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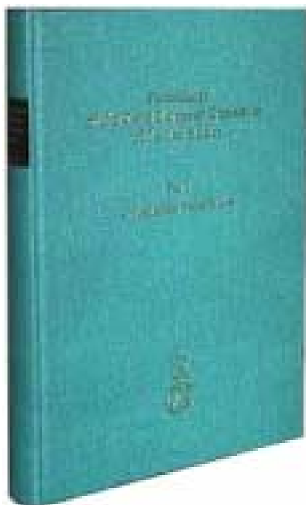

Societas Iranologica Europaea (SIE) was founded in June 1983 in Rome initially with the aim of promoting all aspects of Iranian studies among European scholars (see Ph. Gignoux's announcement in *Studia Iranica* 12/2, 1983, 233-234). In the course of the general meetings every four years (the First European Conference of Iranian Studies in Turin, Sept. 7-11, 1987; the Second … in Bamberg, Sept. 30 – Oct. 4, 1991), however, the Society grew to embrace not only European scholars, but also those from Iran, Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union, Russia, the United States and even Japan. The *Proceedings* under review is the third in the series, following Rome 1990, 2 vols and Rome 1995 for the First and the Second Conferences respectively. Part 1 of the third *Proceedings* deals with "Old and Middle Iranian Studies", while Part 2 dealing with "Medieval and Modern Persian Studies" edited by Charles Melville came out a year later (1999) from the same publisher. The editor of Part 1 divides the contributions into two sections; "Religions and culture of Ancient Iran" (8 articles) and "Texts and languages" (10 articles). With one exception in the first section, A. D. H. Bivar, "Reassessing Mirdrakvandi: Mithraic echoes in the 20th century" about an Iranian who wrote a novel in English apparently inspired by Old Iranian themes, and another at the end of the second section by Ludwig Paul, "The position of Zazaki among West Iranian languages", which is a very thorough work of comparative dialectology (phonology and morphology) on this little studied language and which is especially noteworthy for its detailed treatment of OIr. **-rd*/**-rz* in Modern Western Iranian languages (reminiscent of G. Morgenstierne's works on "*r* + sibilant" in Eastern Iranian languages), it can be said that traditional philology-oriented Iranian studies are represented here.

In the first section, two articles deal with the name S¤s¤n, known as the eponymous ancestor of the Sasanian kings. Philippe Gignoux, "S¤s¤n ou le dieu protecteur" starts from the name of the mysterious god S¤s¤n attested as a component of personal names among the Parthian Nisa documents and some coin legends. This deity, unknown to the Avesta and Zoroastrian Pahlavi literature, may have been a characteristic of the religion of Arsacid Parthia according to V. A. Livshits. The theophoric personal names (name-components) are spelled in Parthian as *ssn* without the long vowel notation, but in Middle Persian inscriptions as *s'sn*, *s's'n* or later also as *ss'n* with an aleph. Gignoux further lists the occurrences of this name in a number of Sasanian seals and amulets, where the spelling is actually either *ssn* or *ssyn*. Lastly Gignoux points out the existence of traces of the divine name *ssn* in Christian literature in Syriac possibly, according to him, through a confusion with the name of the Manichaean leader and successor of

Mani, SÂsÂn (Sisinnios).

In the second article, after providing an attractive etymology for the dynastic name S¤s¤n as the SW Iranian form of IIr. **tr¤-tr-¤n-* “furnisher of protection”, Martin Schwartz, “Sesen: A durable East Mediterranean god in Iran”, points out that in Pahlavi inscriptions of late Sasanian seals and amulets the long vowel notation by an aleph should never have been omitted. It is therefore necessary to distinguish a protective deity whose name is written either as *ssn* or as *ssyn* from the personal name S¤s¤n which is always written with a *mater lectionis*. Schwartz goes on to show that the former represents a divinity called *Sesen*, the late form of the name of the protective god *Sasm-*, *Sesem* attested in Ugaritic, Phoenician, Assyrian, etc. Thus the borrowing of this name in West Middle Iranian (Parthian and Middle Persian) is a testimony to his remarkable longevity in the magic and popular religion in the East Mediterranean.

The next three articles concern different aspects of Manichaeism. Gherardo Gnoli, “Further considerations on a Manichaean dating of Zoroaster”, discusses a possible origin of a late (7th century A.H.) Persian source which emphasizes the difference of a Manichaean tradition placing the prophet Zoroaster under the reign of a king named D¤r¤ and the traditional Zoroastrian reckoning placing the prophet “258 years before Alexander”. Since the latter recognizes only two kings named D¤r¤, the last two in the line of the Kayanids and just before Alexander, the D¤r¤ mentioned by the former which still places the prophet in the 6th century B.C.E. cannot be either. Thus the two traditions are incompatible with each other, but still seem to point independently to the same conclusion. Gnoli’s argument is that the Manichaean tradition originates in the Judaic tradition in the Hellenistic period, when the idea of the dating of Zoroaster to the 6th century was widespread, as can be seen by similar Iranian and Greek traditions.

James R. Russell, “A Manichaean apostolic mission to Armenia?”, examines the historicity of a legend preserved in Sogdian of a mission of Mar Gabryab, a disciple of Mani, to a place called R´v¤n. Since the Manichaean Sogdian fragment was published by Werner Sundermann in 1981, the episode of the apostle’s attempt to convert a Christian king was taken by some at face value as having taken place at Erevan in the late third century. The difficulty is, according to Russell, “no Armenian king was ever converted to Manichaeism, nor was Armenia a Christian country at the time of Gabryab’s life and career”. It is more likely that the source of the Syriac original (via Parthian or Middle Persian) of the Sogdian story was to be sought in the Armenian apostolic tradition such as related by Movs´s Xorenac‘i on the apostle Thaddeus who tried to convert an Armenian king from paganism to Christianity and on the apostle Bartholomew who came to Armenia “in the city of Arebanos” (rather than the modern capital of Armenia, Erevan).

Iris Colditz, “Notes on the problem of punishment and conversion in Manichaeism”, is a textual study in Manichaean Middle Persian, Parthian and Coptic on the significance of the various methods of punishment for conversion, of both those who abandon and deny Manichaeism (apostates and heretics) and those who convert to Manichaeism from Zoroastrianism. The author finds out that condemnation of apostates or heretics against Manichaeism is made in terms of civil offences such as theft,

insubordination and murder, which exactly reflects the treatment they, as a religious minority, underwent by the hand of the Zoroastrian authorities in accordance with Sasanian Law.

The next two articles concern seals and coins in Sasanian Iran. Rika Gyselen, “Un vêtement masculin «archaïsant» dans la glyptique sassanide”, contends that, unlike other materials of artistic expressions such as rock reliefs, silverware, ornamental textiles or coins, most seals were used in everyday life by a larger population of the middle class, reflecting a more general and precise image of the Sasanian society in all sectors, Zoroastrian, Christian and Jewish. Among various features the clothes worn by the figure on the seal are important because the way one dressed was not a matter of choice or fashion, but was determined by the social class or profession where one belonged (in n.4, p. 40 read al-BÂrÞnÂ, *Ath¤r* for al-MasÞdÂ, *MurÞj*). As an illustration an archaistic clothing found in a group of seals with well-defined motifs of “Abraham about to sacrifice Isaac” and “Daniel in the lion pit” is discussed and traced back to the Babylonian seals and Elamite arts in Achaemenian Persia..

Malek Iradj Mochiri, “Les monnaies de Kav¤d I à double effigie”, tries to interpret a group of coins with double figures from iconographical and epigraphical points of view. The figure on the obverse is clearly Kaw¤d I as the only clearly legible proper name in the inscriptions confirms. Other words that can be read are *Šahrewar* “Best Rule (= the third *Amahraspand*), *yazad* “god” and possibly *fr¤xw´nÂd¤r* “one who makes prosper” and *abzÏn* “growth”. On the other hand, the figure on the reverse cannot be the designated heir of Kaw¤d, Husraw I, as has been claimed on insufficient evidence. The peculiar headdress and hairstyle as well as the halo around the head rather point to a divinity, in this case a Mithra image.

The second section consists of one article concerning Avestan, eight concerning various Middle Iranian languages, and one dealing with New Iranian dialectology mentioned above.

Antonio Panaino, “A da´vic speech (Yt. 19.57, 60, 63), gives a novel interpretation of the three enigmatic passages of the Zamy¤d YaÔt, where the Turanian king Fraŋrasiian, having failed to obtain the *x*^{v}*arənah* from the sea Vouru.kaꞪa despite repeated attempts, utters “an evil utterance” (*aγ¥m daoiθrÂm*) three times. Most interpreters have left these phrases untranslated because some forms are, as they are found in the text, not found elsewhere and the syntax is also unclear. Panaino’s explanation, not without minor emendations to the text, is to see in these phrases “obscene expressions referring to sexual intercourse” to signify defeat and disappointment. Thus *iθa* is taken as the (in Avestan) unattested but regular 2nd pl. pres. ind. of the verb *i-* “to go” (Ved. *ithá*) rather than a form corresponding to Ved. *itth¨* “just so” as assumed by others. This very interesting interpretation certainly “does not require any bold emendation or thorny syntactic solution”, but could hardly be the last word to the problem (why should the verb be in the second person and especially in the plural?).

Nicholas Sims-Williams, “Further notes on the Bactrian inscription of Rabatak, with an appendix on the names of Kujula Kadphises and Vima Taktu in Chinese”, improves

upon the first publication by the same author together with Joe Cribb, "A New Bactrian inscription of Kanishka the Great", (*Silk Road Art and Archaeology*, 4, 1996) with the help of new photographs. Some of these photographs, reproduced on plates 9–12, give better readings of the inscription than those published in 1996, and others less so, but still are welcome as giving different angles of lighting. Apart from new readings, some new notes are added such as the one on the definite / human direct object marking by means of the otherwise indirect object marker, which is found widely in Modern Iranian languages (p. 86). One should not forget in this connection Chris Brunner's fundamental study on Parthian (*A Syntax of Western Middle Iranian*, Delmar, NY, 1977, 136ff.), which should in turn be considered in wider perspectives discussed *e.g.* by F. R. Palmer, *Grammatical roles and relations* (Cambridge UP, 1994, 36f.), or Christopher Lyons *Definiteness* (Cambridge UP, 1998, 205ff.), who remarks that "In some languages, direct objects which are distinguished by definiteness or other features differ from others in being marked by a case form, preposition, or other marker, which is otherwise associated with some 'oblique' function, typically that of indirect object". In the meantime, an important critique by Gérard Fussman, "L'inscription de Rabatak et l'origine de l'ère Íaka" (*Journal asiatique* 286/2, 1998, 571-651) has raised a number of important problems, which, if not all readily accepted, require serious consideration. One of them concerns the name of the Kushan king Vima Taktu (?), perhaps the most sensational discovery the Rabatak inscription has offered. Fussman points out that the name *τακτοο cannot actually be read in line 13 of the poorly preserved lefthand part of the inscription (only ακ is clear, followed by less clear το, then by clear ο), that the association of the name with *TakÚuma* on a KharoÛÛhÂ inscription from M¤Ö (near Mathur¤) has serious flaws, and that the traces on the DaÔt-e N¤wur I inscription do not support the reading τακ[το]ο proposed by Sims-Williams (1996: 95). This last point has considerable weight, since it is Fussman himself and nobody else who examined the inscriptions *in situ* at the mountaintop of 4,320m of altitude. However, even if, as Fussman claims, all the connections with other occurrences of the name *Τακτοο proved to be illusory, the fact remains that the Rabatak inscription speaks about a king, whose name probably ends in –ακτοο, and who comes in a sequence between Kujula Kadphises and Vima Kadphises before KaniÛka.

R. E. Emmerick, "Khotanese *ei*", discusses the origin and the possible phonetic value of a special vowel sign traditionally transcribed as *ei* in a kind of Central Asian Br¤hmÂ script used in Khotanese. This sign, an *x*-shaped cross placed above a Br¤hmÂ consonant letter (called *akÚara*), interchanges with more usual *ai* in most manuscripts where *ei* is found, but in a group of manuscripts (the *ÍÞraËgamasam¤dhisÞtra*) with particularly archaic features the two vowel signs, *ei* and *ai*, are consistently distinguished. One of such cases is the endings of the *aa*-declension, where –*ei* represents the contraction of *a* with *£*, while –*ai* that of *a* with *i*. From this relatively secure ground Emmerick embarks on the demonstration that all the forms with the vowel sign *ei* can be reduced to the cases of contraction of *a* with *£*. In some cases, especially when the etymology is unambiguous such as Khot. *tcei'man-* "eye" from **©aÔman-* with an anaptyctic schwa between consonants and the regular loss of intervocalic *-*Ô*-, no other explanations could perhaps do better, but the rest of the cases may not be so successful as the definite solution. At the end the possibility of the graphic origin of the sign going back to the Indian *jihv¤mÞlÂya* (attributed to K. T. Schmidt) is mentioned, although its phonetic

value “can hardly in itself have been sufficiently close to” what the vowel sign *ei* represented.

The next two contributions concern aspects of Inscriptional Middle Persian. Prods Oktor Skjærvø, “Royalty in early Iranian literature”, takes up the theme, much discussed in recent years by himself and others, of the parallelism found between historical documents (*Urkunde*) such as the Achaemenid and Sasanian inscriptions and other types of literature. In this article, however, Skjærvø seeks parallels not in the surviving Old and Middle Iranian textual sources, but rather in the oral tradition that lies behind (at least some of) them. The case in question is the similarity of a passage in the Paikuli inscription, where dignitaries entreat the ostensibly reluctant Narseh to ascend the throne, to another in the Sogdian tale of the Fox and the Monkey published by W. B. Henning in 1945. It is not so much that the redactor of the Paikuli inscription had the well-known Aesopian theme in mind as that the phrasing of the two passages resemble to such an extent that a tradition of the professional storytellers must have taken a hand in both of them. Skjærvø argues that such “professional composer-performers” well versed in ancient traditions of oral literature participated not only in composing but also in spreading the *res gestae* of the king. At the end Skjærvø points out that the “conflation of epic tales and historical accounts is seen throughout the literature of many peoples”. The difficulties in sifting out the genuine historical accounts from inventions of storytellers in Iranian historical and pseudo-historical sources have often been emphasized. Now Skjærvø has shown that even the historical accounts can be told in the framework of the storytelling of minstrels.

Philip Huyse, “KerdÂr and the first Sasanians”, discusses three problematic phrases in the inscriptions of the Zoroastrian high-priest KerdÂr: *bun-x¤nag* (*bwny BYTA*), *KerdÂr Â bÏxt-ruw¤n-wahr¤m* (*kltyly ZY bwhtlwb'n wlhl'n*) and *´w´n mahr* (*'dwyn mhly*) [transcriptions are Huyse's for the forms on the inscriptions in parentheses]. The first term, *bun-x¤nag*, has been interpreted variously. It occurs in a passage where, as KerdÂr claims, “Š¤buhr I assigned the fires and rites to him (= KerdÂr) to be his (= KerdÂr's) *bun-x¤nag*”. Huyse rejects as grammatically impossible (n. 16; after Skjærvø's review of Gignoux's edition) an interpretation with *x¤nag* as dependent (e.g. “the base of the house”). Most of other interpretations, even with the correct Middle Persian syntax, suggesting an association with the building of the Ka‘ba Â ZarduÔt, where one of KerdÂr's inscriptions was engraved, or with some such buildings elsewhere, are shown to be unconvincing after detailed examination. Thus Huyse returns to the, “more or less unavoidable” (Skjærvø), interpretation of “resources, funds” in the sense of “(personal) estate”. In the second term, the ultimate title borne by KerdÂr, Huyse sees, improving on Skjærvø's “K. whose soul was saved by W.”, not the king, but the god Wahr¤m. However, as already noted by Skjærvø, in this sense the phrase would be ungrammatical without the possessive -*Ô* after *Â* for “whose”. The third term, *´w´n mahr*, is “the key to KerdÂr's vision” according to MacKenzie, who sees (his edition, p. 67f.) in *mahr* a “hitherto unattested word” for “death”. Gignoux in his edition (p. 95, n. 214) follows MacKenzie. However, this is phonetically impossible as long as, and as is likely, the underlying Old Iranian form, if it existed, was oxytone; cf. K. Hoffmann, in *Studia Grammatica Iranica, Fs. Humbach* (1986). Huyse rightly defends the previous interpretations of *´w´n* as “custom, rite” and *mahr* as “incantation” (cf. Av. *m¥θra*) with

a parallel passage, although remote, from the Greek author Lucian of Samosata.

Werner Sundermann, “On a Middle Persian legal term and its forgotten origin”, discusses, in a somewhat roundabout way, the meaning and etymology of a Pahlavi legal term written either as *bay¤sp¤n* (in *Riv¤yat Âhm´d ÂAÔawahiÔt¤n*) or as *bay¤st¤n* (in *M¤dy¤n Âhaz¤r d¤dist¤n*). In the context of these legal texts, where the word is used to qualify *duxt* “daughter” or *x*^{v}*ah* “sister”, it seems to mean “the girl who goes to her husband’s house rather than being taken there by her relatives or her bridegroom”. The problem is, therefore, which of the two forms represents the original, and, if the form with *-p-* is preferred, whether this is the same word as the *bay¤sp¤n* “messenger” in Inscriptional Parthian, Manichaean Middle Persian and some Pahlavi texts (references in H. W. Bailey, *Zoroastrian Problems*, 1971^{2}, 46, n. 4), and, if it is so, how the difference in meaning is to be explained. As to the form of the legal term in question, Sundermann explores both possibilities. If the form *bay¤st¤n* is correct, one could derive it either from *baga-* “God” + **st¤n* “messenger” (cf. CSogd. *st’nyq*, BSogd. *’st’nyk* “messenger”), in which case why a bride in a particular type of marriage should be called “God’s messenger” remains obscure, or from *be-ast-¤n* “out of the house”, in which case the semantic connection with the “messenger” word must be abandoned even with a possible change of *t* > *p*. On the other hand, if one starts from *bay¤sp¤n*, it is likely to be somehow related to the Sogdian word for “bridegroom” written as *bγ’(ny)pÔ* (in Syriac script) or *[βγ’]nyÔp* (in Sogdian script), literally meaning “a son of the god Baga”, hence “a divine son”. Sundermann assumes that there existed an Old Persian word such as **bag¤puça-* “bridegroom” without specifying whether it goes back to Proto-Iranian (from which the Sogdian form would derive), or the Sogdian form is a loanword. He further posits a derived feminine **bag¤puç¤nÂ-*, from which, with the loss of the medial *–u-* and the metathesis of *–ps-* to *–sp-*, the Middle Persian form *bay¤sp¤n* “bride”, a homonym to *bay¤sp¤n* “messenger” of quite different origin, would emerge. Sundermann duly notes some difficulties, among which the long vowel at the end of the first term or an archaic nature of the feminine suffix *-¤nÂ* (according to Debrunner, referred to in n. 50, “zwar überwiegend zu männlichen Eigennamen”). All this as well as the semantic aspects of the problem (“bride” is unlikely to be a female “bridegroom” in kinship terminology; while the word for “bridegroom” refers apparently to an ordinary bridegroom, the one for “bride” in question does not, etc.), makes the argument less convincing, if not impossible. It is nevertheless a fascinating attempt to solve a difficult problem.

Enrico Morano, “My kingdom is not of this world: revisiting the great Parthian crucifixion hymn”, is a reedition, with additional materials, of an important Manichaean Parthian hymn concerning the crucifixion of Jesus. The major fragments of the surviving part of the hymn had been published in as early as 1904 by F. W. K. Müller and then in 1934 by F. C. Andreas and W. B. Henning. Since then many other fragments were identified by Mary Boyce, Werner Sundermann and Morano himself. The new edition gives a synoptic text, translation and commentary as well as diplomatic texts of all the fragments identified so far. Especially welcome are Plates 13-16 where their photographs except for those already published elsewhere are reproduced.

Two articles report on collections of Middle Iranian manuscripts. Christiane Reck,

“Work in progress: a catalogue of the Middle Iranian manuscripts in Sogdian script of the Berlin Turfan collection”, lets us know about the present state of the cataloguing work of the German Turfan collection. Apart from a small number of manuscripts in Br¤hmÂ script, the Middle Iranian manuscripts in the German Turfan collection can be divided, with respect to their script, into three groups: those in Manichaean script, those in Sogdian script, and those in Syriac script. Mary Boyce's well-known *Catalogue* in 1960 covers the first group almost completely, while the fragments of the third group are being catalogued by N. Sims-Williams. Here Reck describes the preparation for the catalogue of the second group within the framework of VOHD (Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland). It will further be divided into at least three volumes with respect to the content, the first volume for the fragments with Manichaean content, the second for those with Buddhist content, and the third for others. As an example of the fragments to be dealt with, a Parthian Narisaf hymn in Sogdian transcription (Ch/So 10000(3)) with a photograph on Plate 17 is published here for the first time.

Carlo G. Cereti, “Zoroastrian manuscripts in Italy: past and present”, describes two manuscript collections: one (now apparently lost) in the library of the Faculty of Letters of the University of Florence, and the other in the library of the Istituto Universitario Orientale of Naples. The collection in Florence was first known to Iranianists outside Italy when K. F. Geldner mentioned one manuscript from there in the Prolegomena to his Avesta edition. In 1940 J. M. Unvala gave a fairly detailed description of the Zoroastrian mss. (Avesta, Pahlavi, Pazand etc.) there in his book, *Collections of colophons*, Bombay 1940, but, according to Cereti, discrepancies between the published catalogues and the information given by Unvala leave uncertainties on the status of these mss. when (and if actually) Unvala saw them. Unfortunately, these Zoroastrian mss. cannot be located now, neither is it known when exactly they got lost. The Naples collection consists of four mss. in Zoroastrian Persian and Pazand, and three “relatively recent copies” of the *Das¤tir*. For each the title, contents and the colophon are given.

One would have wished to have, at the end of the volume, the indices of the words and subjects discussed, but that would have made the price of the book prohibitive.