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JAMES DARMESTETER
(1849-1894)
Commemoration Volume

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JAMES DARMESTETER
(1849-1894)

**JAMES DARMESTETER MEMORIAL
LECTURES**

edited by

G. Lazard and D. R. SarDesai

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FOREWORD

This volume is a collection of lectures delivered on the occasion of the commemoration of James DARMESTETER (1849-1894), a great French specialist of old Iranian religion and history .

This commemoration was the brain-child of Dr. Olivier Guillaume, Director of the Centre for Human Sciences (Cultural Section of the French Embassy, New Delhi), and Eric Phalippou, Research Worker at the same Centre. Since Darmesteter, during his travels in India, stayed in Bombay for several months, working with Zoroastrian scholars, it appeared advisable to organize the occasion in this city and in Pune. It took place on December 16-22, 1994 with the support of several French and Indian institutions: Institut Français de Recherches en Iran, the Asiatic Society of Bombay, Gatha Study Group, Pune, Alliance Française de Bombay and Alliance Française de Pune.

The texts of the lectures are here presented to the readers as a token of admiration and gratitude to a great scholar whose name is remembered to this day both in France and in India.

Gilbert LAZARD
membre de
l'Institut de France

D.R. SARDESAI
President,
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JAMES DARMESTETER, HIS LIFE AND WORKS

GILBERT LAZARD

When James Darmesteter died on October 19, 1894, nearly a century ago, the well-known specialist of Pahlavi literature E. W. West who had been his friend wrote: "I am convinced that it would be difficult to find a sounder scholar, a more brilliant writer, and a more estimable man all united in the same individual." I think that anybody conversant with Darmesteter's writings will agree with this judgment. When reading either his scholarly works on Iranian languages, religion and culture or his not unconsiderable writings on other subjects, one cannot help feeling both admiration for his scientific achievements and his qualities as a human being. He was a wonderful person who was endowed with an exceptional mind and who had an astonishingly large field of interest; at the same time he was basically a man of good will. His life was short: he died at the age of 45. However, during the short time which fate allowed him to live he accomplished an extraordinary amount of work in Iranology and in other fields as well.

He was born in 1849 in Château-Salins, a small city in the East of France, into a Jewish family. His father's ancestors had come to France from the German city of Darmstadt, and this is why, when, at the time of the French revolution, the Jews had to take up a family name, they chose the name of Darmstädter, which happened to be written Darmesteter. His mother was descended from a line of rabbis who had been active in Prague. James's father was a modest bookbinder who was eager to provide his two sons with the best possible education. It is for this reason that he came to Paris where, in spite of financial difficulties and at the cost of many sacrifices, he was able to achieve his goal. James was first educated in a Jewish school where he became acquainted with Hebrew and Talmud. Being naturally attracted to great ideas, he conceived a dislike for the punctilious prescriptions and narrow-minded interpretations of the Tora by traditional doctors, but he remained interested in the Bible and the history of the Jews. It may be thought that his Talmudic studies had a part in his later philological abilities. He then went to a Parisian *lycée* (a grammar school), where he studied classics, science and modern languages. He was a brilliant pupil and, in 1867, at the end of his secondary studies, he won the *prix d'honneur* (honour award) given to the best student in Latin oratory in all *lycées*.

At the time he was eighteen and he did not know what career he would take up. Philosophy, natural science and literature tempted him. He got a *licence ès lettres* (more or less equivalent to the British B.A.), studied law, wrote a novel and a

drama which he later judged of poor quality and also tried his hand at poetry. Life was difficult. His father had died in 1868. James had to give lessons in order to earn a living. This is how he spent the tragic years of the Franco-German war of 1870 and the 1871 insurrection in Paris.

He eventually let himself be guided by his elder brother Arsène who was also his best friend and who, following his rabbinic studies, had chosen to be a specialist of Romance philology. He too was a brilliant mind and he became a well known scholar in his own field. To this day the French dictionary he compiled is referred to. Having been appointed to teach in the Ecole des Hautes Etudes, an institute founded for advanced studies which were not taught in the universities, he attracted James to the Ecole and introduced him to linguistics and Sanskrit professors, who engaged him in oriental studies. Since the death of Eugène Burnouf who had established the basis of the scientific study of the Avesta, there had been no specialist of the history, religion and literature of ancient Iran in France. James Darmesteter was to become his worthy successor.

Iranology is a particularly difficult field, for it requires very diverse kinds of knowledge. The origins of languages, religion and old literature of Iran are closely connected to the Indian culture, so that a scholar who applies himself to these subjects must be conversant with the Sanskrit language and literature. Moreover, at different times in the course of its history, Iran came into close contact with the Semitic world and was deeply influenced by it. The Achaemenian empire is in many respects, heir to the Assyrian and Babylonian empires. Aramean scribes were an indispensable part of the Achaemenian administration and left powerful traces of their role in the Pahlavi language and script with its Semitic component. Later, with the Arab conquest and Islamisation, Iran was submitted to the strong influence of the Arabic and Islamic culture. Persian absorbed an immense amount of Arabic words and Persian culture developed in symbiosis with the Arabic one. Contacts with Greece, which culminated in Alexander's conquest and the subsequent centuries of Greek influence, must also be taken into account. To be a competent scholar in the whole field of Iranian civilisation and to be able to use and criticize all the necessary sources of information has become an impossible task in our century, with the discovery of so much new information. A hundred years ago it was not exactly so, though it was still a formidable task.

In 1872 James Darmesteter began his studies at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes. Two years later his professors decided they had nothing more to teach him. In 1874 he became a member of the Société Asiatique (Asiatic Society of Paris) and, in 1875, he published his first book on Iranology, a monograph entitled *Haurvatât et Ameretât*, which, was a systematic study of these two entities of the Zoroastrian

religion. Haurvatât and Ameretât are the last two (never separated) of the seven *amōsha spōntas* which are the highest deities in Mazdaism. Relying on the Parsi tradition, which was passed on by the Pahlavi translation of the Avesta, and on the Sanskrit translation of the Pahlavi translation, he first described the material attributes of these deities, connecting them with water and plants respectively. He then pointed to their abstract values, which, according to the etymological meaning of their names, are health and immortality, and investigated the relation between their material attributes and their abstract values. In the concluding chapter he related them to old Indo-Iranian myths. I am not in a position to pass judgment on these theses. My colleague Philippe Gignoux, who in this matter is more competent than I am, will enlighten you on this point. I only want to emphasize the author's striking firmness of style and thought. This early work already shows a remarkable breadth of information, accuracy in the interpretation of texts and boldness in the building of theories. The book won him the title of *élève diplômé de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes* (graduate student) and a prize given by the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.

Two years later, in 1877, he published another and larger book, *Ormazd et Ahriman*, which was his doctorate dissertation. The book, devoted to the great god of Mazdaism and his irreconcilable enemy, the principle of evil, was in a sense a continuation of the preceding one. It was inspired by the same concepts. In the introductory chapter the author defines the comparative methodology very effectively: "It is the methodology that is used in the history of languages; it must also be used in the history of religion. Just as the comparison of the different forms of a word alone enables us to classify them in order to distinguish old from new forms, to find out in what order they succeeded one another and finally to recognize or restore the primitive form or forms from which they were derived, the comparison of the different attributes of a god is the only way to classify them, in order to distinguish the old attributes from the new, to find out in what order they succeeded one another and finally to recognize or restore the primitive attribute or attributes from which they were derived".¹ According to the methodology, "when investigating a Mazdean deity or conception, one must ask whether the deity or conception was already Indo-Iranian or purely Iranian. In the first case, Vedism which remained much closer to the religion of unity than Mazdaism, often, either directly or inductively, leads to the Indo-Iranian form which gives the possibility of reconstructing the path followed by the Mazdean form. In the second case, the question is more limited and, knowing the environment in which the new fact emerged, it becomes possible to define the relevant factors and how they took effect".²

According to Darmesteter's theory, there is no gap in the evolution from the Indo-Iranian religion to Mazdaism. Ormazd is inherited from the former, while Ahriman developed at a later stage: "Iran took its demons seriously: dualism, covert during the preceding period, became overt and very present. Evil became an independent and sovereign power in an open war with Good".³ Ormazd, according to this view, was originally the personification of the sky and Indo-Iranian myths, which were reinterpreted in later times, originally referred to meteorological phenomena. Such a naturalistic conception of the Indo-Iranian (and Indo-European) religion, much favoured in the XIXth century, is no longer accepted. Nevertheless Darmesteter's theory is impressive, and perhaps the rereading of some of his analyses would be useful. Still, in the eyes of his contemporaries, he had proved his worth. He was appointed to teach at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes and the well known orientalist Max Muller asked him to provide a translation of the Avesta for the "Sacred Books of the East" series.

While preparing the translation he also published articles on different subjects, in particular in the *Mémoires de la Société de Linguistique de Paris*. While some are studies of Indo-European or Indo-Iranian comparative linguistics, others concern the etymology or meaning of Iranian words found in the Avesta or elsewhere. Among purely philological papers it is worth mentioning those where he elucidates some difficult readings in Pahlavi. The Pahlavi script is no doubt one of the most intricate scripts in the world, a real puzzle that deserves to be considered an Ahrimanic creation. Specialists still discuss the reading of some Pahlavi words to this day. Darmesteter's contribution to Pahlavi studies is extremely valuable. As an example of his philological acumen I would like to mention his paper on a passage of the Avesta where his predecessors had read something about a certain dog called Madhaka which does not exist in the rest of the Mazdean literature. Darmesteter, with remarkable ingenuity, combined the almost illegible Pahlavi translation of the passage, the Sanskrit translation and references to Modern Persian, and demonstrated that the passage had been misunderstood: he dismissed the imaginary Madhaka dog and instead recognized the insects and locusts which were genuinely present in the text.

Another paper dealing with the legend of Alexander among the Mazdeans showed how the character was received among them from two different and contradictory traditions, Alexander being a national Iranian hero according to one and a creature of the Devil according to the other, and how some versions of the legend still reflect this duality. Of equal interest and typical of Darmesteter's synthetizing mind is his article on the supreme god of the Indo-European religion, which is a very wide picture of how, among the different Indo-European peoples, the original

supreme god (Varuna, Zeus, Jupiter, etc.) was superseded by another, a domestic one among Indians (Indra), Germans (Wotan) and Balts, but a foreign one (Jesus) in Greek, Latin and Slavic countries. Only Iranians kept the original Indo-European great god whom they named Ahura Mazda.

The first volume of Darmesteter's English translation of the Avesta, the *Vendidad*, came out in 1880. This great and difficult work was universally praised, even by those who did not agree with his theory about the time of emergence of the Avesta. Every competent scholar admired the unprecedented quality of the translation, which united faithfulness to the text with skillful recourse to both tradition and etymology and exceptional insight into the intricacies of the religious doctrine.

At the same time as he worked with untiring will at scrutinizing the holy scripture of Mazdaism, his inquiring mind remained open to other interests as well. His *Coup d'oeil sur l'histoire du peuple juif* (A glance at the history of the Jewish people), an ambitious survey from its origins to modern times, is full of striking remarks and felicitous formulæ of astonishing outspokenness. For example, when speaking of Christianity he writes: "it did the world much good and much harm. Much good because it raised the moral level of mankind; much harm because it stopped its intellectual progress by reviving the mythical mentality and, for centuries, restricted the metaphysical ideal of Europe to the dreams of Alexandrian philosophers, the last combinations of doting Hellenism".⁴ He mentions Islam as a religion "whose dogma is the Jewish dogma which has fallen into a narrower intellect".⁵ He sees the contribution of Judaism to civilization in "its two main dogmas since the emergence of the Prophets: divine Unity and Messianism, i.e. unity of law in the world and earthly victory of justice in mankind".⁶ In his eyes, the two dogmas are identical to the ideas of unity of forces in the field of science and the belief in progress in social life, two ideas which, he says, presently guide mankind in its progression.

In 1883 several of James Darmesteter's major works were published. One of them was the second part of this contribution to the *Sacred Books of the East*, an English translation of the *Yashus*. He also published a long paper on some passages of his translation of the *Vendidad* in answer to an unfavourable review by C. de Harlez, another translator of the Avesta. He criticizes Harlez's interpretations with pungent irony. Here is an example of this style: "I would hate to lead my reader in the intricacies of a review which lacks a very trivial condition. I mean the first condition of any critical review, accessible to anybody, should be accuracy. Accuracy in the facts one criticizes, accuracy in the facts one advances, — to say nothing of higher scientific qualities, insight and shrewdness, which not everybody can have".⁷

In the same year, Darmesteter published his book *Essais orientaux* (Oriental Essays), where he collected different articles some of which had been previously printed in journals. He also published the two volumes of his *Etudes iraniennes* (Iranian Studies). The second was a large collection of varied studies, all in connection with his work on old Iranian literature. Some are detailed critical reviews of books by his fellow scholars: Spiegel, Justi, Geldner, Haug, Geiger, West, Nöldeke, etc. (all are still well known by specialists of Iranology). Other papers concern Iranian lexicography or mythology. This 380-page volume also contains the texts of Pahlavi and New Persian as well as Sanskrit translations of some parts of the Avesta.

The first volume of *Etudes iraniennes* is a valuable detailed survey of the history of the Persian language from Old to New Persian. The latter had been studied and taught in France for two hundred years. A complete edition and translation of Firdausi's *Shahnaméh* had been recently published by Jules Mohl. As for Old Persian, Achaemenian inscriptions had been deciphered in the XIXth century by the joint effort of British, German and French scholars, and consequently knowledge of the Akkadian language had been reached, thereby opening up the immense field of Assyriology. The French Assyriologist Jules Oppert had pointed to the relation between Old and New Persian, indicating that the former was the ancestor of the latter. Still this intuition remained to be elaborated on. Darmesteter undertook the task. He established the historical phonology and grammar of the Persian language and simultaneously laid down the foundations for an Iranian dialectology. He demonstrated that Persian and the Avestan language (which at that time was usually called Zend) were in fact two different dialects of the Iranian family. "Zend and Persian are independent branches. Zend is not derived from Persian nor Persian from Zend, and neither of them is a stage in the development of the other".⁸ He surveyed a number of significant phonological, morphological and lexical differences. For example, he referred to the word meaning "dog", which was **saka-* in Old Persian (New Persian *sag*), *spaka* in Median, according to Herodotus, and *span-* in Avestan (an old Indo-European word, the same as *canis* in Latin). The correspondence of the Persian *s* with the non-Persian *sp* has remained an important criterion in Iranian dialectology. Having thus characterized the Persian dialect, Darmesteter described the evolution of its whole phonology and morphology from the old times to the present day language.

Another valuable discovery concerns Pahlavi. Reading Pahlavi is difficult because of its peculiarities: ambiguity of many letters, and also a puzzling use of a large number of Semitic words in this Iranian language. Languages with a mixed vocabulary are not rare. English is a good example with its many words

borrowed from both Latin and French, and also New Persian which is full of Arabic words. However Pahlavi is of a different nature. In English or New Persian the loanwords are part of the lexical stock. The grammar remains untouched. Grammatical morphemes are of Germanic origin in English and of Iranian origin in Persian. Moreover the most common words usually belong to the native stock. In Pahlavi, on the other hand, such morphemes as personal and demonstrative pronouns, conjunctions, etc., and such common words as "to do", "to sit", "father", "brother", etc., are Semitic (in fact, of Aramaic origin) while rare words are Iranian. As Darmesteter wrote, "it is unlikely that such a language was ever spoken by anybody. A Frenchified Britisher may say "I *amour* thee"; he would never say: "*Je* love *toi*". That this language may have been at any time the language of the people is even more impossible".⁹ Therefore the mixture of Semitic with Iranian must be purely graphic. The words that were written in Aramaic were not pronounced in Aramaic, but rather in Persian (Middle Persian). Written Pahlavi, to put it in Darmesteter's terms, is "an artificial language".¹⁰ The use of Aramaic words and forms, traditionally called *uzwârishn*, was only a manner of coding Iranian words in writing. Unfortunately, as centuries passed, the real nature of *uzwârishn* was more or less forgotten. Even Parsi dasturs were sometimes led astray in reading Pahlavi. Parsism and the culture of Sassanian Iran owe James Darmesteter the service of restoring the real shape of their language. His demonstration was corroborated after his death by the discovery of Middle Persian texts devoid of the Semitic elements that pervade Pahlavi texts.

The publication of *Etudes iraniennes* was greeted as a major work in its field. Geldner said that the book was *epochmachend* (epoch-making). Darmesteter's mastery was acknowledged by his election in 1885 as a professor at the Collège de France, the highest teaching and research institution in the country. Barbier de Meynard who was the professor of New Persian had his chair transferred to Arabic in order that a chair of "Languages and literatures of Persia" be established for his former pupil. The new professor's formal inaugural lecture, *Coup d'oeil sur l'histoire de la Perse* (A glance at the history of Persia), delivered on April 16th 1885, is an encompassing survey of the history of Iran and its culture over more than 2000 years up to his own time. Speaking of the latest times, he interestingly turned his attention to the emergence of Babism in which he saw a factor of regeneration for Persia.

Another of his articles bears witness to his interest in current events. At the time, a religious and political leader had appeared in Sudan and achieved considerable success. Claiming to be the Mahdi announced by religious traditions, he had gathered many followers and won many military battles. Darmesteter seized this

opportunity to present a theory and history of the notion of Mahdi, that is the promised saviour, throughout the centuries. As was his custom he drew a broad historical picture where he placed the different characters who contributed to the emergence of that notion or had themselves claimed to be the promised Mahdi, in Persia, Africa, Turkey, Egypt, right down to the present Sudanese Mahdi. The paper unites sound knowledge with a Voltairian style. When speaking of the Omayyad khalifs, he writes they were "frightful unbelievers who did not hide when drinking wine, instead of drinking secretly as pious Muslims should".¹¹ At the same time he feels some empathy with the people who believe in the Mahdi. He recognizes in them the same spirit that animated those who took part in the French revolution, that is a passionate longing for justice. "The revolutionary idea among us and the messianic idea among Muslims are rooted in the same instinct, the same aspiration [...], on both sides exists the same impulse towards ideal, with bloody falls into cupidity and hatred".¹²

After many years of studying, interpreting and translating the Avesta, Darmesteter felt the necessity to get directly acquainted with the religious practices of the Zoroastrians. The Avesta that has been preserved down to our time is only a small part of the Holy Scripture that existed in Sassanian Iran at a time when Zoroastrianism was the official religion. What has been preserved is the part which was connected with practical worship. For this reason a full understanding of the text is made possible only by knowing the worship ceremonies as accurately as possible, a fact which implies a visit to the places where worship is practiced. Darmesteter had to follow in the footsteps of Anquetil-Duperron who, in the eighteenth century, had gone to India in order to bring back the teachings of Zoroaster. He was sent on a mission by the French government and set out for Bombay.

His travel to India was a great success. He visited the Parsi communities in Bombay and Nausari, and became acquainted with learned dasturs. "In Bombay", he wrote, "I found more and less than I was looking for. I was not admitted to the sacrifice because I was not a *Beh-din*, although I had the honour of being considered a dastur *in partibus*. Nowhere did I find a systematic corpus of a doctrine on the liturgy and the organization of the cult, but I found valuable information on both in my conversations with the dasturs. By looking around and visiting the main Parsi centres, especially in Nausari, the priestly city, I had a feeling of past and present realities that lifeless texts cannot give".¹³ He became acquainted with Tahmuras Anklesaria, a printer who had an excellent knowledge of Pahlavi texts and brought him unknown Pahlavi books. "The too short hours I spent with Tahmuras in the printing-house of Fort-Bazar, in December 1886 and January

1887, reading old manuscripts whose names were not even heard of in Europe, [...] taught me more than months of personal study".¹⁴

Before leaving India he delivered a lecture on Mazdaism for a Parsi audience. He was warmly greeted by the audience and his lecture was published in the *Bombay Gazette* in February 1887. In the lecture he exalted the moral value of the Zoroastrian faith and he advocated the publication of as many of the Pahlavi texts as possible and suggested the establishment of a fund for this goal. The suggestion was met with interest by rich Parsis and was soon put into operation.

During his stay in India he had not only worked with Parsi dasturs, but he had also travelled to the North-West, near the Afghan frontier (present day Pakistan). Being fond of folklore and the Pashto language, he collected valuable pieces of Afghan folklore in Peshawar and Abbottabad (in the vicinity of present day Islamabad), working with Muslim munshis who helped him to write down a large number of songs in Pashto. He also used a manuscript collection which had been previously prepared for a British civil officer.

When he came back to France, he published an interesting series of papers on India (*Lettres sur l'Inde*, 1888), that bear witness to his vivid interest for current events and societies. He set about achieving the task of a complete translation of the Avesta enriched by all the information he had collected and preparing his Pashto texts for publication. About that time, two major events brought about changes in his private life. He lost his beloved brother. Both he and his brother had a heart condition. Arsène died in 1888 at the age of forty-two.

The other event concerned his marriage. James Darmesteter had always been fond of English literature. In 1883 he had published a series of *Essais de littérature anglaise* (Essays on English literature), which included an essay on Shakespeare with a suggestive analysis of Macbeth and a comparative study of the Shakespearian drama and its historical sources. He also introduced the poet Robert Browning to the French public. When he was in Peshawar, he happened to read and enjoy a book of poetry by a young British poetess, Miss Mary Robinson, which he later translated (it was published in 1888). Eventually he met her, they fell in love and married. Mary Robinson-Darmesteter was a writer in English and French. Their marriage lasted only a few years because of the premature death of James, but, according to witnesses, it was a very happy one.

Chants populaires des Afghans (Afghan Popular Songs), published in 1890 in two volumes is one of Darmesteter's major works. In both the original language (Arabic script) and in the French translation, it contains a large collection of popular verses of different kinds, epical-historical, religious, romantic, lyrical, satirical, etc., all abundantly commented on and explained. It reveals the exceptional

wealth of the oral poetry, typical of the spirit of the Afghan people. As Darmesteter wrote in his introduction, "In spite of the weaknesses and the clichés which are found in all literature — for any literature, even and most of all folklore, implies school traditions and routine practices, — and in spite of the limited circle of its ideas and interests and the low level of its ideal, the poetry has a large redeeming quality stemming from its passion and above all its simplicity and direct and spontaneous expression. It is a supreme gift which is lost in our intellectual decadence".¹⁵

The long introduction (218 pages) is as important as the text, for it not only gives a survey of the origins, history and literature of the Afghan people, but it establishes firstly and lastly the position of Pashto among Indo-Iranian languages. There had been controversies about this question. Pashto had been claimed to be an Indian language or an in-between dialect, neither Indian nor Iranian. Darmesteter proves beyond any doubt that it belongs to the Iranian branch and that Indian words that are found in it are loanwords. He also demonstrated that, inside the Iranian family, it is a non-Persian dialect. For instance, the Pashto word for "dog" (*spai*), has *sp* like in Median (*spaka*) and in Avestan (*span-*), and not *s* like in Persian (*sag*). There are other criteria which point to the same conclusion. Having carefully examined all of them, Darmesteter concluded that "Pashto is a descendant of the Avestan language or another very similar dialect".¹⁶ We now know that the situation is more complicated, for many other Middle and New Iranian languages have been discovered and studied. We know that Pashto is one of the many East Iranian languages, while the old Avestan language remains difficult to classify. However, given what was known a hundred years ago, Darmesteter's conclusion was basically correct and an important step forward.

The first two volumes of the book entitled *Le Zend-Avesta* came out in 1892. They offered a complete French translation of the main bulk of the text. They were followed a year later, in 1893, by a third one, containing a translation of the Avestan fragments found in Pahlavi texts, and a detailed study on the origins of the Zoroastrian literature and the composition of the Avesta.

The holy scripture of Mazdaism had been known to Europe for more than a century. Anquetil-Duperron, the intrepid explorer, back from India in 1762, had brought 180 manuscripts to Paris and deposited them at the Bibliothèque nationale (National Library), and had published a translation of the Avesta in 1771. But the scientific study of the text and its correct interpretation began only sixty years later with Eugène Burnouf's *Commentaire sur le Yasna* (Commentary on the Yasna), published in 1833. After Burnouf Avestic studies were taken up by German scholars. For some twenty-five years there were strong disagreements between followers of two different schools. Some scholars, in the steps of Spiegel, relied on

the tradition transmitted by Pahlavi commentaries. Others were adepts of comparative linguistics and interpreted Avestan words and notions by recourse to Vedic Sanskrit and etymology. In 1883 Darmesteter had already showed that these two approaches were more complementary than conflicting. "Vedas and traditions", he wrote, "cannot lead to contradictory results if one examines them according to their respective relevance. The Vedas must be looked at for the oldest part of Avestan ideas, the tradition for their present [...] When first examined, the Vedas do not provide any useful evidence, because there is no proof that the words and gods present in both books kept the same meaning on both sides. The Vedas, more often than not, cannot be used for discovering Avestan facts. On the other hand, they can be used for explaining them after they have been established by the tradition. The first method discloses the Iranian ideas, the second one makes them understood".¹⁷ This is the path Darmesteter followed in his translation, using, in addition to the written tradition, the knowledge he had acquired from the Parsis in Bombay.

As for the question of the time and circumstances of the composition of the Avesta, he developed an original theory. He thought it was written at a late date, around the beginning of the Christian era. In his opinion, the Gathas (i.e. the highly respected poems usually ascribed to Zoroaster himself and considered to be the oldest part of the book) were influenced by Neo-Platonic ideas and, consequently, must have been composed only in the first centuries A.D. On this point he has not been followed by his successors. It is believed today that they are indeed considerably older than the rest of the Avesta and that, contrary to Darmesteter's view, the tradition cannot be of any use in their interpretation because their meaning was lost very early. This divergence does not render his translation useless. As he said himself, "A mistaken view, determinedly adopted and clearly expressed, may be more profitable than being too cautious."¹⁸ Furthermore, for the non-Gathic part of the Avesta, his translation is still needed. It was reprinted in 1960. Emile Benveniste, another great master of Iranology, in the preface he provided for the reprint, pointed out that, in his translation, Darmesteter often displays more shrewdness than his successors and that he had an insight into solutions that were borne out by later research.

In the last years of his life James Darmesteter was more active and prolific than ever. He not only produced his masterwork on the Avesta, which was greeted as a model of elegant erudition and won him the highest prize bestowed by the Institut de France, but he also prepared a number of other publications on different subjects. In "La lettre de Tansar au roi de Tabaristan" (Tansar's letter to the king of Tabaristan) which was published in the *Journal asiatique*, he drew attention to a document important for the early history of Sassanian Iran, although it is

transmitted by a late New Persian writer. Another paper presented to the Société Asiatique in 1894 concerned Parthians in Jerusalem. As the secretary of that society he also had to write a detailed report on the activity of French orientalisists each year. Moreover he was one of the founders of a new fortnightly literary and social journal, *La revue de Paris*, whose publication began in 1894. In the second issue of the journal he wrote a long article on the political situation in France, in which he expressed his faith in concord and progress. Such an activity was probably too much for his physical strength. His heart failed after a short illness in October of the same year.

This lecture is finished. I am afraid I have not been able to do full justice to Darmesteter's works and personality. I have said nothing of some aspects of his activities, for instance his literary works which include philosophical poems in prose, or his interest in art. My survey has mainly dealt with his work as an Iranologist. Shortly after his death the results he achieved in the field were integrated into the large reference books prepared by German scholars, such as Bartholomae's dictionary of Old Iranian and the *Grundriss der iranischen Philologie*, a fact which led to his name rarely being quoted. But it has not been forgotten. Our Institut d'Etudes iraniennes (Institute of Iranology) in Paris was fortunate enough to inherit his personal library and, as a tribute to his memory, the library of the institute bears the name of "Bibliothèque James Darmesteter" (James Darmesteter Library). Moreover a society has been recently founded under the name of "Association James Darmesteter" (James Darmesteter Society). Its aim is to preserve his gravestone, to perpetuate his memory and to let younger generations remember this great scholar, brilliant writer and most estimable man.

NOTES

1. *Ormazd et Ahriman*, p.3: "C'est celle que l'on suit pour faire l'histoire des langues, c'est celle qu'il faut suivre pour faire l'histoire de religions. Comme la comparaison des diverses formes d'un mot permet seule de les classer, c'est-à-dire de distinguer les formes anciennes des formes récentes, de trouver l'ordre de leur succession, afin de reconnaître ou de restituer la forme ou les formes primitives dont elles dérivent; de même la comparaison des divers attributs d'un dieu permet seule de les classer, de distinguer les attributs anciens des attributs récents, de trouver l'ordre de leur succession, afin de reconnaître ou de restituer l'attribut ou les attributs primitifs dont ils dérivent"
2. *Op. cit.*, p.4-5: "Toutes les fois donc que l'on étudie une divinité ou une conception mazdéenne, l'on doit se demander si cette divinité ou cette conception était déjà

indo-iranienne ou si elle est purement iranienne. Dans le premier cas, le Védisme qui est resté infiniment plus près que le Mazdéisme de la religion de l'unité, donne souvent, soit directement, soit à l'induction, la forme indo-iranienne, ce qui permet de retrouver les étapes parcourues par la forme mazdéenne; dans le second cas, le cercle de la question se trouve limité, et connaissant le milieu où le fait nouveau s'est produit, il devient possible de déterminer les éléments qui ont agi, et le mode de formation" .

3. *Op. cit.*, p.88: "L'Iran prit ses démons au sérieux; le dualisme inconscient de la période précédente prit conscience et consistance; le Mal devint une puissance indépendante et souveraine en guerre déclarée avec le Bien" .
4. *Coup d'oeil sur l'histoire du peuple juif*, p.10: "...une religion mixte [...], qui conquiert le monde, auquel elle fit beaucoup de bien et beaucoup de mal, beaucoup de bien parce qu'elle relevait le niveau moral de l'humanité, beaucoup de mal parce qu'elle arrêtait sa croissance intellectuelle, en rajeunissant l'esprit mythique et en fixant pour des siècles l'idéal métaphysique de l'Europe aux rêves de la décadence alexandrine et aux dernières combinaisons de l'hellénisme tombé en enfance" .
5. *Op. cit.*, p.13: "... l'Islam, dont le dogme est le dogme juif, tombé dans une intelligence plus étroite".
6. *Op. cit.*, p.20: "... les deux grands dogmes qui depuis les prophètes font le Judaïsme tout entier: Unité divine et Messianisme, c'est-à-dire unité de loi dans le monde et triomphe terrestre de la justice dans l'humanité".
7. "Observations sur le Vendidad", *Journal Asiatique*, 1883, p.51: "Il me pèse de promener plus longtemps le lecteur dans le dédale de cette critique, à laquelle manque une condition bien modeste, et qui est à la portée de tous, je veux dire l'exactitude: exactitude dans les faits que l'on impute, exactitude dans les faits que l'on oppose: — je ne parle pas des qualités scientifiques plus hautes, de pénétration et de sagacité, que n'a pas qui veut" .
8. *Etudes iraniennes*, I, p.9: "Le zend et le perse sont deux rameaux indépendants l'un de l'autre, c'est-à-dire que ni le zend ne dérive du perse, ni le perse du zend et qu'aucun des deux n'est un moment du développement de l'autre".
9. *Op. cit.*, p.29: "Il serait déjà bien étrange qu'une telle langue ait jamais été parlée: un Anglais *frenchified* pourra dire: *I amour thee*; il n'a jamais pu dire: *Je love toi*. Que cette langue ait pu être à un moment la langue du peuple, encore moins".
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Le Mahdi*, p.17: "Ces khalifes de Damas étaient d'affreux mécréants, qui buvaient le vin sans se cacher, au lieu de le boire en se cachant, comme c'est le devoir d'un pieux musulman".
12. *Op. cit.*, p.93: "L'idée révolutionnaire chez nous, l'idée messianique chez les musulmans, c'est le même instinct, la même aspiration [...]. Des deux parts le même élan vers l'idéal, avec des chutes sanglantes dans la convoitise et la haine".

13. *Le Zend-Avesta*, t.I, p.III: "Je trouvai à Bombay plus et moins que je ne cherchais. Je ne fus pas admis à la célébration du sacrifice, n'étant pas *Beh-dîn*, quoique l'on voulût bien me considérer comme Dastûr *in partibus*: je ne trouvai nulle part un corps de doctrine systématique sur la liturgie et l'organisation du culte. Mais je trouvai dans mes conversations avec les Dastûrs des renseignements précieux sur l'une et l'autre. Je trouvai dans la vue des choses et dans des visites aux principaux centres parsis, en particulier à Nausari, la ville sacerdotale, un sentiment de la réalité présente et passée que les textes morts ne peuvent donner".
14. *Op. cit.*, p.IV: "Les heures trop rapides que j'ai passées dans l'imprimerie de Fort-Bazar, en décembre 1886 et janvier 1887, à parcourir avec Tahmuras les vieux manuscrits, inconnus même de nom en Europe, [...] m'ont plus appris que des mois d'études personnelles".
15. *Chants populaires*, t.I, p. CCV-CCVI: "Avec toutes les faiblesses et les clichés inséparables de toute littérature — car toute littérature, même populaire, surtout populaire, suppose des traditions d'école et une routine — malgré le cercle très limité de ses idées et de ses intérêts et le peu d'élévation de son idéal, cette poésie a une chose qui fait tout pardonner, la passion et surtout la simplicité, l'expression directe et spontanée, ce don suprême qui manque à notre décadence intellectuelle".
16. *Op. cit.*, p.LXII: "L'afghan dérive du zend ou d'un dialecte très semblable au zend".
17. "Observations sur le Vendidad", *op. cit.*, p.55: "*Védas* et traditions ne peuvent donc conduire à des résultats contradictoires si on les interroge chacun sur ce qu'ils savent, les *Védas* sur le passé le plus ancien des idées avestéennes, la tradition sur leur présent[...] Les *Védas*, interrogés tout d'abord, ne donneront aucun témoignage valable; car rien ne prouve que les mots et les dieux communs aux deux livres aient conservé le même sens des deux parts; les *Védas* en général ne pourront servir à faire découvrir les faits avestéens, mais seulement à les expliquer une fois établis par la tradition. La première méthode fait connaître les idées iraniennes, et la seconde les fait comprendre".
18. Quoted by E. Benveniste in his foreword to the reprint of *Le Zend-Avesta* (1960).

DARMESTERER'S STUDY OF ZOROASTRIANISM

K.M. JAMASPASA

In a short life span of less than fifty years, James Darmesteter has left Iranian studies a priceless legacy with his translations and interpretations of Zoroastrian literature. As the poet has said, "Full many a flower is born to blush unseen and waste its sweetness on the desert air". Many a scholar of Zoroastrianism has lived and died unsung and unremembered except by a handful of fellow scholars. Tragically, Zoroastrians themselves remain ignorant of the prolific literature that exists on their religion, always claiming the paucity of available literature in a modern language as the cause of their lack of knowledge on the subject.

It was Professor Darmesteter himself, who, in his lecture delivered under the auspices of the Asiatic Society in Bombay, as far back as 1887, pointed out the urgent need for Zoroastrians themselves to undertake research and scholarship into their own religion. One hopes that by celebrating the death centenary of a scholar of the stature of James Darmesteter through this series of lectures, Zoroastrians will be introduced to the commendable scholarly works of this great Iranist. One also hopes that they will be encouraged to read and study the works of other scholars of Zoroastrianism. The organisers of this event are to be congratulated for commemorating Darmesteter's death centenary and more significantly the centenary of the publication of his translation of the Avesta, in this befitting manner, for though the scholar himself has passed on, his work provides a stepping stone for every future scholar and student on the subject.

The work of James Darmesteter is part of the living legacy that is Zoroastrian literature; beginning from the time of the *Gathas*, down to the heyday of the Sassanian scholarship and further down to our own times when scholars provide fresh insights into an ancient faith — a literature that is not dead, but ever growing and flourishing, belying Darmesteter's own statement that "the Parsis are the ruins of a people, so are their sacred books the ruins of a religion."¹

James Darmesteter was born at Château-Salins, Moselle, in France on 22 March 1849. He was born to Jewish parents and raised in the Judaic traditions which were to colour later on his interpretations of Zoroastrianism to some extent. Darmesteter was awarded a Bachelor's degree in Humanities in Paris, where he studied philosophy, poetry and law. It was a little later that he found his true vocation as an orientalist, when his elder brother introduced him to the study of ancient languages. At the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes in Paris, he studied under Michel Bréal and Abel Bergaigne. His subjects were Comparative Grammar and Sanskrit. The result of

his work was an essay on the mythology of the Avesta entitled *Haurvatat et Ameretat* (1875). In 1877, Darmesteter published his D.Litt. thesis entitled *Ormazd et Ahriman*, a study in the theory of Dualism, wherein he portrays the religion of ancient Iran as having evolved from Hinduism.

Professor Gignoux notes that Darmesteter's chosen method of studying Zoroastrianism was a comparison with India, but Darmesteter himself, in his introduction to his translation of the *Vendidad* in Max Müller's *Sacred Books of the East* series, notes that the comparative method by itself is insufficient to represent the whole picture contained within the Avesta and a mixture of both the traditional and comparative schools is necessary for a true understanding of the religious scriptures of any religion, not just Zoroastrianism.

In 1877 Darmesteter became a teacher of Zend at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes. The famous German orientalist Max Müller invited him to translate the Avesta for his *Sacred Books of the East* series begun in 1880. He brought out the translation of the *Vendidad* in 1880 and of the *Khorde Avesta* in 1883. In 1885 he was appointed professor in the College de France. In 1886 he was sent to India on a mission to collect the popular songs of the Afghans. The fruits of his findings and labours on that mission were published in *Les Chants Populaires des Afghans*. It is a valuable essay on the Afghan language and literature.

Darmesteter spent some time in Bombay during 1886-87. During this time, he delivered his lecture on *Parsism* under the auspices of the Asiatic Society, wherein he impressed upon the Parsis themselves the need to publish hitherto unstudied manuscripts so that valuable material on Zoroastrianism may come to light for the benefit of scholars and for the general edification of the Parsi community itself. For financing this project, Darmesteter proposed the establishment of the Victoria Jubilee Pahlavi Fund. Several important manuscripts were published as a result. Darmesteter left Bombay with the honorific title of "The French Dastur", bestowed upon him by the numerous friend he made from amongst the Parsi community. He was grateful for all the hospitality shown to him during his stay and even more grateful to the savants amongst the Parsis who freely discussed their religion with him. This made Darmesteter extremely mindful of the problems that his predecessor, Anquetil du Perron, underwent during his time in India, when the priests of the time were reticent to discuss the nature of their ancient faith with foreigners.

In 1893, Darmesteter published his magnum opus, the French translation of the Avesta in three volumes, truly a "monument of scholarship" as it has been referred to. Many translations have followed Darmesteter's French one in many different languages, but Darmesteter's remains an essential point of reference

for all scholars and students of Zoroastrianism. The following year, 1894, Darmesteter succumbed to a mild illness and on 19 October passed away from this earthly existence at the very young age of 45 years.

The ancient Greeks, neighbours of Iran since the beginnings of recorded history, had for long been enamoured of the legendary prophet Zarathushtra or Zoroaster as they called him. To them, Zoroaster was a great philosopher and poet, living 6000 years before their own great philosopher Plato, and who had developed a philosophy for which they had the utmost regard. Darmesteter notes that to the ancient Greeks, Zoroaster became the very emblem of wisdom. He further notes that, "upon the whole it may be said that in the first centuries of Christianity, the religion of Persia was more studied and less understood than it had ever been before. The real object aimed at, in studying the old religion was to form a new one".

During the middle ages, Zoroaster was portrayed as a magician and master of secret sciences. It was during the Renaissance in Europe, when the study of the classical literature of Greece and Rome once again grew popular and important that a proper study of the religion of ancient Iran began. But knowledge of the living faith and its practices, its literature and its followers was almost non-existent. It was European travellers in the late seventeenth century who discovered the remains of the followers of Zoroastrianism in Iran and India and made their existence and way of life known to the Europeans. In 1700 an Oxford Orientalist, Thomas Hyde, made a systematic study of the history of ancient Persia from Muslim accounts and what was then known of Parsism. Despite its varied and manifold defects, Hyde's work was perhaps the first beginning in a serious investigation of the history, language and religion of ancient Iran.

Throughout the first half of the eighteenth century, efforts were made to learn more about Zoroastrianism, but with slight progress. In 1754 a young Frenchman named Anquetil du Perron happened to see a facsimile of a copy of the *Vendidad* brought to Oxford earlier in that century and deposited at the Bodleian Library. Anquetil was determined to unravel the mysteries of that manuscript and undertook a hazardous journey to India to meet the Parsis and learn from them their language and religion. With great difficulty Anquetil lived among the Parsis of Surat and learnt from them all about their traditions and scriptural languages. He returned to Paris with a collection of manuscripts of the Avesta and many other books. He then spent ten years deciphering the contents of those manuscripts and published in 1771 the first translation of the Zend Avesta.

The reaction of European scholars to this translation was that the ideas and thoughts expressed therein, the fabulous tales and bizzare rituals, were unworthy of a prophet of the stature of Zarathushtra; and thus the whole was dismissed as a

fabrication of simple priests in India. For seventy years, debate was rife in Europe on the authenticity of Anquetil's Avesta, but no real progress was made except for the realization that Avesta and Sanskrit were sister languages. In 1825 Eugène Burnouf succeeded in tracing the general outlines of the Avesta lexicon based on Sanskrit, and through the study of comparative grammar explained many hitherto undeciphered Avestan words. At the same time the ancient rock inscriptions at Behistun and Persepolis were being deciphered, revealing the existence in Achaemenian times of a language closely akin to Avesta. This established conclusively the authenticity of Anquetil's Avesta.

The nineteenth century saw the scientific study of Zoroastrianism grow by leaps and bounds. However, "presumptuous" is the word now being used to describe the attitude of scholars of Zoroastrianism in Europe at that time. Presumptuous because nineteenth century Europe was "very sure of itself, and ready to instruct the world",² as one modern scholar, Professor Mary Boyce, puts it, scholars then approached the problems of interpreting aspects of Zoroastrianism through their knowledge of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism, believing these other faiths would provide the key to solving the puzzles of Zoroastrianism. Darmesteter was himself working in such an environment, when comparative philology was making great strides, and the similarity between Avesta and Sanskrit was enthusing scholars to use the Vedas as a key to interpreting and translating the Avesta. The efforts of European scholars in the nineteenth century have no doubt rendered yeoman service to Zoroastrian scholarship, but have also hindered its progress in a way, as their suppositions and conclusions often failed to fit in with the accepted traditions and beliefs of the living faith. Traditions and beliefs which they were then quick to condemn as incompatible with the teachings of the Prophet himself.

As I already stated, Darmesteter was quick to recognize the pitfalls of relying on just the comparative method of studying Zoroastrianism. He realized that what was important was not to what extent Sanskrit and Avesta were related, but what the Avesta itself meant. He notes: "The traditional method, as it starts from matters of facts, moves always in the field of reality; the comparative method starts from a hypothesis, moves in a vacuum and builds up a fanciful religion and a fanciful language".³ Darmesteter impressed upon us the need to use the comparative and traditional methods in conjunction with each other in order to better grasp and understand the Avesta. "The Vedas, generally speaking, cannot help in discovering matters of fact in the Avesta, but only in explaining them when discovered by

tradition... in fact, tradition gives the materials and comparison puts them in order. It is not possible either to know the Avesta without the former or to understand it without the latter."⁴

Perhaps Darmesteter's most radical theory is in regard to the date of the composition of the Avesta. In his *Zend Avesta*, Darmesteter postulates that all the sacred writings that may have existed under the Achæmenians were lost after the invasion of Alexander in 331 B.C. The *Vendidad*, according to him, though younger in composition than the *Gathas*, is older in content and Achæmenian in tone. The *Gathas*, claims Darmesteter, show the influence of Gnosticism, the school of Philo Judæus and Judaism. He assigns their origin to the middle of the first century A.C. No scholar at the present time accepts this theory and even when Darmesteter first expounded his opinion, it did not gain much acceptance. The *Vendidad*, though later than the *Gathas* in composition, contains much pre-Zoroastrian material but the *Gathas* are today without a doubt accepted as the oldest part of Zoroastrian scriptures and the very words of Prophet Zarathushtra himself, and they can therefore not be assigned to a date later than 1500 B.C.

It is extremely difficult to recreate the early history of Zoroastrianism as no written records exist. At the time when Zarathushtra was composing his *Gathas* and even much later when most of the religious scriptures were being composed, the Iranian people knew no writing. Nevertheless, in the complex field of Iranistic studies, one fact stands out with extreme clarity, and that is the continuity and faithfulness of tradition. The Zoroastrians have over several centuries, in peaceful times and during political and religious upheavals, maintained their sacred scriptures with fidelity and fortitude by means of an oral tradition. Even when in later times the scriptures were written down, the oral tradition continued side by side, doubly fortifying the ancient and glorious heritage of the Zoroastrians.

The extant Zoroastrian scriptures today are only a fragment of what was once a large and comprehensive body of work. They consisted not only of the original words of Prophet Zarathushtra, the *Gathas*, but also included history, myth, legend, science and prayers. The original Avesta canon was made up of 21 *Nasks* or books, of which only one, the *Vendidad*, and scattered portions from other books remain today. Information about the lost scriptures is gleaned from a Pahlavi ninth century encyclopaedic work on the Zoroastrian religion — the *Denkard*. Stray references by foreign writers too, give us an inkling of the enormity of the original work. Pliny reports, on the authority of Hermippos the Greek philosopher, that Zarathushtra himself composed two million lines of verse. Middle Persian texts and Arab historians also inform us that the sacred writings of the Zoroastrians covered 1200 cowhides and were written with golden ink.

Whatever has survived of the scriptures today is the vital core of the Zoroastrian religion. The prayers that were so conscientiously memorised by generations of priests and passed out onto posterity are the foundation upon which the faith stands today. They are also the foundation upon which scholars base their study of the ancient religion of the Iranians.

Although the sack of Persepolis by Alexander resulted in an irreparable loss not only to the people of the times, but also to us today who try to piece together the history of the Persian people, all of the loss cannot be blamed on Alexander. An authorised version of the Avesta was collated during the Sassanian period from all of the then extant fragments. The Sassanian Avesta contained many texts which are lost today. Even after the Arab invasion of Iran, the ninth century saw a prolific production of Zoroastrian literature. The Zoroastrian tradition has therefore been a long and continuous one despite the many upheavals witnessed by the Iranian people and nation, thanks to the supportive role played by the oral tradition preserved by the priestly class.

That Darmesteter's theories are not now generally acceptable to the scholarly community, ought not to detract one whit from the fact that he ranks amongst the greatest scholars of Zoroastrianism. For every man is a product of his own place and time.

Another theory of Darmesteter's that has come under attack is his identification of the geographical location of the legendary Iranian homeland, Airyana Vaeja, and his interpretation of the legend of Yima's Vara. Darmesteter identifies the Iranian Yima with the Hindu Yama and the Biblical Noah and supposes the story of Yima or Jamshid to be a recounting of the story of the Deluge in the Bible. Admittedly, the two stories do have parallels, but as Bishop Casartelli has shown, Darmesteter's assumption of the connection between Yima and Noah, is untenable. Not only is Yima's Vara or Enclosure eschatological in purpose and existing for centuries, but certain other heroes in the legend are immortal though they habit earthly domains. As for Darmesteter's location of Airyana Vaeja between the Oxus and Jaxartes rivers, a response refuting this theory has been formulated by B.G. Tilak in his book *The Arctic Home in the Vedas*. Darmesteter arrives at his theory that Airyana Vaeja is located between the Oxus and Jaxartes rivers because he identifies these rivers with those mentioned in the *Vendidad* as Vanguhi and Rangha, which two rivers he says form the eastern and western boundaries of Airyana Vaeja. Tilak argues that Darmesteter's reasoning is erroneous on this count and the more likely location of this legendary homeland which has been described in the *Vendidad* as having ten months of winter and two months of summer, is in the arctic regions.

Tilak states: "The names of the two rivers Vanguhi and Rangha in the primeval home may have been subsequently transferred to the real rivers in the new settlement; but we cannot infer therefrom that the country through which these *new* rivers flowed was the original site of Airyana Vaeja. It is a well-known fact that persons migrating from their motherland to new countries often name the places they come across after the names of places familiar to them in their motherland. But on that account no one has ventured to place England in America or Australia; and it is strange how such a mistake should have been committed by Zend scholars in the present case. For even if a province or country in Central Asia had been named Airyana Vaeja, we could not have located the original home in that Province; just as the abode of Varuna cannot be placed in the land named Varena, which is the Zend equivalent of Varuna. The whole of Darmesteter's reasoning must therefore be rejected as unsound and illogical, and, but for the preconceived notion that the original home of the Iranians cannot be placed in the far north, I think no scholar would have cared to put forward such guesses. There are express passages in the Avesta, which describe in unmistakable terms the climatic characteristics of Airyana Vaeja, and so far as I am aware, no valid reason has yet been assigned why we should treat this description as mythical and have recourse to guess work for determining the position of the primeval home. Thus at the beginning of the first Fargard, we are told that Airyana Vaeja was the first good and happy creation of Ahura Mazda, but Angra Mainyu converted it into a land of ten months winter and two months summer, evidently meaning that at the time when the Fargard was composed it was an icebound land. The winter of ten months duration therefore, naturally points to a position in the far north, at a great distance beyond the Jaxartes; and it would be unreasonable to ignore this description which is characteristic of the Arctic regions, and relying on doubtful guesses, hold that the Airyana Vaeja was the easternmost boundary of ancient Iran".⁵ Even though one may not agree with the view of Darmesteter in this matter, one could equally discard the theory propounded by Tilak.

Wisdom, the key attribute of the Good Religion, the epithet of Ahura Mazda, the corner-stone of the Sassanian sages, stems from knowledge. Knowledge is ever growing, increasing and ever changing. Darmesteter is not alone in expounding presumptuous unacceptable theories. We are still striving for perfect knowledge, not only in the study of our scriptures, but in every aspect of science and life. And perfect knowledge will eventually evolve through our mistakes and our conscientious efforts coupled with that little bit of innate wisdom, *asn xrad*, as the Pahlavi writers called it, given to us by the Wise Lord. In the meantime, we must all

tread on this obstacle laden path, stumbling over our mistakes in an effort to reach the truth. And it is great savants like Darmesteter who diffuse the light along the way.

Dastur Darab Peshotan Sanjana, a contemporary of Professor James Darmesteter has said: "Even if we do not accept his reflections on the Prophet and the origins of Zoroastrianism, we ought to admit that so far as his method of translating our scriptures is concerned, he is far more reliable than his predecessors. Without dwelling upon the clearness of his language, the accurate selection of phraseology to express the meanings of ambiguous and obscure terms, the collection of historical data, there are two very prominent features which commend him to the veneration of every Avesta student. First, his patient research to clear away most of the obscurities and inaccuracies which somewhat encumbered all previous efforts to interpret the Avesta. Secondly, his sound judgment in discarding all the fanciful speculations sometimes indulged in by Vedists and Sanskritists, and also in adopting the native meaning so far as it could be reconciled with the results of comparative philology."⁶

More than a hundred years ago, Darmesteter struggled to understand and interpret what was to him an alien religion, only vaguely familiar to a handful of European scholars. I cannot even venture to understand Darmesteter's genius in providing us Zoroastrians with this vast volume of information on our own religion, living and working as he did in France far away from the heartland of Zoroastrian things, in Iran and India. As one steeped in the tradition of my forefathers, my academic pursuits are made just that little bit easier. So, as a student of my ancient faith, I pay my respects to Professor James Darmesteter, and thank the organisers of this Commemoration, especially my good friend Professor Gignoux, for having given me this opportunity to pay my humble tribute to this really fine scholar.

NOTES

1. F. Max Muller (Ed.), *The Sacred Books of the East* (Oxford 1880), 4, p. XI.
2. Mary Boyce, 'The Continuity of the Zoroastrian Faith', in W. Foy (ED.), *Man's Religious Quest*, p. 604
3. F. Max Muller, *op. cit.*, p. XXVII.
4. F. Max Muller, *op. cit.*, p. XXVIII.
5. B.G. Tilak, *The Arctic Home of the Vedas* (Bombay 1903), pp. 339-340.
6. J. Darmesteter, *Parsi-ism: its place in History* (Bombay 1887), pp. 21-22.

JAMES DARMESTETER: HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE MYTHOLOGY OF THE AMESHA SPENTAS

PHILIPPE GIGNOUX

Whoever reads through the writings of a scholar like James Darmesteter can not but marvel at the prodigious amount of research he carried out in less than 20 years. He has hardly aged in the eyes of the historians of religions ever since. His first major work was *Haurvatât et Ameretât, Essai sur la mythologie de l'Avesta (Essay on the Avestan Mythology)* published in 1875 by l'Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Paris,, for which he was conferred the school diploma. He also translated just 100 years ago *Zend-Avesta*, a term first used by Anquetil a century earlier.

We read in his *Essay* the final assertion of his research rejecting all theories of revolution or reform initiated by Zoroaster or his community

« Mazdeism, the same as Vedism, is a spontaneous and free development of the Indo-Iranian religion in smooth transformation, with no need for explanation by any influence from the outside or any sudden revolution from the inside». ¹

The view is echoed even today by Jean Kellens in his introduction to *Les textes vieil-avestiques (The Old Avestan Texts)*.²

The *Essay* only deals with two Gâthic entities, namely Haurvatât and Ameretât, though they are not among the most influential ones in the Avestic literature, as we know. However Darmesteter has demonstrated their importance in a kind of textual analysis which, to my knowledge, has not been attempted by others after him.

Darmesteter very appropriately defines the nature of the Amesha Spenta in the Gathas:

«We are face to face with abstractions which sometimes remain unchanged or which sometimes take life. They are often uncertain and floating and do not allow us know if we are in the presence of a theological virtue or a God». ³

Even today after a century-old abundance of research we are still asking ourselves if we are to consider the Amesha Spenta as really divine persons or simply divinized abstractions or attributes and properties of the Ahura Mazda. The doubt persists in spite of so much research in the area. Touching on this point, I'd like to quote what Mrs Yasmine Jhabvala of your community says in her thesis defended in 1991 at the University of Geneva and later published under the title *Vers Ahura Mazda (Towards Ahura Mazda)*.⁴ Speaking of the Amesha Spenta, she concludes that «they may appear as abstract notions, persons or aspects of the Ahura Mazda ;

however they are none of these.⁵ She then defines them as «presences on the road that leads the Ahura Mazda to man and man to the Ahura Mazda».⁶ They are reflexions of the Ahura Mazda, persons without a personality who are never independent from the Ahura Mazda, but different from each other among themselves and active. She then proposes to call them by a new name of "symbolic presences". Still is there truly an ontological reality when we speak of symbols ? Anyway, this interpretation is at odds with J. Kellens's gâthic polytheism. In fact what Mrs. Jhabvala is trying to do is to understand as much as possible Zoroaster's subjective experience in relating the Ahura Mazda with the Amesha Spenta.

But let us come back to Darmesteter's monograph in his *Essay* at l'Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes on the last two of the Amesha Spenta, Haurvatât and Ameretât. He considers the two to be concrete beings while the others would be abstract notions. To understand this distinction we need a summary of his arguments in the *Essay*.

Darmesteter proposes to answer three questions: 1) what is the material attribute of the Amesha Spenta ? 2) what is their abstract value ? and 3) what is the relation between the two ? Dumézil moots the problem in terms of its functional role and value. The abstract aspect is indicated by the name of the entity, and concrete aspect by the patronage bestowed on a specific type of living being. For example, Vohu Manah patronizing the ox.⁷ L.H. Gray had already written in 1904 about the double nature of the Iranian archangels.⁸

For Darmesteter, Haurvatât and Ameretât constitute a couple and are often mentioned together. They are the guardians of the waters and plants, (their opposition being hunger and thirst). That is why they preside over man's food and are identified with the libation and the harsom made from vegetable branches, as we know.

The real meanings of these two entities are *health* for Haurvatât and *non-dying* for Ameretât. Be aware that non-dying does not mean immortality, but simply a long life. However, no Yasht is dedicated to them. The one of Ameretât has been lost and the other, under the name of Xordâd, is of doubtful authenticity. As Kellens points out, the Yashts 1-4 are a mediocre and later composition.⁹ Darmesteter had made the same observation.

He then underlined the identity of the gods, as their very names imply, as protectors of the waters and plants. In fact, he formulates the two extreme poles of their history :

«... at one end health and immortality combatting illness and death and at the other end the guardians of the waters and the plants fighting against thirst and hunger».¹⁰

Dumezil held in his *Naissance d'Archanges (Birth of Archangels)* that it is irrelevant to know which of the two values (abstract and concrete) preceded the other and thought, contrary to what Darmesteter maintained, that the Gâthâs were already familiar with the system, though they don't mention it explicitly but only allude to it. Darmesteter had nonetheless clearly stated that the two guardians were twins and were opposed to the demon of physical decline (not of hunger), Zaric, and the demon of illness, Taric.

Ameretât means long life here on earth and immortal life hereafter. Such is the exact definition of the word accepted by Mary Boyce in her article *Amurdâd* in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*.¹¹ However, only this eschatological reference was retained later when the idea of resurrection and future life became a clearly defined dogma.

Darmesteter quotes the Yasna 51.7 to demonstrate that the gods of health and immortality were transformed into gods of the water and plants. In fact, there is an identification between the elements and the gods who patronize them. This process was already complete in the Gâthâs. Darmesteter had clearly noted the "natural attributes" of these two Amesha Spenta, (i.e., force (teuîshî) and duration (utaiîûiti)) which was translated by Kellens as "tonicity" and "youth"¹² and which M. Boyce defines as qualities with which the gods can imbue their adorers.¹³

In the monograph on the two gods in *Zend-Avesta*, Darmesteter listed their assistants. Haurvatât had Tishtar who produced the rain, Vâd (wind) who took the waters of Tishtar and transmitted them and Fravashis who hastened to help Tishtar when the distribution of the waters was made par Apâm napât (Yt. 8,34). Ameretât's assistants were, apart from numerous plants, Rashnu, Ashîad and Zamyâd, the guardian of the earth.¹⁴ The three are apotropaic divinities, judges of the life hereafter on the bridge Cinvad, as found in the teaching of the Mênôg i Xrad (II, 120). They are in charge of the situation, as assistants of the god of immortality who becomes himself the anôsh, the ambrosia.

Even if Darmesteter's demonstration of the evolution of the myth of the two gods based on the Gâthic tradition does not seem to be very pertinent anymore, at least he understood their value when compared with India's. In fact, in the second part of his *Essay* he points out that the myth of the waters and the plants dates back to the period of the unity of the Aryans or Indo-Aryans because of the soma/haoma - of which I'll speak a little further on - and of the Indo-Iranian myth of the nectar of immortality. Using the comparative method which is quite helpful for a better understanding of the Gâthâs, Darmesteter who was a student of the Sanskrit scholar Bergaigne found elements in the Vedas to enrich the comparison : Soma is the king just as Haoma is the chief of the plants. Besides in Iran plants grow in the

heavens and in India they come down from the sky as soma. But Darmesteter points out that this myth in the Vedas is only a distant memory and quoted Atharvaveda to support his view:

«May Agni protect you with the waters and Soma with the plants»
(V, 2,10,2).

But the soma/haoma remains the Indo-Iranian beverage of non-death, and is certainly a substitute to the IE *madhu* (mead) as Mircea Eliade observed in his *Histoire des croyances et des idées religieuses (History of Beliefs and Religious Ideas)*.¹⁵

I would like to mention briefly, in order to bring out the accuracy of Darmesteter's intuitions concerning the antiquity of the two gods, what Dumézil says about the vedic Nāsatyas and how he relates the twins to the Iranian couple and to the much later Islamic tradition of Harūt-Marūt (couple). Darmesteter, however, was reluctant to accept this Islamic version.¹⁶

Dumézil found analogies of the myth in one of the principal Indian myths related to the Nāsatya twins. In this Indian myth the twins tried without success to ravish the fair Sukanyā from her husband and were allowed, in spite of Indra's opposition, to drink the soma which procures immortality. In the Islamic version however, the myth combines the same story of the twin angels mixing with mortals with the separation between man and woman and of the beverage that leads to intoxication.¹⁷

It is often in the footnotes of his works that we see the scope of Darmesteter's scholarship that includes not only his knowledge of Avestic literature but also of its translations and works in Pahlavi which extend to the later Persian Rivāyats and modern traditions. The footnotes revealed vast amounts of information and references for further comparisons. He had the distinction of pointing out that the traditions handed down in the Pahlavi literature dated back to the Sassanian period, but no further. Thus based on the diachrony his study of the two gods of the third function proves this concern, even if some of the aspects should be corrected in the light of what Dumézil has said.

In a footnote¹⁸ Darmesteter draws a parallel between the 10,000 salutary plants which were created by Ahura Mazda according to Bundahishn and which grew around the White Haoma (Gaokarena) and the 10,000 immortal soldiers of Darius's army. This army of 10,000 is thus called since every soldier missing due to illness or death was to be replaced as Herodotus accounts (7,83). This army was consecrated to Ameretât, the natural patron of the soldier who was to call upon him more than any other god for his survival. Darmesteter adds to this interesting comparison which, to my knowledge, has not been contested thus far and can be a

solid argument for Achemenian Zoroastrianism, another piece of information given by Herodotus: Xerxes honoured a beautiful tree on his way to Sardis and placed before it a golden necklace which was to be guarded by an immortal soldier, «In other words, he honours Ameretât in one of his works and leaves one of the wards of the god to watch over it»¹⁹. Darmesteter remarks that this true cult continued in Islamic Iran which can be seen in the custom of hanging pieces of cloth on all the branches that travellers like Chardin have witnessed since the 17th century.

The tradition accounted according to Bundahishn concerning the 10,000 plants is also found in the treatise of Zâdspram. It is said that Anurdâd, after Ahriman had dried up the primordial plant, pounded it and mixed it with rain water and after the rain of Tishtar, 10,000 species of plants appeared on the earth and Ohrmazd arranged them in order to prevent 10,000 illnesses. Then Ohrmazd took the seeds of the 10,000 species and by uniting them he created, in the midst of the mythical sea, Vouru Kasha, "the tree of all the seeds" from which all species of plants sprouted.²⁰ It is as if a second vegetable creation was required after the first was destroyed by Ahriman. This can also be related to the creation of the Vahrâm fire which requires 1001 fires of different sorts to produce it.

The cosmic tree is the white Hôrn, which in Zâdspram is called "opposition of old age, which revives and restores the dead to life"²¹.

Darmesteter had stated all this: the Haoma was the chief (ratu) of plants and the Gaokarena was the name of the cosmic tree "which bore all the seeds", which "repeled suffering (jud-bêsh, wrongly translated by MacKenzie as *harmless*)²² and which grew in the sea of Vouru Kasha. It is not necessary to distinguish between the two trees,²³ as he does. The heavenly haoma and the tree of all the seeds as the Pahlavi tradition has identified it constitute the cosmic tree on which the bird Sên is perched and lets the seeds fall on the ground. Darmesteter does not seem to have maintained this distinction into two trees in his Zend-Avesta.

The importance of plants in the Iranian mythology was instanced by the creation of the first human couple. For when Gayômar met a violent death at the hands of Ahriman, a rhubarb sprouted from his semen and gave birth to Mashya and Mashyânê.

Darmesteter also pointed out the association of our two gods with the Fravashis as indicated in the Yasht consecrated to them. They were responsible for sending the rain and making the plants grow. Then we saw how much they were indispensable to man, omnipresent as they were in the life of the Mazdeans. The creatures of Ohrmazd, generally speaking, fight against illness and death which are caused by the creatures of Ahriman. Health and immortality are gained due to the waters and the plants..

Thus the importance of the twin-coupled gods. The protectors of the waters and plants were brought to the fore by Darmesteter as were the privileged association of water and fire in the ritual as M. Boyce has demonstrated. However we must not forget to add the vegetable element excellently represented by the *hôm* and the *barsom*, which is the bundle of twigs from which the priest is never separated during the Yasna celebration.

In *Zend-Avesta*, Darmesteter does not offer a systematic treatise on the Amesha Spenta, though it does contain abundant notes and comments that make the translation all the more rich, especially in his commentary on *Sirôza*²⁴ which is largely drawn from chapter 3 of *Bundahishn*. *Bundahishn* itself is a sort of highly developed glossary of the two (small and big) Avestan *Sirôza*. Darmesteter reviews each of the seven Amesha Spenta describing their nature, their role, the elements they patronize and diverse secondary divinities who assist them. Furthermore in his introductions to different Yashts, he gives us a rich commentary based on the *Bundahishn* and the wider Pahlavi literature. although he did not go into detail concerning the theory of the seven entities.

We now know that the list of seven (Ohrmazd included) was fixed much later, but certainly not before the Hellenistic period. The fact that Ahura Mazda was added to the list on the same level and on equal footing with the entities - Zoroaster had placed him above the others - , as J. Narten had remarked,²⁵ proves, in my opinion, a significantly major change in Mazdean theology. Consequently we are led into revising certain comparisons that were made in the comparative study.

Duchesne-Guillemin believes that the theory of seven angels in St. John's Apocalypse dates back to the 7 Iranian Amesha Spenta.²⁶ However, the tradition can be just as well traced back to the Jewish speculation itself. M. Boyce, in *History of Zoroastrianism*, states that the Jewish conception of angels underwent a deep change in the period that followed the Babylonian exile and that the Graeco-Roman literature spoke about seven hierarchies of archangels, which was an Iranian influence.²⁷ This interpretation seems unjustified because there is no proof that the list of seven Amesha Spenta was definitely fixed in 600 B.C. Besides passing from six to seven just to conform to current trends needs explaining, even if a bit of hypothesizing has gone into it as is usual in a comparative study.

In a study on Hexaemeron and Millenarism,²⁸ I put forth the idea that the list of the 7 Amesha Spenta should simply be related to the seven days of the week or to the seven planets. In other words, the idea originated from the calendar, or from astrology or from the two put together. It is not by pure coincidence that the seven days of the first week are named after the seven divinities in the hierarchical order that remained unchanged in the Pahlavi literature. For example, in Book IV of

Dênkard which begins with a metaphysical speculation on the seven entities, Ohrmazd tops the list.

This list of seven is related to the seven creations patronized by the Amesha Spenta, which has not been attested to so far in the Avestan texts according to J. Narten. Therefore we cannot help but refer to the Biblical creation of the seven days. The Elohist tradition that speaks of creation was fixed around 700 B.C. according to the specialists (cf. Jean Bottéro). In fact Genesis speaks of six days of creation, the seventh being a rest day for the Creator. In the Zoroastrian week the first day is named after Ohrmazd and the other six after the six Amesha Spenta. I wrote:

«The first week of a month implies a beginning just as does the first week of the Genesis at the origin of the world's creation. I think that the relation in later Mazdaism between the first seven creatures (the seven Amesha Spenta) and the first seven days of the month is not far from the Biblical conceptions».²⁹

Based on the datings of Biblical scholars, it is possible that the Zoroastrians in their relations with the Jews in exile during the Achaemenian period borrowed the Biblical speculation for themselves.

J. Bottéro, in his work *Naissance de Dieu, La Bible et l'historien (The birth of God, the Bible and the Historian)*³⁰ showed that the so-called "Sacredotal Document" had its origin in the Mesopotamian myth of creation:

«The first act of world creation is an exact copy of the mythology of the origins such as the one found in the well-known "Babylonian Epic of creation" (the *Enuma Elish*)»,³¹ which was composed in the last quarter of the second millennium B.C.

It's then quite probable that the Iranian myth of seven creations was fashioned in the crucible of the Mesopotamian cosmogony.

In the visions of *Pastor of Hermas* (ca 150 A.D.) Christ is seen, enveloped in glory and surrounded by the six angels who are the first-born-after the creation. We also see seven angels in a celebrated mosaic at Cathedral St Mark, in Venice. Angelology among the Jews and in Christianity has been quite a common phenomenon for a long time, so it is no use comparing them with the Amesha Spenta.

Now allow me to speak to you briefly about some aspects of Darmesteter's personality that transpire in his writings and especially in his inaugural lecture at the College de France.

We know how deeply James Darmesteter was attached to his elder brother Arsène on whom he wrote a touching biography, *Scientific Relics of his brother (Arsène Darmesteter)*. It's rather strange to hear him say that he himself was

not gifted for philology, a field into which his brother Arsène tried to initiate him. He believes that his brother was responsible for the shift in approach among the Sorbonne teaching staff which gave erudition its rightful role in the place of the then prevailing literary analysis. He wrote:

«If the new Sorbonne has opened up to strictly scientific method and research, if there is no more talk of hostility or antinomy between scientific scholarship and literary pursuit, it is largely due to the successful teaching approach set in motion by my brother». ³²

But what was the teaching of James ? Indeed it's difficult to speak about it only basing it on his inaugural lecture at the College de France. For the *year book* of the College, giving summaries of the conferences only started coming out in 1901 several years after Darmesteter's death. All we know is that he was very outspoken about his sentiments and judgements which must be understood in their historical context of the cultures he then studied. Sometimes the scholar gives way to the man with his rather subjective reactions. Here is an example. In his *Haurvatât and Ameretât*, he made this rather peremptory statement about the Parsis:

« Parsism was negatively influenced by its contact with the Christian civilization and was reduced, as time went by, to a colourless counterfeit of the spiritualism of the western Aryans». ³³

This was of course long before he visited India and met some prominent members of the Zoroastrian community. Darmesteter would certainly not have written such a thing after his visit here in 1886.

Darmesteter was outspoken and a man of his time. He was subject to the prevalent Eurocentrism which looked down on the oriental cultures they were studying with disdain. An objective historian should bear this in mind, even if it is extremely unpleasant. A couple of examples will suffice to illustrate this behaviour. In the introduction to the *Chants populaires des Afghans (Popular Songs of the Afghans)*, he qualifies the Iranians as semi-wild tribes, but also thinks that they «exercised a decisive influence on the destiny of their large neighbours, India and Persia». ³⁴ A little further he affirms that «the Afghans have no history, for anarchy never does». ³⁵

In his inaugural lecture at the College de France on April 16, 1885, Darmesteter regretted that a protest was voiced by Gobineau against the denigration of the Orient. That is why he came to the defense of the Greek ideal of humanity by writing:

«The contempt with which the Greeks held the Persians as their born slaves has been one of the most powerful moving forces in human progress». ³⁶

To support this assertion he regrets that the Greek victory over Persia was only material and that Alexander stopped halfway through Hellenizing Persia. He says that «Alexander Persianized Greece ; he didn't Hellenize Persia»³⁷ and adds, «Greece had nothing more to learn from Persia other than full-blown despotism, brutal force, scorn for the individual and widespread superstitions, all of which Greece got. Persia on the other hand could learn from a victorious and degenerate Greece neither high moral lessons nor quality to improve their intelligence and character».³⁸

Today historians would rather speak about brave resistance to the Hellenic domination, as Mary Boyce does. I would not support such simplistic appreciations, as Darmesteter and historians do, about the Graeco-Persian relations during the Alexandrian period. Darmesteter's attitude from the second half of the 19th century should be put in proper historical perspective. It was rich in linguistic discoveries concerning oriental studies but also erroneous and contradictory. He tried to explain the European domination in sciences, politics and trade through the so-called superiority of the Indo-European languages downgrading Hebrew which lost its status of mother-language of humanity as act which led to the belittling of the Biblical revelation. On the other hand to assert the antiquity of the Semitic languages in Mesopotamia which was under the influence of E. Renan, Joseph Halévy defended, for more than 40 years, the theory that Sumerian was not a non-Semitic language that preceded Akkadian. He equally tried to demonstrate that the Avesta was influenced by the Old Testament. That was also the period when Nietzsche's sister, Elisabeth wanted to found an anti-Semitic community to keep the German race pure.

But let us come back to Darmesteter's research work which should not be reduced to the few debatable views I've quoted.

In his inaugural lecture Darmesteter stated that the chair of the Persian language was split into two departments - Persian and Turkish. In 1805, Silvestre de Sacy was the first to be nominated. He was succeeded by Amédée Jaubert (1836), J. Mohl (1847) and Barbier de Meynard (1876).

However the chair confided to Darmesteter was called "Languages and Literature of Persia", which meant an extension of the field to the pre-Islamic period after the three discoveries that transformed the history of Persia, i.e.:

- discovery of Zend-Avesta
- deciphering of Pahlavi inscriptions ;
- deciphering of Persian and Zend (= Old Persian and Avestic).

This was a result of works of Anquetil du Perron, Silvestre de Sacy and E. Burnouf.

Darmesteter rightly underlines the continuity of Iranian thought from the religious point of view. This aspect of research was easily overlooked in so far as the Alexandrian and the later Arab conquests cut through the continuum of the Iranian history causing piecemeal studies of the different periods as if they were quite independent of each other. Still attempts were made to find a continuum through borrowings and influences from outside Iran.

But Darmesteter's view on the Parthian period is obsolete today since he thinks that the four-century period, dating from Alexander to the fall of the Arsacids, was a literary vacuum and that the Parthians always remained foreigners in Persia. For we now know through the works of Minorsky and Boyce that literature was not all together absent during that period and that, thanks especially to the works of Wolski, the Parthians continued the model of the Iranian monarchies in spite of the Hellenizing process whose impact is rather difficult to assess.

Darmesteter is quite right when he speaks of the importance of the Sassanian period (the most important of the ancient periods), for it is best known « due to a large amount of documents : Pahlavi literature, inscriptions, medals, seals, writings of Byzantine, Armenian, Arab and Persian historians, etc...». ³⁹ This is all the more true when considering the few new sources of documentation that have come to light over the last century concerning periods prior to the Sassanian monarchy. In this area we have a lot of new Parthian-Pahlavi inscriptions, a remarkable capacity to interpret them and the study of coins, seals and bullae to help us understand the history of the four centuries prior to the Arab conquest.

Darmesteter imagines, a bit excessively, this period as being one of moral penetration from the East and the West and views Persia as the centre-point, because of its geographical position, for the "inter-change of human spirit". This way of formulating seems fair to me, for it steps out of all conceptions of the Eurocentrism or the Iranocentrism of the Persian culture.

Darmesteter then writes about the specific character of Islam in Persia where the popular and living Zoroastrianism is still visible especially through its mythology, which is its "most resistant" element as he qualifies it. But at the same time he can't help taking some nasty kicks at the Arab culture, and especially philosophy in order to highlight the superiority of ancient Persia. He equally dislikes the Sufi poetry which he thinks to be "a sign of the decadence of Persia" that makes people "spend the life not to live it". ⁴⁰ He dislikes the detachment from the world which characterises Iranian mysticism. As we can see, Darmesteter does not hesitate to crudely state his sentiments, rather than to reason by arguments. All this to end with a vibrant praise of Bâbism (p. 61 sq.). In the end his concluding

judgement is not inaccurate: «Persia was a cross-roads of races, religions and civilisations».

An extraordinary and endearing personality, Darmesteter must not live in our memory for his misconceptions, for they are part and parcel of his period. I quoted some of them only to underline his passionate and enthusiastic temperament in his research on Mazdaism. Whoever forgets what we owe him, be he a linguist or a historian of religions, will commit a grave injustice. His works are still used and quoted, as in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* for example, a sign that his name still lives on.

NOTES

1. *Essai*, p.85: «Le mazdéisme est au même titre que le védisme un développement spontané et libre de la religion indo-iranienne, se transformant sans secousse, et sans qu'il soit besoin d'invoquer une invasion étrangère, ou une révolution intérieure».
2. Jean Kellens-Eric Pirart, 1988, p.35: «Le mazdéisme vieil-avestique.... témoigne d'une évolution heurtée des idées religieuses, mais non d'une révolution, ni même d'une réforme.»
3. *Essai*, p.35 :«L'on est en face d'abstractions, qui tantôt restent telles, tantôt se personnifient, le plus souvent incertaines et flottantes, laissant mal deviner si l'on est encore en présence d'une vertu théologique, ou déjà en présence d'un dieu».
4. Jhabvala 1992.
5. Jhabvala, 1992, p.185 «...Les *amesha spenta* et les deux *mainiiu* peuvent apparaître comme des notions abstraites, des personnes ou des aspects d'Ahura Mazda; et pourtant ils ne sont rien de tout cela».
6. Jhabvala, 1992, p.185: «Ils se manifestent comme *présences* sur le chemin qui conduit Ahura Mazda à l'homme et l'homme à Ahura Mazda».
7. In his book *Naissance d'archanges*, passim.
8. Gray, 1904, pp.345-372.
9. Cf. *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, III/1, p. 38b.
10. *Essai*, p.35: «... à une extrémité, Santé et Immortalité combattant la Maladie et la Mort ; à l'autre extrémité, génies des Eaux et des Plantes combattant la Soif et la Faim.
11. Vol. I/9, pp. 997-998.

12. Kellens-Pirart, 1990, II pp.249 et 226.
13. EI I/9, 998.
14. *Zend-Avesta* II.,pp.319-322.
15. Eliade, 1976, pp.223-224.
16. *Essai*, p. 61 note 3.
17. Dumézil 1945, pp.159 sq.
18. *Essai*, p.52 note 5.
19. *Essai*, p.53 note 5: «Autrement dit, il honore l'Amshaspand Ameretât dans une de ses productions, dont il remet la garde à l'un des pupilles du dieu.»
20. Anklesaria 1956, p.79 (chap. VI,D) ; Ph. Gignoux et A. Tafazzoli, 1993, pp.43 sq.
21. *Essai*, p.49: «opposition à la vieillesse, qui revivifie les morts, qui rend immortels les vivants.»
22. Mackenzie, 1971, p.47.
23. *Essai*, p.55 note 2.
24. *Zend-Avesta*, II, pp.305 sq.
25. Narten, 1982.
26. Duchesne-Guillemin, 1962, p.264, quoting Moffatt.
27. Boyce, 1991, pp.404-405.
28. Gignoux, 1990, pp.72-84.
29. Gignoux, 1990, p.76: «La première semaine du mois signifie un commencement, comme la semaine de la Genèse à l'origine de la création du monde. Je pense donc que la relation, dans le mazdéisme tardif, entre les sept créations premières, les sept A.S., et les sept premiers jours du mois, peut n'être pas très éloignée des conceptions bibliques.»
30. Bottéro, 1986 et 1992.

31. Bottéro, 1986, p.258: «... le *premier acte de la Création* du monde traduit exactement la mythologie des origines telle qu'on la trouve élaborée dans la célèbre «Épopée babylonienne de la création», l'*Enûma elish*.»
32. *Reliques*, I p.XXXI: «On peut dire que si la nouvelle Sorbonne s'est ouverte depuis si largement aux méthodes et aux recherches purement scientifiques, si l'on n'y entend plus parler de l'hostilité et de l'antinomie prétendue entre l'érudition et l'esprit littéraire, ce résultat est dû en grande partie au succès de l'enseignement inauguré par mon frère.»
33. *Essai*, p.59: «... Le Parsisme, se corrompant au contact de la civilisation chrétienne, se réduit de jour en jour à n'être plus qu'une contrefaçon incolore du spiritualisme des Ariens d'Occident.»
34. *Chants populaires*, p. I: «Si on remonte dans le passé, on voit que ces tribus à demi sauvages ont plus d'une fois exercé une action décisive sur le sort de leurs deux grands voisins, l'Inde et la Perse.»
35. *Chants populaires*, p. CLII: «Les Afghans n'ont pas d'histoire, parce que l'anarchie n'en a pas.»
36. *Coup d'oeil sur l'histoire de la Perse*, p.20: «Le mépris du Grec pour le Perse, né pour l'esclavage, a été l'une des forces les plus puissantes du progrès humain.»
37. *Coup d'oeil*, p.21: «Alexandre.. a persisé la Grèce, il n'a pas hellénisé la Perse.»
38. *Coup d'oeil*, p.21: «La Grèce macédonienne n'avait guère à prendre à la Perse que l'apothéose du despotisme et de la force, le mépris de l'individu et des superstitions plus vastes: elle le fit. La Perse, de son côté, ne pouvait emprunter à la Grèce, triomphante et dégénérée, de bien hautes leçons, ni de nature à relever les intelligences ou les caractères.»
39. *Coup d'oeil*, p.29.
40. *Coup d'oeil*, pp 55-56: «Cette poésie soufie est la gloire de la Perse, mais aussi le signe de sa déchéance elle aide à passer la vie, mais non pas à la vivre.»

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THE SECOND OF THREE ENCOUNTERS
BETWEEN ZOROASTRIANISM AND HINDUISM:
PLASTIC INFLUENCES IN BACTRIA AND SOGDIANA
(2nd - 8th c. A.D.)

FRANTZ GRENET

James Darmesteter, an Iranologist who had a profound knowledge of the Indian languages and civilization, paid special attention to those historical occasions when the Zoroastrian faith met with India.

The first encounter, which may be called the "original" one, was the often conflictual process by which the Iranian and the Hindu religions shaped their respective identities from a common Indo-Iranian background. In this respect, the pages which Darmesteter gave in the third volume of his *Zend-Avesta*¹ still deserve the admiration of the modern reader. What he wrote there on the common mythological lore of both religions, and especially on the legends of Yama, Aži Dahāka, Thraëtona, etc..., anticipates in a striking manner the more recent analyses of S. Wikander and G. Dumezil;² on the other hand, modern specialists of the Indo-Iranian borderlands, such as T. Burrow and Gh. Gnoli,³ explicitly appeal to his theory according to which the three Zoroastrian demons Indra, Saurva and Nanhaithya were not inherited from the past, but actually modeled on Indra, Śarva and Nāsatya, gods of the Hindu neighbours whose cult the early Zoroastrians fiercely rejected.

The second encounter between Zoroastrianism and India which Darmesteter knew of is the one which took place after the migration of the Parsis. Almost one millennium of in general pacific cohabitation led to influences being exerted at various intellectual levels, ranging from popular devotion to scholarly achievements. The first type of influences led to Parsi women occasionally bringing offerings to some Hindu sanctuaries and taking part in the celebrations of the Holi carnival; from the beginning of the last century onwards these practices have been gradually eradicated through the efforts of the Bombay Panchāyat. But the main fruit of the intellectual contacts between Parsi learning and Indian thought, the Sanskrit translation of the Yasna by the Dastur Neryōsang, was duly praised by Darmesteter as having provided the key to the first authentic philological understanding of the Avesta in the West.

These two historical encounters of Zoroastrianism with India were not the only ones. Another took place in Central Asia, during a period which stretches from the 2nd century AD to the Muslim conquest in the 8th century. Darmesteter

did not know or even suspect it, as the main documents related to this curious phenomenon have been discovered or elucidated during the past twenty years. Had he known of it, it would certainly have excited his curiosity. Consequently, and also because this paper is addressed to an Indian audience, I have not felt it improper to present this still little known subject on this particular occasion.

The earliest evidence at our disposal comes from coins issued by the Kushan emperors Kaniška and Huviška, who ruled Bactria and Northern India during the 2nd century AD. The reverse sides of their coins show many different deities, most of them, but not all, being Zoroastrian *yazatas* depicted in Greek garb. One of the gods (fig. 2), however, has a general Indian look with his four arms, and a clear link with Viṣṇu through two of his attributes: the wheel (*cakra*), and the plough held in the upper left arm with the bent ends of the ploughshare on top (compare the early images of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa on Indo-Greek coins and rock carvings from the Upper Indus⁴). But the god on the Kushan coin is designated by a Bactrian name written in Greek script: MANAOBAGO, which was long ago recognised as *Manah бага*, "Manah the god". It thus appears to be a variant of Vohu Manah, "Good Thought", one of the six Ameša Spentas ("Bounteous Immortals") of the Zoroastrian theology. Some iconographical peculiarities of the image under discussion, which are not proper to Viṣṇu, can in fact be interpreted in the light of the functions devoted to Vohu Manah according to Zoroastrian texts of various dates. His bestowal of a ring and of an untied diadem could reflect the role of giver of *khšathra*, "power" which is attributed to him in the Gāthās.⁵ The throne is mentioned in a passage in the Vendidād (*Vd.* 19.31) which describes Vohu Manah welcoming the souls of righteous men in Paradise. Also, Pahlavi texts associate him both with moon and cattle,⁶ hence the crescent and the plough. This last attribute probably helped his assimilation to Viṣṇu, an assimilation which, however, appears not to be documented after the Kushan period.⁷

This was not the case with the second assimilation initiated in this period. It concerns the god whose images correspond to the traditional types of Śiva. He first appears on coins of the early Kushan emperor Vima Kadphises (fig. 1): here he is not directly named, although the title *maheśvara* given to the emperor obviously refers to the god he worships. But from the issues of Kaniška onwards all the Kushan coins showing this god, in some cases with three heads (fig. 3), designate him with a Bactrian name OĒŠO which was probably pronounced *Wēš*. There have been several attempts to derive this name from some Indian epithets of Śiva: *viṣa*, "bull",⁸ or more recently *Bhūteśa*, an epithet witnessed at Mathurā.⁹ None of these solutions is convincing. In fact the correct explanation was put forward nearly two decades ago by Helmut Humbach, in a fundamental article to

which I shall often refer in this paper.¹⁰ *Wēš*, he shows, is not an Indian form but an Iranian one: *vayuš*, the nominative of *Vayu* who in the Avesta is the god of the atmosphere. Humbach also demonstrates that the same god, with the same iconography, was worshipped later on in Central Asia under his full name *Wēšparkar*, a perfectly regular outcome of the Avestan sequence *Vayuš.uparō.kairyō*, "Vayu who acts in the superior region".

Coins issued in the 3rd and 4th centuries by the Sassanian viceroys of the former Kushan realm (fig. 4) depict the god with dishevelled hair on the top of his head, strangely contrasting with the Sassanian-style buns on both sides of the head: this detail reminds one that the Indian *Vayu*, the homonym and counterpart of the Iranian *Vayu*, is described as dwelling in *Śiva*'s hair. Surprising as it may appear, the Sassanian conquest of Bactria did not put an end to the official worship of this *Śiva-Vayu*, who remains the deity by far the most frequently depicted on the coinage. But he then assumes a new, Pahlavi, name: *Burzāwand yazad*, "the god who possesses the heights", an approximate translation of the Avestan epithet of *Vayu* we have just examined: "(the one) who acts in the superior region".

In the subsequent centuries we meet him again in Bactria;¹¹ but most of the evidence of his cult now comes from Sogdiana, the country whose capital was Samarkand. Although never included in the Kushan nor in the Kushano-Sassanian realm, this region always had commercial contacts with them; and from the 5th century onwards it was submitted to strong cultural and artistic influences from the south, as a result of Central Asia and north-west India coming under the rule of the Hephtalites, followed by the first Turkish empire.

Within Sogdiana, the bulk of iconographic material on *Śiva-Vayu* comes from the excavations of Panjikent, a small city lying sixty kilometres east of Samarkand, and which has proved the "Pompei of Sogdiana" from the abundance of paintings it has yielded. Moreover, its excavators B.I. Maršak, V.I. Raspopova and V.G. Škoda (from the Hermitage Museum and the Saint-Petersburg Institute of the History of the Material Culture) are not only outstanding field archaeologists but also scholars well versed in the philological sources on Zoroastrianism. From their publications it appears that *Śiva-Vayu* was one of the gods most frequently depicted at Panjikent, both in the city temples and in private houses. In several paintings (fig. 7) he stands barefoot, dressed in a tiger skin and performing his cosmic dance on mountains symbolized by stylized rocks, in perfect accordance with the Hindu canon of *Śiva*. Another image (fig. 8)¹² displays the three-headed version we already met with on a Kushan coin (the central head is male, the right one female, the left one demoniac). This specimen is of special importance for several reasons. First, this is the only known instance where the image of the god is labelled with his

full Iranian name: *Wēšparkar* (inscribed on his leg). Secondly, a wish is manifest to adapt the Indian iconography of the god to the genuine Iranian concept of Vayu: the female head blows a horn, a wind instrument never found with Śiva, but very suitable for Vayu as god of the atmosphere. And the young god enthroned in front of him is a purely Iranian one, Apam Napāt, who embodies the fire element which lies within water - hence the two concentric haloes which surround him, the inner one made of flames and the outer one filled with aquatic creatures (fish and tritons). On this painting Vayu and Apam Napāt are obviously paired as personifications of natural elements.¹³

Vayu was not the only Iranian high god whom the Sogdians consciously equated with an Indian one. A list of equivalences has been preserved in two Sogdian texts of Buddhist content, which have been brilliantly elucidated by Humbach in his above-mentioned article of 1975. One of them, a passage added to the *Vessantara Jātaka* by the Sogdian translator (VJ 908-921), gives the physical description of five gods: Zurvān, Adhvagh, Wēšparkar, Nārāyaṇa, Vaiśravaṇa. The last two are characterized by their normal Indian attributes: sixteen hands for Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu, a full armour for Vaiśravaṇa. The first three gods, despite their Iranian names, are given the attributes of Brahmā, Indra and Śiva-Mahādeva respectively: a beard for Zurvān, a third eye for Adhvagh, three faces for Wēšparkar. Another Sogdian Buddhist text (P 8, 41-42) fully confirms these equivalences, as here the first three gods are invoked under double names: Brahmā-Zurvān, Indra-Adhvagh, Mahādeva-Wēšparkar.

When he presented his theory, on a purely philological basis, Humbach could not predict that it would soon be backed, in almost every detail, by archaeological discoveries made in Sogdiana but also in the mountains of central Afghanistan. We have already examined the case of Śiva-Wēšparkar. As for the enigmatic Adhvagh, given as the equivalent of Indra, he has recently been recognized by Maršak on a series of cultic terracotta figures from Samarkand and Panjikent (fig. 9).¹⁴ the god, obviously a major one as shown by his crown tied with Sassanian royal fillets, sits on a throne shaped by the forequarters of two elephants, an animal which is precisely the vehicle of Indra in Hindu mythology. So much for Indra, but who is Adhvagh, his Iranian counterpart? Humbach had proposed to consider this name as an epithet qualifying no other than Ahura Mazda; and since then it has been shown that Adhvagh means in fact "supreme god",¹⁵ a fitting designation for the highest god of the Zoroastrian pantheon. This assimilation of Indra with Ahura Mazda represents a surprising revenge for the great Vedic god whom early Zoroastrianism had turned into a demon!

We are thus left with the last double-named god of the list: Brahmā-Zurvān. No image attributable to him had so far been identified; but among the divine symbols adorning the mural at Dokhtar-i Nōshirwān (north of Bāmiyān), to which we shall soon come back, I now propose to recognize the wild goose (*hamsa*), vehicle of Brahmā as the elephant is of Indra (fig. 13). As the context here is neither Hindu nor Buddhist, but clearly inspired by Sogdian Zoroastrianism, Brahmā should stand for Zurvān. The god which occupies the centre of the composition is indeed Mithra, as shown by his throne resting on the forequarters of two horses, a detail characteristic of Sogdian images of this god (fig. 12),¹⁶ and which has been proved to derive ultimately from the solar chariot of the Hellenistic sun god. Closer to the prototype is the more elaborate composition which surmounts the 38-metre Buddha at Bāmiyān (fig. 11).¹⁷ As recognised long ago by the specialists of Indian art, the Iranian type of Mithra has provided the inspiration for the Hindu one of Sūrya, which constitutes an exception to the predominant direction of iconographic influences.

Contrary to the cases of Zurvān, Ahura Mazda and Vayu, this assimilation of Mithra with his Hindu counterpart, unquestionable as it is, is not expressed in any of the Sogdian texts which have come down to us. Now we know that Sogdian Zoroastrians had no reluctance to identify their own gods with Hindu ones, further assimilations can be detected or assumed. Maršak has proposed that such a phenomenon took place between Vahrām and Kārttikeya.¹⁸ The result can probably be seen on a Zoroastrian ossuary from southern Sogdiana (fig. 10),¹⁹ which shows the war god in full military attire and fitted with four arms in Hindu style to make room for all his attributes: an arrow, a round shield, a wreath and a bird, which could be either Vahrām's hawk or Kārttikeya's parrot (the rendering is not precise enough to ascertain the identification). Next to the god sits the great goddess Nana, who in Central Asia had inherited the functions of Anāhitā; she too has four arms, and she has clearly come under the influence of Durgā, as shown by her mace.

Contacts sometimes went further. At least one Indian god was introduced into the Zoroastrian Sogdian pantheon without explicitly merging with an Iranian counterpart: this is Vaiśravaṇa, who, as we have seen, is mentioned under this single name in the list of Sogdian gods, where he is described as dressed in full armour. I propose to identify him in a Panjikent painting (fig. 14),²⁰ as the god who stands in front of a gate. With his attributes and with the contorted demon lying at his feet, he looks very close to Chinese and Japanese versions of Vaiśravaṇa (*Bishamen*, *Bishamon*). Judging from the context, the gate is surely the gate of Hell: cats walk on the top and the inside is covered with snake scales, two symbols which

have definite demoniac connotations. Beside it is the gate of Paradise, encrusted with gems and peopled by young women. All these details find analogies in Pahlavi texts which describe the hereafter, except that these do not mention any guardian of Hell. The reason why the Sogdians borrowed Vaiśravaṇa for this function is probably that in Indian cosmology he is the guardian of the northern direction, the one which in Zoroastrianism belongs to the demoniac world. There is, also, a possibility that the Sogdian Vaiśravaṇa inherited the lower province of the realm of Yama, the Indo-Iranian sovereign of all abodes of the deceased, both heavenly and subterranean; he was denied his former divine rank by Zoroastrian scriptures, but apparently kept it in Kushan Bactria,²¹ as he did up to recent times among the Kafirs of the Hindukush.

Still at Panjikent, Śiva was in one place worshipped in the pure Hindu form of an ithyphallic Maheśvara keeping his consort Umā on his knees (the reluctance of Sogdian artists to represent nudity has led to the penis being covered, but it remains clearly visible under the skirt).²² Nothing is left here of the Iranian concept of Vayu; and the case seems all the more extreme as this statue was set in a chapel within the precincts of the major city temple, which was devoted mainly to the goddess Nana. The chapel, it is true, had an independent entrance on the street, and was isolated from the temple courtyard by a wall, which on the other side received a perfectly acceptable image of the Fravašis, the female guardians of the Zoroastrian Paradise.²³ The chapel thus appears to have been carved out in the temple for use by a local or foreign Shivaite community, to which it was probably leased or sold. As such, it bears witness to the high quality of the relations developed between Zoroastrianism and Hinduism.

Having now surveyed, in chronological order, the most important evidence of these contacts, I shall suggest some elements of explanation for them.

Such contacts can hardly be accounted for only by geographical proximity, as in religious life proximity leads to self-affirmation more often than to symbiosis. The border situation of Central Asia in the Zoroastrian world can, however, partly explain the long-lasting fortune of Śiva-Vayu. As Henrik Nyberg surmised long before anything was known about OĒŠO or Wēšparkar,²⁴ Vayu was an ancient great god of the Eastern Iranian tribes, whose acceptance within Zoroastrianism came as a result of a compromise, as shown by the distinction maintained in Pahlavi texts between the "god Vay" and the "evil Vay". This may have helped his assimilation to the foreign Śiva, who is ambivalent as well and who, moreover, had integrated the concept of the Indian Vayu. As Humbach very aptly wrote, "the wind-god Vayu easily crosses the barrier which the Zoroastrian reform had erected between the Iranian and the Indian religion".²⁵

An important factor of explanation can probably be looked for in the attitude of the successive overlords of Central Asia after the fall of the Achaemenians - Greeks, Sakas, Kushans, Huns, Turks. None or almost none of them was a personal adherent to Zoroastrianism, so, contrary to their contemporaries in Iran, they cared little to preserve the doctrinal or ritual purity of this religion. But why did not the Zoroastrian Sassanians care more than their predecessors after their conquest of Bactria? For we have seen that on their coins they continued to depict Śiva-Vayu standing next to his bull Nandi, limiting their initiative to replace the god's name by an epithet. On coins issued in Marv and Herat (fig. 5), the Sassanian viceroy is offering worship not to the fire, whose holder has been reduced to an incense-burner of dwarfish proportions, but to the enthroned statue of the deity. In Iran itself such a depiction would have been unthinkable at that time, after Ardashir's "iconoclastic" reformation. One is led, therefore, to ask whether in Bactria the Sassanian rulers and their *mowbeds* did not establish a sort of tactical alliance with local worshippers of Hindu cults, or with Hinduized *magi*, in order to fight the common enemy: Buddhism. In fact I do not know of a single document showing a Sassanian or Kushano-Sassanian official paying homage to Buddha, whereas a seal dating apparently from the 3rd or 4th century depicts one of them worshipping Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa (fig. 6).²⁶ Although Darmesteter was mistaken in recognizing the name of Buddha behind the Avestan demon Būdhi,²⁷ Buddha is certainly the origin of *but*, the Pahlavi and Persian deprecatory word for "idol". With its monasteries, its schools of thinking, its synods, Buddhism probably looked like a more foreign and challenging force than Hinduism, which in Bactria presented itself rather as a collection of various local cults.

In Sogdiana, too, the only exception to religious tolerance which we know about is the anti-Buddhist reaction which was carried out at the beginning of the 7th century, when the Chinese pilgrim Hsuan-tsang describes Zoroastrian priests or zealots armed with torches attacking Buddhist monks who tried to reoccupy abandoned monasteries.²⁸ The Sogdians who composed the translations of Buddhist texts which have come down to us were emigrants who had embraced Buddhism in China, and worked mostly from Chinese originals. On the other hand, the apparently unrestrained Hindu influence in Sogdiana is all the more surprising in a country which did not border India, nor was penetrated by sizeable groups of permanent Indian settlers like Chinese Turkestan. But Sogdiana was at that time the main commercial crossroads of Asia, the seat of an open and in some ways democratic society. Religions both indigenous and foreign were, with the exception of Buddhism, allowed to compete freely without any interference from the State. It was also a society of pomp and display, where paintings often show open-air festivals

and lavish processions. This context could explain why some Hindu forms of worship were eventually borrowed by the Zoroastrians themselves, notwithstanding the strength of their local tradition. Had they kept to their sober, secluded rituals, as well as to their degenerate copies of Greek divine images, they might have lost their position in towns and progressively receded into the countryside. As far as staging and plastic imagination are concerned, Hinduism surely provided the best model available on the international religious market of the time.²⁹

In fact, paintings show that altars of Indian type, umbrella-shaped and fitted with hanging bells, were used in Zoroastrian ceremonies addressed to *yazatas*, like in the one illustrated here, which was probably performed in front of a statue of Farn, god of Fortune (fig. 15).³⁰ It appears also that music was introduced in the cult: on an ossuary from the Samarkand region (fig. 16) one of the priests, dressed like those of today with their sacred girdle and mouth-mask (completed by a sort of balaclava covering the hair and beard), performs the funerary service of the *čahāom* while seemingly agitating a rattle-type instrument in order to add rhythm to the recitation of his prayer to fire.³¹ Also the early mediaeval temples of the local religion, known mostly from those excavated at Panjikent and at Dilberdjin near Balkh, provided ample space for public ceremonies in their pillared halls, galleries and open courtyards, whereas the only case where rooms for the fire cult are firmly documented (in the Temple I of Panjikent) shows that they occupied an inconspicuous side position.³²

We have already seen that Sogdian religious artists largely used two iconographic formulae devised by their Hindu predecessors in order to express the various functions of a particular god: the multiple arms, and the regular association of each god with his *vāhana* - his animal mount or seat. In some cases the transposition was rather servile, but in others it led to very original results. Coming back to the image of Adhvagh - Ahura Mazda (fig. 9), one cannot but admire the richness of symbolic associations it awakes: might, expressed by the sword; royalty, expressed by the Sassanian crown and the elephant, the kingly mount *par excellence*, borrowed from Indra; sweet music played in Paradise, expressed by the lyre and plectrum borrowed from Byzantine images of King David³³ - which, incidentally, made the whole figure appealing also to Nestorian Christians living in Central Asia. It suffices to compare this expressive icon with the dry and unimaginative Ahura Mazda of the Sassanian sculptors, which is no more than a mirror image of the king himself.³⁴

The symbolic use of animals each linked to a particular deity continued a tradition already initiated in the Yašts of the Avesta, and the Hindu iconography simply enriched the stock of possible associations. The most

spectacular example of this animal code can probably be seen on the monumental painting which once adorned a cave sanctuary at Dokhtar-i Nōshirwān, attributed to the early 8th century (fig. 13).³⁵ The enthroned Mithra wears a complicated crown surrounded by a halo from which eight animal heads protrude. Only six are preserved, which anti-clockwise are: an elephant, a goose, a bull, a lion, an ass and a wild goat. Although these animals are unlikely to have been chosen arbitrarily, their significance has long remained a puzzle. But if one takes into account the documented equivalences between Hindu and Sogdian gods, and also the planetary functions of the latter,³⁶ each of the surviving figures can receive an immediate explanation. The elephant stands for Indra, hence Ahura Mazda, hence Jupiter. The goose stands for Brahmā, hence Zurvān, hence Saturn. The bull usually draws the chariot of Māh, the Moon. The lion is the vehicle of Nana-Anāhitā, hence Venus. The ass is explicitly associated with Tištrya, patron of the planet Mercury, in the Pahlavi *Bundahišn* (XXIV.10-21).³⁷ The wild goat is the ninth incarnation of Vahrām, hence Mars. As for the two missing figures, one could have been a horse, the Sun as a planet being repeated in the halo of his god Mithra. But which figure occupied the eighth position? Perhaps the elephant of Jupiter, repeated at the lower left end for symmetry and as a special reverence to the "Supreme God"? Or the tortoise, *vāhana* of Rāhu the ascending lunar node, whom a Sogdian divinatory text (*P* 22, 15 and 19) mentions as "Rāxu, king of the Asuras" together with the Sun ("Khuwir Vagh"), Jupiter ("Urmazd") and Saturn ("Kēwān", the alternative, Babylonian name for this planet)?³⁸ In India also Rāhu was added to the list of the seven planets, which at a later period was further extended to nine (the *navagrahas*) by the inclusion of Ketu the descending lunar node. Taken as a whole, the compositional scheme at Dokhtar- i Nōshirwān recalls in fact the Indian one, as there too the planets are sometimes disposed around the central figure of Sūrya;³⁹ but the systematic use of animal symbols for the heavenly bodies, and the individual associations of most of them, find no parallel in Indian iconography.

It is now time to conclude, and to ask to what extent the Central Asian mixture which I have presented in this paper can be called Zoroastrianism. The material we have examined could give the impression that in Sogdiana the gradual reintroduction of the pre-Zoroastrian polytheism, initiated in the "late Avestan" stage, was after one millennium brought to its natural conclusion: a full reconciliation between the two branches issued from the common Indo-Iranian trunk. The religious situation of Sogdiana already posed a problem for the Sassanian priests, as shown by the section on this country in the geographical treatise *Šahrestānīhā ī Ērān* (2-7).⁴⁰ Here Samarkand is presented as a land of very ancient Zoroastrian tradition, a place where Key Khosrow built an Āteš Bahrām and where

even Zoroaster preached his message. But a breach in the tradition was caused by two villains: one historical, Alexander, who burnt the copy of the Avesta, and one legendary, Afrasiab, who transformed all the "seats of the gods" into "idol-temples of the demons". So this text appears to reflect both an awareness of the Zoroastrian claims of the Sogdians, and a reluctance towards their forms of worship.

On the other hand, Chinese records consistently characterized Sogdiana as a country which worshipped "fire" and the "god of Heaven".⁴¹ And if the question was asked to a Sogdian worshipper of Adhvagh or Wēšparkar, there is little doubt that he called himself a Zoroastrian or a Mazdean. Here one should not forget that our documentation on Sogdian religion is somewhat biased, as it mainly reflects those aspects which were the most permeable by alien influences - architecture and iconography. Even there, the Sogdian artists sometimes reached more conservative solutions than those we have examined: see, for example, a newly published ossuary (fig. 17)⁴² which depicts, at the bottom register, the ceremony of the *čahārom*, and at the upper register the flying soul of the deceased, welcomed by Vohu Manah or Sraoša sitting next to the Daena and Aša Vahišta. Had more texts survived, they would probably have given a more traditional picture than the one obtained merely from the archaeological documentation. In fact, the only Sogdian text of Zoroastrian content which has come down to us opens with a Sogdian transcription of the prayer *Ašem Vohu*, and, except for the substitution of the name Adhvagh for Ahura Mazda, it continues with a pure pastiche of Avestan formulae: "At that time when the king of the gods, the famous, skilful Adhvagh, was residing in the sweet-smelling Paradise in Good Thought, there came thither the perfect, righteous Zarathushtra, paid homage to him, from the left knee to the right, from the right knee to the left, and addressed him thus: ' O God, beneficent law-maker, justly deciding judge...' "⁴³

Increasing Muslim pressure eventually led to a rapprochement between the Zoroastrians from Iran and those from Sogdiana. We know that in 830 the latter appealed to their brethren in Fars for advice about the reconstruction of a Tower of Silence which probably had been knocked down.⁴⁴ A few decades earlier the Parsi founding fathers had chosen India as their refuge. They came from Sanjān, not far from Herat, and their numbers were soon swollen by other emigrants from the Eastern Iranian regions, so that one cannot exclude that a living memory of long and fruitful contacts with Hinduism played a part in their choice.

NOTES

1. Darmesteter, *Zend-Avesta*, III, pp. xliii-xlvi.
2. Wikander 1949-50; Dumézil 1968-73, II, pp. 133-377, 403-407; III, pp. 24-26.
3. Burrow 1973; Gnoli 1980, pp. 73-80. This point is still debated, cf. Boyce 1975, pp. 53-55 with note 211.
4. Filliozat 1973; Bernard / Audoin 1974; Fussman 1989, pp. 4-6 with pl. 4.
5. *Yasna* 31.4, 31.6, 46.10, 46.16. This point was made by Rosenfield 1967, pp. 79-80, who however did not recognize the plough (described as a "sceptre or insigne"), and therefore missed the comparison with the early iconography of Viṣṇu. This last detail was brought to my attention by J. Cribb (British Museum).
6. Boyce 1975, pp. 204, 267.
7. A more canonical image of Viṣṇu, with the legend BAZODEO (Vāsudeva), is known from a unique gold coin of the Kushan king of this name (to be published by J. Cribb). Some attributes of MANAOBAGO (the headgear derived from a Greek helmet, the moon symbols, seemingly the throne, and on one variant the crown held in the hand) are still to be seen with a god depicted among others on a series of Sogdian ossuaries from the 7th c. AD: Grenet 1986, where I propose to interpret the group as the Ameša Spentas and this particular deity as Vohu Manah. Should this late version remotely derive from the MANAOBAGO type, all iconographic traces of the earlier assimilation to Viṣṇu have disappeared.
8. Maricq 1958, p. 425; still upheld by Gnoli 1980, p. 82 with note 128.
9. Gail 1991-92; *contra*, see Tanabe 1991-92 and my review of Gail in *Abstracta Iranica* 15-16, Paris 1993.
10. Humbach 1975.
11. Especially Kruglikova 1974, pp. 44-48, 74-75, with pl. 4-7 (in the temple complex at Dilberdjin, near Balkh in Afghanistan).
12. This composition is analyzed in Maršak 1990, pp. 307-309, whose conclusions I follow. See also Boyce 1993.
13. Incidentally, it should be mentioned that Darmesteter ingenuously proposed to see in the name of Apam Napāt the etymological origin of *naft*, the Persian word for "petroleum", which is actually fire in liquid form (quoted in Dumézil 1985, p. 240, without the reference, which I have not been able to find yet - this is neither in *Le Zend-Avesta* nor in *Etudes iraniennes*).
14. Lastly Maršak / Raspopova 1991 a, pp. 159-161 with figs. 3-6. See also Karomatov / Meškercis / Vyzgo 1987, pp. 102-103; Mode 1991-92.

15. Sims-Williams 1983, pp. 138-139.
16. Škoda 1980. In Sogdiana, Mithra was most often referred by his title Vagh (< *baga-*), "God" (distinct from Adhvagh, "Supreme God"): Sims-Williams 1991.
17. For an attempt at analysing the Bāmiyān composition in the light of the Yašt to Mithra, see Grenet 1993.
18. E.g. Belenickij / Maršak / Raspopova 1990, pp. 129-131 with fig. 7; Maršak 1990, p. 307.
19. Karomatov / Meškeris / Vyzgo 1987, pp. 128-129 ; Grenet 1992, pp. 47-48.
20. "Vaiśravāna in Sogdiana. About the origins of Bishamon-ten", forthcoming in *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 4, 1994 [1995]. The painting has been published, with a different interpretation of this particular character, by Maršak 1990, pp. 305-307 with fig. 15, and Maršak / Raspopova 1991 b, pp. 189, 194-195, with figs. 3-6.
21. Grenet 1984, pp. 253-258. Differently Fussman 1986, pp. 171-172, and Gnoli 1989.
22. Škoda 1992; Modé 1992.
23. Maršak 1990, pp. 297-298 with fig. 9.
24. Nyberg 1938.
25. Humbach 1975, p. 407.
26. Göbl 1967, I, p. 226 (seal G 7); III, Pl. 85 n°7. The type of the worshipper's cap corresponds to the one worn by early Sassanian and Kushano-Sassanian officials.
27. Darmesteter, *Zend-Avesta*, III, pp. xlvi-xlvi.
28. *The Life of Hiuen-tsiang by the shaman Hwui Li*, transl. S. Beal, London 1911, pp.45-46.
29. On this point I cannot entirely agree with Maršak (Maršak 1981; Belenitskii / Marshak 1981, pp. 28-35), who considers that Hindu deities entered Sogdiana in the 4th-6th c. under the cover of Buddhism, then merged with several of the local Zoroastrian ones, and eventually remained when Buddhism was eliminated; but very few archaeological traces of this alleged Buddhist episode in Sogdiana have so far been discovered (for one of them see Marshak / Raspopova 1990, pp. 151-153 with figs. 24-25). Although a Gandhāran or Bactrian Buddhist intermediary is probable in the case of Vaiśravāna, the likelihood is that most iconographic influences came directly from Hinduism to Zoroastrianism.
30. Škoda 1985.

31. Thus Karomatov / Meškeris / Vyzgo 1987, pp. 106-107. This interpretation was suggested independently by Dastur F.M. Kotwal in a personal communication to M. Boyce. On this ossuary see also Grenet 1986, pp. 101-104, where I proposed to identify the objects as *barsoms*, a hypothesis which now seems contradicted by the appearance of this cult implement on the ossuary illustrated here fig. 17. It is unlikely that they are logs either, as the squatting priest must be the *zōt*, whereas the fuel for the fire should be held by the *raspiīg* who stands on the left with tongs in hands.
32. Škoda 1987, 1990.
33. Maršak / Raspopova 1991 a, p. 160.
34. See e.g. Ghirshman 1962, figs. 168 (Naqsh-i Rostam), 235 (Taq-i Bostan).
35. Last published by Klimburg-Salter 1993, but the tentative interpretation here proposed is mine, see F. Grenet, "Mithra et les planètes dans l'Hindukush central: essai d'interprétation de la peinture de Dōkhtar-i Nōshirvān", forthcoming in R. Gyselen, ed., *Au carrefour des religions: Mélanges offerts à Philippe Gignoux (Res Orientales 7)*, Paris 1995. The drawing fig. 13 is reproduced from photographs kindly communicated by the author.
36. The astrological document A-12 from Mount Mugh has confirmed, after the Manichaean documents, that the Sogdians knew the planetary week, using for the planets the same names of Zoroastrian deities as in Sassanian Iran: *Sogdijskie dokumenty s gory Mug*, I, Moscow 1962, pp. 48, 60.
37. *Zand-Ākāsīh. Iranian or Greater Bundahīšn*, ed. B.T. Anklesaria, Bombay 1956, pp. 194-197.
38. Ed.-transl. E. Benveniste, *Missiot Pelliot en Asie Centrale, III: Textes sogdiens édités, traduits et commentés*, Paris 1940, p. 156, comm. pp. 234-235. Here Saturn is called Kēvān, an alternative name to Zurvān which was also used in Sassanian Iran.
39. Banerjea 1956, pp. 429, 443-445, with pls. XXX:1 and XXXI:1-2. The *navagrahas* are always represented as human figures.
40. Ed.-transl. J. Markwart, *A Catalogue of the provincial capitals of Ērānšāhr*, Rome 1931, pp. 8-10: *pas gizistag Frās[iy]jāg ī Tūr har(w) ek nišēmag ī bayān* [or: **yazadān*] *uzdēstazār ī *dēwān pad-iš kard*. This passage provides a reverse parallel to Kirdīr (KKZ 10, KNRm 30-31, KSM 14): *uzdēs gugānī ud gilist ī dēwān wišōbī ud yazadān gāh ud nišēm akirī* "idols were destroyed and the abodes of the demons disrupted and made into thrones and seats of the gods" (ed. transl. D.N. MacKenzie, in *The Sassanian Rock Reliefs at Naqsh-i Rostam (Iranische Denkmäler 13/II/1)*, Berlin 1989, pp. 42, 54, 58). See also the apocalyptic text *Zand ī Wahman Yasn* (4.58), where "Sogdians" are mentioned together with "Chionites, Turks, Khazars, Tibetans, inhabitants of deserts and mountains, Chinese, Kabulis, Byzantines" in a list of "non-Iranian slaves" hostile to the faith (*Zand-ī Vohūman Yasn*, ed.-transl. B.T. Anklesaria, Bombay 1958, pp. 34-35).
41. E.g. *The Life of Hiuen-tsiang*, loc. cit. (n. 28); Chavannes 1903, p. 135.

42. Krašeninnikova 1993, and my remarks pp. 60-65.
43. British Library Fragment 4: Sims-Williams / Gershevitch 1976, pp. 46-48, 75-82. The arguments adduced here in favour of a Manichean attribution of the text raised some linguistic objections from M. Schwartz (p. 82 note 116), and are less convincing since Humbach has established that Adhvagh is the name by which Sogdian Zoroastrians called Ahura Mazda; moreover, this text was apparently copied by the same scribe as Fragment 13 which contains one episode of Rustam's adventures. A parallel text (questions asked by Zoroaster to Adhvagh) has been published by Yoshida 1979.
44. *The Persian Rivayats of Hormazyar Framarz and Others*, transl. B.N. Dhabhar, Bombay 1932, pp. 104-105.

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DARMESTER AND THE STUDY OF MODERN IRANIAN LANGUAGES

PIERRE LECOQ

James Darmesteter was not only the famous scholar who twice translated the Avesta, first into English and later into French, but he was also a devoted student of modern Iranian languages, mostly Persian, the most used western Iranian culture language and Pashto, the second most used Iranian language, spoken in Afghanistan and in the neighbouring countries.

His studies of the historical grammar of the Persian language were published in 1883, with the title, "Etudes iraniennes" (Iranian Studies), in a huge volume. The second part includes valuable articles on literature, mythology, lexicography, religion, etc. All this bears witness to the deep and fine scholarship of Darmesteter. However, as this is beyond the scope of the present paper, it will not be discussed here.

The first part is entitled "Etudes sur la grammaire historique de la langue persane" (Studies of Persian Historical Grammar). Actually, it was a remodelled version of a slightly earlier essay which merited an award given by the "Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres" (the French Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres) in 1881.

From the very beginning, Darmesteter acknowledged the continuity of the Persian language from the VIth century B.C. up to modern times.

From philologists we know what is called "Old Persian", the language of the prestigious inscriptions carved at Persepolis, Susa, Bisotun and other places by the Achaemenid Emperors who worshipped the Supreme Being Ahura Mazdâ, the same god venerated by the Prophet Zarathushtra in the Avesta.

The language of the Achaemenid inscriptions must be considered as the direct ancestor of modern Persian, but the same cannot be said about the Avestan language. Darmesteter wrote: "Avestan (or "Zend" as it was called at the time) and Persian are two separate boughs, neither of the two languages can be derived from the other".¹

After the collapse of the Achaemenid Empire, the Seleucid and the Arsacid periods provide no documents of any real value. We must wait till the dawn of the Sassanian dynasty in order to once again find links with the Persian language which developed into a state which is not very different from the modern language.

By "Persian language", says Darmesteter (p. 3), "I do not mean precisely the idiom of modern Persia, which we read in its purest form in the Book

of Kings by Firdausi. During its long history, the language has not been submitted to any substantial changes".²

This statement has been criticized by G. Windfuhr, in his *Persian Grammar* (The Hague, 1979, p. 18-19), who considers the stability of Modern Persian as a myth. We cannot discuss here what stability of a language is. It is needless to say that the recognition of different levels appearing in the ten century history of modern Persian is an established fact.

In my opinion, it would be a great injustice to argue with Darmesteter on this point. Rather let us compare Persian with some western languages. Old English, or Anglo-Saxon, as we can read it in the writings of King Alfred or Bede is unintelligible for a modern Englishman without a special philological training. The same can be said about French. The language of the early documents of the XIth century is just a scribble for the average Parisian of today.

But the situation of Persian is not the same. The Persian of Firdausi is not so different as to prevent a modern Iranian from enjoying the great poet. Darmesteter insists on the linguistic continuity of Persian as we know it in three chronological stages (Old, Middle and Modern Persian), from the point of view of a comparatist and philologist who asserts his method. On this point he is perfectly right. You cannot describe the historical development of a language without a prior knowledge of its roots.

We can only mention briefly the subject matter of the first chapter which does not pertain to modern languages. Darmesteter supports the idea that Avestan was a western Iranian language formerly spoken in Media. He gives a short, but accurate description of the nature of the Pahlavi, or Middle Persian, language and its artificial character of "langue savante" with its use of Semitic, Aramaic, words used as ideograms, and also a valuable account of the evolution of the script.

All this would be an interesting subject of discussion and evaluation in the scope of modern science. It would reveal the pertinency of many of Darmesteter's views.

Before we proceed to our main subject, it would seem necessary to take a short look at the situation of comparative and historical linguistics at the end of the 19th century.

Everybody knows that comparative linguistics began in the first years of the 19th century. The foundations of the new science were laid in Franz Bopp's *Über das Conjugationssystem der Sanskritsprache in Vergleichung mit jenem der griechischen, lateinischen, persischen und germanischen Sprachen*, which appeared in 1816. Old Persian was not very well known then. Colonel Rawlinson published

the first copy of the great inscription of Bisitun in 1847 (*The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Volume 10).

Surprisingly enough, Avestan is absent from Bopp's work. It would appear however in his major publication *Vergleichende Grammatik ...* (Comparative Grammar ...), published between 1833 and 1852. It suffices to say that Persian, although a modern language, was associated with the oldest Indo-European languages, from the very start of comparative linguistics.

After Franz Bopp many scholars devoted themselves to the historical phonology and morphology of Persian. Here are just a few: Ascoli, Pott, de Lagarde, Nöldeke, Spiegel, etc. Special mention must be made however of the first detailed comparative Persian grammar written by Johann August Vullers: *Institutiones linguae Persicae cum Sanscrita et Zendica lingua comparata*, Giessen, 1840-50 (a second, revised, edition, with a slightly different title appeared in 1870). The same scholar also published the first etymological dictionary, *Lexicon Persico-Latinum etymologicum ...*, Bonn, 1855-64.

Here is not the place to compare the respective merits of Vullers and Darmesteter in detail and to describe each new idea introduced by the latter. Even at first glance, the reader is struck by the great clarity of Darmesteter's work. He makes a complete and critical presentation of what had been written before him. His compilation is far better arranged than his predecessors'.

On the other hand, Vullers thinks and writes with the Indo-Europeanist's view. One of his main concerns is to define the place of Persian among the Indo-European languages. However, Darmesteter's objective, as we have seen, is to show the evolution of Persian, in the largest meaning of the word, inside the specific linguistic branch to which it belongs.

The second chapter of his work is an account of the phonetic evolution of the language. He illustrates the difference between Avestan and Persian. Worthy of notice is his postulation of the existence of a vocalic "r" in Old Persian, ex. in *kṛta-*, like in Sanskrit (p. 49). His chronological evaluations may be considered now as obsolete, but it is funny to observe that his view has been long neglected, even in the most recent Old Persian Grammar, by R.G. Kent (1953). Now, we must revert to the existence of a vocalic "r" in Old Persian. Kent was wrong because he omitted the ultimate evolution of the language. Darmesteter did not.

The main lines of his description are still valuable today, except on one point, something for which his scholarship is not responsible. At the present time, we know that the vocabulary of Persian has been invaded by a large number of borrowings from a neighbour Iranian language. For instance, words like *ash* "horse",

šahr "town", and many others, are not pure Persian words, a fact which creates confusion in any analysis of the history of the Persian phonetics.

It was only at the end of the 19th century that a solution to the problem was found. The discovery in Central Asia of hundreds of documents written in various Iranian languages allowed us to make acquaintance with the Parthian language. It was clear then that the idiom, the official language of the Arsacids who were the predecessors of the Sassanian dynasty, was responsible for the chaotic situation of the Persian vocabulary.

The third chapter is devoted to morphology. It shows the main theory on which the whole conception of the study finds its foundation or its philosophy. The disintegration of the Old Persian morphology, by a process which quickly led to the disappearance of the ancient and complicated flexional system of nouns and verbs, cannot be dissociated from the profound transformation of the syntax.

In other words, Persian had become one of the most analytical modern Indo-European languages, to a higher degree than English or French, and its grammatical structure was already established in Middle Persian. The rapid and inexorable disintegration took place between the language's form which is reflected by the late inscriptions at the end of the Achaemenid Empire in the 4th century B.C. and the emergence of the epigraphic documents at the outset of the Sassanian period in the 3rd century A.D.

Many of his theories have been accepted by later scholars, for instance, his explanation of the verbal endings kard-ī, kard-īm, kard-id, as a new formation derived from the old causative suffix.

Darmesteter also gives an explanation of the thorny problem of what is now called "ergativity". It concerns both the Iranian and Indian modern languages. It is a most intricate problem and I shall try to explain it in a simple way.

In Old Persian you find an imperfect, with preterital use, adam akunavam "I did". The same idea may be expressed by a passive manā krtam "by me was done". There is nothing surprising here. The exact same alternative construction is found in other languages, even in classical Sanskrit where uvāca "he said" alternates freely with the passive tena uktam "by him was said".

The amazing thing is that in its later development we find a parallel and odd evolution in both the Iranian and Indian languages. In the past tenses, a transitive verb may not be conjugated as an intransitive verb. In English, there is no difference between "I went" and

"I did", but in Kurdish, for example, you must say ez çûm "I went" and min kir "I did". The latter form is not a passive, but rather something between active and passive. The same construction is not only found in Pashto za wlāram "I

went", vs. *mā kral* "I did" and in most other Iranian languages, but also in: Hindi *maē calā*, but *maēne kinyā* and in other languages as well.

Other complications also exist, such as the agreement of the verb and its direct complement, something which uses to frustrate the desperate foreign learner of the language. Middle Persian had that special construction, but the modern language has lost it. For what reason is Persian so simple now and why is there no longer a difference between *man raftam* "I went" and *man kardam* "I did"?

As we have seen, in all the other languages the personal pronouns have two forms, one for the subject and the other for the agent. Darmesteter thinks that in Persian one of the two forms of each pronoun disappeared by a mechanical process of phonetic reduction. Transitive and intransitive verbs in past times therefore merged into one and the same paradigm.

However good or bad is the explanation, we again see here Darmesteter's view that morphology and syntax are deeply associated in the evolutionary process of a language. Let us put it in other words: language is a structure. Each particular modification involves a modification of the whole system. All this took place in 1880 and at that time young de Saussure was in Paris. His *Cours de linguistique générale* appeared some years later and after him his brilliant follower, the comparatist Antoine Meillet, would insist unrelentlessly on the same conception.

I dare not say that Darmesteter inspired de Saussure on the point, but it is a question to be asked to historians in historical linguistics. Undoubtedly, at the end of the 19th century, structuralism was on the way, in France. Not everywhere, though. Twenty years after Darmesteter's *Etudes*, the German scholar Paul Horn published a new historical grammar of Persian in the *Grundriss der iranischen Philologie*. It is a highly valuable work that is well documented, but it seems to me that the general concepts still reflect the mechanical and atomizing concepts of the "Jung Grammatiker".

In his short etymological dictionary of Persian (*Grundriss der neupersischen Etymologie*, Strassburg, 1893), Paul Horn pays homage to Darmesteter's work when he writes: "Darmesteter, who is quite often quoted here in Germany, does not seem to care about quoting the name of his predecessors in his 'Etudes' and elsewhere. H. Hübschmann, in his *Persische Studien* (Strassburg, 1895), did not fail to recognize the importance of Darmesteter's work.

It is a pity that after Darmesteter in France, Paul Horn and Hübschmann in Germany, and others in other countries, no major historical study of

Persian has appeared except for a short essay which was recently published in Russian. It is one of the greatest desiderata in the field of Iranian linguistics.

Thus, Darmesteter's *Etudes iraniennes* is certainly worth reading, even today.

Despite the importance of the *Etudes iraniennes* we must not forget another important book devoted to a modern Iranian language, the *Chants Populaires des Afghans* (Popular Songs of the Afghans, or Pathans) which was published in 1888-1890, the decade following the "Etudes". Pashto is along with Persian, now called dari, a major language in Afghanistan. It is also spoken on the other side of the Afghan border, from Peshawar to Quetta, and even in the north of Peshawar.

The language attracted the attention of European scholars only at the beginning of the 19th century. One of the most interesting descriptions of the language and its people was made by M. Elphinstone in his famous book *Account of the Kingdom of Caubul* (London, 1815). Some valuable material was compiled shortly afterwards by the Russian counsellor of state, B. Dorn, in 1840-1845.

Pashto is quite a different language from Persian and other Iranian idioms like Kurdish and Balochi. There was a time when Pashto was classified under the Semitic languages. Some scholars were of the opinion that Pashto contained Hebrew words, ex.: $\bar{o}r$ "fire" was identified with the Hebrew $\bar{o}r$ "light". This word must of course be derived from Avestan $\bar{a}tar-$, and the same word is found in Persian $\bar{a}dar$, and modern Persian $\bar{a}tes\bar{.}$

The funny idea that Pashto was a Semitic language was likely suggested by a native tradition which would have wanted the Afghans to be descendants from Jacob the Patriarch. A similar tradition is found among the Balochs.

When Ernest Trumpp published his *Grammar of the Paštō* (1873), it was admitted that Pashto was an Indo-European language. The problem arose from its classification inside the great family. Was it to be considered as an Iranian or an Indo-Aryan tongue?

Some scholars, like Friedrich Müller ascribed the Pashto unhesitatingly to the Iranian family. Trumpp agreed with him that some phonetic and morphological features could only have come from the Avestan. However, according to him, Pashto also exhibits some other phonetic features (the cerebrals), many declensional and conjugational formations, and moreover its very large stock of words which can only be explained by a direct derivation from the adjoining Prakrit idioms, mainly Sindhi, but also Panjabi.

Trumpp therefore reaches the conclusion that «Pashto is by no means a Prakrit idiom, like Sindhi, etc., but an old independent language forming the first transition from the Indo-Aryan to the Iranian family and therefore participating of the characteristics of both, but still with predominant Prakrit features». (p. XII).

Such was the state of affairs when Darmesteter came on a journey to India during the spring and summer of 1886, with the help of a grant given to him by the French Ministry of Education.

His purpose was, as he explains it in the introduction of his book, to provide European philologists and historians with genuine and direct specimens of the language and the popular ideas of the Afghans.

He also expresses his intention to consider two important problems: the origin of the Afghan people and the classification of the language. He confesses though that a decisive solution cannot yet be found for the first of these problems, but that with regard to the second one, the situation of Pashto does not permit any doubt. It is definitely an Iranian language, derived directly from the Avestan, or from a very similar Avestan dialect, and therefore it is not an Indian dialect, nor a transition language, as Trumpp believed it was.

The first part of the book is devoted to the phonology and morphology of Pashto. It is the first complete descriptive and historical grammar of the language. A particular attention is paid to the borrowings from Indian languages because they were responsible for the erroneous attribution of Pashto, by some scholars, to the Indo-Aryan family.

Darmesteter also studies the problem of the origin of retroflex consonants. We know for a fact that retroflex consonants are characteristic of Indian languages, not only Indo-Aryan, from the Vedic times till the modern languages, but also Dravidian. Contrary to Trumpp he shows, that the sounds, except for two of them, occur only in Indian words borrowed by Pashto. The two exceptions may be explained by a natural evolution from Iranian, although they do not exist, or better said, they did not exist in the linguistic family. Their appearance in Pashto, as well as in other eastern Iranian languages, as we know at present, is easily explainable by the action of an ancient Indian substrat.

As regards the morphological side of the question, Darmesteter agrees that the situation is less decisive. In its development from Old Iranian, Pashto went its own way and is therefore structurally quite different from Persian. It is also very difficult to explain the morphological evolutionary processes exclusively from Avestan. As a matter of fact, we should not be surprised by it. We know quite well that in almost all the Indo-European languages, evolution has led to a progressive

and complete destruction of noun and verb endings. Thus, the new morphological systems have little in common with the old ones.

In the field of syntax, the genitive relation is expressed according to a well known Iranian type: the determiner is introduced by a preposition, before the noun that follows. On the other hand, the Indian construction is adjectival and shows a strong tendency in using postpositions.

Darmesteter's arguments proved to be convincing and the veracity of his theory has never been questioned since.

The problem of the origins of the people will not detain us long. We have said already that a solution will not soon be found. I cannot resist quoting Darmesteter who explains the reason why: «The Afghans have no history, because anarchy has no history». ³

What follows is a brief but substantial account of the Afghan literature, written and oral languages, a full description of the prosody and an elaborate analysis of the popular poetry. The main body of the book is an impressive bulk of poems with a French translation: historical narratives, religious legends, romantic ballads, love songs, etc.

Most of the songs have been collected in Peshawar, some of them in Abbotabad. Darmesteter explains the technic he used to collect the poems. Each singer was asked to perform a song, then a munshi transcribed it. Afterwards both of them gave Darmesteter the necessary explanations, which are reproduced in the footnotes of the publication.

The *Chants Populaires* are not only a remarkable achievement in the field of linguistics, but they have long been a unique testimony of this literary genre. They are all the more precious since that sort of literature is liable to vanish without a trace forever. They also bear witness to historical events and cultural features of the Afghans, which otherwise would have faded away.

One is astonished by the vast, solid and ingenious learning of Darmesteter. His competence was not limited to the Semitic languages and the old idioms of Iran. He also had a great ability in Indian linguistics. Moreover, he was not only a scholar in the library, but proved to be an excellent researcher out in the field.

Darmesteter is rightly celebrated for his translation of the Avesta, but I think it would be a great injustice if the posterity was to disregard his achievements in modern Iranian languages.

NOTES

1. *Etudes iraniennes* I, p. 9: "Le zend et le perse sont deux rameaux indépendants l'un de l'autre, c'est-à-dire que ni le zend ne dérive du perse, ni le perse du zend et qu'aucun des deux n'est un moment du développement de l'autre."
2. *Op. cit.*, p. 3: "j'entends par langue persane, non pas le persan proprement dit, c'est-à-dire la langue de la Perse moderne, dont le type le plus pur se trouve dans le livre des Rois de Firdousi (Xe siècle) et qui n'a point subi d'altération sensible depuis cette époque jusqu'à nos jours: j'entends toute l'étendue du développement linguistique dont le persan moderne est le dernier moment ..."
3. *Chants populaires* I, p. CLII: "Les Afghans n'ont pas d'histoire, parce que l'anarchie n'en a pas".

THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL APPROACH TO TRADITION BY JAMES
DARMESTETER: DOGS, FLIES AND LOCUSTS

ERIC PHALIPPOU

In 1881, James Darmesteter completed the English translation of the *Vendidad*, the theological core of the *Zend-Avesta*. Thereafter he began to work on the translation of the second part: the *Yasht* and the *Niyâyesh*. In his desire to compare the extensive mythological material he had examined in the course of his studies on ancient Iranian languages, Darmesteter left the translation of the *Gatha* to L.H. Mills and that of the *Pahlavi Texts* to E.W. West. The French philologist himself then turned to mythology and, in 1881, wrote "Le Dieu Suprême des Aryens".¹ In this article, he clearly stated that theology and belief in a personal god were abstractions that came afterward. He felt that primitive belief merely envisaged a separation of sky from earth and honoured the former. The relationship with the sky was not only primitive but became a source for law through the ideal of justice that it gave rise to. Throughout his life and work, Darmesteter was to remain attached to this social aspiration.

According to Darmesteter, the ideal of justice represented the hope of "the coming of the sky on earth", an ideal theologians chose solely as a metaphor for Messianism. However, Darmesteter detected theist overtones among the Indo-Europeans in their relationship with the sky. Pursuing his enquiry, he also explored the Judaic culture in 1881.² As was to be expected, he saw the same evolutionary pattern occur throughout the course of Semitic history: a simple religion (the relationship with the sky) becoming an abstract theology (Messianism).

As if this vast body of mythological elements was not enough, Darmesteter decided to extend the scope of his study to include the whole of Modern Europe. In his introduction to Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, he delighted in finding the same evolutionary pattern in Elizabethan drama: the separation of sky and earth as the cause of injustice. His theory, applied to France, became part of the school curriculum of the time: it showed how Gaul, a nation which cherished justice, was transformed into France, a monarchy, that came to be known as "the eldest daughter of the Church".³

Listing the numerous projects Darmesteter undertook in 1881, gives us a clearer idea of his approach to Zoroastrianism. There is a popular misconception that encyclopedic knowledge precludes depth of analysis. In Darmesteter's case, this would be failing to do justice to the implicit system that underlies his work.

Moreover, eclecticism was very much in vogue throughout the second half of the 19th century, in keeping with the tradition of German historical philosophy.

Darmesteter, critical of this school of philosophy, was fascinated instead by another system: Darwinism. Like his brother Arsène,⁴ he too attempted to apply the theory of evolution to linguistics, especially to mythology. This romantic fascination for the power of the Origin and the Word is reflected in the lyricism of Darmesteter's translations and even in his scientific exposés; a lyricism the Anglo-Saxons frowned upon. However, a careful reading of his work, especially his critical reviews, reveals the precision of his terminology. Let us consider for instance, as a historian of anthropology, his critical appreciation in 1881 of the folklorist Eugène Rolland.⁵ The title itself "Le Folklore et sa méthode" engages our attention. Furthermore, in a posthumous tribute to Darmesteter, Gaston Paris, who published the review, underscored the epistemological value of the text full of "profound observations on the real nature of what is called `folklore'".⁶ At the time however, such was the ascendancy of philology that no one took much notice of the ideas expressed in this text. Today, when multidisciplinary is very much in favour and orientalism has been debunked as an a priori construct, Darmesteter's review assumes great significance.

Darmesteter himself was aware of the prejudices against orality that existed during his time. He was under no illusion as to how scholars would react to the work of Eugène Rolland. His plan to compile a "complete encyclopedia of European folklore" was dismissed as being far too ambitious. Darmesteter argued that the blame for the closure of the journal *Méluſine*, coedited by Rolland and Gaidoz, lay squarely with the institutions as they withdrew their support to it. For Darmesteter, however, the journal had a rare quality: a simplicity of purpose unmatched either "in England or Germany". Darmesteter said this simplicity consisted in "gathering material and drawing a few parallels, emphasizing at the same time the existence of "only one European, or even universal, folklore".

On the one hand, the diffusionist theory in vogue in the Anglo-Saxon world found itself reduced to a weak justification of colonialism. Who among "the most ardent supporters of the primitive tradition of humanity", after reading Eugène Rolland, would put together in "a common tradition going back to a primitive relationship" levels of discourse as dissimilar as that of myths and hearsay? Darmesteter maintained that the only valid comparison was that of mythological elements taken from similar cultural substrata: grouping together myths related to the "legend of the deluge" was relevant when functional characters were compared - for instance both Yama of the *Avesta* and Noah of the *Bible* have been regarded as

the Guardian of the World. But the exercise became meaningless when old wives' tales were included.

On the other hand, the limits of the culturalist theory that the upholders of Germanic philosophy adhered to in the name of the genius of the race, became apparent. Who, "among the most resolute adherents of the universal identity of human nature", asks Darmesteter, after seeing this work on folklore, would have the temerity to proclaim "a creation everywhere independent and everywhere identical"? The fact that Eugène Rolland's inquiry upset prevailing attitudes called the scholar to reflect on his method and apprehend how it influenced the data collected. Darmesteter accepted the challenge and shifted the line of demarcation that his elders had drawn arbitrarily between 'early' and 'late' or between 'universal' and 'particular'. What was emphatically called Tradition had to be viewed at two levels: the language of popular belief and scholarly discourse of the clergy.

Darmesteter then took to task the small group of learned men who ventured to carry out field work without taking into consideration the fact that they unquestionably belonged to the scholarly community and not the popular class. This type of investigator persisted in trying to get the event to speak for itself without realizing that when questioned "according to the rules of the game", the informant would never communicate to him "what he knew naturally but what he had heard from the local scholar, the school teacher, the priest or the cock of the walk". The sociological questionnaire may be seen as the last avatar of the civilization of the Book with its inherent feeling of superiority. For Darmesteter, such a procedure stemmed from the refusal to take into account an authentic ethnoscience. In every folklorist who rejects the participatory method there lurks a dormant historiographer. Darmesteter says: "If without bothering to look any further one takes to be popular tradition whatever is given in the Book as belief, custom or legend, the only result can be an endless source of error."

Darmesteter is emphatic about this: what matters is the quality and quantity of informants. Accordingly, he was extremely circumspect when dealing with what he considered to be the ultimate reference of the scholars: the sacrosanct "earlier tradition"; for him this was mere hearsay and in no way comparable to "direct and personal observation". By mixing "direct observation" with pedantic scholarship, one could well end up confusing a "so-called line of modern folklore" with "a line of Pliny", and seek justification for such a hotch-potch in a long "scholarly tradition" of obscure origins. Eugène Rolland's simplicity is thus salutary. But for those who believed in systems, James Darmesteter provided a matrix which incorporated in the field of culture what had already been demonstrated in the case of language structure. An empirical law states: "the experience of languages whose history has been studied

proves that in such a case, thanks to the specific development of each idiom, what is apparently similar is erroneous and the real similarities are hidden."

This law was applied to the study of myths through a formal classification of their content in relation to the category of tradition they belonged to:

1. "an apparent similarity of traditions based solely on a illusory knowledge, *idolum libri*";
2. "a real similarity of traditions, but going back to an original source of knowledge which had penetrated the popular class";
3. "finally a real similarity of truly popular traditions, both in origin and nature".

For the sake of convenience, we shall, in this article, respectively call these three forms of tradition which vary depending on the degree of similarity:

- 1) anti-tradition;
- 2) pseudo-tradition;
- 3) traditions.

The anti-tradition is a hasty identification, i.e. the projection of concepts motivated by what Darmesteter chose to call the "illusion savante" which today would be considered an ethnocentric prejudice. Orientalism was not free from such prejudices. Throughout his philological work, Darmesteter tried to do away with this unfortunate tendency. He was extremely critical of the way Zoroastrianism had been reconstructed with the help of western knowledge, referring to it ironically as "Avestan Pandemonium". This reconstruction took its inspiration from the classical Antiquity. As Rome had its Cerberus, so the "Avestan Pandemonium" had its "dog Madhaka", a pure invention of European scholars. They gave birth to a dog, Darmesteter remarked ironically, whereas the "Parsees had never even heard of one".⁷

The projection of categories and the hierarchical vision of the world betrayed a strong bias in favour of Europe as the centre from which knowledge and custom radiate from. Such a diffusionist approach reconstructed religions by laying down an original tradition from which minor ones must have been derived.

At the time, Darmesteter's harshest critic was Monseigneur Charles de Harlez. It was in an essay written in 1883 that this philologist of the Louvain school of thought expressed his views most vigorously.⁸ Implicitly he was criticizing the concept of "indo-iranica", which Darmesteter had chosen as the title of a whole section of his *Etudes Iraniennes*, published the same year.⁹

"Ancient India and Eran", Charles de Harlez pointed out, "both have their own myths and genius which have nothing to do with Indo-European mythology; they came up after the separation of the two races".¹⁰

In this way, Charles de Harlez restricted Indo-European mythology to the period before the historical separation of the different branches. Hence any attempt to make a comparative study of the sacred texts is irrelevant as it would make a mockery of the influence of Iran and India. Darmesteter for his part contended that contact between Iran and India had never been broken, whether it had to do with exchange of goods and ideas or the survival of invariants. Charles de Harlez, on the contrary, advocated a dissociative point of view: "For two peoples of common stock to have produced such widely differing literatures, their separation must have occurred several centuries ago and their influence on each other must have ceased a long time ago".¹¹ However let us not assume mistakenly that Harlez was an advocate of cultural isolationism. He stressed the Indo-Iran dissociation only to contrast more sharply the virtues of India ("poetry", "colorful paintings", "bold figures") and the vices of "Eran" (bereft of "imagery" and "mythical tales"). He used a +/- system, giving to India an original tradition status. Indian civilization had its own archetypes whereas ancient "Eran", "dull, monotonous and down-to-earth", could not have survived without acculturation, as is the fate of any minor tradition.

As an illustration of these divergent approaches to tradition, we would do well to recall the quarrel between Darmesteter and Harlez about the form *çûnô* madhaka and its interpretation: "dog" or "flies and locusts". Harlez maintained that *çûnô* was the genitive of *çpan*, an Avestan lexeme attested in the Greek *kuôn/kunos* which means dog. Thus, he considered Madhaka to be a proper noun and produced, as if by magic, a new entity, the dog Madhaka like the Cerberus of Greek mythology, without bothering about the fact that Madhaka was not attested anywhere else. With one stroke of the pen, an entire section of ethnoscience was crossed out, stripped of its logic, on the altar of "idolum libri".

The example of the dog Madhaka is in fact a perfect illustration of that blind faith in "apparent similarity" which leads to anti-tradition thinking. Darmesteter, for his part, pointed out the need to take into account the tradition established by the Sassanid sacerdotal class, for whom the term *çûnô* had never been translated by dog either in Pahlavi (*sag*) or in Aramaic (*kalbâ*). He was aware such an argument would flatter his philology-oriented colleague, as it supported a diachronic analysis of culture, going back to the oldest written sources. It was a direct reference to the first criterion of authenticity as laid down by Harlez of "Parsee or Zoroastrian tradition":

1. Pahlavi version;
2. Commentaries on this version;
3. Zoroastrian religious books written in Pahlavi;

4. Oral tradition still alive in the customs and habits of modern day Parsis and in their traditional oral teachings;

5. Though distinct from the others, I shall include here what I call 'living tradition', i.e. the list of words inherited by languages of 'Eran' from ancient idioms".¹²

In order to strengthen his demonstration, Darmesteter pointed out to Harlez - who thought of himself above all as an "Eraniste", i.e. a specialist of "a Book, a civilization, a people who have to be studied in themselves above all" - that seeing in Madhaka a dog was inconsistent with the Zoroastrian system. Was not Zoroastrianism a religion which held dogs in respect? Did not the eighth chapter of the *Vendidād* go to the extent of prescribing for dogs funeral rites similar to the ones prescribed for humans? Was there no contradiction in treating the offenders of these rites as "men of hell,¹³ Nasu-makers" to the extent that, out of disrespect, they "favour the power of the dog Madhaka"? Was not, on the contrary, the dog a Nasu-repellent, to the extent that, not only used to attesting the death (*sagdīd*), but it also shared, with the vultures, the privilege of feeding on the corpse perched on a high place?

But Harlez refused to acknowledge his error. Instead, he blamed the Pahlavi text, asserting that: "Parsi tradition is very often erroneous. The correct pronunciation has been forgotten and faulty Middle-Persian pronunciation leads to a great many errors. On the other hand, the etymology is sometimes questionable. To arrive at somewhat satisfactory result based on certain principles, we have restricted ourselves to etymology every time it appears certain".¹⁴ Thus despite Darmesteter's valid objections, Harlez refused to budge an inch: "Madhaka has been described as a dog in this paragraph: but the corresponding Pahlavi word is perhaps related in meaning to the Middle-Persian *tūni*, brigand".¹⁵ This time, it was Harlez's turn to try to please Darmesteter. The latter had purposely used the epistemological presuppositions of his opponent in trying to convince him of his error. Harlez did likewise. Knowing that Darmesteter considered the Pahlavi script to be the "most ancient form of tradition", he played with the ambiguity of this script, pointing out that in Pahlavi, the Avestan *čūnō* may be read as *tūn*. Darmesteter lamented its "obscurity" and "unknown meaning" of the term,¹⁶ unless it was read as *tūni*, another deprecatory epithet; Harlez opined that this too referred to Madhaka, whose name was to be transcribed in Pahlavi as *Madhaga*. Darmesteter for his part said he had no "direct objection against this reading", but there was just one hitch...

If Harlez's interpretation was correct, it would be difficult to accept that the entity Madhaka was attested only once. Trying to find out other occurrences, the philologist noted a Mad'aka in a passage from the Fargard (I.58) which mentions

"Yâtus and the murders they commit";¹⁷ clearly, this was a reference to a negative character who could only be described as a "brigand" or more metaphorically, a dog. It probably belonged to the Ahriman Bestiary and gave its meaning to the famous passage from the Vendidad (VII.26) which lay at the heart of the controversy by naming three of the most famous assassins in the pay of the *div*: "It is those men of hell, those Nasu-makers that most increase the power of the dog Madhaka. It is those men of hell who most increase the grass-destroying drought. It is those men of hell, Nasu-makers, who most increase the power of winter, produced by the Daêva, the flock killing winter".¹⁸ Choosing to ignore the inconsistency in associating a dog with seasonal upheavals, Harlez saw this as a means to put forward the equation: Madhaka = dog of destruction (Fargard I.58) as against Darmesteter's equation: Dog = Nasu-hunter (*Sadder* 72). Harlez concluded on a playful note: "Would it be presumptuous to say that the passage from the *Sadder* which alludes to defilement caused by the contact with corpses does not refer to it (to Madhaka)?"¹⁹

Before discussing any further the difficulty in making a comparison with the *Sadder* - written at a different time and in another language (the Persian of the Rivâyât) - we must point out that the philologist went against his own principle of taking into account the immediate context to interpret a term. The offending passage is Ohrmazd's answer to a question by Zoroaster in the Vendidad on the observance of funeral rites:

"Can those become pure again, O Lord Ahura-Mazda, who carry to water or fire a foul corpse that defiles them?"²⁰ Harlez's insistence on challenging Darmesteter's reference to the *Sadder* was his way of criticizing the concept of a continuous tradition postulated by the latter and persisting in the belief that the Pahlavi version alone was the earliest. So as to leave no doubt whatsoever on the subject, Harlez complained that while Darmesteter "portrays me nonetheless as an advocate of tradition, he surely knows such is not the case; but in doing so, he puts me in contradiction with myself".²¹

Indeed, there was a contradiction, though it was not inherent in Harlez's demonstration. It had to do with the fact that while both the authors considered tradition to be the ultimate reference, each one defined it differently. In 1887, Harlez recommended that one "first endeavour to study the texts in their entirety, and then study tradition, mainly its material content, i.e. Iranian languages that have derived from ancient idioms. This tradition is, in principle, all the more reliable as it is the oldest and the closest to the sources".²² Harlez made a cult of the Origin which he considered the "true tradition". In the name of this tradition, he preferred the Pahlavi Nerigistân to any unfortunate continuator of the Sanskrit version".²³ He also challenged the use of "general mythology" that filtered through

the "polytheism of the Vedas" to explain the "monotheism tainted with dualism of the Avesta". He would rather turn to "traditions of `Eran', while keeping in mind the primitive Aryan element and the influence of Semitism".²⁴

In a nutshell, Harlez reserved for himself the right to separate the wheat from the chaff, the so-called original tradition from acculturation, or to put it in racial terms, Aryanism from Semitism. Accordingly, he regretted the fact that "too often, the translation itself is interpreted with reference to its commentaries, somewhat like the Talmud, which the dasturs themselves tried hard to remove from the sacred text without being able to do so".²⁵ It was in this sense that he refused to accept being labeled as a follower of the "traditional school". He preferred posing instead as a fundamentalist who subjected the historical method to the scrutiny of the founding texts as the Church was doing at the time. This attempt to reappropriate directly a so-called sacred meaning, i.e. unsullied by the vicissitudes of life, gave rise to a research methodology in linguistics whose substantialism has been criticized ever since. Darmesteter had said much the same thing when he spoke of "idolum libri", that is the belief that the Book was sacrosanct.

Such an *a priori* made Harlez incapable of understanding the dynamic aspect of tradition which Darmesteter considered as a sure sign of its authenticity. One had already suspected the disagreement between the two authors by looking at the order in which each one of them laid down the criteria for determining the validity of tradition (cf. above). Where Harlez advocated as a matter of priority sticking to the text ("version", "commentaries" or "books"), Darmesteter emphasized two *a priori* constructs which he called "the illusion savante" and the "source savante".²⁶

In the case of Zoroastrianism, Darmesteter felt that the contemporary tradition was illustrated fully in "Frâmjî's translation" in Gujarati.²⁷ This priest was better known by the name of Dastur Frâmjî Aspendiârjî. His translation was published in 1843 under the auspices of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. It acquired the seal of approval as the Translation of the Dasturs. According to Darmesteter, the translation was put in writing only for adjusting to the contingencies of modernity whose key feature is the critical approach. When applied to the texts, it was used and misused as a method to study etymologies with a view to link words more closely to their so-called original meaning. Frâmjî, said Darmesteter, was not exempt from this "common failing among translators: he had a preference for etymological translations and his etymologies were generally incorrect. But as he followed tradition, his etymologies were harmless, unlike the ones today whose purpose is to provide meaning and not justify it".²⁸

Thus, Darmesteter laid great stress on the notion of continuity, on which he based his interpretation. In the case of the controversy surrounding the *Vendidad* (VII.26), which is what interests us here, he developed this idea in three stages, each one of which was refuted by Harlez:

1. He referred above all to the current link of tradition - Frâmjî Aspendiârjî's Gujarati translation - not as an "absolute value" but as the testimony of a useful informant. This is how he quotes from it: "This man of hell, Nasu-maker, is the worst ally of mosquitoes and flies". To use Darmesteter's understatement: "We are indeed far from the dog Madhaka";²⁹

2. He ascertained the validity of Frâmjî's commentary, who attributed the swarming of these insects to the violation of the funeral prescriptions and the defiling of sacred elements such as water and fire. He observed that the offending passage dealt most certainly with the non-observance of the last rites attested since Antiquity. He thus questioned the interpretation of the Pahlavi noun group: *cûnô madhakhayâo*;

3. On the basis of these two links in tradition, he suspected the "European translators" of a mistranslation. He claimed he could join these two links, the most recent link in Gujarati and the latest link in Pahlavi, to prove the continuity of tradition. The missing link was probably the *Sadder 72*, an excerpt taken from the *Grand Ravayat* in Persian, the book Anquetil-Duperron brought back from India: "He who throws dead matter into water or fire deserves death; for it is said in the Law (the *Avesta*) that when *sin* (i.e. flies) and locusts grow in number, this happens because dead matter was thrown in water, and winter becomes colder and summer hotter".³⁰ The link was thus established. *Molkhosin* was the Persian translation of the Pahlavi compound word *cûno madhakhay* which corresponds to the Gujarati macchar mâkh.

It may be noted that Darmesteter translated the term "Avesta" by "Law", in keeping with the Muslim authors who likened the "Avesta" to the "Daêna". The latter, in its literal meaning of Law, applies to every revealed religion in Islamic taxonomy. Anquetil-Duperron, following in the footsteps of his master, Dastur Darab - himself a disciple of a Dastur from Iran, Jamasp Vilâyeti - had brought back the same tradition, stating that the "Avesta" was the "Revealed Word". It is therefore easier to understand Voltaire's strong opposition - backed by "Enlightened Europe" - to Anquetil-Duperron's conception. Eugène Burnouf's position was more qualified since he had gained access to new texts: "Burnouf," recounted Darmesteter, "while rejecting the evidence of Parsi tradition in the imperfect and doubtful way presented by Anquetil, discovered another far older and purer form", namely the Sanskrit version of the *Yasna* by Neriosengh.³¹ Max

Mueller (who had commissioned the English translation of the Avesta to Darmesteter) adopted the same position as Eugène Burnouf. Harlez asserted that for Max Mueller the Avesta was the text that had been established by religious authority, i.e. tradition.³²

Needless to say, such an identification of the Avesta with the Revealed Word offended Harlez's religious beliefs. Though like Darmesteter he agreed with Jules Oppert's identification of the Avesta with "Abasta" (law, statute), Harlez made it clear that the term meant "announced", i.e. "promulgated" and certainly not "known through revelation".³³ For him, this settled the matter: without revelation, there could be no tradition, in the sense of continuation or filiation. He, therefore, considered it legitimate to state that Darmesteter, in his reasoning, was not referring to "tradition but to a Gujarati translator of the 19th century". He was surprised that "Mr Darmesteter does not brook anyone pointing out that the differences of opinion were due sometimes to the fact that he has followed the least ancient tradition. "This he says is `to take him to task".³⁴

A crime had, indeed, been committed, which is the failure to recognize Darmesteter's originality in comparison to the mythologists of his time. Harlez persisted in depicting his colleague as suffering from the romantic syncretism of the time, which was "leading him to false conclusions, out of his love for myths and analogies".³⁵ Darmesteter's widow, Mary Robinson, was to do justice to her late husband who she said rose up "strongly against the pure abstractions of comparative mythology".³⁶ So, it would be criminal to call him, as was the case with Geldner, a dabbler in "external analogies".³⁷ Darmesteter had, indeed, fought against the German Vedic school and its excesses. He was of the view that Martin Haug's superimposition of distinct semantic fields was baseless. It was an illusion savante which the German orientalist justified as best as he could by "reducing everything to tradition when he must have met the Parsi priests", as Darmesteter accused him.³⁸ It may be recalled that in Darmesteter's opinion the priests spoke an abstract language which, at best by chance, may correspond to popular tradition when it did not go against it.

In his preface to the Avesta in French, Darmesteter suggested that this discourse be called "the tradition of theological schools", conventionally attributed to Zoroaster, as if to "lean on a tradition that won obedience". In fact, he thought of such discourse as successive layers of interpretation, that is discourses held down the ages by the hierarchical representative: the *Maubadân Maubad*, or the Mobed of Mobeds, also called *Zarathushtrôtema*, "the most similar to Zoroaster".³⁹ Thus, but in a manner different from that of Harlez, Haug appeared to be intoxicated with the myth of the Origin, reducing everything to Zoroaster. Darmesteter chose to view the

whole of the Avesta as an open system of interpretation, a "constant tradition" which ran from the Pahlavi to the Gujarati through a "traditional teaching", *darezha upayana* "long tradition" (*Sîrôza* I, 29; *Yaçna* 13).⁴⁰ That is why he considered Frâmjî to be a useful informant, who could not be overlooked, even if one could not take him fully at his word.

Darmesteter's reservations about Frâmjî were not motivated by any Eurocentrism but out of his concern for authenticity. After all, a dastur was only a "supervisor of conscience"; and what mattered were the universals of popular conscience. In this regard, the Avesta was a good area to investigate as it could help decipher a larger semiological field. To take up again the example of the locust - *madhaka* (Avestan), *mêg* (Pahlavi), *malakh* (Persian), *tîd* (Gujarati) -, it emerged that an etymological law linked the Persian to the Avestan via the Pahlavi. The labial in Persian *malakh* derives from the dental in Avestan *madhakha* > **madhaka*, as was to be expected in "a dialect of the same group as the Afghan".⁴¹

This geographical information enabled him to suggest a parallel between the Avestan term and the Sanskrit term *mandûka* (frog). Furthermore, such a parallel opened an anthropological perspective: on this side of Indo-Persian taxinomies, the same ethnozoological principle must have governed these names. "Frogs and locusts," Darmesteter pointed, "have this in common that they jump; both are somewhat crazy nervous beings, who appear to be suffering from intoxication or *mada*".⁴²

One now understands why, in search of traces of this living tradition, Darmesteter, during his journey to India in 1886, spent a great deal of time in the region north of Peshawar where he collected *Les Chants populaires des Afghans*. He viewed these songs as rich data on the basis of which he could structure Indo-European mythology. In this sense, he may be considered as a precursor of our modern studies.

Indeed these days, the development of anthropology in oriental studies and the inclusion of sociological parameters in religious history have led to a shift of interest. It is not in Zoroastrianism constituted into a church that we are going to look for the final transformation of Indo-European tradition, but in its deviant and sectarian forms. It is here, veiled in a mystic form, that we can locate the naturalist elements which first underlaid belief. Now this is a line of research Darmesteter had advocated much earlier: "It is one of those Greek and Indian ideas that Iran could not preserve; that the world was born out of the night". We are faced here with a contradiction that the Zoroastrian system could not accept but which can be seen in the heterodox movements. "This conception," Darmesteter went on, "was expelled from mainstream religion but left its mark on the sects: the Zervanites believed that

the dark Ahriman was born before Ormazd (...). Such was the case in Greece, among the philosophers".⁴³ Such was the case of the 'illuminative' Oriental philosophy which a successor of James Darmesteter at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Religieuses, Henry Corbin, brought to the fore through the Sohrawardi school of the "black sun".

But, unlike Corbin, Darmesteter's only interest in this mysticism was that it stood in sharp contrast to the official evolution that theologians assigned to belief: an increasingly metaphysical abstraction. Darmesteter recognized in Iranian mysticism - in particular the Zervanite movement - a shrewd counterweight to the priests' tendency towards abstraction: "Persia, though preserving in general the personality of its supreme god, has let this god get merged, especially in the sects, with the material infinite which was the first revelation".⁴⁴ The first revelation said the Sun was a King whose duty it was to dispense justice and whose creation was the fruit of a sacrifice. Darmesteter established this source of tradition not only through comparison but also by referring to his conception of folklore as a popular fund of primitivism opposed by official cults. "The primitive conception," he added, "thinly veiled beneath the mystic forms it has taken on here, can be seen, veiled in another way, beneath the childish features taken from old tales, in a bizarre myth that has almost been demoted to a children's story. One day, Ahriman invited Ormazd to dinner; when Ormazd reached, he said he would only eat after their sons had wrestled with each other. Ahriman's son brought down Ormazd's son; the two fathers tried looking for a judge, but as they could not find one, they decided to take the sun as their judge".⁴⁵ One can recognize here the conception of the Sun as the eye of Ahura Mazda, an attribute given to him by the Avesta before this description drifted to the theological interpretation of omniscience (cf. *Yasht of Mithra* and *Yasht of Khorshid*).

In a nutshell, Darmesteter seemed to be making a distinction between tradition and orthodoxy. Tradition was oral in nature: it was the spoken word even if it referred to the written word. Such was the case of the tradition - which he sometimes called Parsi and sometimes Neo-Zoroastrian - which divided sacred literature into two branches, the *Avesta* and the *Zend*.⁴⁶ Orthodoxy on the other hand belonged to the realm of the written: that which was arbitrarily laid down. The Sassanid orthodoxy was no exception; king Ardashir allowed only one version of the *Avesta*, that of the "great priest Tansar to the exclusion of all others".⁴⁷ This summed up the difference between the spoken word and the written word: the former derived from custom, the latter from sentence. In attaching greater importance to the spoken word, Darmesteter had anticipated the anthropological school whose adherents

noted wherever they went in the course of their fieldwork an organic resistance by society to the State.

The followers of this school detected the cunning with which communities, in the name of acculturation, resplit themselves into networks within the institutions. In retrospect, it appears the English anthropologist Maurice Hocart was the totemic ancestor of such anatomical dissection of the social body. Excluded from official science by his peers, he could only occupy a Chair of Sociology at the University of Cairo from 1934 to 1939. During this period, he wrote a book on castes in French which caught the attention of Louis Dumont.⁴⁸ In this study, he used Darmesteter's ideas to bring out the emergence of the priestly class in Zoroastrian society. Hocart also took recourse to Darmesteter in his *Kings and Councillors*.⁴⁹ In this book, he showed how a community ritual, in which the central character is vested with duty of the Sun, got transformed into a code with mystical connotations; this in order to legitimize royal power which this character lays claim to in a new institutional setup.

Any observer of the daily life of Zoroastrian communities in India cannot help being struck by the open hostility between the advocates of orthodoxy and the various groups claiming heterodox forms of practice. On the one hand, groups of Iranian emigrants maintain their originality by performing rituals not found in Parsi orthodoxy. On the other hand, groups that have integrated into India are keen to underline their common heritage with Hinduism, going to the extent of interpreting their sacred texts in the light of Reincarnation. It appears that the specialists in religious sciences, with their contemporary approach to Zoroastrianism, confine themselves to orthodox informants, overlooking a dynamism which for us is an inseparable part of this religion. Darmesteter had emphasized this before in his introduction to the *Avesta*: "Neo-Zoroastrianism is the first example of such an eclectic method; this method, which the derived sects were to apply so skillfully, consisted in blending in one's own doctrine the main doctrines of competing systems so as to form a larger whole, the sole custodian of truth, whose other systems seemed no more than a partial reflection. Zoroastrianism was rich enough to adopt and adapt all these new elements without losing its distinct identity, and there are few other instances of religious borrowings being blended so harmoniously in the primitive mold".⁵⁰

Finally, in order to emphasize the relevance of this dynamic concept of tradition today, we would like to end with a few words about a character scholars have so far ignored. Born a Zoroastrian in the Iranian community of Pune (Maharashtra), he combined the claims of the two groups we have distinguished: Iranianism and Hinduism. He was the perfect contemporary example of the "derived

sects" which can tell us a great deal about the development processes and internal logic of Zoroastrianism. His name: Shri Meher Baba. Shri is the form of address for a Hindu, Baba for a Muslim saint; the Persian Meher in the middle refers to that famous Sun of mystic illumination.

On account of this obvious syncretism, the Orthodoxy considered Meher Baba as a "bad man". In reply to a journalist in 1932 who asked him to explain how he got this reputation, he said: "I am a Persian. I was born in Poona, but my father and mother were Persian".⁵¹ Shri Meher was born in Poona/Pune on the 25th of February, 1894 under the name of Merwan Sheheriarji Irani. The Parsees used the term Irani for Yazd and Kerman emigrants in order to distinguish them from the orthodox Zoroastrians they claimed to be. This term does not cover the same semantic field as that of a caste but simply indicates an ethnic origin regardless of the denomination: Zoroastrians, Muslims and Bahais.

The haziness of this term is undoubtedly linked to the issue of discrimination. After Darmesteter's instructive handling of the subject, it is hardly surprising that the repugnance of the "orthodox" be shared by the "scholar". A Parsi, Jamshedji Maneckji Unvala, who had studied philology in Heidelberg and was attached to the French Archaeological Mission in Susa, came down heavily on the Iranis in the conservative mouthpiece of his community (*Jam-e-Jamshed*): "Bombay is the El Dorado of adventurous Iranis who are often smooth-tongued, polished-mannered, and educated to a certain degree".⁵² He advised the Parsees against giving their daughters in marriage to these people about whose varying principles little was known... Very often they were disguised Bahais who claimed to be superior on the pretext that their proselytism had borne fruit in Europe, Australia and the United States.

The criticism of the Iranian Bahais was directed in fact against all the Iranis, including Meher Baba. The latter had spread his teaching from the Old Continent to the New World, from London to Hollywood. His message to his followers ("Sufism reoriented") was part of a dynamic tradition. This message was in sharp contrast with traditional "Iranianness" as conceived by Unvala whose observations in Gujarati were reported by a fellow Parsi Ardeshir Eduljee Reporter in the same *Jam-e-Jamshed*: "It is in rural Iran, especially Kurdistan, that the contemporary nature of true "Iranianness" (irânîpanum) is best attested. Here, the dialects are a reflection of Zoroastrian culture; archaeologists bear out this fact. Among them is the well-known learned scholar Athorman J.M. Unvala...".⁵³ In this belief, the philologist joined the orthodox in postulating, from a similar etymology, a common identity based exclusively on the 'significant'.

This is far removed from Meher Baba who transmitted his teaching in silence as if to emphasize the 'signified'. Since June 10, 1925, he used a tablet with the alphabet written on it to communicate. The person to whom Meher Baba pointed out some letters with a stick had to reconstruct the words. From June 17, he used the same method to communicate in Persian with his Irani disciples. Apart from this vow of silence, Meher Baba expected his disciples to fast. Both these practices can in no way be considered to be Zoroastrian habits. They were part of a spiritual strategy for the widening and strengthening of a religious experience. Just as Darmesteter relied on the study of Neo-Zoroastrianism to understand Zoroastrianism, so we think it useful to address ourselves to movements considered to be heterodox in relation to Parsism. It would be interesting to see how the Iranis like Meher Baba live a tradition, whereas the endeavour of the official movements such as the Iran League - of which the likes of Unvala and Reporter were militants - is to reconstruct Tradition.

NOTES

1. "Le Dieu Suprême...
2. *Coup d'oeil...*
3. *Lectures patriotiques...*
4. Darmesteter A: 1887
5. Rolland E: 1877-1881.
6. Paris G, 1986, p. 56: "profondes remarques sur la vraie nature de ce qu'on appelle le folklore".
7. "Le chien..., p. 195 "Les Parsees n' [en] ont jamais entendu parler".
8. Harlez, 1883.
9. *E.I.*, Vol II, pp. 95-123
10. Harlez, 1883, p. 191: L'Inde et l'Iran antiques ont l'un et l'autre des mythes et des génies propres à chacun des deux pays et qui n'appartiennent point la mythologie indo-européenne; ils se sont formés après la séparation des deux races".
11. Harlez, 1883, p. 95: "Pour que deux peuples, issus d'une souche commune, insiste-t-il, aient pu produire des littératures aussi différentes, il faut que leur séparation

date de longs siècles et que depuis longtemps toute influence de l'un sur l'autre ait cessé de se produire".

12. Harlez, 1883, p. 8.
13. "Le Chien..., p. 196: "des hommes d'enfer, faiseurs de Naçu... favorisent la puissance du chien Madhaka".
14. Harlez, 1883, p. VIII, "La tradition perse est très souvent erronée. L'oubli de la vraie prononciation, l'application fautive de la prononciation néo-persane multiplient les erreurs. D'autre part, l'étymologie est parfois douteuse. Pour arriver à un résultat quelque peu satisfaisant et basé sur des principes, nous nous en sommes tenus à l'étymologie chaque fois qu'elle nous paraissait assurée."
15. *Le Zend-Avesta...*, Vol I, p. XLV, "Madhaka est qualifié de chien dans ce paragraphe: mais le mot pchlevi correspondant à cette épithète est peut-être en rapport de signification avec le néo-persan *tūni*, brigand".
16. "Le Chien..., p. 197.
17. Harlez, 1881, p. 8, " propos des Yâtus et des meurtres qu'ils commettent".
18. *Vendidâd*, VII.26, "Ce sont ces hommes d'enfer, faiseurs de Naçu, qui donnent le plus de force au chien Madhaka d'enfer, faiseurs de Naçu qui donnent le plus de force à la sécheresse qui détruit le pâturage. Ce sont ces hommes d'enfer, faiseurs de Naçu, qui donnent le plus de force l'hiver, créés des Daévas, à l'hiver tueur de troupeaux".
19. Harlez, 1881: "est-il outrecaidant de dire que le passage du *Sadder* qui parle des souillures causées par le contact des cadavres ne s'y rapporte pas?"
20. *Vendidâd*, VII.26: "ceux-là peuvent-ils redevenir purs, ô saint Ahura-Mazda, qui portent à l'eau ou au feu un cadavre immonde qui les souillent?"
21. Harlez, 1881: p. 14.
22. Harlez, 1887, p. 69: "s'attacher d'abord à l'étude des textes et de leur ensemble, puis à celle de la tradition, principalement de sa partie matérielle, les langues éraniennes, héritières des idiomes antiques. A cette tradition, il doit être accordé, en principe, une confiance d'autant plus grande qu'elle est plus ancienne, plus rapprochée des sources".
23. Harlez, 1877, p. 26: "continuateur malheureux de la version sanscrite".
24. Harlez, 1877, p. 26: "les traditions de l'Iran, tout en tenant compte de l'élément aryaque primitif et de l'influence du sémitisme".
25. Harlez, 1877, p. 70: "trop souvent, on interprète la traduction même au moyen des gloses, dignes parfois du Talmud, et que les destours persans eux-mêmes s'efforçaient d'éliminer du texte sacré sans pouvoir y parvenir".

26. *Zend-Avesta*, Vol i, p. XLII, "fidélité que l'on ne saurait pas soupçonner a priori".
27. *Zend-Avesta*, Vol 2, "Introduction...", p. XLV.
28. *Zend-Avesta*, Vol.1, "Introduction, VII...", C-CI: "travers communs beaucoup de traducteurs: il affectionne les traductions tymologiques et ses étymologies sont généralement fausses. Mais comme il comprend par Tradition, ces étymologies sont inoffensives, au contraire de celles l'aujourd'hui qui sont destinées à fournir le sens et non à le justifier".
29. "Le Chien..., pp. 196-97, "Cet homme d'enfer, faiseur de *Naçu*, est le pire allié des moustiques et des mouches... Nous voici loin du chien Madhaka".
30. *E.I.*, pp. 198-199, "L'homme qui jette de la matière morte dans l'eau ou le feu est digne de mort; car il est dit dans la Loi (l'Avesta) que quand se multiplient le sin (c.-à-d. les mouches) et les sauterelles, c'est pour avoir fait venir de la matière morte dans l'eau, et l'hiver en devient aussi dur et l'été plus chaud".
31. *Zend-Avesta*, Vol I, p. XXIV: "Burnouf, rejetant le témoignage de la Tradition Parsie dans la forme imparfaite et douteuse où il la trouvait dans Anquetil, en découvrit une forme beaucoup plus ancienne et plus pure".
32. Harlez, 1877, p.2: "Avesta était le texte établi, fixé par l'autorité religieuse, la tradition".
33. Harlez, 1877, p. 6: "le sens de annoncé 'promulgué' n'est nullement celui de su, 'connu par révélation'".
34. Harlez, 1881, p. 6: "M. Darmesteter ne permet pas qu'on dise que nos divergences de vue viennent parfois de ce qu'il a suivi la Tradition la moins ancienne. Il appelle cela 'lui faire un crime'".
35. Harlez, 1881, p. 11: "entraîne dans des conclusions fausses, par l'amour des mythes et des analogies".
36. Preface to: *Critique...*, p. VII: "si vigoureusement contre les pures abstractions de la mythologie comparée".
37. Harlez, 1883, p. IX: "analogies extérieures".
38. *E.I.*, 2, P. 39: "ramenant tout à la tradition, quand il eut fait connaissance avec les prêtres Parsis".
39. *Le Zend-Avesta*, Vol I, "Introduction VII...", p. XI & LV: "le Maubadân Maubad, ou Mobed des Mobeds, appelé aussi Zarathushtrêtema, 'le plus semblable à Zoroastre'".
40. *E.I.*, pp. 43-44: "la longue tradition".
41. *E.I.* 2, p. 200, "un dialecte du même groupe que l'afghan".

42. *E.I. 2*, "Grenouilles et sauterelles ont cela de commun qu'elles sautent; ce sont des personnes nerveuses et un peu folles, et qui semblent atteintes d'ivresse, de *mada*".
43. "Les Cosmogonies...", pp. 173-174: "Cette conception chassée du grand jour de la religion, laissa sa trace dans les sectes: les Zervanites croyaient que le ténébreux Ahriman naquit avant Ormazd (...) Ainsi en fut-il en Grèce, chez les philosophes".
44. "Le Dieu suprême...", p. 125: " La Perse, quoi qu'elle ait en général conservé fidèlement la personnalité de son dieu suprême, le laisse, surtout dans les sectes, se confondre avec l'infini matériel qui en fut la première révélation".
45. "Les Cosmogonies", p. 175: "La conception primitive, à peine voilée sous les formes mystiques qu'elle a revêtue ici, se retrouve, voilée autrement, sous des traits puérils empruntés à d'anciens contes, dans un mythe bizarre presque déchu en conte d'enfant. Un jour, Ahriman invita Ormazd à dîner: Ormazd, y étant allé, ne voulut pas manger que d'abord leurs fils ne se fussent battus; et le fils d'Ahriman ayant terrassé le fils d'Ormazd, les deux pères furent la recherche d'un juge et, n'en trouvant pas, firent le soleil pour leur servir de juge".
46. *Avesta*, Vol III, p. XCIV: "la littérature sacrée en deux branches, Avesta et Zend".
47. *Avesta*, Vol III, p. XCVI: "grand prêtre Tansar à l'exclusion de tous les autres".
48. Hocart, 1936, a.
49. Hocart, 1936, b.
50. *Avesta*, Vol III, p. XCIX-C, "Le Néo-Zoroastrianisme présente le premier exemple de cette méthode éclectique, plus tard appliquée avec tant d'habileté par les sectes dérivées et qui consiste à fondre dans sa propre doctrine les principales doctrines des systèmes rivaux, de façon à présenter un ensemble plus vaste, héritier de toute la vérité et dont les autres systèmes ne semblent plus que le reflet partiel. Toutes ces nouveautés, le Zoroastrianisme était assez riche de son propre fond pour les adopter et les adapter sans perdre sa physionomie propre, et il y a peu d'exemples d'emprunts religieux si harmonieusement fondus dans le moule primitif".
51. *The Sunday Express*, April 10, 1932, quoted by Purdom, 1937, p. 162.
52. Unvala, 1943.
53. *Reporter*, 1931, p. 120.

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THE ZOROASTRIAN THEMES
IN THE CHINESE MANICHAEAN LITERATURE

NAHAL TAJADOD

To Leyly Matine-Doftary

The expansion of trade between Chinese and Persian states and the reopening of the caravan roads favoured the arrival of the first Manichaean missionaries in China. In 694, a Persian named *fuduodan* went to the court of China bringing "the false religion of the book of the two principles" (*Erzongjing*).¹

In 719, another Manichaean dignitary, characterised by his title of *muzhu* and specialised in astronomy, was sent to the Chinese emperor by the vice roy of Tokharestan.²

Twenty years later, on July 16, 731, a Manichaean priest also named *fuduodan* composed "The *Compendium* of the Doctrines and Styles of the Teaching of Mani, the Buddha of Light". The imperial edict which called for the translation of the document intended to allow the Chinese authorities, not only to obtain a complete statement of Manichaeism, but to be able to take a more proper position on it. The following year (732) an edict condemned Manichaeism, but at the same time gave the liberty of the cult for non-Chinese disciples.³

The edition of the *Compendium* and the edict of 732 favoured the expansion of the new religion in China. Later on, in 745, the Uighurs founded a very vast kingdom which expanded from Ili to the Yellow River. One of their kings, Mouyu, conquered Luoyang, on November 20, 762, where he met some Manichaean religious dignitaries who converted him to their doctrine. The conversion of the *qaghan* made Manichaeism the official religion of the Uighurs, and the Manichaeans got the courage to ask the Chinese authorities for the right to build temples.

The protection of the Uighurs obliged the Chinese emperor, first to give the Manichaeans, in 769, the right to open temples called *Dayunguangming* in the two capitals Changan and Luoyang, then, in 771, the right to reach other localities in the basin of Yangzi.

In 806, some Manichaeans became ambassadors for the Uighurs at the Chinese court.⁴ The expansion of Manichaeism around the end of the VIIIth century and the arrival of the Manichaean ambassadors in the Chinese court prove the liberal politics of the Tangs.

"In 784, there were 150 000 foreigners in the army of the empire, among them the Uighurs, Tartars, Persians and Arabs. In the sole city of Xianfu, 4000 foreign families traded tea and silk."⁵

The end of the VIIIth century and the beginning of the IXth century were the height of Manichaeism in Eastern Asia, but once again the success was rather brief. The destruction of the Uighur kingdom by the Kirghiz in 840 stopped the expansion of Manichaeism in China. The Kirghiz victory paralysed the Manichaeist progress. The decline of the Uighurs coincides with the decline of Manichaeism. Once the Uighurs weakened, Manichaeism was isolated from its protectors who had power of making laws at the Tang court.

In 843, Manichaeism was forbidden in China. The Chinese officials, according to an imperial edict, had to collect and burn Manichaeian images and books in the public places. In 845, a terrible persecution rose against Buddhism, Nestorianism, Manichaeism and Mazdaism.

"That is how 260 500 Buddhists and 2000 Nestorians, Zoroastrians and Manichaeians entered laic life."⁶

After the disasters of 843, the Uighur tribes established themselves through various part of Central Asia. Those from Ganzhou settled down in Gansu and those from Gaochang to the east of Tourfan.

The Uighurs of Ganzhou had been surrounded by Chinese and Tibetan Buddhists. Introduced to the Ganzhou in the middle of the IXth century, Manichaeism had to give way to the Buddhists who were all around them.

The Uighurs of Gaochang are known by Moslem authors under the name *Toghuzghuz*.

"Under their influence Chinese Turkestan became "turkised". From then on, Chinese Turkestan stopped speaking Eastern Iranian or Tokharian."⁷

Mas'udi, Ibn al-Nadim and Gardizi attest to the presence of Manichaeism among the *Toghuzghuz*. The manuscripts and frescos found in the Tourfan region, added a supplementary confirmation.

"Biruni says around 1000, the majority of Oriental Turks, of the inhabitants of Sina and Tibet, and some of the Hindus, believed in the doctrine of Mani."⁸

The cultural impact of the Manichaeians on the Uighurs was very important. Through this religion, the Uighurs entered in contact with the Iranian culture.

Manichaeism remained in Chinese Turkestan until the XIIIth century. In China, however, Manichaeism was cut from any contact with Iran (now a Moslem country), without any political support, persecuted and repressed since the proscription of 843. It therefore had to hide under the aspects of Taoism and Buddhism. It was deeply influenced by these two important religions. In order to

escape persecutions, Manichaeism entered the "underground world" and became a "secret society", and was soon accused of many crimes, and in particular, subversion.

In the *Taoic Canon* which was completed under emperor Zhenzong, in 1019, two Manichaean treatises existed, the *Erzongjing* and the *Sanjijing*. It's probably in Fujian that the commissioner in charge of writing the *Canon* assembled Mani's treatises and incorporated them in the *Song Canon*. Both were denounced and removed soon after. However, this brief insertion testifies to the importance of the Manichaeism in some provinces of Eastern China.

In the XIIth century in Fujian, there were some adepts of the "religion of light" which had succeeded in attracting some members of scholarly families who were fasting.⁹

Even though the second half of the XIIth century was favourable to the expansion of Manichaeism in Fujian, a new persecution was to start soon.

With the fall of the Song dynasty (1277), the dissident sects helped the Yuans. In return, the Yuans granted them the liberty of cult. This is how the success of foreign religions like Nestorianism, Judaism and Islam started to grow. As for Manichaeism, it remained excluded.

Finally, an imperial edict, dated 1370, ordered the strangling of the chiefs of the religion of the "Venerable of light", the lapidation of their disciples and them sending into exile.¹⁰

The *Code of Ming* (XIVth century) banished the religion of the "Venerable of light" with a curious consequence. The sentence entered into the code of the last Chinese dynasty, and from there, the *Annamite Code* was applied in Indo-China by the French tribunals. Consequently, the French government in the XXth century has theoretically condemned Manichaeism in the same way that the Middle Ages prosecuted the Manichaean "albigéois".

Among the Chinese manuscripts discovered by Sir Aurel Stein and Paul Pelliot, at the beginning of this century at Dunhuang, exists a Manichaean scroll translated from Parthian. The title of the document is "The *Compendium of the Doctrines and Styles of the Teaching of Mani, the Buddha of Light*". I brought together and explained the two separated parts of the document. The first part is conserved in London and the second in Paris. The book called *Mani, le Bouddha de Lumière* was published by Cerf in 1990 in the collection *Sources gnostiques et manichéennes*, 3.

The text which is unique in Manichaean documentation, is a sort of catechism of the Manichaean doctrine, in a Chinese version and is intended to reach the administration of cults of the imperial Tang government.

The religion of Mani when it reached China presented some Buddhist notions. There was a voluntary syncretism and not an eclectism due to time or to proximity of such and such a religion. This syncretism is detectable even in the thought of the founder of the Manichaean religion, where the addition of Christian and Buddhist concepts to the Zoroastrian notions has given birth to Manichaeism, a religion which, from the beginning, claimed to be universal. Once in China, the Manichaeans tried to assimilate Mani to some *boddhisatvas* which were venerated by the Chinese and to combine Buddhism and Manichaeism. This efficient attitude helped the infiltration of Manichaeism, through a religion already established, into the Chinese thought and culture.

The adaptator of the *Compendium* wanted to adorn the doctrine in such a way as to make it more easily understandable by Taoïst and Buddhist population. With this in mind, he used a vocabulary which was based on the Buddhist tradition. He tried to present Mani as the last *avatara* of the prior founders of doctrines. He did not hesitate to extract the predictions that could build a bridge between the new faith and the old ones from a Taoïst work or a Buddhist *sûtra*. It is interesting to note that Buddhism itself, at the time of its arrival in China, had to go the same way. It had to identify itself and borrow its vocabulary from Taoïsm.

The *Compendium* is written in the same way a *sûtra*. The denominations of Mani and the descriptions of his thought contain the secret of this interdoctrinal mixture. The Chinese Manichaeism can not be deeply understood if we ignore its magic home (Buddhism). The Manichaean missionaries not only used the vocabulary of the religion of Buddha but adapted their own doctrine to Buddha's and Laozi's. That is how the *Compendium* was born as a syncretism of Manichaeism, Mazdaism, Buddhism and Taoïsm.

The *Compendium* had never been just a text for archives. Unlike the other documents written by non-Manichaeans, the *Compendium* is composed by a Manichaean bishop. It allows us to understand how Manichaean believers perceived themselves and also to see the points of the doctrine they insisted on.

The *Compendium* shows that, in spite of a Buddhist consistency and Taoïst themes, the Chinese Manichaeism has kept its Iranian and specific Zoroastrian origins. Some precise indications can assert this remark.

In the *Compendium*, Mani is identified with the "Insurpassable healing king".¹¹ The term is profoundly Buddhist. The Buddha of healing, *da yiwang fo*, cures diseases and ignorance. Paul Demiéville likened the healing king to the Vaidyarâja Buddhist who is an epithet of Buddha.¹² Nevertheless the description given by the *Third book of Dênkart*,¹³ about Zoroastrian religion, is very similar to the healer of Manichaeism. The *Dênkart*¹⁴ says:

"When all men receive and practice the remedy of perfect healing for the good health of the world and its cure [...], there will be no more disease, nor corruption, nor old age, nor death..."

Concerning the extraordinary birth of Mani, the *Compendium*¹⁵ says: "At the time when he was about to be born, the two radiant-ones sent down spiritual power to lighten each part of the *trikâya*". The description brings to mind the birth of Zoroaster, about which Henri Corbin¹⁶ writes:

"The *xvarnah* (glory light of Mazdaism) sometimes descends under the appearance of a flame of an infinite light and penetrates inside the mother of Zoroaster. Sometimes the *fravarti* (celestial entity) of Zoroaster and his *xvarnah* unify themselves to constitute the form of the child, Zoroaster."

As we just saw, the conception of Zoroaster comes from the union of *fravarti*, which may be interpreted as a celestial entity which existed prior to his birth in the terrestrial world (his Self of light) and the *xvarnah* must be acknowledged as the glory light of Mazdaism. This supernatural process led to the birth of Zoroaster, and corresponds exactly to the process which precludes the extraordinary birth of Mani.

The *Compendium*¹⁷ promises a reward to whomever follows the proper method of conduct. "If the method of conduct is true, the reward will be realized in the three palaces"¹⁸, the Chinese text says.

The Zoroastrian tradition also promises a reward (*mizda*) to the believers. They may receive it in this life, but the real reward offered to him after his death, from the very hands of Ahura Mazdâ. The reward is entry into the "kingdom" of Ahura Mazdâ, who is the king¹⁹.

The Manichaean metempsychosis is defined in Parthian by the word *zâdmûrd* (lit. "born-dead" or "birth-death"). In Sogdian the exact equivalent of *zâdmûrd* exists, *zy mrch*: "The life in this world is called by Mani "birth-death". This concept is transposed into the Chinese *shengsi*, which literally means "birth-death" or "life-death" "²⁰.

The *Compendium*²¹ illustrates Mani crowned with the symbol of the "twelve kings of light". This aspect of Mani evokes the Kayanian princes crowned by the nimbus and the flame as the symbols of *xvarnah* (the glory light of Mazdaism). Glorified by the crown of light, Mani can also represent Mithra. In this case, the "twelve kings of light" might correspond to the twelve signs of the zodiac which are related to Mithra²². On the anniversary of Mithra, kings of Persia used to decorated the head of their sons with a golden crown. The crown appears on the medallions of Sassanian kings and also on Mithra's monuments. The peaks of the crown symbolize the sunbeams.

The *Compendium* defines Mani's body as "fully displaying the Great light and the esoteric meaning of Limitless".²³ In the Buddhist tradition, the Great light refers to the *bodhissatva* Amitâbha. The "Limitless" Chinese *wuliang*, or the Sanskrit *amita*, is one of the main characters of Amitâbha.

In the *Compendium*, Mani is compared to Amitâbha four times. Because of his name "Infinite longevity" and his luminous character which was connected to the Iranian god (Mithra), the conception of Amitâbha has been close to the Infinite time of Iran (*Zurvan akanara*).²⁴

"The cult of Amitâbha, says Henri de Lubac,²⁵ appears in Iranian or Iranised countries. There are men originally from Iran or neighbouring countries who brought it to China. The first translator of *Sukhâvatî Sûtra* (*Sûkhâvatîvyûha* which describes the land of Buddha Amitâbha) was working in China, in the second century A.D., under An Shigao. An Shigao, or the "Parthian marquis", was a genuine Iranian, a member of the royal family of Arsacids and the son of a ruling prince of today's Afghanistan. He gave up the royal crown to become a monk."

The travels of Mani in Persia crossed the Indian territory and ended in China. It is comparable with the journey of an Iranian divinity (incarnated in Amitâbha), who arrived in China as the "saint of the west".

The *Compendium* gives vast amounts of information concerning the five Manichaean sacerdotal grades and the Heptateuch of Mani.²⁶

The titles of Mani's books²⁷ were studied by Haloun and Henning.²⁸ They came in many cases from Middle-Persian. The *Niwan* corresponds to Middle-Persian's *dêwân* (*Epistles*); the *Eluozan* to Middle-Persian's *râzân* (*Secrets*); the *Juhuan* to *kâwân* (*Giants*); the *Afuyin* to *âfrîn* (*Psalms and Prayers*).

The titles of the five grades of the Manichaean church²⁹ came equally from the Pahlavi.³⁰ The *muzhu* corresponds to the Pahlavi *môze*³¹ (magisters); the *sabosai* to the Pahlavi *aspasag* (episcopous, diaconus), but also to the Chinese *supusa* which means *bodhissatva*; the *moxixide* corresponds to the Pahlavi *mahistag* (presbyter); the *aluohuan* to the Pahlavi *ardâwân* (elects); the *noushayan* to *niyôshâgân* (auditors).

As for the titles of the three elected members at the head of a Manichaean monastery,³² they were identified in Pahlavi by Gauthiot.³³ The *afuyinsa* (chief of the hymns and wishes) corresponds to the Pahlavi *âfrînsar* (chief of praises); the *huluhuan* (chief of the religious doctrine) to the Pahlavi *xrv.xv'n* (the one who calls for the prayer); the *ehuanjiansaibosai* (official of the month) to the Pahlavi *'rw'ngânsâh pâsak* (overseer of the reciting of the sermon).

These terms which transcribed from Pahlavi into Chinese, clearly show that in spite of the influence of Buddhism, the *Compendium* has remained a

Manichaean text which still has its original vocabulary intact, and which stems from the Zoroastrian tradition.

The text also shows how the religion, with the ambition of expansionism, adopted certain characteristics of Buddhism and Taoism. From the time when it began to grow in various localities of the Yangzi basin and the oasis of the Tourfan, it was facing a long time established religion and therefore tried to preserve its Iranian origins. We encounter it not under the name of its founder, Mani, but under the title of "religion of light".

This light is the main pillar of the Iranian religions, whether symbolized by Mithra the "god of light" and the "guardian of truth and moral perfection" or under the form of Zoroaster's Fire, the symbol of Ahura Mazdâ. This same light illuminates the Iranian Islam. Sohrawardi refers to it as the symbol of the "epiphanic instant of the self-knowledge of the soul".

Another Chinese Manichaean document is a large scroll from the Dunhuang grottos which dates from the middle of the Xth century. Chavannes and Pelliot who translated and published the scroll titled the document "Un *Traité* manichéen retrouvé en Chine". Since then, it has become usual to call it by the same name. In its literary form taken from a *sûtra*, the *Traité* appears as a Manichaean cosmo-theogonic text, which was extracted from Iranian sources to be adapted to a Buddhist culture.

In spite of the efforts of the Manichaean adaptator to assimilate Manichaeism and Buddhism, it is surprising to find so many Chinese transcriptions of the Zoroastrian divinities when we read the *Traité* in the manner of a *sûtra*.

Let's start with Hulushede and Polouhuode, the former was translated by Shuoting (the one who listens when spoken to) and the latter by Huanying (the one who answers when called). They are evidently the gods Xroshtag and Padvakhtag which are Pahlavi terms meaning "appeal" and "answer".

"Appeal" and "answer", plus the five elements (ether, wind, light, water, fire), constitute the seven emanations which corresponds in the Manichaeism to the seven Ameshaspentas of Mazdaism. The last two Ameshaspentas (Haurvatât and Ameretât) also constitute a non-linked couple.

The two entities represent the goddesses of the waters and plants in the *Avesta*. The two couples have already been compared in the *gâthâ* (Y. 51.7):

"O You who shaped the cow and the waters and the plants, give me Immortality and Integrity."³⁴

As it has been said by Darmesteter,³⁵ the idea of waters and plants being capable of giving health and immortality has existed since the Indo-Iranian era. During this period, Haurvatât and Ameretât were conceived as persons and heroes of

myths. Therefore in Manichaeism "appeal and "answer" are the incarnation of two personalities. Appeal for Salvation is given by a voice coming down from beyond the sky and goes through the soul and awakens the hope of being saved. Answer comes immediately from the Man imprisoned in the darkness. The dialogue between the divine couple ends by the unification of Appeal and Answer, henceforth shaping the "desire of life".

Another Zoroastrian divinity present in the Chinese Manichaeic pantheon is Sulushaluoyi, the Pahlavi Srosh or the Sraosha (the Obedience), which is formulated in the 11th *yasht* of the *Avesta*, as one of the three judges of the souls. When Mithra who was ignored at first by Zoroaster, is again honoured in the *Avesta*, Sraosha and Rashnu are his associates. The three act as judges at the entrance to the other world.³⁶

Sraosha is known in the *Avesta* as the "strong" and the "powerful" or the "saint" and the "powerful". The *Traité* also speaks of the great force of Sulushaluoyi who is considered as the "king-judge of all matters".³⁷

The devils of the *Traité*³⁸ are Tanmo (the devil of lust) and Tanyu (the devil of concupiscence). They correspond to the devil Âz in Mazdaism. As Henning³⁹ says, Ahriman is, with Âz (the Concupiscence), the main enemy of Ohrmazd.

When he created man, the devil put Lust (the male devil) and Concupiscence (the female devil) in him, in order to represent two divinities of the macrocosm Xroshtag and Padvakhtag. The origins of Concupiscence may be found in Varenya of the *Avesta*⁴⁰ (the female devil of envy and lust).

In the *Traité*, the devil of Lust actually usurped the function of Ahriman, the primitive devil. Although Ahriman creates the microcosm, he never appears in the *Traité* under his real name. It is a good example of devil's game!

The creation of man by the devil is one of the basic theories of Manichaeism.

"The fleshly body, says the *Traité*, with its lust and concupiscence... is the faithful image of the universe of the skies and earths."⁴¹

The *Skand gûmânîk vicâr* (*The Decisive Resolution of Doubts*) which is the apologia of Mazdaean dualism against Manichaeism, Christianity, Judaism and Islam, speaks of man as a microcosm made in the image of a macrocosm. Darmesteter⁴² speaks of this theory as having existed in Mazdaism. He quotes the *Great Bundahish* (*Original Creation*):

"It is said in the *Avesta* that the body of man is a representation of the material world..."⁴³

It is said in the *Traité*⁴⁴ that the thirteen terms (ether, wind, light, water, fire, pity, good belief, contentment, patience, wisdom, Hulushede [Xroshtag], Pulouhuode [Padvakhtag] and the beneficial light are the signs which symbolize the "Venerable of the light of the world of the pure light" (*Qingjing guangming shijie mingzun*).

This Venerable is called in the Pahlavi documents of Tourfan either the "Father of light" or Zurvan. In Turkish its equivalent is Äzrua. As Cumont⁴⁵ remarks, the Manichaeism knew Mazdaeism by its Zurvanian form (Infinite Time). The ancient Buddhist Turks like the current Lamaist Mongols knew Indra and Brahma under the name of Äzrua (Zurvan) and Ohrmazd. These loan words explain a special Manichaeism in which Zurvan became the supreme god, the "Father of light", the unreachable god, who was located in the other world where he was not the creator who could be identified with Brahma. As for Ohrmazd, he became the equivalent of the First Man who was the hero of light and who fought against the devils. His fall shook the temporal process and he easily took the place of Indra.

The *Traité*⁴⁶ speaks of seven Moheluosaben. The term is a Pahlavi transcription of Mahrspand. In the *Avesta*, Mathra-spenta is the Holy word.⁴⁷ In the Pahlavi texts of Tourfan, Mahrspand appears as the 29th day of the Iranian month.⁴⁸ But we have to look for it in the group of seven divinities of Mazdaeism, the seven Ameshaspentas. As Salemann⁴⁹ notes, after studying the chapter related to the Manichaeism in the *Skand gûmânîk vicâr*, the Ameshaspentas were known by the Manichaeans. However for the Chinese Manichaeans the seven Moheluosabens only had distant links with their Mazdean ancestors, the seven Ameshaspentas. According to Chavannes and Pellio,⁵⁰ instead of becoming seven archangels, they became the five elements of light completed by Appeal and Answer, into a group of seven.

The "twelve forms of beneficial light" are, according to the Chinese text,⁵¹ the great king, wisdom, constant victory, joy, the application to practise religion, equality (truth), belief, the endurance to insults, right thought, meritorious actions, the uniformed hearth and the total light from the inside and from the outside.

These "twelve forms of beneficial light" have to be compared with the twelve Zoroastrian divinities of the solar calendar, which consists of the twelve months of thirty days and which was adopted in the Vth century B.C. The twelve Zoroastrian entities⁵² are: *fravartîs* (Avestian souls), excellent justice, integrity, the Sirius star, immortality, desirable empire, Mithra, the suns of the waters, fire, the creator, good thought, and holy devotion.

The interdictions of the *Traité*⁵³ define the three Manichaean seals⁵⁴ (for the mouth, the hands and the breast). The *seal of the mouth* concerns food interdictions but also the uttering of certain words. A Manichaean must not slander, lie, swear or forswear. The *seal of the hands* forbids any violence likely to hurt any of the five elements (light, fire, water, wind, air). Because of this there exists a prohibition of agricultural work. The *seal of the breast* imposes the interdiction of any sexual relation.

This triple division (thought, speech, action) can somehow be explained by Mazdaeism. It can be found in the *Great Bundahishn* where it is written:

“Wicked thoughts, wicked words and wicked deeds struggle against good thoughts, good words and good deeds.”⁵⁵

At the end of the *Traité*⁵⁶ appears a very surprising character who is connected to death. His name is Pingdengwang, the king of equality (truth).

A Buddhist term from the XIth century, Pingdengwang, might correspond to the eighth king of a series of ten pseudo-Buddhist kings. But it probably corresponds to a Mazdaean divinity, for instance Rashnu who is one of the three judges of Hell and who is in charge weighing the souls of the dead. These examples show clearly that Chinese Manichaeism, in spite of its Buddhist mask, has remained faithful to its Mazdaean origins.

Moreover, we know that Mazdaeism, or, according to the Chinese the “cult of the celestial god of fire”, played an important role in the Far-East for two centuries. It was enough for the Tang administration to organise a special office (*sabao*) which dealt with all the matters concernig this religion. Unfortunately, the Chinese Mazdaean monuments have disappeared.

Mazdaeism which was less lucky than Manichaeism could not infiltrate the Chinese. Some ancient historians even happen to confuse them. Zhipan⁵⁷ (XIIIth century) spoke about “the Zoroaster of Persia who instituted the Manichaean religion of the celestial god of fire”.

It is also interesting to see how Mazdaeism which was the official religion of the Sassanians and a super-power of the first few centuries A.D., when obliged to expatriate, hid itself under the aspects of a religion - Manichaeism - that for a long period of time it had condemned and persecuted. Henceforth, it happened to be mistaken for this “heresy” that it wished to banish forever from the lands of the king of the kings.

Heading for East, the religion of Mani had to take on certain Taoist and Buddhist aspects. However, it somehow kept its Iranian origins, its Mazdaean birth.

NOTES

1. Zhipan, *Fo zu tong ji*, chap. 39, IX, 71 v°.
2. Wang Qinruo, *Ce fu yuan gui*, chap. 971, XII, p. 11406.
3. Zhipan, *ibid.*, chap. 54, IV, pp. 340-349.
4. Ouyang Xiu, Song Qi, *Xin Tang shu*, chap. 217, XIX, p. 6126.
5. Devéria, 1897, p. 474.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 479.
7. Chavannes, Pelliot, 1911, p. 269.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 278.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 305.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 329.
11. Tajadod, 1990, p. 47, p. 90.
12. Demiéville in Tajadod, 1990, p. 263.
13. The *Dēnkart* was a nine volumes encyclopædia, the two first volumes of which, and the first folio of the third volume, are lost. The first author of the *Dēnkart* was a contemporary of the caliph Ma'mun. The *Third book of Dēnkart* deal with moral and theological problems, connected with a polemic against Islam.
14. Menasce, 1973, p. 191.
15. Haloun, Henning, 1952, p. 189 ; Tajadod, 1990, p. 47, p. 94.
16. Corbin, 1971, p. 86.
17. Tajadod, 1990, p. 53, p. 159.
18. Haloun, Henning, 1952, p. 194.
19. Widengren, 1968, p. 110.
20. Casadio, 1992, p. 111.
21. Tajadod, 1990, p. 55, p. 173.

22. Purity, truth, grateness, force, vigilance, justice, heroism, protection, generation, benediction, pacification, meditation... Hammc, 1976, p. 30.
23. Haloun, Henning, 1952, p. 194 ; Tajadod, 1990, p. 55.
24. Filliozat, 1953, p. 569.
25. Lubac, 1955, p. 237.
26. Tajadod, 1990, p. 57, pp. 193-205.
27. *Dayinglun (the Great Gospel), Xintihe (the Treasure of Life), Niwan (the Epistles), Eluoazan (the Secrets), Bojiamodiye (the Treatise), Juhuan (the Giants), Afuyin (the Psalms and Prayers), Damen heyi (the Drawing).*
28. Haloun, Henning, 1952, p. 207.
29. Tajadod, 1990, p. 59, pp. 213-217.
30. Haloun, henning, 1952, p. 195.
31. Chavannes, Pelliot, 1911, p. 74.
32. Tajadod, 1990, pp. 52-63, pp. 240-244.
33. Gauthiot, 1911, p. 60.
34. Duchesne-Guillemin, 1962, p. 197.
35. *Haurvatât et Ameretât.*
36. Duchesne-Guillemin, 1962, p. 203.
37. Chavannes, Pelliot, 1911, p. 26, note 1.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
39. Duchesne-Guillemin, 1962, p. 274.
40. Darmesteter, *The Zend-Avesta*, II, p. 29.
41. Chavannes, Pelliot, 1911, p. 30.
42. Darmesteter, *op. cit.*, p. 191.
43. Blochet in Chavannes, Pelliot, 1911, p. 30.
44. Chavannes, Pelliot, 1911, p. 46.

45. Cumont, 1908, p. 8.
46. Chavannes, Pelliot, 1911, p. 48.
47. Darmesteter, *op. cit.*, II, p. 12.
48. Müller, 1904, p. 95.
49. Salemann, 1904, p. 17, p. 23.
50. Chavannes, Pelliot, 1911, p. 48.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 72.
52. Duchesne-Guillemin, 1948, p. 109.
53. Chavannes, Pelliot, 1911, p. 78.
54. Tardieu, 1981, pp. 79-84.
55. Blochet in Chavannes, Pelliot, 1911, p. 78.
56. Chavannes, Pelliot, 1911, p. 88.
57. Zhipan, *Fo zu tong ji*, chap. 39, IX, 71 v°.

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Fig. 1: Siva-Maheśvara
(coin of Vima Kadphises)



Fig. 2: MANAOBAGO
(coin of Kaniska I)



Fig. 3: OĒŠO
(coin of Huviška)



Fig. 4: *Burzāwand yazad*
(transcribed in Bactrian:
BORZAOANDO IAZADO;
coin of the Kušānšāh Vahrām I)



Fig. 5:
The Kušānšāh Hormizd I worshipping
Burzāwand yazad (coin issued in Herat)



Fig. 6: Viṣṇu and worshipper
(Kushano-Sassanian seal inscribed in Bactrian,
British Museum, 3rd-4th c. AD)

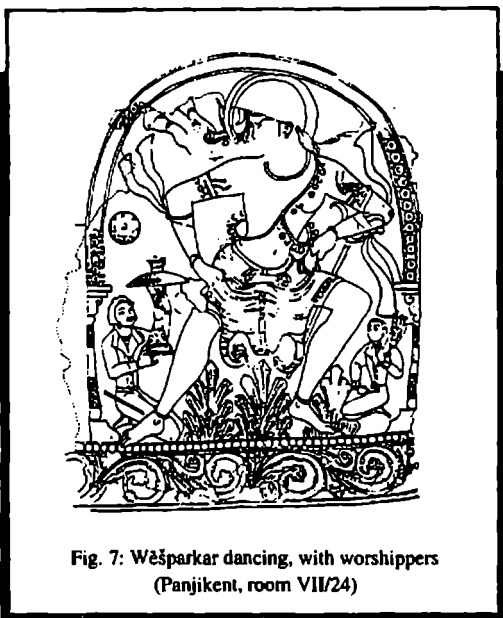


Fig. 7: Wešparkar dancing, with worshippers
(Panjikent, room VII/24)

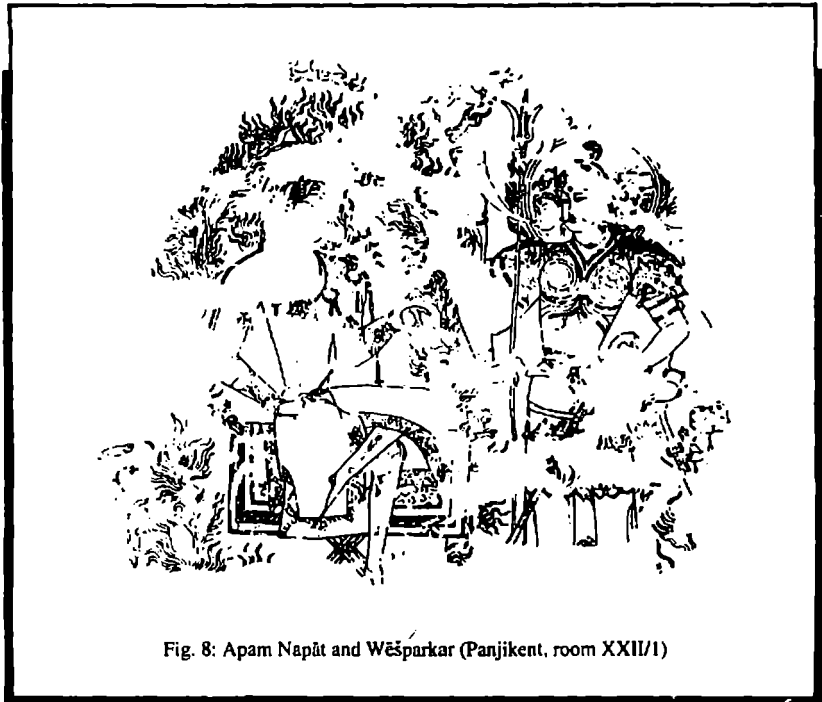


Fig. 8: Apam Napāt and Wešparkar (Panjikent, room XXII/1)



Fig. 9: Adhvagh (terracotta from Panjikent, 6th c.)

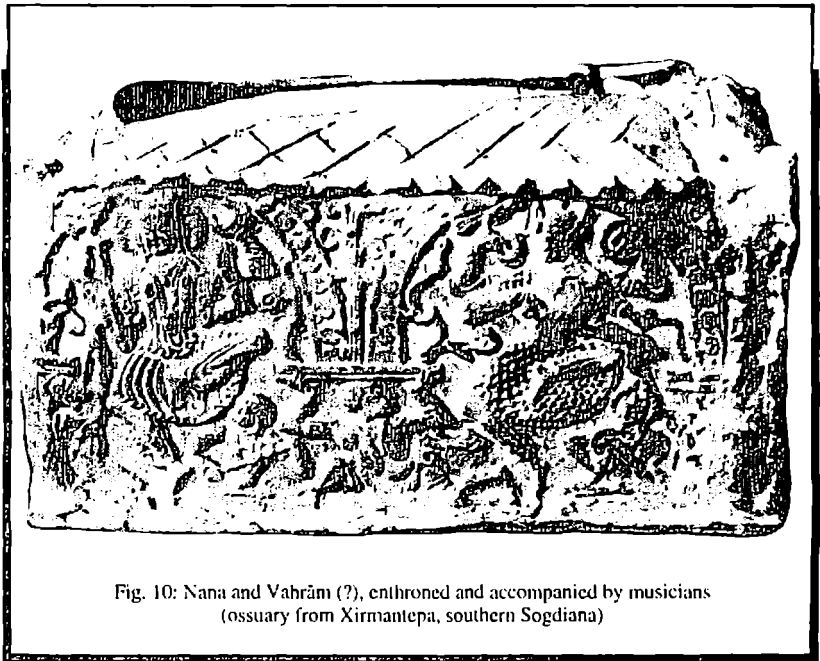


Fig. 10: Nana and Vahrām (?), enthroned and accompanied by musicians (ossuary from Xirmantepa, southern Sogdiana)



Fig. 11: Mithra with his retinue
(Bāmiyān, soffit of the niche of the 38-metre Buddha)

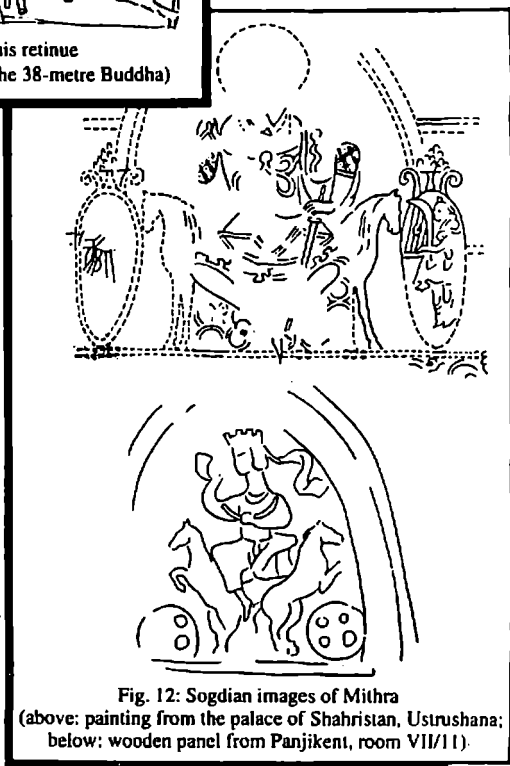


Fig. 12: Sogdian images of Mithra
(above: painting from the palace of Shahrīstan, Ustrushana;
below: wooden panel from Panjikent, room VII/11)

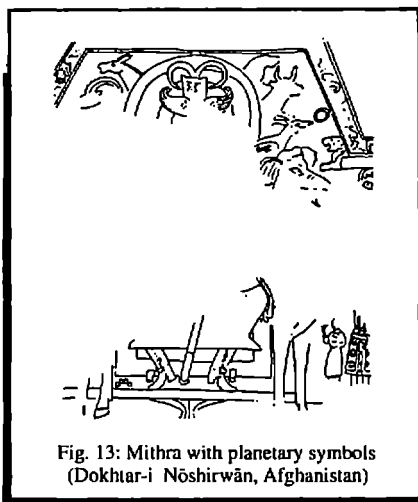


Fig. 13: Mithra with planetary symbols
(Dokhtar-i Nōshirwān, Afghanistan)

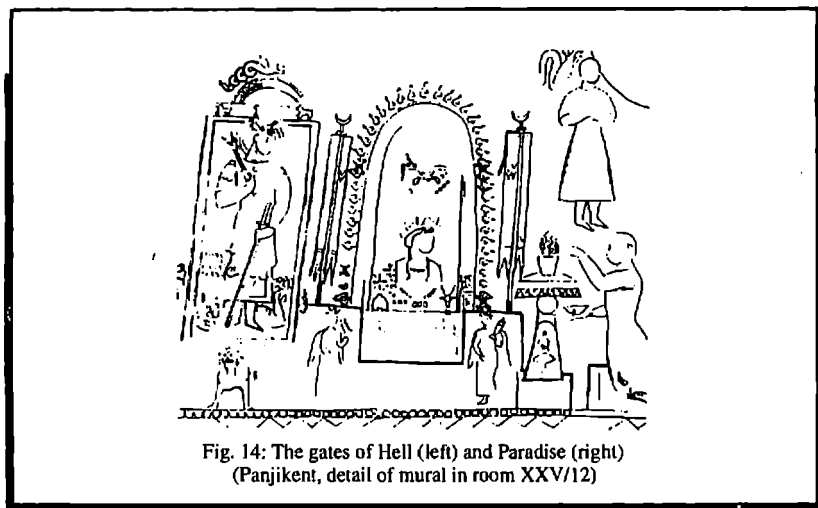


Fig. 14: The gates of Hell (left) and Paradise (right)
(Panjikent, detail of mural in room XXV/12)

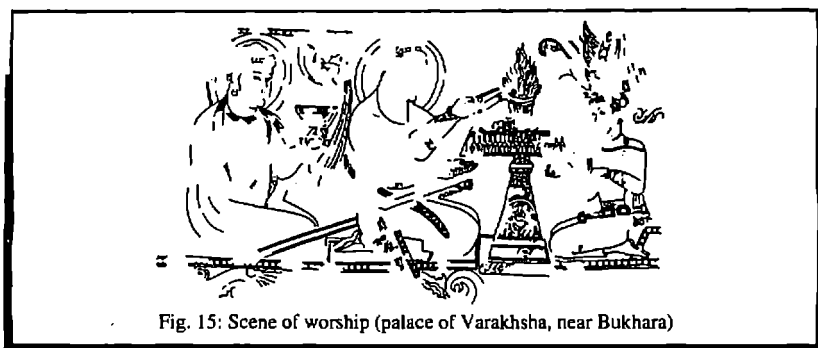


Fig. 15: Scene of worship (palace of Varakhsha, near Bukhara)



Fig. 16: Ossuary from Mollakurgan (Samarkand region)

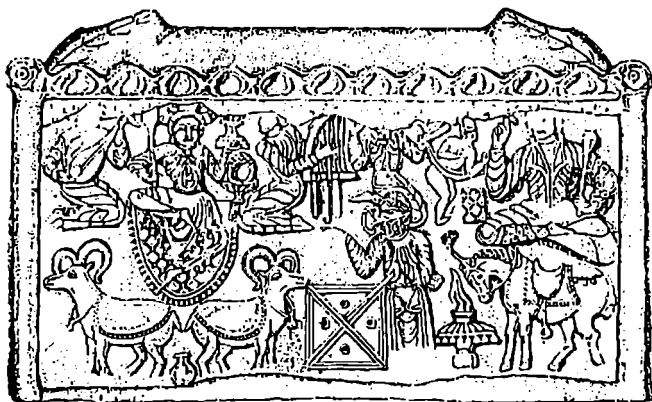


Fig. 17: Ossuary from the vicinity of Shahr-i Sahz (southern Sogdiana)

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4. Footnotes, numbered consecutively through the article, should be typed on a separate sheet at the end and not at the foot of each sheet. They should also be typed with double spacing.
5. Both photographs and line drawings, including maps, will appear as "plates" and "figures", numbered consecutively in Roman and Arabic numerals throughout each article. Captions should be typed on a separate sheet.
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