

— REVIEW ARTICLE —

A New Picture of the Achaemenid World

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From Cyrus to Alexander, A History of the Persian Empire, Pierre Briant, Translated by P.T. Daniels, Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbraun Publication, 2002, 1196 pp.

The appearance of a superb English version of Pierre Briant's monumental history of the Achaemenid Persia is a welcome and profoundly appreciated contribution to the Iranian studies. Professor Briant has been in the forefront of Achaemenid scholarship for the past thirty years, and his books and articles on subjects dealing with the Persian Empire and Alexander of Macedon have won a good many following among ancient historians of noted rank. The present volume combines and supplements the author's earlier studies into an encyclopedic work which, although not a comprehensive connecting account of the Persian Empire, nevertheless describes various aspects of that state in a coherent form.

The contents of this massive work may be usefully outlined here. It starts with an introduction (pp. 1-30) which first vividly explains the aims, scope and method of the investigation, and then provides an account of the antecedents to the rise of the Persian Empire. Of the many questions raised in this introduction we shall discuss one only, on the term "empire" (see below, pp. 74-75). Then come eighteen chapters arranged thematically into six parts. The conquests of Cyrus the Great and Cambyses are treated in Chapter 1

the last two days". It is most probably to be derived from OIr. *hvāda- from base hvād- < IE. *sṷād- "süß" (*IEW* 1039). Cf. Skr. svādú- "süß", svāda- "Geschmack" Bal. vād "Salz" (*KEWA* III 567f). For d > r cf. NP. šōr- (beside šōy-) "to wash" from base xšaud- (and also in some of the other Iranian dialects). Also: *štrēn-xʷār* "sweet-taste" (*Maqāmāt-e Harīrī* 307) and *talx-xʷār* "bitter-taste" (*Maqāmāt-e Harīrī* 149).

Abbreviations and Sources

Aiw

Bartholomae, Chr., *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*, Strassburg, 1904 (Berlin, 1961).

Chw. Verb

Samadi, M., *Das chwaresmische Verbum*, Wiesbaden, 1986.

CPD

MacKenzie, D.N., *A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary*, Oxford, 1971.

IEO

Abaev, V.I., *Istciko-etimologičeski Slovar osetinskogo Yazyka I-V*, Moskva-Leningrad, 1958-1995.

IEW

Pokorny, J., *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch I-II*, Bern-München, 1949-1960 (Tübingen-Basel, 1994).

IIFL

Morgenstierne, G., *Indo-Iranian Frontier Languages*, II: Iranian Pamir Languages, Oslo, 1938.

KEWA

Mayrhofer, M., *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen I-IV*, Heidelberg, 1956-1980.

KhS

Bailey, H.W., *Dictionary of Khotan Saka*, Cambridge, 1979.

small coarse carpets which are worn out". It seems to me *rafna* is derived from OIr. **rafnaka-* from base *rap-* "to attack, to injure". The word corresponds to Skt. *rāpas-* "Gebrechen, Verletzung" (*KEWA* III 41) O.s. (ir.): *ryn* (dig.): *run* "disease, illness" (< **rafna-*) (*IEO* III 444f); also *rafna-hāt* "dishevellment" (*Maqāmāt-e Harīrī* 241) and *rafna-hay'at* "dishevelled" (*Maqāmāt-e Harīrī* 27).

3. *rāvanda* (راوند) "one who cries, one who shouts > one who barks (like a dog)": *har ka bad gōyad, sag-ē rāvanda bāšad* (*Tark-ol-'etrāb* 384/6) "Everyone who says bad (speech), (he is) one who barks (like) a dog". *Rāvanda* may be derived from OIr. **rāvantaka-* from base *rav-* "to cry, to shout, to roar" < IE. **rēu-* "brüllen, heisere Laute ausstossen; brummen, murren" (*IEW* 867). Cf. Skt. *rav-* (*rāuti*) "brüllen, schreien" (*KEWA* III 82) Chw. *rw-* "knurren" (*Chw. Verb* 173) Oss. (ir.): *arawyn* (dig.): *arawun* "to echo" (*IEO* 157).

4. *sāh* (سَاه) "smooth, even": *jsag ij māda, šikār bhitār az nar kunad ... bar zamīn i sāh na-xusbad magar bar čēz-hā...* ('*Ajā'eb-ol-maxlūqāt* 584/16) "The female [dog] is better than the male [dog] in the hunt ... she doesn't sleep on the smooth ground except on the things (= unsmooth ground)..". It seems to me *sāh* is derived from OIr. **sāta-* "smooth, even" (with *t* > *h*) from the base *sā-* "to cut" < IE. **skēi-* "schneiden, trennen, scheiden" (*IEW* 919). Cf. Sak. *sāta-* "smooth" (*KhS* 424) NP. *sād* "smooth, even" (< **sāta-*), *sāda* "simple".

5. *sapul* (سپل) "spleen": *al-maṭḥūl: ān ka sapul i d dard kunad* (*Molaxxaš-ol-loghāt* 99/16) "*al-maṭḥūl*: one whose spleen aches". *Sapul* is certainly derived from OP. **sp̄dan-* (SW form of Av. *spərəzan-* "Milz"; *Aiw* 1623). Cf. Zor.Phil. *spul* "spleen" (*CPD* 76) Bal. *isp'ulk* "spleen" Kāš. *espūl* "spleen" (*KhS* 415) NP. *uspurz*, *supurz* (NW form).

6. *sipark* (سپرك) "bud, blossom": *al-tanwīr: ... wa sipark bārōn āvurdar i dīraxt* (*Mašāder-ol-logha* 163) "*al-tanwīr*: to blossom". It may be derived from OIr. **sparga-* (with dialectal *rg* > *rk* or ك instead of گ) from base *sparg-* "to open, to blossom" < IE. **spherg-* "streuen, sprengen, spritzen" (*IEW* 996). Cf. Av. *spərəya-* "Spross" (*Aiw* 1613) Zor.Phil. *sprahm* "flower, fragrant herb" (*CPD* 76) Wax. *spray* "flower" (*IIFL* II 540) NP. *isparyam*, *siparyam*; the word *sipary* "spark" (*sipary i angīšt*: spark of a live coal; *Maqāmāt-e Harīrī* 57/7) is also derived from this base.

7. *x'ār* (خوار) "taste, flavour": *na-čāšdast az dō rōz bāz x'ār i hēč x'ardant* (*Maqāmāt-e Harīrī* 33/5) "He hasn't been tasting flavour of any foods for