

## Translation Techniques and Exegesis in Zand of Three Gāthic Hymns of Avesta

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### Abstract

Zand texts or Middle Persian translations of Avestan texts are an important part of Middle Persian literature. Zoroastrians believe that Zand literature is as important as Avestan texts. Most scholars suppose that Zand literature dates back to the period when Avestan texts were compiled. According to oral traditions, even some are of the opinion that Zand texts are older than Sassanid Archetype of *Avesta*. In the whole, it can be said that Zand literature, probably, belongs to the period in which Sassanid inscriptions were written. In this article, general concepts regarding translation and translation techniques will be examined including communicative and semantic translation. In addition, some manners of translation like borrowing, calque, transposition will be studied. This survey is based on Zand rendering of three gāthic hymns 28-30. One of the most important doctrines of Gāthās is the role of abstract forces which are called on along with God's name. In later Avesta, these forces are totally individuated and called Amāša Spəntas "divine immortal beings." We also consider whether the translator was aware of that these entities were abstract forces or he considered them as individual gods.

**Keywords:** Avesta, Zand, Translation, Translation techniques, Neologism.

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## 1. Introduction

Since the early days, having an exegesis of *Avesta* has been a need, as the book itself contains terms and expressions most likely serving originally to interpret and explain, integrated into the text later in Sassanid period when the oral form was rendered into the written form (Christensen 1932, 37). Obviously, in Parthian and Sassanid periods, when Avestan language was not intelligible for the masses, the need for explaining this book was felt more than ever.

Rendering *Avesta* into middle Persian is called Zand, originally meaning “knowledge” derived from the Avestan word *zainti-* (Bartholomae 1904, 1660; Shapira 1998, introduction: 31). It should be noted that Zand texts are valuable in terms of their religious validity in such a way that in Zoroastrians’ viewpoint, the translation of *Avesta* into Middle Persian is as important as the *Avesta* text (Tafazzoli 2004, 115-17). Most scholars believe that the translation and exegesis of *Avesta* in middle Persian dates back to the time when Sassanid *Avesta* was compiled (Josephson 1997, 11) and even a group of scholars suppose that some of these Zand books date back to sometimes earlier than the rendition of *Avesta* into written form (Amouzegar 2008, 121). Also, some believe that certain parts of Zand texts including Zand of Gathas were compiled when a variety of Avestan language were spoken yet (Shapira 1998, introduction: 2). Overall, based on certain linguistic features used in these texts, it could be asserted that the language of these texts is comparable to that of the period when middle Persian inscriptions and Manichaean middle Persian texts were written; accordingly, it may be said that Zand texts are the oldest middle Persian texts (Josephson 2003, 10). Before studying Zand of these three Gathic hymns, it is necessary to explain briefly some key concepts and methods of translation.

Generally speaking, translation is defined as a process through which a text or speech is rendered from one language to another language (Catford 1978, 1; Bell 1993, 13). According to this definition, we have two general types of translation -oral translation and written translation-each of which consists of subcategories. Since we just deal with texts within this study, we will merely address written translation.

Among the major methods of written translation, we may refer to two methods: communicative translation and semantic translation. In communicative translation, the reader is considered more important than the author and the message itself; in this method, the translator tries to familiarize the translated text for the reader as far as possible. Thus, in this kind of translation, it is always likely that the translated text is not fully loyal to the original text. However, in semantic translation, unlike the communicative method, it is the message of the original text that is primarily focused. Hence, in this kind of translation, influenced by the original text, it is always likely for unfamiliar formal and semantic structures to find a way to the translated text making it difficult to read and understand. Also, it should be noted that the so-called literal translation and free translation are parallel with semantic and communicative translation methods, respectively (Safavi 2009, 16).

Generally, in each kind of translation, different methods and techniques are used which could be analyzed in two broad categories of direct and indirect approaches. The major methods of the first approach include: Borrowing. This method is often employed when the target language lacks a lexical entity for expressing a certain concept; then, it borrows the same form used in the source language. Claque or loan translation. This method is itself a kind of borrowing. However, in this method, each unit of a word is translated into the

target language literally. Literal translation. This type of translation is possible when the source language and the target language are structurally and conceptually similar. In fact, in this kind of translation, the major change occurs in the syntactic level. The main methods used in the indirect approach include: Transposition. This method is found in the level of grammatical changes and consists in changing of the grammatical class of a word in the source language into another grammatical class in target language without any alteration in meaning. Modulation. In this method, there's a difference in the way a concept is stated in the source and target languages but there is no change in the concept itself. The most representative example is seen in stating a single concept differently in the source and target languages via positive and negative sentences, respectively, or vice versa (Fawcett 1997, 34-39).

## **2. Research literature**

Regarding Zand texts –i.e., the translation of *Avesta*-, several studies have been conducted so far; the major ones are summarized as follows: According to a general viewpoint, middle Persian equivalents for Avestan words and expressions in Zand texts and also those sections of Middle Persian texts based upon the lost parts of *Avesta* could be classified as: 1) transliteration of Avestan words into middle Persian; 2) words having roots different from those of Avestan words but entailing the correct meaning; 3) some middle Persian words made homophone with certain Avestan words entailing thus inappropriate meaning for those Avestan words; 4) using cognate words which at the same time have a somewhat appropriate meaning (Buyaner 2010, 80). Also, looking from an alternative aspect, comparing translations with their Avestan equivalents, the following issues may be generally considered: 1) change in word class; 2) change in morphological level;

3) change in syntactic level (Josephson 1997, 154-57). In alternative comprehensive research, Avestan words are divided into two classes of nouns and verbs; regarding the category of nouns, topics such as gender, number and grammatical case are examined and on the verb category, topics such as transitivity (being transitive or intransitive), tense and aspects of verbs and their effects in selecting Zand equivalents are analyzed (see Cantera 2004, 274-301). Finally, in terms of writing style and right communication of the meaning, the series of these texts may be evaluated as such: Vendidad and Nirangestan Zands have the best style in terms of diction and translation method and Yasnas and Gathas have the next rank and the existing Zand of Yashts has an older style (Amouzegar 2008, 121). Earlier, Tame also mentioned some of the features of translation in some Gathic hymns (Tame 2015).

In this paper, along with considering the earlier research and their standards, we attempt to study Zand of three Gathas 28, 29 and 30 according to the new translatology and the relevant linguistic tenets. Since Gathas is the most sacred text of the Zoroastrian religion -it is read in almost all ceremonies and prayers-, its major religious terms are also investigated in terms of religious diction and at the end; a brief explanation will be presented regarding the most frequent words used in exegeses of Zand translation of these three hymns.

### **3. Communicative and semantic translation in Zand**

Zand or the very middle Persian translation of Gathas is commonly assumed as a literal translation in which each Avestan word is tried to be rendered into a middle Persian word; however, the translator has attempted to clarify and complement this literal translation through remarks and interpretations outside the original text (Malandra and Ichaporria 2010, preface: 5). Now, in order to demonstrate this point,

we will present sections of these three Gathas, based mainly on Humbach's translation (1991) of Avestan text and also the transcription and translation of Zand according to Dhabhar (1949), Josephson (2003), and Malandra and Ichaporria (2010). Since the *Gathas* consist of seventeen hymns and it is not possible to study the translation of all seventeen hymns into Middle Persian in this article, only the first three hymns of the first chapter, or *Ahunauuaitī Gāθā*, were selected for this study. Although there is no difference between the different chapters of the *Gathas* in terms of spiritual value, since *Ahunauuaitī Gāθā* is the beginning chapter of the *Gathas*, we chose this chapter to study the translation techniques of the *Gathas*. Of course, in this chapter, we have only dealt with the first three hymns.

First:

28.6    vohū gaidī manaṅhā # dāidī ašā dā darəgāiīū

ərəšuuāiš tū uxδāiš mazdā # zaraθuštrāi aojōṅhhuuat  
rafənō

ahmaibiiācā ahurā # yā daibišuuatō duuaēšā  
tauruuuiāmā

Come with good thought! Grant with truth as a long-  
lasting gift,

Through (Thy) exalted statements, O Wise One,  
strong support to (me), Zaraθuštra,

And to (all of) us, O Ahura, (that support) through  
which may overcome the hostilities of the enemy!

A) rasišn ī wahman [ō tan ī kasān] dahē-m ašwahišt  
dāšn ī dagr-gyānīh [kū-m ān tis ma dahēd ī pad tan ī  
pasēn abāz abāyēnd kuštan].

B) pad ān ī rāst-saxwan tō ohrmazd zardušt [nimūd ēstād agar] az ōy ī ōzōmand [wištāsp ast kū-t] rāmēnišn hom [kū-t pad nekīh frāz ān xwadāyān barišn hom].

C) ud manīgān-iz ohrmazd [ud hāwištān ī man u-t pad nekīh frāz-barišn hēnd] bēšīdārān bēš bawēd [ka ēdōn kunēnd] tarwēnišn [kū bēš az awēšān agār bawēd].

A) The arrival of Wahman [to someone's body] give to me. O Ašwahišt, the gift of longevity [that is, may he not give me that thing which in final body one must slaughter again].

B) By that true-speech, though Ohrmazd, to Zardušt [it is shown, if] from that this which is strong [Wištāsp it is, that to you] I am to give peace [that I am to bring forth to thee those rulers through goodness].

C) And, also my people, O Ohrmazd, [and my disciples; and they are to bring forth goodness to thee] hostility of the hostile [it will be when they act thus] is to be overcome [that is, the hostility from them becomes ineffective].

Second:

29.10 yūžəm aēibiiō ahurā # aogō dātā ašā  
xšaθrəmcā

auuaṭ vohū manarhā # yā hušəitīš rāmaṃcā dāt  
azəmcīṭ ahiia mazdā # θβam məjḥī paouruuim  
vaēdəm

Grant You, O Ahura, strength through truth and that power to them

Through good thought, by which one may establish good dwellings and peace.

(For) I myself realized (that) Thou (art) the primal provider of that, O Wise One.

A) ašmā ō awēšān ohrmazd ayārīh dahēd ašwahišt ud šahrewar [kū zardušt ud hāwištān ī zardušt nēkīh padiš kunēnd].

B) ēdōn-iz wahman kē humānišnīh [gāh ī ānōh] rāmišn-iz ā-š dahēd,

C) az-iz ōy ohrmazd [ōy zardušt] ā-š az tō menom fradom-windišn [kū-š fradom nēkīh az tō bawēd].

A) You, O Ohrmazd, give help to them, Ašwahišt and Šahrewar [until Zardušt and his pupils do goodness with that.]

B) Also, Wahman, in this way, who is good place [place in that (world)], gives peace to his as well.

C) Also, I [Zardušt], O Ohrmazd, myself realize the first acquisition from you [it means the first goodness appears from you.]

Third:

30.3 aṭ tā mainiiū +pauruiiē # yā yēmā xvaḥnā asruuātəm

manahicā vacahicā # šīiaoθanōi hī vahiiō akəmcā

āscā hudāñhō # ərəš vīšiiātā nōiṭ duždāñhō

There (are) the two spirits (present) in the primal (stage of one's existence), twins two have become famed (manifesting themselves as) the two (kind of) dreams,

The two (kinds of) thoughts and words, (and) the two (kinds of) actions the better and the evil.

And between these two, the munificent discriminate rightly, (but) not the miserly.

A) ēdōn ān ī harw dō mhēnōg [ohrmazd ud gannāg] ā-  
šān fradom ān ī jomā xwad srūd [kū-šān wināh ud  
kirbag xwad be guft],

B) menišn ud gōwišn ud kunišn ān ī harw dō kē weh  
ud kē-z wattar [ēk ān ī weh menīd ud guft ud kard ud  
ēk ān ī wattar].

C) az awēšān ōy ī hudānāg [ohrmazd] rāst be wizīd nē  
ān ī dušdānāg [gannāg mēnōg].

A) Thus, the both spirits [Ohrmazd and The Evil] recited dual (quality) of theirs [it means they said their sin and virtue.]

B) Both of their thought and speech and action are good and bad too [One thought, said and did that is good and another one worse thing.]

C) Among them who is the wise one [Ohrmazd] selected the truth, but not the ignorant [The Evil One.]

Reviewing translations of the Avestan paragraphs, we will at first sight recognize the main purpose of Zand translator as to select cognate equivalents for the Avestan words in doing which he has been somewhat successful. For example, for the Avestan words: *dāidī*, *dā*,

*darəgāiiū, aojōṅhuuat, daibišuuatō, duuaēšā, tauruuaiiāmā, rāmāṃ, vaēdəm* and *yāmā*; the following equivalents were selected respectively in Zand text: *dahē, dāšn, dagr-gyānīh, ōzōmand, bēšīdārān, bēš, tarwēnišn, rāmišn, windišn* and *jomā*. As it may be seen, these Zand equivalents are not only similar to the Avestan words in terms of etymology; they have also a kind of semantic overlap. However, the very effort used in selecting cognate words had made Zand translation occasionally distinct from the Avestan text. For instance, the word *aša* "integrity" in the Avestan text, does not denote Ashavahishta Emshaspand but the Zand translator has rendered this word into *ašwahišt* for a mere etymological cause and due to coming the name of another Emshaspand; or, for the Avestan word *xvafənā* "sleep", the translator seems to have rendered this word into *xwad* due to mere resemblance of its first phoneme /x<sup>v</sup>/ to the middle Persian /xw/ which is absolutely incorrect and has no semantic similarity with the original text. Also, in translating the Avestan word *hudāñhō* "The gracious", the Zand translator has only considered the form of the word assuming it as derived from *dan-* "know", unaware that the Avestan equivalent of this root is *zan-*; thus, he selected a cognate form, that is, *hudānāg* according to mere form of the word. Another reason leading to incorrect understanding of the text should be attributed to the translator's false analysis of the syntactic structure of the text augmented by its versification. An interesting issue about selecting equivalents according to the etymology of the words is the simplified remarks following the Zand equivalent. For instance, in Avestan translation of *tauruuaiiāmā* "we should overcome", *bawēd ... tarwēnišn* has been used which is a combination of the verb *bawēd* and the gerund *tarwēnišn* derived from the present stemmer *tarwēn-* "overcome" (see MacKenzie 1986, 82). The translator has then used the simpler and syntactically more prevalent term *agār bawēd* for further illustration of the meaning.

It should be concluded that the translator in rendering these three hymns has attempted to introduce a single equivalent for each word as far as possible in such a way that this equivalent might be as close and even symphonious to its Avestan form as possible. Also, in terms of word order, he has complied with the same order of the Avestan words unless where in the Avestan text, a noun such as *vohū manah-* has been splitted for the lexical and poetic necessity while in Zand translation, a single word, i.e., *wahman* has been chosen. This adherence to Avestan syntactic arrangement has forced the translator to present remarks like *kū bēš az awēšān agār bawēd* ‘that is, the hostility from them becomes ineffective’ even for such simple expressions as *bēšīdārān bēš bawēd ... tarwēnišn* ‘hostility of the hostile [...] is to be overcome’. Generally, it seems that the translation of these three hymns is entirely literal or in better words semantic, although the translator has occasionally attempted to reduce the obscurity of the translation through explanations and remarks.

#### 4. Translation methods in Zand

The analysis of the translation methods of Zands of these three Gathas is made in the following manner: First, the sentence which contains the term studied is mentioned in two Avestan and middle Persian forms along with the Persian translation. The Avestan stem of the word is then introduced and its derivation is described followed by the translated form in Zand and the necessary comments concerning the translation method. In this study, we attempted to give example(s) for each of translation methods employed in the Zand texts under study.

##### 4.1. Borrowing

28.1a) *ahiiā yāsā nəmaṇhā #ustāna.zastō ...*

In reverence to him, with hands stretched out, I  
entreat...

ān [mizd ī ōy Ohrmazd xwēš] xwāhom pad niyāyišn  
... ustān-dast ...

That [reward which is Ohrmazd's own] I seek in  
prayer... raised hand...

*ustāna.zasta*- “raised hand, with raised hands”. The first part of this phrase is an adjective derived from *tan-* “stretch” root plus the prefix *us-* which altogether means “stretch out”. The Zand translator has adopted the very Avestan form in translation of this word for which he has employed the form *ustān*. It should be noted that in common dictionaries of the middle Persian texts, there is no entry titled *ustān* meaning “stretch out” (MacKenzie 1986; Nyberg 1974) and this word has been used only in Zand texts.

28.9a) anāiš vā nōiṭ ... yānāiš zaranaēmā

May we no longer annoy you with these entreaties.

... ō ašmā ... pad yān nē āzārom

... I do not annoy you with this entreaty.

*yāna-* “entreaty”. Despite the fact that in middle Persian, a frequently used word like *xwāhišn* “entreaty, asking” exists for stating the “request” concept, Zand translator has borrowed the same Avestan word using it with the same meaning, influenced by the sacred nature of the Avestan text.

29.5b) mē uruuā gēušcā aziīā ...

My soul and (that) of the fertile cow.

ān ī man ruwān gāw ī az ...

My soul, cow of az

*azī-* “pregnant”. This Avestan word with *ahī-* as its Sanskrit equivalent having a meaning close to “lactating; pregnant” is borrowed in Zand translation with the same meaning. This word has not been used by this meaning in Middle Persian compiled texts, but in other Zand texts like Zand of *Vendidad*, it has been used denoting an adjective for the cow or a certain kind of cow (Kapadia 1953, 269). In Sanskrit translation of this Gathā, *gāw ī az* is translated *to gośca ajināmyāḥ* “from a cow named *Aji*” and the meaning of *aji* is demonstrated by this expression: *ajināmnī trivarṣikī gauḥ* “a three-year-old cow called *aji*” (Humbach 1991, 2:38). Also, in Zand of *Vendidad*, this word is defined as “three-year-old cow” (Kapadia 1953, 269).

## 4.2. Calque or loan translation

28.6a) ... dāidī aṣā dādarəgāiiū

Grant with truth a long-standing gift!

dahē-m ašwahišt dāšn ī dagr-gyānīh

Give to me, O Ašwahišt, the gift of longevity!

*darəgāiiu-* “long-standing”. This word is an adjective composed of two components: *darəga-* “long” and the noun *āiiu-* “age” which altogether means “long-standing” (Bartholomae 1904, 694). The first part of this phrase has undergone the common phonological process in Zand translation being rendered into the middle Persian via the form *dagr* but what is important for us is the second part, that is, *gyānīh* which is originally an abstract noun derived from *gyān* meaning “life” which in the phrase *dagr-gyānīh* seems to signify “life, longevity”. Overall, the Zand translator in rendering the expression *darəgāiiu-* has attempted to make a similar equivalent and for *āiiu-* usually having *zamān* as the equivalent in Zand texts, has employed the word *gyānīh*.

It should be noted that in Middle Persian texts, for conveying the meaning of “longevity” or the “long life”, the expression *dagr-ziwīšnīh* is normally used (MacKenzie 1986, 23).

30.1a) ... yā mazdāθā hīaṭcīṭ vīdušē

Such (things) which you shall report also to (him)  
who knows (them).

... ī Ohrmazd-dād [abestāg ud zand] kē-z āgāh

... whom created by Ohrmazd [Avesta and Zand] also  
who knows.

*mazdaθā* "give awareness (inform)". This word, according to Humbach, is the aorist subjunctive active 2.pl. of the stem *mazdā-* "notify" which consists in two components of *man-* "notion" and the root *dā-* "to set" meaning on the whole "to set in notion" (Humbach 1991, 2:46). Since the translator had not had a correct knowledge of this word, considered it as consisting of two components of *mazdā* meaning God's name and *θā* derived from the root *dā-* "to give" and selected the closest equivalent in Middle Persian for each component and thus introduced *ohrmazd-dād* "given (created) by Ohrmazd" as the equivalent of *mazdaθā*.

29.8c) carəkərəθrā srāuuaiieṅhē ...

[He wishes] to sing lauds...

čārag-kardārī-iz srāyēd [kū čārag ī druz ī andar gēhān  
be gōwēd]

Also, you should sing the remedy of affair [it means  
you should say the remedy for demon in the world.]

*carəkərəθra-* "sing, hymn". This rare Avestan word is a neutral noun from the root *kar-* "to sing" (Kellens and Pirart 1990, 2:241). Since the Zand translator had poor knowledge of this word, he has

assumed it as a compound word and selected the *čārag* equivalent for its first part, i.e., *carə* and the *kardār* equivalent for the second component, i.e., *kərəθra* and has in fact translated the two components resulting in a new compound word, i.e., *čārag-kardārī*. The incorrect meaning mentioned in Zand translation for the Avestan words *carəkərəθra*- and *mazdaθā* is indeed the result of inaccurate and vulgar etymology of the Zand translator. These two cases may be considered as either loan translation or belonging to the category of words symphonized with the Avestan form, but having erroneous meaning.

### 4.3. Transposition

29.8c) *carəkərəθrā srāuuaiieḡhē ...*

[He wishes] to sing lauds...

*čārag-kardārī-iz srāyēd...*

Also, you should sing...

*srāuuaiieḡhē* "to sing". This word is originally an infinitive derived from the root *sru-* "to sing" (Kellens and Pirart 1990, 2:320). In Zand translation, the word *srāyēd* is selected as its equivalent which is exactly from the same root and has the same meaning; however, from a syntactic viewpoint, the equivalent used in Zand text is considered as a verb.

29.8a) ... *yē nē aēuuō sāsnaḡgūšatā*

... The only one who listens to our teachings.

... *ān ī amā hammōxtišn ēd ēk kē niyōšāg.*

... The only one who is listener to us.

*gušatā* “(he) listens”. This word in Avestan text is a middle third-person singular injunctive aorist verb from the root *guš-* “to listen”. The translator has rendered this word as a present participle, i.e., *niyōšāg* “listener” of the same root and the same meaning and despite the change in the grammatical class of the word; he has presented a completely correct meaning for this Avestan verb.

28.4c) *yauuaṭ isāi tauuācā...*

As much as will be in my command and as I will be able...

*čand xwāstār ud tuwānīg hom ...*

As much as I am demanding and able...

*isāi* “I might, am able to” and *tauuā*<sup>o</sup> “I may”. These two words are first-person singular present subjunctive verbs that derived from the roots *is-* and *tauu-* “being able”, respectively. In translating these two simple verbs, the Zand translator has used two adjectives *xwāstār* and *tuwānīg* respectively, along with the linking verb *hom*. It seems that the Zand translator has assumed the first word as derived from root *iš-* and hence has used *xwāstār* equivalent in Zand translation; however, he has rightly considered *tauuā* as derived from the root *tauu-* and has used the adjective *tuwānīg* for its translation which is exactly consistent with the Avestan word, semantically and etymologically. Therefore, here we deal with two subjunctive verbs which in Zand translation have been translated through a change in their grammatical categories into two present participles and a linking verb.

## 5. Religious terms

One of the most important doctrines of Gāthās is the role of abstract forces which are called on along with God’s name. In religious texts

of later periods, these divine beings with God himself constitute a septet called upon in many ways; however, the inherent unity of these divine beings has always been mentioned so that God has been called either their father or fusing himself with them (Boyce 1979, 21). In *Gāthās*, four forces are frequently mentioned whose names often come with the name of God. These four forces include: *ašā* (integrity), *vohū mananḥā* (good thinking), *xšaθrəm* (strength) and *ārmaitiš* (true thinking). However, in New Avesta, these forces are totally individuated with their number amounting to six, so called *Aməša Spəntas* ‘divine immortal beings’ (Josephson 2003, 20).

Now, according to the mentioned points, we deal with the question whether the Zand translator was aware that these manifestations were abstract forces or he considered them as individual gods influenced by the predominant idea which personified these manifestations and also which words the translator generally employed for their description.

### 5.1. ašā

Among the four aforementioned forces, *ašā* is the most frequent one in *Gāthās*. Different meanings including “integrity, order, and harmony” have been mentioned for *ašā* (Bartholomae 1904, 229). In Yasn 28, the word *ašā* either lonely or accompanied by the word *vahišta-* has been translated into two different words in Zand. In six cases, that is, paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 8, 10 and 11, it is translated into the word *ahlāyīh* “piety” and in paragraphs 3, 5, 6, 7 and 9, the word *ašwahišt* is used in translation. Upon studying these cases, it may be noted that in all the cases where the word *ašā* has a vocative case -it is called on or is accompanied by the word God-, the Zand translator has used the word *ašwahišt* and in the other cases where the translator has inferred meanings such as piety and righteousness, it has been

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translated to the word *ahlāyīh* attached by a remark which often contains the word *frārōnīh* “righteousness”.

28.5a) ašā kaṭ θβā darəsānī ...

O truth, shall I see thee...

ašwahišt kay tō wēnom ...

O Ašwahišt, when do I see you?

28.8a) vahištəm θβā vahištā # yōm ašā vahištā

hazaošəm

I lovingly entreat you, O Best one, who are in harmony with best truth.

ka pahlomīh ī tō [dēn ī tō] pahlom [az abārīg tis] pad ahlāyīh pahlom ō ham dōšānd [pad frārōnīh]

Since Thy excellence [Thy religion] (is) excellence [than other things] through righteousness they shall together love excellence [through righteousness].

In Zand translation, the word *ašā* is translated to the word *ašwahišt* in paragraphs 2, 3 and 10 of Yasn 29 and in paragraphs 7, 9 and 10 of Yasn 30 and to the word *ahlāyīh* in paragraphs 6, 7 and 9 of Yasn 29 and paragraphs 1 and 8 of Yasn 30. The usage of this word in these two Yasns is similar to that in the former Yasn; the only thing which is noteworthy is that whenever in Avestan text, *ašā* or every other abstract forces is used in instrumental case accompanied by an intransitive verb, they are topicalized in the Zand translation and positioned in the subject of verb position.

30.7a) ahmāicā xšaθrā jasaṭ # manarhā vohū ašācā...

If one comes to it (existence) with power, good thought and truth...

ō ōy šahrewar rasēd wahman ud ašwahišt-iz.

It reaches to that one, Šahrewar, and Wahman and Ašwahit as well.

## 5.2. *vohū manañhā*

In Zand translation of these three Gathic hymns, *vohū manañhā* has been consistently topicalized and translated to Wahman. This word in all the paragraphs of these three Gathas is accompanied by the word Ahura or mazdā or a combination of these two, that is, Ahura Mazdā perhaps indicating its special importance in comparison with other divine manifestations; only in the paragraph 7 of Yasn 30, this word has not been collocated with Ahura Mazdā. However, the interesting point is that in this same paragraph, the names of these four abstract forces, i.e., *ašā*, *vohū manañhā*, *xšaθrəm* and *ārmaitiš* have been used together and thus the absence of the God's name may be possibly due to the very reason that names of these four forces are used next to each other.

30.7a) ahmāicā xšaθrā jasaṭ # manañhā vohū ašācā.  
aṭ kəhrpēm utaiiūitiš # dadāt ārmaitiš aṇmā.

If one comes to it (existence) with power, good thought and truth, then stability grants form (to one's body), right-mindedness (grants) breath.

ō ōy šahrewar rasēd wahman ud ašwahišt-iz.

u-š ēdōn kirb tuxšan dahēd spandarmad pad astowīh  
[kū tā-š dahēd stō nē bawēd].

It reaches to that one, Šahrewar, and Wahman and Ašwahit as well.

Thus, Spandarmad gives the body energy for non-distress (one she gives it one does not become distressed.)

### 5.3. xšaθrəm

In Zand, the word *xšaθrəm* meaning “strength” is either translated to the word *xwadāyīh* “sovereignty” or topicalized by rendering into the word Šahrewar. *Xšaθrəm* is a magical power by which Zoroastrian priests attract the favor of God and in fact is a heavenly force which enables the divinity to fulfil the desires of the priests (Humbach 1991, 2:221). Overall, this word is repeated six times in these three hymns and is translated in Zand to *xwadāyīh* three times and to Šahrewar three times. Where the translator has inferred the meaning “strength” and “sovereignty” for this word, he has used the word *xwadāyīh*; however, if he has found the word in a subject position, he has topicalized it and employed the word Šahrewar.

30.8b) aṭ mazdā taibiiō xšaθrəm # vohū manəḡhā  
+vōiuuīdāitī

O wise one, one will commit to thee the power (over it) with good thought.

ēdōn Ohrmazd kē ō tō xwādayīh ā-š wahman be dahēd [mizd].

Thus, O Ohrmazd, Wahman gives [reward] to one who (stands) on your sovereignty.

29.10a) yūžēm aēibiiō ahurā # aogō dātā ašā  
xšaθrəmcā...

Grant you, O Ahura, strength through truth to those (present), and that power...

ašmā ō awēšān Ohrmazd ayārīh dahēd Ašwahišt ud  
Šahrewar [kū Zardušt ud hāwištān ī Zardušt nekīh  
padiš kunēnd].

A) You, O Ohrmazd, give help to them, Ašwahišt  
and Šahrewar [until Zardušt and his pupils do  
goodness with that.]

#### 5.4. *ārmaitiš*

*Ārmaitiš* meaning “true thinking” unlike the three other entities which are neutral nouns is a feminine noun and is much less frequent in Gāthās compared to the three other words. Within these three Gāthic hymns, it is mentioned only three times (paragraphs 3 and 7 of Yasn 28; Paragraph 7 of Yasn 30); in two cases, it takes the position of the subject of the sentence and in one case, it takes the vocative case. Hence, it is a distinct manifestation in translator’s view; so, he has translated this word to Spandarmad in all three cases.

28.3c) ...varədaitī *ārmaitiš* # ā mōi rafədrāi zauuəṅg  
jasatā.

Right-mindedness increases. May you come to my  
calls for support.

ōy-iz ī wālišn-dādār Spandarmad [ā-š xwēš hānd] ān ō  
man pad rāmišn pad xwānišn rasēd.

She too who is giver of increasing, Spandarmad, [they  
belong to her] that come to me in peace, in  
invocation.

## 6. Explanation and remarks

The exegeses made in Zand of Gāthās including the three hymns, unlike Zand of other parts of Avesta such as Vendidad and Nirangestan is very short and somewhat monotonous often involving a style of thinking focusing mainly on the afterlife and the purely religious demands and thus Gāthās explanations may be considered as the result of a single school. This point should also be noted that the interpreter has attempted through these remarks to somehow include beliefs of his time in the Gāthic text (Josephson 2003, 31).

Some instances common within Zands of these three Gāthās which are embedded without any contextual evidence in the Avestan text include:

The expression *tan ī pasēn* which is used a total of seven times within Yasns 28 and 30. This expression is often used when explaining these terms: *dagr-gyānīh* “longevity” which is itself a translation for the Avestan word *darəga-āīiu-* “long” in paragraph 6 of Yasn 28; *hamē tā ō wisp* “forever, eternal” which is an equivalent for the Avestan *vīspāi yauuē* in paragraph 8 of Yasn 28; conjunctions *yadā* and *adā* meaning “when; then” in Avestan language in paragraphs 8 and 10 of Yasn 30 are translated through the expression *pad ān dahišn* “within that creation” followed by the exegesis: *tan ī pasēn*.

30.8a) aṭcā yadā aēšam # kaēnā jamaitī aēnaḥam.

And when the atonement for their (the Daevas’) crimes will have arrived.

ēdōn-iz ī pad ān dahišn [pad tan ī pasēn] ō awēšān  
kēnīgān [wināhkārān] rasēd kēn.

Thus, malice reaches in that creation [in final body] to those malicious [sinners.]

Among the other explanatory words common within the Zand interpretation of these three Gāthās, we may refer to the following cases:

*hāwišt* “disciple”, *mowbedān mowbedīh* “Zoroastrian priests”, *hērbed* and *hērbedestān* which have no textual links in the Avestan text; they are included in the exegesis possibly due to the dominance which priests as a privileged class had at that time.

28. 7b) *dāidī tū ārmaitē# vištāspāi īšəm maibiiācā.*

Grant, O Right-mindedness, vigor to Vištāspa and to me.

u-m dahē tō spandarmad ān ī az wištāsp xwāhišn  
[*mowbedān mowbedīh*] ud *manīgān-iz* [*hāwištān ī*  
*man ā-šān mowbedān mowbedīh dah*].

And given to me, thou O Spandarmad that which is to be sought from Wištāsp [the office of chief priest] and even my follower [my pupils, grant them the office of chief priest.]

30.2a) *sraotā gōuš.āiš vahištā # auuaēnatā sūcā*  
*manaḡhā.*

Hear with (your) ears the best (thing)! View through the radiance, with (your) thought.

*gōšōsrūd waxšēnišnīh* [*kū-š hērbedestān kunišn*] *kē-š*  
*wēnābdāg ān ī rōšn pad menišn* [*kū ān ī hērbedān rōšn*  
*ōy tārīg*].

To grow learning [one should attend the *hērbedestān* ‘priestly school’] is he whose light is visible in his mind [that of the *hērbedestān* is light and that one dark.]

Another frequent word which has been used for interpreting certain expressions is the word *dēn*. This word has been used in interpreting terms such as *pahlomīh ī tō*; *ka ī ašmā mānsar*; *pad ān ī ohrmazd*; *Ohrmazd*.

28.8a) vahištəm θβā vahištā # yōm ašā vahištā  
hazaošəm...

I lovingly entreat you, O Best one, who are in  
harmony with best truth.

ka pahlomīh ī tō [dēn ī tō] pahlom [az abārīg tis] pad  
ahlāyīh pahlom ō ham dōšānd [pad frārōnīh].

Since thy excellence [thy religion] (is) excellence [than  
other things] through righteousness they shall together  
love excellence [through righteousness].

30.8c) aēibiiō sastē ahurā # yōi ašāi dadən zastaiiō  
drujəm.

At (the recompense) announced to those, O Ahura,  
who will have delivered deceit into the hands of truth.

pad awēšān hammōxtišn ohrmazd [pad dēn ī  
ohrmazd] ka ō ōy kē ahlāyīh [kū pad tis ī frārōn  
hammōxt estēd] ā-š ō dast dahīhēd druz [druz ī  
ahlomōyīh].

For teaching them Ohrmazd [in religion of Ohrmazd],  
when one who has righteousness [it means he was  
taught by righteous thing], then it will be given to  
his hand demon [demon of heresy.]

## 7. Conclusion

It may be asserted that due to the long interval between creation of Gāthās and its Zand translation and the inaccurate understanding of the key meanings of the Gāthic words and of its lexical structure and also since Gāthās is a versified text describing the most transcendental religious doctrines of Zarathustra, the Zand translator was mostly incapable to infer the correct meanings of the words leading him to make use of a vulgar etymology in an attempt to select equivalents most similar to the form of the Avestan words. Therefore, he has provided translations far from the original meaning of the text and as mentioned earlier, the semantic or literal translation is the most prevalent translation method used in Zand of Gāthās.

The most frequent technique of translation employed in Zand of these three hymns is borrowing or in other words, transcription of the Avestan words; next is the loan translation where an Avestan word or expression is broken into parts followed by choosing for each part an equivalent closest to the Avestan word in terms of etymology. Subsequently, transposition or the change of grammatical category of a word is a usual phenomenon in Zand text. Due to the limited scope of the selected Zand text, not all of translation techniques may be analyzed; however, other translation methods must have been used in the Zand texts for sure. Through a more comprehensive investigation into the Zand texts, these techniques may be recognized and analyzed in more detail.

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