ‘this’ (dem. pron. with proximal deixis)

paⁱti + instr. ‘on’

zəṃ- f. ‘earth’

irīriṅ- – perfect st. of *raēṅ-* (see *para-raēṅ-* above)