



Societas Iranologica Europaea

Fifth European Conference of Iranian Studies
Ravenna, 6 – 11 october 2003

Palazzo Corradini, via Mariani 5

Faculty of Preservation of the Cultural Heritage

Room 3: Middle Iranian Studies

ABSTRACTS:

Monday 6 october:

Iris COLDITZ (Institut für Iranistik, Berlin, Germany): On the Zoroastrian Terminology in Mani's *Shabuhragan*

The so called "Iranian garment" of Mani's *Shabuhragan*, also known as "the book of the two (great) principles", has been differently interpreted by scholars like H.H. Schaeder, G. Widengren or W. Sundermann. The *Shabuhragan* belongs to the few original works of the religious founder Mani that have been preserved until today. Written in Middle Persian instead of Syrian like all his other works it holds a special position within the Manichaean canon. Mani dedicated the *Shabuhragan* to the Sasanian king Shabuhr I. as an exposition of his doctrine since he hoped to gain his protection and support for the Manichaean missionary activities. Conceived as a universal religion Manichaeism was to complete all other religions and to open the way of redemption for all people who had previously been followers of those. The main task for the Manichaeans was therefore to do missionary work all over the world. Manichaeism spread rapidly and stayed in existence from the 3rd to the 14th c., from Spain to China and from the Balkans to North Africa. One reason for this success was the syncretistic character of Mani's religion that emerged by adapting, reinterpreting and integrating elements, symbols and terminologies of other religions.

Sasanian Iran belonged to the first regions for missionary activities, where Zoroastrianism was the ruling confession among the Iranian population including the king. Zarathustra was also counted by Mani as one of the prophets who had preceded himself. For missionary reasons the Iranian Manichaeism approached Zoroastrianism to a certain extent in fashion and terminology. On the other hand Mani and his disciples had to face in Iran a strong and powerful priesthood of the Zoroastrian church as competitors for political and material influence and as serious enemies of their own activities. This paper deals with the problem of Manichaeism between adaptation and independence. Selected proofs from the apocalyptic-eschatological part of the *Shabuhragan* shall illustrate the grade as well as the means and methods of a terminological adaptation.

Hassan DEREKHSI (Tarbiat Madares University of Tehran, Iran): **Survey and Comparison Architecture in the Parthian Period: Case Study: Zohak Castle**

One of the largest sites Parthian in Iran is Qal-ye Zohak or Zohang, (Zohak castle). This site enable us to answer the key issues from this belonging to area base on document. But surveying and continues excavating is the only way of revealing these documents. This military and residential castle, which should be considered as the city castle. Consist of many parts, during three seasons of excavating (2000 until 2002) in the castle citadel much architecture has been obtained and these discovered buildings can be considered as the main buildings of the complex. However before excavating the famous buildings of Pavilion which is also a part of this complex was standing. This building built on an artificial platform of the semi carved stones and plaster matter, other buildings that have been discovered during excavating such as the crossform saloon and building are located on the rock stone bench of the citadel. This buildings are made of bricks, the bricks of these walls are set horizontal and vertical.

This method in addition to stabilizing is also beautiful this and is continuation of the Iranian tradition which



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had been adopted during this period. Around this main buildings there are other mud-bricks, which are related to them. This building are decorated with stucco and fresco, the remaining parts are both on the walls and have been discovered during excavating, although stucco were built in that place using indigenous technology but they have been effected, because the ancient East and Hellenic-Roman culture in their decorative and visual motifs. Some of the effects of these stucco are symbolic and are related to religion and some have governmental application. The structure and design of these buildings such as the saloons the traditional architecture of the Achaemenid is apparent and the crossform building is also the part of the Iranian model, but the famous building known as Chahar-Taq has been built based on same influence from the memorial buildings built as the Roman time of the Asia Minor. According to the evidence and comparative study these buildings are among the indigenous remainings of the Parthian territory and have religious application. In terms of time are from the second Christian century, this is the late Parthian period.

Tuesday 7 October:

Federicomaria MUCCIOLI (Università di Bologna, Italy): I Seleucidi re di Siria, re dell'Asia

In the literary sources we find often "kings of Syria" or "kings of Asia" for the Seleucid kings. Those titles are both unofficial, but very important to understand the political propaganda of Seleucus I and his successors. It is true that the title "king of Asia" was allowed to Alexander in 331 B.C. and we can suggest that Seleucus wanted to pick up the political heritage of the son of Philip II. On the other hand, it is very difficult to see a direct connection with the Achaemenid titlature, in spite of what the Greek sources have to say about the tomb of Cyrus II (where he is called in the same way). Anyway, even if unofficial, "king of Asia" helps to understand the two dimensions of the Seleucid kingdom, because it is sound in Asia Minor but even in Iranian lands until the second Century B.C.. In fact in a very important oriental inscription, Antiochus IV is called "soter of Asia" (OGIS 253), a title which can be connected to this concept. Even the official title "soter" for Demetrius I, which was assigned to the king in Babylon, can be judged in a similar way.

Wednesday 8 October:

Nicholas SIMS-WILLIAMS (SOAS University of London, UK): Bactrian Letters from the Sasanian and Hephthalite Periods

More than 150 documents in Bactrian have come to light during the past ten years. In addition to the legal and economic documents edited in the first volume of my *Bactrian documents from Northern Afghanistan* (Oxford, 2000), and a couple of fragmentary Buddhist texts, these include a large number of letters, which will be published in the second volume of my edition. Apart from their formulaic greetings, which resemble those employed in Sogdian, the Bactrian letters tend to be difficult to understand, in particular because we lack a great deal of information which could be taken for granted by the writers. Nevertheless, the letters can tell us a great deal about the language, history and culture of Afghanistan during the 4th and 5th centuries of the Christian era.

Thursday 9 October

Pavel B. LURJE: How long was Sogdian spoken in Transoxiana?

It is known that the East Iranian Sogdian language or some of its dialects were spoken by the inhabitants of Zaravshan and Kashkadarya valleys and Tashkent oasis from the deep antiquity until the 11th century. The

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last dated texts and the notes about this language in the foreign sources are attributed to this time. A descendant of a dialect very close to literary Sogdian, namely the Yaghnobi language is still surviving in the highland valley of Yaghnob. But, as for the main oases, such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Tashkent, Qarshi, we have no information on the language from the 11th century onwards. Yet the absence of evidence is not the evidence of absence. A more precise information on this subject can be useful for the ethnic history of Central Asia. In this paper, I shall try to use the toponymical data in order to show that Sogdian was probably spoken in rural areas around Bukhara till the 16th century, while large towns, such as Bukhara and Samarkand were already persianized in the 10th century.

Friday 10 October

Irene HUBER (University of Innsbruck, Austria) and Udo HARTMANN (Humboldt-Universität Berlin, Germany): Die soziale und politische Rolle von Frauen am Hof der Sasaniden

Der Beitrag, Teil eines größeren Projektes zur systematischen Sammlung und Untersuchung des prosopographischen Materials über Frauen am Hof der Sāsāniden, beleuchtet deren soziale und politische Rolle. Die Berichte über Frauen am Königshof in den arabischen und byzantinischen Quellen sind meist zufällig und ausschnittartig, zudem in ihrer Historizität vielfach problematisch oder gar völlig legendär. Generalisierungen aus den vereinzelt Nachrichten über Herrscherinnen können nur mit der größten Vorsicht gezogen werden. Ausgehend von der kritischen Analyse des Quellenmaterials wird die Hierarchie der Frauen am Hof von den Konkubinen bis zu den Königinnen vorgestellt und ihre Aufgabe im Staat der Sāsāniden betrachtet. Zudem werden die Möglichkeiten und Grenzen politischer Einflußnahme der Frauen aufgezeigt. Es soll herausgestrichen werden, daß Frauen am Hof in der männlich dominierten sāsānidischen Gesellschaft nicht nur als passive Statisten des Geschehens, als Mütter und „schmückendes Beiwerk“, fungieren konnten, sondern je nach äußeren Umständen auch eine wichtige Rolle in der Repräsentation der Dynastie spielten, zum Teil eigenen Interessen zur Durchsetzung verhelfen oder in sehr seltenen Fällen – insbesondere in politischen Krisenzeiten – direkte Macht ausüben konnten.

Abolghasem ESMAILPOUR (Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran): New Light on Iranian Approach of Manichaeism based on Persian Texts: from 10th to 12th A.D.

Persian classical literature remained a treasury of source materials on Mani and the movement of his gnostic view throughout a vast period from 10th to 16th centuries A.D. In this paper, we focus only on the Persian texts consisting treatises, literary, historical and geographical works remained from 4th A.H. (= 10th A.D.) to 6th A.H. (= 12th A.D.).

Among the most significant sources of this period, eight masterly works, some of which are regarded as the masterpieces of Iranian classical literature have been chosen to survey of their viewpoints on Mani and Manichaeism.

Thus, we encounter with a specific Iranian approach of Manichaeism and a unique character of its prophet. Most of Persian sources of this period deny Mani's prophetic personality. Instead, they emphasize on his genius as a shaman and an artist who moved to India and China. It is because Manichaean dualistic view was refuted throughout these sources, but one can reconstruct Iranian Manichaean approach through them.

Some new features based on Persian texts are: 1) Mani as *Fṛdōšn/Qṛdōšn*'s disciple;

2) His character as a shaman and a magician-painter, the characteristics of *Ardahang*;

3) *Engliyšn* as both the name of the prophets' books and a marvelous place; 4) Bahrōm's trick for the imprisonment, trial and execution of the prophet, filling his skin with straw and hanging him at the entrance of the capital city; and 5) *Yazdōšn-bōxt*'s character as one

of Manichaean Electae and his trial in 11th century.