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Elam between Assyriology and Iranian Studies

Mais ce que l'esprit humain a créé,
l'esprit humain peut le déterrer, le retirer de l'oubli de la tombe,
quand même son œuvre aurait été ensevelie pendant des milliers d'années¹

Saith Darius the King:

*tuvam kā, haya aparam imām dipim
patiprāsāhi, taya manā krtam vṛnavatām
θuvām, mātaya draugam maniyāhai.*

Thou who shalt hereafter read this inscription, let that which has been done by me convince thee; do not thou think it a lie.²

Are modern historians convinced by Darius' words? What is your opinion about Gaumāta and Bardiya, Smerdis and Cometes³? In any case we are neither ancient Persians nor subjected to them, neither friends nor enemies. We are not directly involved in Darius' message and royal propaganda. We cannot read the Bisotun inscription the way we read today's newspaper, neither can we understand its text as its ancient composers did.⁴ We lost the context, so at most we can appreciate the monumental environment as art and skilful deed of ancient men. Otherwise we have to study it, try-

ing to reconstruct ancient history, ideology and society, but, since there are square meters of inscriptions, furthermore trilingual, the first step was, and still partly is, to reconstruct ancient writings and languages. Did Darius foresee all that? Well, I think he was so aware of the greatness and freshness of his political establishment that he knew that its memory would have survived its fall. However, modern historiography is something unexpected to ancient peoples.

From an internal point of view, it is usually said that Oriental studies were born in the Middle Ages from the study of the holy scriptures,⁵ which were not only history or art, but first of all object of faith. It was the Bible which preserved the name of most ancient Eastern civilizations from complete oblivion. Then the 17th and 18th centuries came, and it was the age of the long journeys to the East which brought back accounts of fabulous ruins and mysterious scripts.⁶ Later on,

¹ Oppert 1851: 256.

² DB OP IV 41-43 (§56). Phonetic transcription according to Schmitt 1991: 69; translation according to Kent 1953: 131.

³ "Among the classical authors, only one, Justin, applies the name Cometes to Gaumāta (1.9.7)" (Briant 2001: 334), "mais le mage de ce nom (Comètes), chargé par Cambyse lui-même de mettre à mort le vrai Smerdis, pousse sur le trône son frère Oropastès!" (Briant 1996: 112).

⁴ Rossi 1981, especially pp. 187-191 (§§ 6.1-2). See also Cardona 1981: 178-179.

⁵ For example, Predari 1842: 1; Rawlinson 1876: 19;

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De Gubernatis 1876: 18, 21 and following pages; Guidi 1935: 538. Cf. Said 1995; Schwab 1984.

⁶ See Sancisi-Weerdenburg & Drijvers 1991. About the Italian traveller Pietro della Valle, see more recently Invernizzi 2001 and Vitalone 2003. According to Hinz & Koch 1987: 1332, the first drawings of Elamite texts were published in de Bruyn 1711 and Chardin 1711; Teloni 1903: 32 referred only to the latter; the inscription in Chardin 1711 is DPa according to Hinz & Koch, DPc according to Giovinnazzo 1990 and Hachard & Hourcade 1999: 162 ("the first copy of one of the Persepolis inscriptions of Darius"). About Jean Chardin, see Emerson 1992.

in the 19th century, the first pioneering archaeological excavations began.⁷ In the meanwhile, the trilingual Achaemenid inscriptions from Persepolis and Bisotun attracted the attention of Orientalists. As soon as the inscriptions became an object of study, the scholars' first need was to find a name⁸ for the languages. So, long before understanding them, the three⁹ languages were sorted out according to the top-bottom order in which they generally appear on the walls of Persepolis, followed by such labels as 'column, kind, range, species' in English,¹⁰ 'Gattung, Art, Columne' in German,¹¹ 'colonne, sorte, type, système, espèce' in French¹² and 'genere, maniera' in Italian.¹³

Saith again Darius the King:

*ada xšnāsāhi, adatai azdā bavāti:
Pārsahyā martiyahyā dūrai rštiš
parāgmāta.*

A Name for Elam

At the very beginning of the deciphering adventure, when G.F. Grotefend, N.L. Westergaard and F. de Saulcy¹⁶ wrote about the language of the so-called second kind, they did not know they were

Then shalt thou know, then shall it
become known to thee:
the spear of a Persian man has gone forth
far.¹⁴

When Darius ordered to write that, he certainly did not imagine that not only his spear, but also the stylus of his scribes would have gone forth far, so far in space and time that by writing the Babylonian version of his inscriptions, he had put a seed which would give birth to our Assyriology at the beginning of the 19th century AD. Not satisfied, having ordered to write the inscriptions in Old Persian, too, 2500 years ago he contributed, together with the compilers of the Avesta corpus, to the birth of Iranian studies.¹⁵

What about the remaining version?
Which academic subject did it originate?

dealing with Elamite. They named it 'Median.' In this section I would like to elucidate why Elamite was called 'Median' and how 'Median' became today's Elamite. In a wider perspective, the

⁷ See Gran-Aymerich 1998 for a detailed account.

⁸ Cf. *Genesis* 2,19-20; see also Cardona 1982: 7.

⁹ According to Weisbach 1890: 5, Niebuhr (1778) "erkannte [...] zuerst die 3 Arten der Inschriften"; see also Rossi 1985: 191-192.

¹⁰ For example, 'column' in Norris 1855; 'species' in Westergaard 1844. Also 'idiom' in Sayce 1874.

¹¹ For example, 'Columne' in Winkler 1896.

¹² For example, 'colonne' and 'sorte' in Scheil 1909: 528; 'système' in Lenormant 1875: 314 and 316; 'espèce' in Oppert 1856: 173. Also 'écriture' in Löwenstern 1850a and 1850b.

¹³ For example, 'genere' in Finzi 1872: 2-3; Teloni 1903: 29-35; Teloni 1930: 37; 'maniera' in Teloni 1903: 32 and 1930: 37; Basevi 1850: 246. Luzzatto, already in 1848, preferred 'persiano,' 'medo' and 'babilonese' (Luzzatto 1848: 466-467). Jannelli similarly wrote in Latin about "scriptura cuneiformis Chaldaeorum, Medorum et Persarum" (Jannelli 1830:

225 and 242, quoted in Teloni 1923: 230).

¹⁴ DNa OP 43-46 (§4). Phonetic transcription according to Schmitt 2000: 29; translation according to Kent 1953: 138.

¹⁵ According to Gignoux 1999: 167a (Iranian studies in France), Eugène Burnouf (1801-1852) was "the founder of Iranian linguistics." The deciphering of the Old Persian cuneiform script was completed in 1851 by Oppert, who identified the sign *l(a)* (Schmitt 1999: 534a; Lecoq 1997: 28). Schmitt 1999: 530a (Iranian studies in German): "The first Iranist in the literal sense of the term was Friedrich Carl Andreas (1846-1930), professor of Western Asiatic philology at the University of Göttingen from 1903 to 1920." See also Pagliaro 1935.

¹⁶ The first scholars who dealt with Elamite are: Westergaard, de Saulcy and then Norris (Oppert 1876: 136; also 1879: p. VII); Westergaard, de Saulcy, Norris and Oppert (Lenormant 1877: 217);

focus is on the link between a written language and its name,¹⁷ and the people who spoke it.

As soon as the language of the first kind was connected to the language of Avesta, which was known since the second half of the 18th century and supposed at that time to be located in Bactria,¹⁸ it was named (Old) Persian and therefore located in Persia. Then the languages of the second and third kinds could be related to “the neighbouring countries of ancient Media and Susiana.”¹⁹ As to the language of the second kind, the name ‘Median’ was preferred, even if the Danish scholar Niels Ludvig Westergaard (1815-1878), was aware that by so doing, he disregarded the testimony of Strabo²⁰ “who plainly tells us that the Medes and Persians spoke nearly one and the same language.”²¹ It was in 1844, and Westergaard referred to Rawlinson as an ‘oriental scholar.’²²

In 1846, sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson (1810-1895), although not worried at all by Strabo’s wording, emphasized the Scythic character of this language. According to Rawlinson, the name ‘Median’ had been assigned to this language on a ground which was “irrespective of all internal evidences.”²³ In fact, “in many of the essential characteristics of language, the so-called Median organization is of the Scythic type.”²⁴ However, he conceded that “the Scythic or quasi-Scythic character which it presents should be recognised as a secondary development”²⁵ because only the Median, i.e. the language of a people “admitted to a certain degree of participation in the political rights of the Persians,”²⁶ could precede the ancient and revered Babylonian language on the inscriptions. The great number of Old Persian loan words attested in Achaemenid Elamite misled Rawlinson. However, he was perfectly

Westergaard (1845) and then Norris, Oppert, later Weissbach (1890) (Furlani 1929: 4); Grotefend, Westergaard, Hincks and de Sauley (Teloni 1930: 37, ‘Il secondo genere di Persepoli’); Westergaard (Lecoq 1997: 28); Westergaard and Norris (Schmitt 1999: 541b). According to Teloni (1903: 32), “gli studi più importanti intorno al [secondo] «genere» medesimo furono editi dal Westergaard (1845), dall’Hincks (1848) tanto segnalatosi nelle ricerche assire, da De Sauley (1850), Oppert (1851-52), Holtzmann (1862-65), Fr. Lenormant (1871), Sayce (1874), Delattre (1883), Weissbach and Foy (1890 e sgg.)” As Luzzatto wrote, Westergaard was a “dotto indianista” (Luzzatto 1848: 467).

¹⁷ On this topic throughout the article, see the relevant contributions in Rossi 1981, especially pp. 152-153 (§2.3) with footnote 37, also p. 163 (§4.1.1.2), and Rossi 1984, especially p. 39, footnote 2.

¹⁸ Westergaard 1844: 272.

¹⁹ Westergaard 1844: 272.

²⁰ Strabo, *Γεωγραφικά*, XV 2,8 (cited in Weissbach 1890: 11 and, as “XV, II, 14,” in Delattre 1883: 5, footnote 3): ἐπεκτείνεται δὲ τοῦνομα τῆς Ἀριανῆς μέχρι μέρους τινὸς καὶ Περσῶν καὶ Μήδων καὶ ἔτι τῶν πρὸς ἄρκτον Βακτρῶν καὶ Σογδιανῶν· εἰσὶ γὰρ πῶς καὶ ὁμόγλωττοι παρὰ μικρὸν.

²¹ Westergaard 1844: 273. Cf. Lecoq 1997: 29: “Nous savons maintenant que les Mèdes parlaient une langue iranienne très proche du perse.”

²² Together with Lassen (Westergaard 1844: 273). See also Rawlinson 1846: 29: “[...] excite the astonishment of Orientalists [...]” The OED attests the word ‘Orientalist’ since 1779-1781 (“The great Orientalist, Dr. [Edward] Pocock [(1604-1691)]” from “Johnson L.P., *Smith Wks.* II. 465”).

²³ Rawlinson 1846: 33: “[...] the people to whose tongue it was appropriated must have constituted, under the Achæmenian dynasty, one of the great divisions of the Persian empire; and as we also find the tablets upon which it is engraved occupying a middle place, either in actual position or in relative convenience, between the original and vernacular records on the one side, and the Semitic transcripts on the other, we may further argue that this great popular division was inferior to the native and then dominant Persian, but superior to the conquered Babylonian. An indication of so plausible and direct a nature immediately leads us to the Medes, who, although a subject race, were admitted, it is well-known, under the Achæmenians to a certain degree of participation in the political rights of the Persians; and it is, I imagine, on such grounds only, irrespective of all internal evidence, that by general consent the name of Median is now assigned to the writing in question.”

²⁴ Rawlinson 1846: 34.

²⁵ Rawlinson 1846: 36.

²⁶ Rawlinson 1846: 33 (quoted in footnote 23).

right when he tried to express in detail the contrary hypothesis.²⁷ Moreover, his continuous efforts to arrange each hypothesis on the background of a plausible historical scenery is noteworthy.

In 1855, Edwin Norris (1795-1872), publishing the text of the second kind of the Bisotun inscription, referred to it as the ‘Scythic version,’ dropping the name ‘Median.’²⁸ The Scythians were supposed to be a Turanian people, i.e. neither Indo-European nor Semitic,²⁹ scattered on wide lands but very influen-

tial in Media.³⁰ In fact, we have to recollect “that Media was constantly exposed to irruptions from the northward, that for twenty-eight years during the reign of Cyaxares it was under a Scythic yoke.”³¹ Its language should have been “of that class which has been denominated Tartar, Scythic, Tschudish or Mongolian.”³² Jules Oppert (1825-1905) explains to us what had happened: in 1852 he suggested to employ the name ‘Scythic’ because of Strabo and because Median proper names (like Deiokes³³ or Ecbatana) could be

²⁷ Rawlinson 1846: 37 (translated in French in Delattre 1883: 8): “But if, on the other hand, the language of the inscriptions should be fundamentally Scythic, and the departure from that type should be the effect of an intercourse with Arian or Semitic nations, then I believe we must reject the possible attribution to the Medes of the centre columns of the trilingual tablets. In that case, it would become a question of considerable embarrassment to what constituent portion of the Persian empire they might belong. We should be obliged, in fact, in order to resolve the difficulty, either to suppose the Scythic and Arian colonization of Persia to have taken place simultaneously; or we might consider the Persian immigration to be of a comparatively recent date, and we might assign the inscriptions in question to the aboriginal race, who under the new empire had lost their political individuality, but to whom, as they still continued to constitute the great mass of the population of the country, it was thought proper to address a transcript of the national records in their vernacular and only intelligible dialect” (“[...] et celle d’une immigration récente des Aryens en Perse. Dans le dernier cas on rapporterait le texte du milieu à une race aborigène, laquelle, malgré la perte de son existence politique sous le nouvel empire, continuait à former le gros de la population du pays, et paraissait digne [of the second place!] d’avoir à son usage une version des monuments nationaux dans sa propre langue, la seule qu’elle comprit”). This hypothesis was accepted in Norris 1855: 3.

²⁸ Norris 1855.

²⁹ Oppert 1879: 3 (quoted below at footnote 184); Elliot 1876: 54. The common characteristic of this great family is agglutination (Elliot 1876: 54; see Sayce 1874: 465 for a reference to Elamite as “an agglutinative idiom”). Cf. Delattre 1883: 22: “Or ce terme [touraniennes] est une qualification indéterminée, sous laquelle on comprend toutes les langues de l’Europe et de l’Asie, abstraction faite du chinois et de ses dialectes, qui n’appartiennent ni au groupe indo-européen ni au groupe sémitique. Ainsi le trait

principal qui fait des langues touraniennes une classe à part, est tout négatif; les marques communes d’un caractère positif sont en petit nombre et d’un vague désespérant.” See also the address of the Turanian section (Elliot 1876) and the paper by Hunfalvy (1876) at the 2nd International Congress of Orientalists. From this point of view, the statement “Jean Vincent Scheil (1858-1940), an Assyriologist, [...] was the first to identify the Elamite language as non-Semitic” (Gignoux 1999: 168a) seems a little hasty.

³⁰ Delattre 1883: 7. See also Oppert 1856: 180: “Les Perses placent ce système toujours avant celui des Chaldéens, qui pourtant avaient été encore naguère très-puissants, et dont l’importance scientifique a survécu même à l’empire de Cyrus. Les Achéménides eurent donc quelque raison spéciale pour donner à l’écriture scythique la préséance sur le système babylonien, et puisqu’on n’en peut guère chercher le motif dans une puissance qui n’existait plus alors, il faut le trouver dans l’ancienneté de Touran, qui n’était pas un mystère pour les vainqueurs ariens.” Cf. Genito 1986: 38, footnote 56.

³¹ Rawlinson 1846: 36 according to Herodotus, Ἰστορίαι, I 106 (also IV 12); see also Oppert 1879: 3 and Weisbach 1890: 11. Cf. Frye 1984: 72.

³² Norris 1855: 2. See also the references to Tartarian and Turkish in Rawlinson 1846: 35 (cf. Lecoq 1997: 29: “C’est une langue de type agglutinant, comme le turc”); Georgian and Armenian in Rawlinson 1846: 36, footnote 1; “d’origine tatare” in Oppert 1856: 171, footnote 1; Turco-Tartaric and Mongolian in Lenormant 1877: 217; “finno-tatarisch („turanisch“)” in Weisbach 1890: 11. De Saulcy 1849: 211: “2° Que de l’idiome médique il est resté des traces évidentes dans le zend, dans le persan moderne, dans le turk, dans le kurde, dans le mongol, dans l’arménien, dans le géorgien et dans la langue des Tsi-ganes; 3° Que le turk, plus que les autres langues congénères, présente des débris fort reconnaissables de l’ancienne langue des Mèdes.”

³³ See also Weisbach 1890: 19-20.

interpreted as Aryan. Thus, it was not possible that the language of the second kind, which appeared as non-Aryan, could have been Median.³⁴ Afterwards Oppert changed his opinion and clearly analyzed his ‘error’: in 1879 he realized that language is only one element in the ethnic composition of a people and that he was previously affected by the idea that the language was the criterion of races.³⁵ Here he was right but he was always late³⁶: in 1883 Alphonse Delattre (1841-1928) was aware that Scythians are Indo-Europeans, even if partly Turanians.³⁷

So in the meanwhile, François Lenormant (1837-1883) wrote:

le caractère touranien de cette langue, sa parenté avec les idiomes turcs et ougro-finnois, ne fait plus question pour personne; après les travaux de Westergaard, de M. de Saulcy, de Norris, de M. Oppert et de M. Mordtmann, ce fait capital n’est plus contesté, comme l’est encore le touranisme de l’accadien [i.e. Sumerian language³⁸]. Le proto-médique est donc le seul langage de la famille touranienne dont on possède des documents écrits

remontant à l’antiquité, le seul contemporain de l’idiome des premiers Chaldéens.³⁹

Here Elamite, called ‘Protomedic,’ was considered “l’ancien parler des habitants anté-aryens de la Médie, conservé vivant au temps des Achéménides et admis par ceux-ci à l’honneur d’être compté parmi les langues officielles de leur chancellerie.”⁴⁰ Archibald Henry Sayce (1845-1933) employed this name,⁴¹ too, but he had in mind a concept of the Medes which was slightly different, as we shall see.⁴²

However, it should be remembered that Norris in 1855 and then R. Caldwell in his comparative grammar of the Dravidian languages (1856) noticed that ‘Scythic’ resembles Tamil, since “there is no distinction made between surd and sonant consonants at the beginning of a word, and in the middle of a word the same consonant must have been pronounced as a sonant when single and a surd when double”⁴³ (this orthographic device was already known by Westergaard⁴⁴). Caldwell referred to ‘Scythian

³⁴ Oppert 1879: 2-3.

³⁵ Oppert 1879: 3-4. See also Delattre 1883: 14.

³⁶ Lecoq 1997: 29: “Il n’y a plus guère que Jules Oppert pour s’obstiner à appeler encore, en 1879, cette langue le «médique».”

³⁷ Delattre 1883: 22-23 (citing Rawlinson G. 1858). Cf. Spiegel 1881: 148, footnote 4.

³⁸ Cf. Teloni 1903: 24-26, §10. «La questione sumerica». Regarding the ‘question sumérienne’ towards the quest for the right name of the language of the second kind, see the comparison at a glance in Scheil 1909: 527. Sayce (1874: 466) regarded ‘Accadian’ as “the Sanskrit of the Turanian family, and consequently the future starting-point of Turanian philology.” As Furlani emphasized, Lenormant is considered as “uno degli iniziatori degli studi sumeri” (Furlani 1928: 60).

³⁹ Lenormant 1875: 313; see also p. 454, ‘première division’ of the ‘classment des langues touraniennes sur les bases du système de Castrén,’ where the ‘Groupe médo-susien’ comprehends the ‘Protomède’ and the ‘Susien’ (the latter splitted into ‘dialecte de

Suse’ and ‘dialecte des Cissiens’). Comparisons between Elamite and Sumerian words are listed in Lenormant 1874b: 317-318 (Protomedic) and 1875: 314-316 (Protomedic and Susian).

⁴⁰ Lenormant 1875: 313.

⁴¹ Sayce 1890. Cf. Oppert 1879: 11: “[...] le nom de *Proto-Médique*, mais ce barbarisme ne peut alléguer aucune raison pour son excuse. Le proto-médique serait plutôt le Zend ou le Perse.”

⁴² Sayce 1874: 466 (cited below); see also the following page discussing Lenormant’s thesis.

⁴³ Norris 1855: 6-7; quoted also in McAlpin 1981: 13. See also Caldwell 1856: 43-45 corresponding to 1913: 66, no. 2.

⁴⁴ Westergaard 1844: 431-432. On this subject, E. Reiner (1969: 111-116) in 1966 (the grammatical sketch was written in 1960 but the *addenda* were appended in 1966, as Reiner herself notes on p. 54) accepted Paper’s conclusions (Paper 1955: 7-8, §2.7) who in turn referred to Weisbach 1890: 31. So in Khačikjan 1998: 6 (§2.1), ‘According to Reiner...,’ a lot of history is inevitably lost!

languages' as a group⁴⁵ and, reporting the opinion of Oppert and Norris, he attached the 'language of the tablets'⁴⁶ to this stock as a link between Dravidian languages with the Scythian group – that is, Turanian. More recently, the linguistic kin between Dravidian languages and Elamite has been supported by I.M. D'jakonov, D.W. McAlpin and is taken for granted by M. Khačikjan.⁴⁷

Both Rawlinson and Norris thought that the 'Scythic' writing was not used before the time of Cyrus the Great.⁴⁸ The breakthrough was therefore the discovery of other Elamite – as we call them now – texts not related to the Achaemenid dynasty far away from Persia: in 1859 W.K. Loftus published the lithographic facsimiles⁴⁹ of the inscriptions by Middle Elamite kings (Šutrukids dynasty, c. 1210-1100 BC⁵⁰) excavated in the acropolis of Susa from 1851 on-

wards.⁵¹ In 1862, Andreas David Mordtmann (1811-1879) preferred the name 'susisch' because Rawlinson had said that some inscriptions written in a language like that of the second kind were found in Susiana.⁵² I think that Mordtmann referred to the Mālamīr rock inscriptions (c. 160 km east of Susa) mentioned by Rawlinson as inscriptions of Elymais, even if to Rawlinson this 'Elymæan group' was a development of the third kind of writing of the Achaemenid inscriptions.⁵³ In fact it had already been noticed by de Saulcy that the second kind of writing derives from the Babylonian cuneiform script.⁵⁴ However, Mordtmann correctly distinguished between writing and language, and he was the first⁵⁵ to recognize that the inscriptions from Susa were in the same language of the second kind of Bisotun and Persepolis.⁵⁶

⁴⁵ Caldwell 1913: 61 and following pages, *passim*.

⁴⁶ 'Language of the second series of tablets,' (Caldwell 1913: 65), 'language of the second Behistun tablets' (Caldwell 1913: 77), 'Behistun tablets' only (Caldwell 1913: 68), 'language of the Scythian tablets of Behistun' (Caldwell 1913: 49). See also McAlpin 1981: 14: "Dravidianists have generally missed the reference, since Caldwell referred to Elamite only as 'the language of the tablets'." Cf. 'trilingual tablets' in Rawlinson 1846: 37; also 'tablets' on p. 33.

⁴⁷ D'jakonov 1967; McAlpin 1981; Khačikjan 1998: 3 (§2.3). See also Sorrentino 1988. Cf. the short review of McAlpin 1981 in Vallat 1982.

⁴⁸ Rawlinson 1846: 38; Norris 1855: 2.

⁴⁹ Loftus 1859. About the publishing year, see the remark in Curtis 1993: 34; 1852 seems too early with respect to the discovery (see Curtis 1993: 6, regarding some Achaemenid inscriptions also published there). However Loftus died in 1858, being born in 1821. A list of the published inscriptions is in Hinz & Koch 1987: 1334, '1852'; see also Curtis 1993: 31-32.

⁵⁰ As a reference framework for Elamite history throughout this article, see Vallat 1998.

⁵¹ Curtis 1993: 2 (also Curtis 1997: 37, 40 and 43-44); Gran-Aymerich 1998: 189: "[...] sondages à Suse en 1851 et 1852-1853." A short mention is in de Mecquenem 1980: 2 (related to 1853-1854): "il vit sur les flancs de la butte principale une grosse pierre basaltique, couverte de caractères scythiques."

⁵² Mordtmann 1862: 21-22: "[...] Es stehen also die 3 Völker, in deren Sprachen die Inschriften abgefasst sind, voran, und zwar genau in der Reihenfolge der Inschriften. Da nun ausserdem Rawlinson sagt, dass die in Susiana aufgefundenen Keilinschriften eine Sprache enthalten, die ihm mit unserer hier behandelten viele Aehnlichkeit zu haben scheint, so werde ich mich von jetzt an des Namens 'susisch' für die Sprache der zweiten Gattung Keilschrift bedienen"; 1870: 7-8. See also Foy 1898: 119, footnote 1. Lecoq 1997: 29.

⁵³ Rawlinson 1846: 21 and 27-28. Rawlinson wrote that "up to the present time, the public are I believe altogether unacquainted" with these inscriptions, since they were described for the first time in Layard 1846 (1841 according to Scheil 1910: 569) and afterwards published in Layard 1851. See also Weissbach 1891: 120-121; Hinz 1962: 105-106; König 1965, pp. 20-22, nos. 75 and 76; Calmeyer 1988.

⁵⁴ De Saulcy 1849: 212, no. 8; Oppert 1876: 136. Cf. Rawlinson 1846: 28.

⁵⁵ Scheil 1909: 530.

⁵⁶ See also Sayce 1885. Cf. Oppert 1879: 15 and Oppert 1876: 136: "Le susien présente, comme nous l'avons dit, un langage très-ressemblant au médio-scythique ou médique, de manière à ce qu'on ait même cru à l'identité de ces deux idiomes. On a même voulu donner au second système des inscriptions trilingues le nom d'*élamite*. Une étude superficielle du susien démontre déjà qu'il est impossible de

Apart from Mordtmann, the name ‘Susian’ was only applied to non-Achaemenid Elamite inscriptions, as appears from the following excerpt by Sayce dated 1874⁵⁷:

But besides the Accadian and an allied Babylonian idiom, which chiefly differed from Accadian by preferring *m* to *b*, *ma* to *ba* (“ille”), &c., we have fragments of at least *three Susianian dialects*, more or less related to the second Akhæmenian. These are the languages of the inscriptions copied by Mr. Layard at Mal-Amir, of the Cassi or Kossæans, who conquered Chaldæa under Khammuragas [Hammurapi⁵⁸], and established a dynasty there which lasted to the 13th century B.C., and above all, of the Susians, or Susianians proper, who had their seat at Shushan.

The only writer, so far as I know, who has as yet worked at these languages, is M. Fr. Lenormant. He has not only published all the Susian inscriptions at present known in Europe, but has also, in his admirable work on “La Magie chez les Chaldéens” (pp. 315-326), done much towards the elucidation of them.⁵⁹

In fact Lenormant had been the first one to publish the drawings of 25 ‘inscriptions indigènes de Suse et de la Susiane,’⁶⁰ mainly taken from the facsimiles by Loftus.⁶¹

Since in a vision prophet Daniel saw himself “in the citadel (בִּירָה) of Susa,

which is in the district (מְדִינַת) of Elam,”⁶² all pointed to Elam, but these clever scholars did not know Elam yet, as we understand it today. Notwithstanding, already in 1614, in a map from *The historie of the world* by sir Walter Raleigh (1552?-1618), they could find the caption “Elam. The eldest sonn of Sem possesst the regions of Persia and therefore were those nations first called Elamites.”⁶³ The right, even if not the last, suggestion came in 1874 from young⁶⁴ Sayce:

Its [of the second Akhæmenian language] prominent position, the care taken by the engraver,⁶⁵ the occurrence of inscriptions in it unaccompanied by Persian or Greek texts, all show that it must have been the vernacular of the lower classes who inhabited the country in which the monuments of the Persian kings were erected – in other words, of the Medes.⁶⁶ [...]

At the same time, the name itself, as a geographical or national title, does not seem to have become known before the 9th century B.C., [...] and many indications lead me to think that it was not the Turanian natives but the Aryan emigrants who are really meant. At any rate, it was the latter who are designated Medes by the classical writers; and on this account, while fully allowing with the French school that the language of the second Akhæmenian texts belonged to the aborigines of Media, I prefer to call it Elamite, as less likely to lead to ambiguity and misconception.⁶⁷

l’expliquer par le médique seul, et cela tranche la question de l’identité.” The designation ‘médoscythique’ was used in connection with the language ‘casdo-scythique’ (‘casdo’ for ‘Chaldean,’ see Oppert 1857: 137, footnote 1; note also the association with Turanian people), i.e. another language of the supposed ‘scythic’ family (Oppert 1879: 6), the Sumerian.

⁵⁷ See, for instance, Oppert 1876a and Quentin 1891.

⁵⁸ The cuneiform sign *bi/pi* has the value *gaš/kaš*, too.

⁵⁹ Sayce 1874: 466.

⁶⁰ Lenormant 1875: 315.

⁶¹ Lenormant 1874a, nos. 31-55 (from Loftus 1859 except for nos. 36, 40, 41 and 44-50).

⁶² *Daniel* 8,2. Cited also in Löwenstern 1850b: 692. See also Rossi 2003b: 682.

⁶³ Map between pp. 178 and 179; quoted in OED, ‘Elamite.’

⁶⁴ Oppert 1879: 11.

⁶⁵ On this feature, cf. the conclusion by Jannelli (1830; see below, ‘Elamite studies in Italy’) reported in Teloni 1923: 230: “Pensa lo Jannelli che, essendo la scrittura cuneiforme *accuratissima* nelle sue forme, *nitida e perspicua*, dovesse venire adoperata ad esprimere cose solenni (sacre).”

⁶⁶ Sayce 1874: 466.

⁶⁷ Sayce 1874: 467.

Elam was identified with Susiana through Elymais,⁶⁸ but it involved a wider geographical perspective.⁶⁹ However, this designation gained general consent later on,⁷⁰ since in those early days Elam was slightly different from what it is today: Oppert rejected this hypothesis because the name ‘Elam’ implied a Semitic colouring which was alien to what he called Median,⁷¹ indirectly reminding us that Elam is probably a name given by the Semitic peoples of Mesopotamia, and thence Elamite is an ethnonym devised by foreigners; moreover “the exiguous plight of Susiana could not justify for its language the honour to precede the language of Ninive among Persian kings.”⁷² It was still an issue of glory!⁷³

‘Anšan’ was certainly a more glorious concept: it precedes Susa in the Middle Elamite (Šutrukid) titular ‘King of Anšan and of Susa,’ while Cyrus the Great called himself ‘king of Anšan’ (*šār URU An-šá-an*).⁷⁴ Rejecting the name ‘Susian’ on the basis of the same considerations Oppert made,⁷⁵ Delattre⁷⁶ ascribed the language of the second kind to the inhabitants of Anšan, related to Susians and to their language (i.e. Mid-

dle and Neo-Elamite), but inspired by Persian thoughts and attitudes. Considering another ethnic dualism in Elam, Jean Vincent Scheil (1858-1940) splitted written documentation in ‘textes élamites-sémitiques’ and ‘élamites-anzanites,’⁷⁷ the first group represented by texts in Akkadian, the second being related to the other, non-Semitic and prominent, element of the Elamite kingdom:

Le dualisme ethnique en Élam est un fait certain. A ce dualisme correspondent sous les plus grands règnes, dans le protocole royal, le nom double de Anzan-Suse, et dans la littérature, deux sortes de documents. Une partie de ces documents est manifestement sémitique et peut se dénommer d’après le dernier élément marqué dans le protocole royal, c’est-à-dire de *Suse*, qui fut précisément par ses origines une ville de Sémites, dans une région où prédomina sans doute toujours le génie sémitique.

Si, à ce titre, nos inscriptions sémitiques d’Élam sont proprement des inscriptions *susiennes*, il nous reste, pour dénommer l’autre catégorie de textes, le premier élément ethnique du protocole royal, c’est-à-dire *Anzan*. Nous appellerons donc *anzanite* la nouvelle série de documents.⁷⁸

⁶⁸ Oppert 1879: 11.

⁶⁹ Lecoq 1997: 29: “Sayce préfère le terme «élamite», qui finira par l’emporter, puisque cette langue a couvert un domaine bien plus vaste que celui de la ville de Suse.” Cf. Scheil 1909: 532-533: “Encore un coup, si, appelé à dénommer une chose, on le fait d’après les lieux où elle existe, il convient de préférer le lieu où elle existe *proprement et exclusivement*. Plusieurs races et plusieurs langues pouvaient se couvrir du nom d’élamite, qui cesse dès lors d’être *spécifique*. Les motifs qui font condamner le choix du terme *susien* font également récuser celui d’*élamite*.” See also André-Salvini 1997: 116.

⁷⁰ Rossi 1981: 152-153, footnote 37, and Lecoq 1997: 29.

⁷¹ Oppert 1879: 11 and 15.

⁷² Oppert 1879: 16.

⁷³ This was a recurring issue: see Sayce 1874: 465 (“the place of honour next to the Persian legend was

given to an agglutinative idiom”); Lenormant 1875: 313; Delattre 1883: 6.

⁷⁴ Cyrus Cylinder from Babylonia (CB), §§ 4 and 7; cuneiform text published in Schaudig 2001: 550-556 (firstly published in Rawlinson 1884); see also Eilers 1974 and the translation in Lecoq 1997: 181-185. See also Frye 1984: 90, and Potts 1999: 309. Cf. the seal in late Neo-Elamite style which bears the name of Kurash (Cyrus I), the Anshanite, son of Teispes (Stronach 1997: 40-41; Potts 1999: 340-341).

⁷⁵ Delattre 1883: 18.

⁷⁶ Delattre 1883: 44.

⁷⁷ See André-Salvini 1997: 116-119: “Il [Scheil] reconnaît donc dans le concept historique d’Elam une entité géographique et politique”; also Scheil 1910: 564. Cf. Stolper 1992: 256.

⁷⁸ Scheil 1909: 534 quoting Scheil 1901, ‘Avant-Propos.’

Moreover, regarding Anzanian as imported to Susa, he prefigured the relevant discoveries of the Persepolis and the Tall-i Malyān archives.⁷⁹ By that time, it was only a name issue: the content, the meaning which that label pointed to, was rightly identified. In the meantime, Assyriology was not only born, but it was also well grown,⁸⁰ since Delattre referred naturally to Rawlinson as a “savant assyriologue,”⁸¹ while in the 9th International Congress of Orientalists held in 1892 there was a specific session devoted to Assyriology.⁸²

These are the titles of some of the essays dealing with Elamite published between 1890 and 1892: at first an apparently neutral F.H. Weissbach with *Die Achämenideninschriften zweiter Art* (in which he proposed ‘neususisch’ for

Achaemenid Elamite⁸³) followed by *Anzanische Inschriften und Vorarbeiten zu ihrer Entzifferung*⁸⁴ (devoted to Middle Elamite royal inscriptions); *Zu den altsusischen Inschriften* by H. Winkler and *Elamitische Eigennamen. Ein Beitrag zur Erklärung der elamitischen Inschriften* by P. Jensen⁸⁵; A. Quentin referred to some ‘textes susiens’ while Sayce wrote about *Amardian or ‘Protomedic’ Tablets in the British Museum*.⁸⁶

The latter title needs further explanations. Unfortunately Sayce, after suggesting ‘Elamite,’ concluded that “it is possible, indeed, that the most correct designation of the language would be Amardian,”⁸⁷ a name derived from the classical authors.⁸⁸ This is remarkable because, since we have seen the foreign designation ‘Elam’ before, it was an en-

⁷⁹ In the thirties and seventies of the last century respectively. See also Scheil 1910: 573: “Le sol de l’Élam, si libéral en découvertes, nous produira sans doute dans l’avenir une ample moisson de ces modestes et indispensables documents [les documents juridiques et de comptabilité].”

⁸⁰ Note that the lecture given by Oppert at the 1st International Congress of Orientalists (Oppert 1876) is entitled *Rapport sur les progrès du déchiffrement des Écritures Cunéiformes* but in the running headers it is shortened as *Rapport sur les progrès de l’Assyriologie!* See also Castellino 1971: 34: “Premesso questo richiamo agli assiriologi antilettera, possiamo venire ai tempi a noi vicini [from Teloni onward; see below], quando l’assiriologia, ormai nata, si era assestata con diritto di cittadinanza nel mondo della scienza.”

⁸¹ Delattre 1883: 8. Rawlinson is regarded as one of the founder of Assyriology: together with Oppert in Sayce 1892: 169; “La storia delle ricerche assire, che ancora non è fatta esattamente, definirà un giorno qualche disputa per la priorità di questa o quella scoperta: certamente però non potrà togliere a Henry Rawlinson, Edward Hincks, Jules Oppert [called ‘vecchi maestri’ on p. VII] la gloria di aver fondato scientificamente anche [besides that of the second kind] l’interpretazione del terzo genere persepolitano” (Teloni 1903: 33); “La decifrazione della terza specie di iscrizioni, di quelle scritte in babilonese, è dovuta a H.C. Rawlinson, il quale può chiamarsi veramente il padre dell’assiriologia” (Furlani 1929: 4). Rawlinson himself considered Hincks and Norris

as the first, but Oppert “has a right to claim the pater- nity of Assyrian science” (Rawlinson 1876: 21). Also Lecoq 1997: 28: “Mais c’est Rawlinson qui, en 1851, avec la publication de la version «assyro-babylonienne» de Bisotun, fonde vraiment une nouvelle science, l’assyriologie, dont on connaît le prodigieux développement.” Cf. Daniels 1995: 85b, in which the credit is given to Hincks. The OED attests the word ‘Assyriology’ since 1828 (“*N.Amer.Rev.* CXXVII. 157”) but ‘Assyriologist’ later, in 1865 (“*Reader* 4 Mar. 250/3”).

⁸² Sayce 1892: 169. The addresses presented at the International Congresses of Orientalists are particularly pertaining to the history of studies; Said made reference to them, too (Said 2001: 208 and 258, quoting from an essay written by R.N. Cust in 1897).

⁸³ Weissbach 1890: 24.

⁸⁴ Weissbach 1891. Scheil 1909: 534: “Weissbach l’avait proposé [le terme de *anzanite*] autrefois, sans le fonder beaucoup en raison, à cause de la pénurie de textes de cette catégorie, à l’époque où il publiait *die Anzanischen Inschriften*. Il l’a abandonné depuis en faveur du terme *élamite*.”

⁸⁵ Winkler 1891 and Jensen 1892. Jensen was not appallingly uncertain between ‘Elamitisch’ and ‘Elamisch’ as can result from the title given in Hinz & Koch 1987: 1337, ‘1892.’

⁸⁶ Quentin 1891 and Sayce 1890.

⁸⁷ Sayce 1874: 467.

⁸⁸ In particular Strabo, Γεωγραφικά; see other refer- ences (Stephanus Byzantinus, Pomponius Mela and Pliny) in Andreas 1894, column 1729.

deavour to catch the self-designation⁸⁹ of the people who spoke this language. The list of countries in paragraph 6 of Darius' Bisotun inscription was well-known because, being a list of proper names, it was very useful to decipher the script. It was already noticed by Norris in 1855 that "the only peculiar name found attached to any place or province of Persia is the one attributed to Susiana; every other name is rendered by a Persian word, often corrupted, but still Persian; while Susiana is called neither by its Greek name (Elymais, I think), nor by the Semitic term *Elam*, nor the Arian *Uwaja*," and "the only people known by an indigenous name in a language are likely to have been the people who spoke that language."⁹⁰ In addition to this peculiarity, since the first and third countries correspond to the languages of the first and third kinds, it could also be that the second country in the list was the one in which the language of the second kind was spoken.⁹¹ And this is still right. But

the name of the second country was wrongly read *Afarti* or *Habirdi*⁹² rather than *Hatamtip*.⁹³ Therefore Norris guessed a connection between this *Afarti* and the *Amardi*, a people which, according to Strabo,⁹⁴ bordered with Persians (this association was supported by the comparison of the Old Persian name *Bardiya* with the corresponding Greek name *Smerdis*). Working on this odd hypothesis, Sayce also recognized the Mālamīr inscriptions⁹⁵ and the so-called letters from Ninive as Amardian,⁹⁶ both of which are actually Elamite. This discussion came to an end in 1905 when Scheil showed the correct reading of the name of the second country.⁹⁷ Therefore in 1911 Franz Heinrich Weissbach (1865-1944) transliterated *Ha-tam-tup* and translated *Elam*, being aware that Elam was a Semitic designation.⁹⁸ With regards to names as labels, Georg Hüsing (1869-1930), while preferring the reading *Halpirti*, employed 'Elamisches' as the name for the language.⁹⁹

⁸⁹ Cardona 1982: 7 and also p. 15.

⁹⁰ Norris 1855: 4 (cited in Andreas 1894, column 1731 and Oppert 1879: 16). Cf. also Mordtmann 1862: 21-22 and Oppert 1879: 12. Actually, also the 19th country, Gandāra, is written differently in the Elamite and Babylonian versions.

⁹¹ Mordtmann 1862: 21-22 and 1870: 7-8.

⁹² *Afarti*: Norris 1855; Mordtmann 1862: 47 (*Afardi*) and 1870: 7-8. *Hapirti*: Oppert 1879: 114. See Andreas 1894, columns 1731-1732, for a full list and discussion; note that Andreas was not concerned with the name to be assigned to the language of the second kind, he only wanted to demonstrate that the name *Amardoi* was not attested in Achaemenid or Susian (i.e. Neo-Elamite Mālamīr) inscriptions (Andreas 1894, column 1732, around line 50).

⁹³ *Ha(l)tamti* in Vallat 1993: 90-93; *ha-tam_s-tup* in Grillot-Susini & alii 1993; *Hatamtip* in Hallock 1969: 694. About sign *tam_s*; Mordtmann 1862: 38, no. 80; Steve 1992, no. 393/227.

⁹⁴ Strabo, Γεωγραφικά, XI XIII,6 ("lib. XI. cap. xiii. sec. 3, 6" according to Norris 1855: 4): Νέαρχος δὲ φησι, τεττάρων ὄντων ληστρικῶν ἔθνων, ὃν Μάρδοι μὲν Πέρσαις προσεχεῖς ἦσαν, Οὔξιοι δὲ καὶ Ἐλυμαῖοι τοῦτοις τε καὶ Σουσίοις, Κοσσαῖοι δὲ Μήδοις. This passage is not clear: "settled between

Susiana and Persis" (Norris 1855: 4); "Nearchus says that there were four predatory tribes and that of these the Mardi were situated next to the Persians; the Uxii and Elymaei next to the Mardi and the Susians; and the Cossaei next to the Medians" (Jones 1928: 309); "Nearco dice che i popoli briganti sono quattro: i Mardoι, che confinavano con i Persiani, gli Ouxioi e gli Elymaioi con questi e con gli abitanti di Susa, i Kossaiοi con i Medi" (Nicolai & Traina 2000: 169, and footnote 188). On the writings Ἄμαρδοι and Μάρδοι, both attested several times in Strabo, see Andreas 1894, column 1732.

⁹⁵ Sayce 1885. Sayce regarded wrongly ^{AS}*A-a-pir* (which is probably the name given to the country of Mālamīr inscriptions) as *Habirdi*. Cf. Andreas 1894, column 1832. See also Hinz & Koch 1987: 15, 'h.a-a-pir,' 'h.a-a-pir-ra' and variants; Vallat 1993: 26-27, 'Ayapir.' In König 1965 it is referred to as ^{AS}*a-a-tam_s*.

⁹⁶ They were actually rediscovered in the British Museum. The first fragments were published in Sayce 1890, followed by Weissbach 1900; see Vallat 1998a for an updated reference.

⁹⁷ Scheil 1905. See also Weissbach 1913: 292 and following pages; Weissbach 1931, column 1649, no. 3.

⁹⁸ Weissbach 1911: 10 and 11, footnote '§6 b.'

⁹⁹ Hüsing 1906b; cf. for instance with Hüsing 1906a.

In the end, who was the first scholar proposing ‘Elamite’? According to the comprehensive *Bibliographie* by W. Hinz & H. Koch, in 1874 Sayce “erwägt erstmals die Bezeichnung ‘elamitisch,’ gibt sie aber für ‘amardisch’.”¹⁰⁰ A small doubt arises skimming through a report printed in 1876 but given as a lecture in 1873 at the 1st International Congress of Orientalists, where Oppert said that “on a même voulu donner au second système des inscriptions trilingues le nom d’*élamite*.”¹⁰¹ Actually Sayce was perhaps the first who put the word ‘Elam’ in the title, since in 1850 Isidore Löwenstern (1810-1858 or 1859) did not dare to entitle his article ‘Remarques sur la deuxième écriture de Persépolis’ more explicitly. Its first lines deserve a full quotation:

S’il était de mode de nos jours d’employer le style moins réservé des savants du dernier siècle, je changerais mon titre en celui de: *Mémoire dans lequel on prouve, que la deuxième écriture de Persépolis, dite mède, est celle du peuple primitif de la Perse, les Élamites*. Ce serait imiter de Guignes, qui avait in-

titulé un célèbre opuscole: *Mémoire dans lequel on prouve que les Chinois sont une colonie égyptienne*. Mais quand on n’est point prince de la science, comme l’illustre historien des Huns et des Tartares, il est bien mieux d’adopter des allures moins altières et de se contenter de soumettre humblement ses idées dans le texte.¹⁰²

‘Élamite’ as the name of the language was consequently used in the last pages of the article, which was enriched by a lot of references to contemporary and classical authors and by a strong confidence in the Bible. Moreover, according to the final ‘note de l’éditeur,’ the first French cuneiform font was employed there; it was made by A. Lucas and property of the author.¹⁰³ However, although the alleged title is correct as a statement, by guessing the name Löwenstern missed its meaning: arguing against the name ‘Median,’¹⁰⁴ he deemed to have found Semitic elements in Elamite; then finding the same elements in Pahlavi (misled by heterograms), he assumed a relaxed connection between them.¹⁰⁵

Elamite Studies in Italy

The first scholar in Italy who dealt, even if incidentally, with Elamite was probably Cataldo Jannelli (Brienza, Potenza 1781 – Naples 1841), royal librarian in Naples. Writing in Latin, in 1830

he devoted 67 pages to cuneiform writings, which he called ‘scriptura cuneiformis Chaldaeorum, Medorum et Persarum.’¹⁰⁶ Jannelli rejected Grotfend’s decipherment because his main assump-

¹⁰⁰ Hinz & Koch 1987: 1335; also Lecoq 1997: 29.

¹⁰¹ Oppert 1876: 136. The speech does not seem to have been subsequently updated, except for the few words put in the few footnotes, regarding the intervened death of Finzi and the regular chair of Assyriology (see below).

¹⁰² Löwenstern 1850b: 687.

¹⁰³ Löwenstern 1850b: 728.

¹⁰⁴ See also Löwenstern 1850a, an open letter to de Saulcy which, rejecting ‘Median,’ did not make further proposals.

¹⁰⁵ Löwenstern 1850b: 696 and following pages. Cf. also de Saulcy 1849: 211, no. 2 (affinities with ‘zend’ and ‘persan moderne’). See the progress in Pahlavi studies attested in Finzi 1870b and Darmesteter 1883: I 14-42.

¹⁰⁶ Jannelli 1830: lib. II, sect. V, pp. 225-282. On this subject, see the remarkable essay by Teloni (1923: 229-231, ‘Un avversario dimenticato di G. F. Grotfend (1930)’). Regarding Jannelli’s studies on ancient Egypt, see De Salvia 1991.

tion was that the cuneiform writing “in sacris et mysticis rebus fuisse adhibitam.”¹⁰⁷

On these matters, the first to write in Italian was Filosseno Luzzatto (Trieste 1829, July 10 – 1854, January 25¹⁰⁸). In 1848, he published a brief memory on the Bisotun inscriptions, dealing mainly with Old Persian words.¹⁰⁹ Two years later, in an essay written in French and devoted to the Babylonian language,¹¹⁰ he identified 24 ‘Medic’ signs with Babylonian ones.¹¹¹ He must not be confused with his father, the well-known scholar Samuel David Luzzatto (Trieste 1800 – Padua 1865), teacher of Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew in Padua.¹¹²

His Jewish origins¹¹³ and a short life span are the two elements which connect Luzzatto with the first Italian Assyriologist, Felice Finzi (Correggio, Reggio Emilia 1847 – Florence 1872, September 3). At the age of 20, he took a degree in law at the University of Bologna¹¹⁴ and began his scientific researches as an Ethnologist: he was the editor of the anthropological and ethnological section of the journal *Archivio per l’antropologia e la*

etnologia edited by Paolo Mantegazza¹¹⁵; a letter by Finzi sending a publication to C.R. Darwin is dated 1871, February 9.¹¹⁶ From ethnology, his interest for ancient peoples, their origins and the development of races (as understood at that time) grew.¹¹⁷

Following Oppert’s example in Paris (where a special course of Assyrian language was inaugurated in December 1868¹¹⁸), Finzi taught *Lettere e antichità assire* at the *Regio Istituto di Studii Superiori* of Florence since 1869.¹¹⁹ Despite his young age, Finzi suddenly entered the exclusive club of international Assyriology. In 1870, Oppert presented him to the *Société asiatique*.¹²⁰ Moreover Finzi was the only Italian cited by Oppert in the *Rapport sur les progrès du déchiffrement des Écritures Cunéiformes* presented at the 1st International Congress of Orientalists held in Paris in 1873: Oppert spoke of him as of a young and promising scholar.¹²¹ Again Finzi was the only Italian who “also joined our band of Assyriologists” according to the address by Rawlinson at the 2nd International Congress of Orientalists held in London

¹⁰⁷ Jannelli 1830: 225, cited in Teloni 1923: 230.

¹⁰⁸ De Gubernatis 1876: 96 and 97.

¹⁰⁹ Luzzatto 1848.

¹¹⁰ Luzzatto 1850; see also the critical and (today) odd review by Basevi (a lawyer of Jewish family), written in Italian (Basevi 1850).

¹¹¹ As written in Weisbach 1890: 7 (no. 27 in the bibliography on p. 3).

¹¹² De Gubernatis 1876: 86-87. See also the story *Un letterato ebreo* and the related notes by U. Saba (1956).

¹¹³ On the origin of Finzi’s family, see Colorni 1983b.

¹¹⁴ Amari 1873: p. VI; Finzi R. 1983: 274.

¹¹⁵ Casati 1934: “filologo ed etnologo, assiriologo. Fondò con Paolo Mantegazza l’Archivio di Etnologia e di Antropologia e fu tra i promotori della Società Orientale in Italia”; Furlani 1932a.

¹¹⁶ Recorded in *The Darwin Correspondence Online Database* (<<http://darwin.lib.cam.ac.uk>>), where Finzi appeared as “Ethnologist and Assyriologist.” I ran into this reference by chance and it was my first encounter with Finzi.

¹¹⁷ See for example the ethnological glimpses in the

report about the excavations in Cyprus (Finzi 1870a).

¹¹⁸ Oppert 1876: 148, and footnote 1. The first chair of Assyriology was created in 1874; see the few lines devoted to this event in Labat 1973: 33, despite Oppert’s fame in his own time. It should be noted that Jules Oppert was German, naturalized French (‘Julius,’ among the German-speaking scholars, in Schmitt 1999: 541; see also Furlani 1935, André-Salvini 1999: 332, Gran-Aymerich 2001 for further references).

¹¹⁹ Amari 1873: p. VI; de Gubernatis 1876: 426, and footnote 1; Furlani 1928: 59, 1929: 14-15 (‘libero docente’) and Furlani 1932a; ‘Finzi Felice,’ in *Lessico universale italiano*, Roma 1968-1986 (‘etnologo e assiriologo, libero docente a Firenze’). Till 1872, Finzi managed to hold three courses (Finzi 1872: p. III, ‘Prefazione,’ dated 1872, March 27; cf. Furlani 1932a: “due corsi liberi”).

¹²⁰ As results in *Journal asiatique*, vol. 16 (1870), p. 294: “M. Finfi [*sic!*], professeur, à Florence, présenté par MM. Mohl et Oppert”; the name was rightly written in the index published in 1872.

¹²¹ Oppert 1876: 144.

in 1874.¹²² Oppert's *omen* proved sadly unfulfilled, since Finzi was already dead at the young age of 25, leaving his wife and two sons¹²³; neither did Rawlinson seem to be aware of it two years later.

Finzi's main work is *Ricerche per lo studio dell'antichità assira*, with an extended introduction on Akkadian language and long sections about Mesopotamian ethnology and religion.¹²⁴ M. Amari wrote the following waggish sentence about his work:

talchè se il Finzi nella breve sua vita non arrivò all'onore di grande assiriologo, veggiam che s'era messo in via e che lasciò un'opera utile e scopri qualche fatto nuovo. Così il suo libro fosse scritto in buon italiano! Ma chi mette il piè in questa torre di Babele di tante favelle antiche e moderne e sente suonar all'orecchio ogni altra lingua fuorché la nostra, merita perdono s'egli talvolta la sciupa. Finirà cotesto pericolo, quando la letteratura nazionale risalirà in tanto onore che non ci occorra studiar sempre le scienze in idiomi oltramontani e che un giusto orgoglio ci muova a serbar puro il nostro, ancorché viva e si sviluppi a seconda dell'incivilimento.¹²⁵

Finzi's library was the first acquisition of the *Istituto di Studii Superiori* in Florence, and it became the core of the first Italian university library with an Assyriological section.¹²⁶ He was one of the founders of the *Società italiana per gli studii orientali*¹²⁷ in September 1871 and he also knew Hebrew and Sanskrit.¹²⁸ In a review of *The old Pahlavi-Pazand Glossary* edited by Hoshangji Jamaspijasa and M. Haug, he proved his acquaintance with Iranian matters, as well.¹²⁹

The premature death of Finzi was a hard stroke to the rising Italian Assyriology. In 1876, A. de Gubernatis wrote: "Les langues touraniennes et l'assyriologie, par exemple, sont presque entièrement négligées chez nous."¹³⁰ Actually, Finzi is forgotten today, and the first Italian Assyriologist is generally considered to have been Giulio Cesare (but he preferred to be called Bruto) Teloni (1857-1942).¹³¹ In 1803, Teloni premised his book on Assyrian literature with a detailed account of the history of Assyriology,¹³² probably because of its divulgatory aim¹³³ and because it was one of

¹²² Rawlinson 1876: 21-22.

¹²³ Finzi R. 1983: 274.

¹²⁴ Finzi 1872. Furlani 1932a: "la prima [in Italy, I would add, but in Furlani 1928: 59-60 Finzi is placed in front of all other authors and followed by Lenormant!] trattazione sistematica della religione babilonese e assira, basata su un'estesa conoscenza di tutta la letteratura sull'argomento"; after so much laud and praise, Furlani concluded: "Per il tempo in cui fu scritto il libro è ottimo; al giorno d'oggi non ha più che pochissimo valore" (Furlani 1928: 60). Cf. Bassi 1899: p. X.

¹²⁵ Amari 1873: p. VI.

¹²⁶ De Gubernatis 1876: 426. It is still accessible in the *Biblioteca della Facoltà di Lettere e filosofia* of the Florence university: "Il fondo, acquistato su richiesta di Pasquale Villari nel luglio 1873, rappresenta il primo esempio di acquisto di una intera raccolta da parte dell'Istituto di Studi superiori. Comprende 250 volumi dal XVI al XIX sec. (di cui 8 cinquecentesime) di argomento archeologico, assiriologico e linguistico, e inoltre volumi di particolare interesse

per la letteratura e la storia della tipografia ebraica" (<<http://www.unifi.it/universita/biblioteche/fondi/lettere.htm>>, with further references; the birth year is wrong).

¹²⁷ Amari 1873: p. VI-VII; de Gubernatis 1876: 428.

¹²⁸ Finzi R. 1983: 274.

¹²⁹ Finzi 1870b.

¹³⁰ De Gubernatis 1876: 14. Also Teloni 1903: p. VIII: "Gli studi assiri fino ad oggi non fecero in Italia che rare e fugaci apparizioni; questa nobilissima scienza resta da noi pressoché sconosciuta."

¹³¹ So Castellino (1971: 38), in his essay on Assyriology in Italy, is wrong in defining Teloni the first Italian Assyriologist ('primo assiriologo italiano'); somehow he did not cite Finzi.

¹³² Teloni 1903: 1-35.

¹³³ The book appeared in the series *Manuali Hoepli* (from the name of the publisher, Ulrico Hoepli) which provided hundreds of handbooks devoted to the practical needs of common people, although they had a high concept of common knowledge.

the first Assyriological works in Italy.¹³⁴ He wrote that “Nel vasto regno *elamitico* si parlarono diversi dialetti che vengono espressi con caratteri cuneiformi, ma la loro reciproca relazione non si conosce esattamente,” and he was still in doubt about the second kind of Persepolis belonging to this Elamite group.¹³⁵ This doubt disappeared some thirty years later, since in the entry *Assiriologia* of the Italian encyclopaedia Treccani he assured that “oggi si preferisce chiamarlo (come dialetto dell’antico elamitico) neo-elamitico.”¹³⁶ In this entry, Teloni referred to Elamite in three different ways: ‘susiano,’¹³⁷ ‘neo-elamitico’ and ‘elamico.’ The first two referred to the Achaemenid inscriptions; the third seems to point to linear and Middle Elamite. Moreover he considered the ‘Cassitico’ as “in sostanza un dialetto elamico del N[ord].”¹³⁸ He was also in touch with Weissbach.¹³⁹

During the first years of the last century, Elam was attracting a growing interest in Europe. Various scholars were involved in Elamite studies (see for example the articles following one another on the pages of the *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung*) while people could see beautiful Elamite artefacts in the Louvre

exhibitions.¹⁴⁰ So we are not astonished by that Italian scholar who called Hüsing “dotto e geniale Elamista”¹⁴¹ (i.e. skilled and ingenious Elamologist¹⁴²)! Someone in Italy was dealing with Elam and he was not an Assyriologist but an eclectic Linguist. Alfredo Trombetti (Bologna 1866-1929), of humble birth, learned French, German, Greek, Hebrew and Latin by himself. He was fluent in these languages when he was 14 years old.¹⁴³ No surprise that, when he was an adult, he knew nearly all the languages of the world, Elamite included. In fact, in 1913 he wrote an essay (22 pages) entitled *La posizione linguistica dell’Elamitico*. He referred to Achaemenid Elamite as “una forma seriore del neo-elamitico”¹⁴⁴ and quoted texts in ‘nuovo’ and ‘medio Elamitico’ as we employ today these designations. He upheld the theory of the monogenesis of languages, and to him Elamite was the ‘connecting link’ between Nilotic (today Nilo-Saharan family, Chari-Nile sub-group¹⁴⁵) and Dravidian languages through Brahui, while being a collateral branch of Caucasian languages.¹⁴⁶ His main references were the German scholars, first of all Hüsing,¹⁴⁷ then Winkler, Weissbach and Bork.¹⁴⁸ He also referred to Caldwell for Dravidian

¹³⁴ Preceded by Brunengo 1885, Teloni 1887, Bassi 1899. Bassi, being a scholar of Greek studies (Furlani 1929: 15), apologized to Assyriologists (Bassi 1899: p. VII).

¹³⁵ Teloni 1903: 19 and 20, footnote 3.

¹³⁶ Teloni 1930: 37a.

¹³⁷ Teloni 1930: 36a; also Teloni 1903: 28.

¹³⁸ Teloni 1930:38a, ‘3. Cassitico.’

¹³⁹ In Teloni 1903: 21, footnote 3, a letter dated 1899, August 19, is cited.

¹⁴⁰ Benoit 1997; see especially pp. 144-145 on the 1905 exhibition with paintings and plans. See also Potts 1999: 444 for further references.

¹⁴¹ Trombetti 1913: 21.

¹⁴² ‘Elamologist’ after McAlpin 1981: 13.

¹⁴³ Trombetti 1902: p. XXXVIII and following

pages.

¹⁴⁴ Trombetti 1913: 3/117.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Trombetti 1923, §28 (see also §52) with Ruhlen 1975-76: 64-65 and Sim 1994.

¹⁴⁶ Trombetti 1913: 18-19/132-133 and 1923, §§ 137 (cf. Trombetti 1913: 4/118), 147 and 242 (quoting Trombetti 1913: 18-19/132-133). Cf. the remark on Caucasian family in Meriggi 1966: 560.

¹⁴⁷ See the remark on Hüsing and the German school in Meriggi 1966: 562.

¹⁴⁸ For example, Winkler 1896 and Hüsing 1910 in Trombetti 1913: 3/117; Weissbach 1911a on p. 19/133 and Weissbach 1913 on p. 21/135, note 2; Bork on p. 18/132; Bork 1905b is cited as the first essay on linear Elamite on p. 22/136, note 3; also Oppert on p. 17/131.

and Bray for Brahui.¹⁴⁹ Trombetti died untimely in 1929, drowning in the Venice lagoon.

Afterwards some Elamite studies were conducted in Italy by Assyriologist Giuseppe Furlani (1885-1962) whose main interest was Mesopotamian religion and mythological texts. He compiled the clear and exhaustive entry *Elam* in the Italian encyclopaedia Treccani and the section *La religione degli Elamiti* in a book on the history of religions.¹⁵⁰ Like Trombetti, he cited the German scholars¹⁵¹; moreover he knew the recent essays by König and the catalogue of the famous Susa exhibition in the Louvre Museum in 1913.¹⁵² Treading in Teleri's wake, Furlani named Achaemenid Elamite 'neoelamico'¹⁵³ (in Italy, too, there was disagreement about the adjective derived from Elam¹⁵⁴) and considered Cassite as northern Elamite.¹⁵⁵ In 1936, he published an essay entitled *Divinità gemelle nel Pantheon Elamico*, which he concluded somehow triumphantly writing: "Inoltre mi pare di aver fatto vedere che siamo ancora molto ignoranti in fatto di religione sumera o elamica o accàda."¹⁵⁶

Next came Piero Meriggi (1899-1982), who was a Linguist like Trombetti, and as such¹⁵⁷ he dealt with Elam, especially with Proto-Elamite. In 1965, he pre-

sented a collection of some scattered notes about the Elamite language to Italian scholars,¹⁵⁸ recalling everybody's attention on its possible linguistic kin with Hurrian. At the end, a remark on linear Elamite peeped, preparing the way for his main work, *La scrittura proto-elamica*, which was devoted to the most ancient scripts of Iran.¹⁵⁹ Since the main interest of Meriggi was for less-understood languages of the ancient Near East like Lydian, Hurrian and Urartian, we owe to him the Italian tendency to associate Elamite to the Anatolian languages, in spite of Assyriology. In this 'desertion,' he felt comforted by the inclusion of the Elamite grammatical sketch by E. Reiner¹⁶⁰ in the volume *Altkleinasiatische Sprachen*.¹⁶¹

This trend is being carried on by Mirjo Salvini,¹⁶² a specialist in Urartian interested in linear Elamite, and to him we owe the publication in Italy of the more recent Elamite grammar, written by Margaret Khačikjan for the *Istituto per gli Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici* in Rome.

Coming to the present, I would like to remember the late father Luigi Cagni, Assyriologist in Naples, whose disciple Grazia Giovinazzo studied Elamite with François Vallat in Paris. She has been holding a regular course of Elamite language at the 'L'Orientale' University of

¹⁴⁹ Caldwell 1856 is cited in Trombetti 1913: 3/117 and 16/130; Bray 1908 in Trombetti 1913: 4/118 (as published in 1909) and 16/130. Obviously Trombetti could not take advantage of the third part of the latter, the useful etymological vocabulary published in 1934 (Bray 1934).

¹⁵⁰ Furlani 1932 and Furlani 1949; the latter meaningfully not included in further editions of the book.

¹⁵¹ Furlani 1932: 605-606, 'Bibl.' Hüsing 1916 in Furlani 1936: 57.

¹⁵² Pézard & Pottier 1913 in Furlani 1932: 605-606, 'Bibl.'

¹⁵³ Furlani 1931: 138-139.

¹⁵⁴ See also Trombetti 1913: 21/135, note 1: "Oppure «Elamico», come si dice ora generalmente (Elamisch)." Today the adjectives 'elamico' and

'elamita' are used.

¹⁵⁵ Furlani 1932: 603b. See also OED, 'Kassite': "Also Cossæan, Kasshi, Kossæan. A member of an Elamite people from the central range of the Zagros mountains, who ruled Babylon from the 18th to the 12th century B.C.; also, their language." Cf. Potts 1999: 339-340 on the Kissians.

¹⁵⁶ Furlani 1936: 65.

¹⁵⁷ Meriggi 1971: 49.

¹⁵⁸ Meriggi 1966.

¹⁵⁹ Meriggi 1971-1974. See also Meriggi 1969a; 1969b; 1971b and 1977.

¹⁶⁰ Reiner 1969.

¹⁶¹ Meriggi 1971: 56-57. See also the review of this volume in Meriggi 1971a.

¹⁶² Cited also in Meriggi 1971: 56.

Naples since 1999-2000, in which she teaches all the historical developments of Elamite.¹⁶³ In the same university, but with an Iranological emphasis, Adriano V. Rossi has been involved in Elamite studies,¹⁶⁴ and Giovanni D’Erme, author

in 1990 of a perhaps less-known but surely very interesting essay about the connections between Old Persian and Elamite scripts,¹⁶⁵ has been teaching modern Persian.

The Name Elam

What is the difference between the history of studies and a footnote with a bibliographical reference? Probably it is the aim, but as a matter of fact it could be no more than a chronological gap between referring to an immediate past and reconstructing a past which is a little bit further in the same field of study. Even if you take a short essay on a less-frequented field as Elamite studies and represent it as a point on a virtual timeline, then connect this point with other points representing, according to the chosen scale, the articles or books cited therein, then you go down to your library and fetch each of these you can, and do the same with them, you will find an uninterrupted chain going back to the half of the 19th century. Making a bibliographical note means keeping track of one’s own path, allowing others to travel more swiftly and going farther. One of the main characteristics of human beings is that we make experiences: this is true both for each individual’s personal story, and for the knowledge passing from master to disciple, from book to reader,

from generation to generation.¹⁶⁶ Bernard of Chartres said that we are dwarves on the shoulders of giants.¹⁶⁷ I prefer to say that we are dwarves perched on other dwarves’ shoulders, being piled up on top of other dwarves, and so on. And the more this building grows and becomes taller, the more, as a reversed Babel’s tower, it is sound. Moreover, as Teloni said negotiating about Jannelli, “nella storia della scienza il racconto degli errori può essere qualche volta d’ammaestramento.”¹⁶⁸

But time ago, a man died and since then no living man was able to read a script or to understand a language which had been the usual way of communication and of thinking for the people. The chain of knowledge had been broken. One of the differences between natural and human sciences is perhaps that the first discovers something in nature which was previously unknown to men, while the second is about what at least some of the men already knew in the past.¹⁶⁹ And paradoxically, while even the most innovative natural discovery relies at least on

¹⁶³ Among her articles, see for instance Giovinazzo 1989a, 1994a and 2000.

¹⁶⁴ See for instance Rossi 1995, 2000, 2003a and 2003b.

¹⁶⁵ D’Erme 1990. See also D’Erme 1983.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Said 2001: 200.

¹⁶⁷ *Dicebat Bernardus Carnotensis nos esse quasi nanos, gigantium humeris incidentes, ut possimus plura eis et remotiora videre, non utique proprii visus acumine, aut eminentia corporis, sed quia in altum*

subvehimur et extollimur magnitudine gigantea (Joannis Saresberiensis Metalogicus, liber III, cap. IV, 900C (Patrologia Latina 199), <<http://www.abaelard.de/abaelard/060013metalogicon.htm>>). As is well known, this sentence was taken by I. Newton: “If I have seen further it is by standing on ye shoulders of Giants” (sir Isaac Newton, letter to Robert Hooke, 1675/1676, February 5, quoted in Merton 1965: 31).

¹⁶⁸ Teloni 1923: 231 (adapted).

¹⁶⁹ See also Frye 1974: 57.

means conceived by others, the rediscovery of a lost language is a somewhat zero point, even if the developments in linguistics could help deciphering, and it is not the work of a single man, but the endeavour of many people. The only faith of the decipherer, as Oppert wrote, is that what human ingenuity created, can be reconstructed. So, this is the challenge, based on the assumption that we study ourselves, or at least what we would have been, had we by chance been born some centuries ago.¹⁷⁰

The quest for the name of the language of the second kind was a winding path, which had been deserted for a long time, and which has finally been meeting again the main road that it had left long ago.¹⁷¹ The path and the road were apart for many miles, and the landscape is now heavily changed. While the scholars toiled along the nameless path, the road was more and more unfrequented by that time. The road bears a name, and it is the road travelled by the name ‘Elam’ to come up to us. Luzzatto was treading on this road when, in 1847, he devoted an essay to *Gli Elamiti*; he did not connect them explicitly with the language of the second kind (it would have been a fore-running short-cut towards the path!), however he justified his attention to such a less-known people saying prophetically:

E’ bene adunque, a mio giudizio, che la filologia e la storia non si lascino prendere, dirò così, alla sprovvista, ma, prevedendo quasi la scoperta archeologica, le preparino il campo e le appianino la

via, cosicchè questa non distrugga già, ma si confermi splendidamente i dati di quelle.¹⁷²

Actually, while Persians and Babylonians are mentioned also by Greek authors (revived since the 15th century AD), the name Elam is attested uninterruptedly only by the never forgotten source of the Bible.¹⁷³ Otherwise, the only trace of Elam is Elymais, mentioned by Strabo and some other ‘scrittore profano.’¹⁷⁴ Moreover, like I said during the past MELAMMU meeting, perhaps the Bible does not concern only ancient and Achaemenid Elam, if ‘Elamites’ as the name of the people from Elam as a geographical area is attested in the Acts of the Apostles (unless some Jews from Elam were in the crowd attending the apostles’ speech on the Pentecost day), more than five centuries after the fall of Elam as a political entity.¹⁷⁵

The Archaeology of Elam by D.T. Potts¹⁷⁶ is, despite its title, a deep and comprehensive historiographic work on Elam. In 450 pages covering 4500 years of history, the author shows us many Elams, from the *Elammatum* (or *Elamtu*) attested in Akkadian texts of the 3rd millennium BC to the Nestorian ecclesiastical province of Elam in the 14th century AD. Between these two ends, what was named Elam underwent continuous transformations, even if both the name Elam and a core of identity and perhaps ethnicity were maintained through the ages.¹⁷⁷

When Scheil spoke about Anšan as

¹⁷⁰ As prof. A. Panaino is used to saying to his students at the opening lesson of his courses.

¹⁷¹ From the point of view of the intersection (i.e. of a wrong label) with the ‘Median’ road, see Genito 1986: 65-70. Cf. also the present state of the label ‘Tocharian’ with respect to the language conventionally named after it (see Mallory 1989: 56).

¹⁷² Luzzatto 1847: 301.

¹⁷³ Potts 1999: 3.

¹⁷⁴ As said in Luzzatto 1847: 303. See Gesenius 1839; Weissbach 1905; also Potts 1999, chapter 10.

¹⁷⁵ *Acts* 2,9. See Basello 2002: 13-14.

¹⁷⁶ Potts 1999.

¹⁷⁷ Potts 1999, chapter 1, especially pp. 1-5 and 9.

being more specific than Elam, the perspective was mainly philological, i.e. unconcerned by the effective geographic location of Anšan.¹⁷⁸ F. Vallat showed how a geographic name must be seen on the background of history according to the point of view of the author who used it.¹⁷⁹ In fact the name ‘Elam’ was attached to different geographic areas in different periods.

Moreover, the Elamite civilization was often seen and judged from a foreigner’s point of view, from ancient times onwards. The name ‘Elam’ itself is likely to have originated in Mesopotamia among Akkadians, rather than having derived

from Elamite *Hallatamti*.¹⁸⁰ In any case, the form which the Bible handed down to us and which we employ today is Semitic.

But the most misplaced detour of the name ‘Elam’ is probably in the Babylonian Talmud. As on Pentecost day, Elamites appeared side by side with Medes, but this time the focus is on their languages: rabbis questioned whether the book of *Esther* can be read in Elamite (עִלְמִית) or Median.¹⁸¹ This is not likely to be our Elamite, but what if this passage had been known to Sayce and to the other scholars in 19th century?

The Place and Role of Elam in Ancient Near Eastern Studies

Another characteristic of human beings is the need to schematize. Language is the first means of schematization, as language itself is a schema applied to our mind, used not only in our speeches but also in our thoughts. And languages are a very good starting point for schematizing reality. As written evidence marks the

watershed between prehistory and history, at the beginning of the 19th century a language was useful in defining the geographical and ethnic boundaries of an ancient civilization. The language of a text was that of the country where the bulk of texts in the same language were found. The catchword was one country,

¹⁷⁸ Scheil 1909. For example, cf. Sayce 1874: 475: “Anzan was properly that part of Elam which bordered upon the Persian Gulf.” For a detailed bibliographical account on the researches about Anšan, see Prášek 1906: 189-191, footnote 1.

¹⁷⁹ Vallat 1980 and also 1998: 302.

¹⁸⁰ Vallat 1996; cf. Quintana 1996. See also Poebel 1932; Dandamaev 1989: 1; Vallat 1993: pp. CVI-CX; Vallat 1998: 301-302; Potts 1999: 1-4.

¹⁸¹ *Babylonian Talmud*, Megillah 18a (note also the second list with languages associated to the respective peoples, where Median is not mentioned); see also *Babylonian Talmud*, Shabbath 16, fol. 115a, referred to all the sacred books. “What is meant by ‘Elamite’ to the ‘Elameans’ is by no means clear to me” (Neusner 1966: 77); moreover, “about Judaism in Mesopotamia (Edessa, Nisibis), Adiabene, Armenia, Mesene, Khuzistan, Elam, Khorrasan, and other satrapies of the Western Iranian Empire in Sasanian

times where Jews lived, we know practically nothing. All we know is that there *were* Jews in these satrapies” (Neusner 1969: 435). “The existence of Iranian language translations of the Book of Esther in use among Jews is indicated by a question raised in the Talmud as to whether is permissible to recite the text of the Book of Esther in the following languages: Greek, Coptic, Elamite, or Median (Bavli Megilla 18a). The meaning of the last two language designations is uncertain, but they seem to refer to two varieties of Iranian. ‘Elamite’ or ‘Median’ could not have meant in the third or fourth century A.D. the ancient languages which used to carry these labels and which had long ceased to exist by this time but local varieties of the current Iranian language, presumably Persian” (Shaked 1990: 206). See also Jastrow 1903: 1070, ‘עִלְמִי,’ and the analysis of the relevant passages in Colorni 1983a. Giancarlo Lacerenza drew my attention to these occurrences.

one nation, one ethnic group (if not a whole race), one language.¹⁸² Oppert wrote in 1851:

Tout y a passé: mœurs, sciences, arts, lois, même le premier et le dernier critérium de la nationalité, la langue. La destruction de la nation entraînait la perte de l’idiome; avec celui-ci s’effaçait son représentant visible, l’écriture.¹⁸³

The royal propaganda of the Achaemenid dynasty, putting three languages together in each inscription, started wavering this argument. So Oppert had changed his mind in 1879:

A cette époque [1852], je partageais les idées alors répandues dans le monde savant et surtout parmi les représentants de la philologie comparée, à savoir: que la langue était toujours le critérium de la race, et que les nations étaient toutes, ou indo-européennes, ou sémitiques, ou touraniennes. Depuis cette époque, le progrès des études philologiques a montré la fragilité de ces théories, et je suis un des premiers qui aie soutenu, dans les discours prononcés à l’ouverture de mes cours, que la langue ne prouve que la présence d’un seul élément entrant dans la composition ethnographique d’une nation, sans préjuger pour cela la question de la race à laquelle le peuple doit appartenir.¹⁸⁴

Moreover, the boundaries are never sharp and clear enough, as Scheil noted:

L’aire d’emploi de la langue elamite ne se circonscrit pas aisément. Connuissions-nous les limites politiques de l’empire elamite, notre embarras resterait grand.

L’aire d’une langue, non plus que celle d’une race, ne se confondent nécessairement avec celle d’un pays.¹⁸⁵

Also Delattre had conceded that “il n’arrive guère qu’on grand pays soit la propriété exclusive d’une race homogène.”¹⁸⁶

In 1890, Weissbach put forward a detailed and still today most useful synopsis about the quest for the name of the second kind.¹⁸⁷ Even if the only concern was the language, its title is remarkably “Das Volk der Achämenideninschriften zweiter Art.” On this matter, the last words are owed to Scheil:

Il serait naïf de compter, pour nous tirer d’embarras, sur des traités de grammaire ou de philologie comparée, exhumés par les fouilles, ou sur la bonne volonté d’un scribe nous avertissant que sa rédaction est ici en telle langue, là en telle autre.¹⁸⁸ Nous serions ravis d’accepter sans discussion ces renseignements. L’arbitraire n’aurait aucun inconvénient: l’usage antique ferait loi, lors même que ces dénominations pussent nous paraître inexacts, à nous qui appelons *française* une langue qui n’est pas du tout *franque*, et qui n’est pas davantage parlée par une population exclusivement *franque*. [...] Faute de traditions, force nous est de dénommer les langues qu’on y parlait, ou d’après des caractères intrinsèques les rattachant à des groupes connus, ou d’après la race à laquelle l’une ou l’autre est propre.¹⁸⁹

Therefore the quest for the name of an ancient language ends only when the

¹⁸² For example, Rawlinson 1846: 32: “The character which has hitherto been denominated the Median [...] is of a very high degree of interest [...] in regard to the nation to which its language may be assignable.” Compare Rawlinson 1846: 37 (larger quotation in footnote 27) with its French translation in Delattre 1883: 8: “it would become a question of considerable embarrassment to what constituent portion of the Persian empire they might belong”; “de savoir à quelle nation de l’empire cette langue appartenait.” Finzi, Ethnologist and Assyriologist, must be seen on this background. See also Genito 1986: 70. Cf. the

ironical statement in Diakonoff 1970: 111, end of footnote 35.

¹⁸³ Oppert 1851: 256.

¹⁸⁴ Oppert 1879: 3-4.

¹⁸⁵ Scheil 1910: 568-569.

¹⁸⁶ Delattre 1883: 7.

¹⁸⁷ Weissbach 1890: 11-24.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Khačikjan 1998: 3 (§2.1) about Elamite: “and, finally, Elamite, as this language and its bearers were called in Akkadian.” See Scheil 1909: 528 about the names of Sumerian and Akkadian languages.

¹⁸⁹ Scheil 1909: 527-528.

conventional name is confirmed or replaced by the glottonym attested in ancient documents, possibly the name assigned by its own speakers.¹⁹⁰

Since in Elam different languages were spoken,¹⁹¹ it was more difficult focusing on the Elamite language. Moreover, its uncertain linguistic kin delayed the acknowledgement of Elamite studies as an independent academic subject. In fact, as Oriental studies were born studying the Bible, i.e. a written text, only the deciphering of a script and the identification of the related language could originate a new academic subject.¹⁹² In order to develop Iranian studies and especially Assyriology as distinct branches of Oriental studies, the quick identification of the languages of the first and third kinds in the Achaemenid inscriptions with those spoken by ancient Persians and Babylonians was striking. According to Teloni, in 1903 the situation of Elamite studies was still uncertain if not actually confused:

il nome di *mediche* dato un tempo a queste iscrizioni non pare storicamente giustificabile e vien respinto dai critici odierni: i nomi poi di iscrizioni *scitiche*, o *medo-scitiche*, o *elamitiche*, o *Amar-diane* (v. Strabone XI. 13, 3), che in vario modo vogliono accennare alla posizione geografica o al carattere etnico delle genti le quali parlarono il così detto *medo* non incontrarono neppure essi una-

nime approvazione. Invece le iscrizioni del *terzo genere* di Persepoli già ai primi tempi degli studi cuneiformi si chiamarono *assire*, e se ne riconobbe il semitismo dal Löwenstern dall'Hincks, dal De Saulcy, dal Longpérier, ecc.¹⁹³

In the last hundred of years, this gap has not been bridged. In 1966, Meriggi spoke of Elam as “una componente della civiltà achemenide la cui voce è ancora incerta e oscura,” where Elam was considered as one ingredient in the Achaemenid civilization.¹⁹⁴ The obscurity of its voice, i.e. the Elamite language, led the Iranist I. Gershevitch to an extreme conclusion: Achaemenid Elamite was an artificial language used to record alloglottographically the Old Persian language.¹⁹⁵ From another point of view, in 1981, McAlpin wrote that “Elamite has always been the stepchild of cuneiform scholarship,” while still in 1995 Vallat remarked that “L’élamite demeure la langue la plus mal connue du Proche-Orient ancien!”¹⁹⁶

While even today languages play a basic role in our schematization and teaching of the past, this stepchild shows us how frail the boundaries of our academic subjects are. Ancient Elamites fought against Assyrians and rebelled against Persians, whereas Elamite studies are strictly bound to Assyriology and Iranian studies. As ancient Elam stood and represented a meeting place between Meso-

¹⁹⁰ Rossi 1984: 41-44.

¹⁹¹ For the Achaemenid period, see Rossi 1981. On non-Elamite texts in Elam, see Lackenbacher 1998.

¹⁹² In this respect, archaeology was instrumental to the finding of new texts.

¹⁹³ Teloni 1903: 33.

¹⁹⁴ Meriggi 1966: 559 (adapted).

¹⁹⁵ Gershevitch 1979 (but elaborated since 1968); see the complete list of references in Gershevitch 1994: 66, footnote 12. The ‘elamography’ represents a drastic solution to a long-known problem; see for instance the following statements: “I have sometimes thought that the relative pronoun may be foreign to the language, as in the Osmanli-Turkish; and that its

employment, together with the Anti-Scythic collocation which it necessarily produces, may be caused by the desire of producing a literal translation (in which each individual word shall correspond) of the Persian original” (Rawlinson 1846: 32-39); “I may say that I believe the language to be wholly Scythic, and that any departure from that type which we may find is due to an intercourse with nations speaking Arian tongues, or else to the probable circumstance that the inscriptions were written, not by natives, but by Persians, who, because they were Persians, wrote it with a foreign admixture” (Norris 1855: 3).

¹⁹⁶ McAlpin 1981: 13-14; Vallat 1995.

potamian lowland and Iranian highland, so Elamite studies need to grab and grasp data both from Assyriology and Iranian studies and through many fields of work.¹⁹⁷

As a language officially¹⁹⁸ attested in the Achaemenid period, Elamite attracts the interest of Iranologists. At the same time, the strong relationships between Elamites and Sumerian, Babylonian or Assyrian peoples in the preceding periods, draw the attention of Assyriologists. As an example, one could quote these words by R. Labat:

Les études élamites ont toujours été plus étroitement associées que les études hittites à l'assyriologie proprement dite: l'on peut dire qu'il n'est guère un élamitologue français qui ne fût ou ne soit un authentique assyriologue.¹⁹⁹

On the other hand, R. Schmitt included a section on Elamite studies (although at the very end of his detailed account) in the entry about Iranian studies in German of the *Encyclopædia Iranica*.²⁰⁰ In *Gli studi sul Vicino Oriente in Italia dal 1921 al 1970*, a synopsis of the history of Italian studies on Near East, the Elamite language is dealt with properly and more extensively in the Anatolian section (written by Meriggi) than in the Assyriological one.²⁰¹ In Italy, at least from a normative point of view, the wavering of Elamite as an academic subject found a more definite position on the brink of the 21st century. Today Elamite is one of the disciplines explicitly grouped under the label 'Assyriology':

L-OR/03 – ASSIRIOLOGIA (EX: L15A – ASSIRIOLOGIA) Comprende lo studio epigrafico, linguistico e letterario delle testimonianze in scrittura cuneiforme relative alle antiche civiltà della Mesopotamia e dell'Iran sud-occidentale (Elam), in un arco cronologico che si estende tra la fine del IV millennio a.C. ed il I secolo d.C.²⁰²

As A.V. Rossi (who is one of the advisors of the new classification) told me, the present choice (which may not be the final one) was made following the customary habit dating back to the beginning of Elamite studies, though forcibly neglecting the contributions of scholars of Iranian studies.

Unfortunately, lacking an independent academic subject, we have little specific teaching of Elamite. As we employ a foreign designation in referring to ancient Anšan and Susiana, Elamite scholars are often Assyriologists, Iranists or Linguists in their academic background, i.e. they have approached Elam later and from an external point of view.²⁰³ At the same time this is an enriching factor, and today, thanks to these scholars, it is much clearer what Elam was. However, the Elam revisited by modern historiography is only the last transformation in the meaning of this name.²⁰⁴ As digging means unavoidably removal and mouldering, studying means reinventing and recreating the object of our study. Our Elam cannot be ancient Elam. Our Elam is a name, a mere label which we try to stick again to a thing which does not exist anymore and which we need to recon-

¹⁹⁷ What Salvini says about Hurrian (Salvini 2000: 12-13) can be applied to Elamite, too.

¹⁹⁸ Frye 1974: 63-66. Cf. Rossi 1981: 162.

¹⁹⁹ Labat 1973: 43.

²⁰⁰ Schmitt 1999: 541-542.

²⁰¹ Compare Meriggi 1971: 56-58 with Castellino 1971: 40.

²⁰² 'Rideterminazione dei settori scientifico-

disciplinari (decreto ministeriale del 04/10/2000).'

²⁰³ Cf., from an Assyriological point of view, the pressing concern regarding learning cuneiform in Oppert 1876: 147-148 and Sayce 1892: 175-176 ("Copy, copy, copy" and afterwards "translate, translate, translate!").

²⁰⁴ Potts 1999: 5.

struct according to our data and our speculations.

While the history of the name 'Elam' shows us that names are labels, the quest for a name to be assigned to Elam teaches us how important the act of giving a name to an object or a concept is, a

name which identifies it univocally in our or in ancient minds. I hope that by reviewing both, we can better understand what Elam represents today and what its peculiar place in modern historiography should be. I am quite confident that this stepchild can still grow.

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DB, DNa, DPa, DPc: Achaemenid inscriptions of king Darius (D) at Bisotun (B), Naqš-e Rostam (N) and Persepolis (P). **OP**: Old Persian version. See Kent 1953, Schmitt 1991 and 2000.

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FIGURES

1. Robert Ker PORTER, Stone relief of Gate R at Pasargadae with inscription CMA (1818) in the first, second and third kinds (from top to bottom) of Achaemenid languages [John CURTIS, *Ancient Persia – British Museum*, p. 37, London 1989].

2. The Tomb of Daniel at Susa (Loftus 1857) [John CURTIS, ed., *Mesopotamia and Iran in the Persian Period*, p. 68, London 1997]. Cf. *Daniel* 8,2: “And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai” [according to the King James Version].

3. ‘Cuneiform’ motifs as heading and ornament in *Mémoires du Congrès International des Orientalistes. Compte-Rendu de la Première Session - Paris - 1873. Tomes I et II*, pp. 117 and 229, Paris.

4. The ‘Scythic’ inscription of Bisotun as published in Norris 1855. Note the reading *A far ti* on line 10 of the transliteration.

5. Title-page of Oppert 1879.

6. Title-page of Delattre 1883.

7. Jacques DE MORGAN and Vincent SCHEIL at the Louvre Museum, 1902, February 4 [Chevalier 1997]. On the background, note the stele of victory of Naram-Sin found at Susa.

8. Filosseno LUZZATTO [courtesy of prof. Felice Israel].

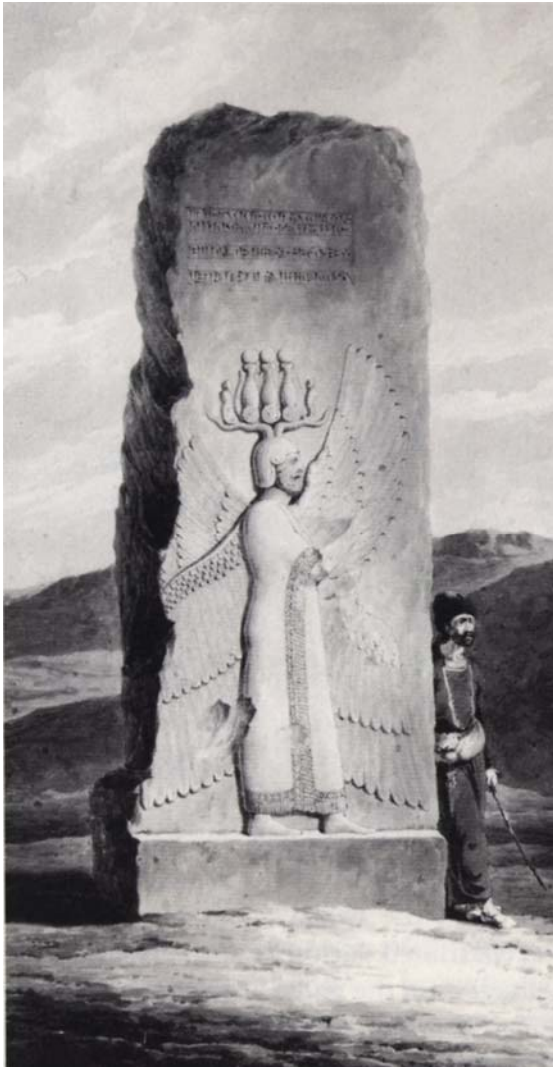
9. Felice FINZI (1847-1872) [Finzi R. 1983: 275].

10. Alfredo TROMBETTI (1866-1929) [*Scritti in onore di Alfredo Trombetti*, Milano 1938].

11. Maps of Mesopotamia with cuneiform names [Finzi 1872].

12. Books and articles about Elamite language per year [data from Hinz & Koch 1987 (till 1984) and Gian Pietro BASELLO, *Elamite Bibliographical Database*, demo available at <www.elamit.net> (1985 onwards)].

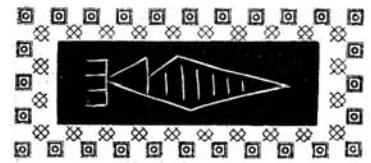
13. Susa, 1901, December – Ravenna, 2001, October. The discovery of the Codex Hammurapi.



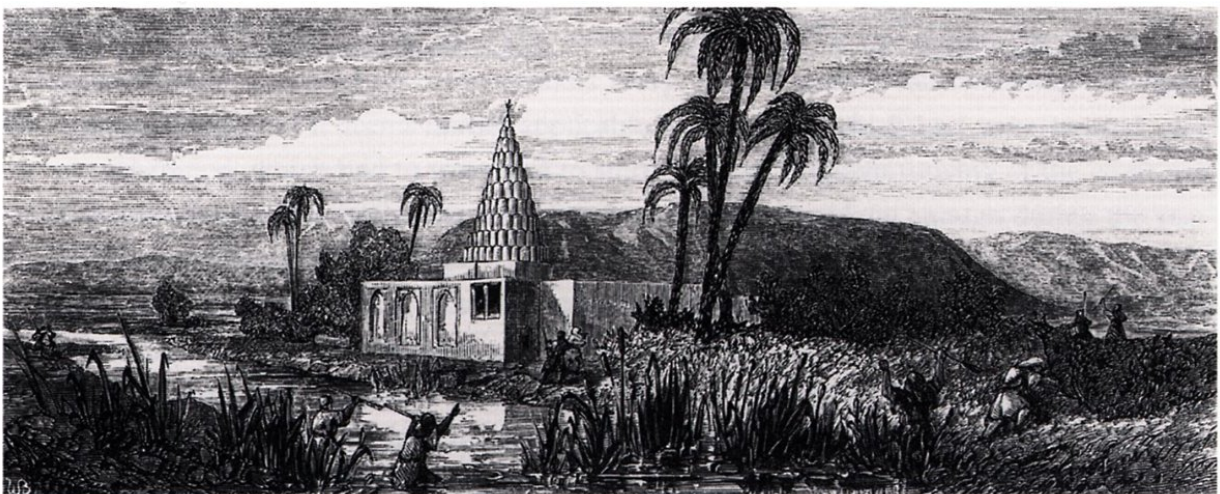
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Scythic Inscription: Column I.

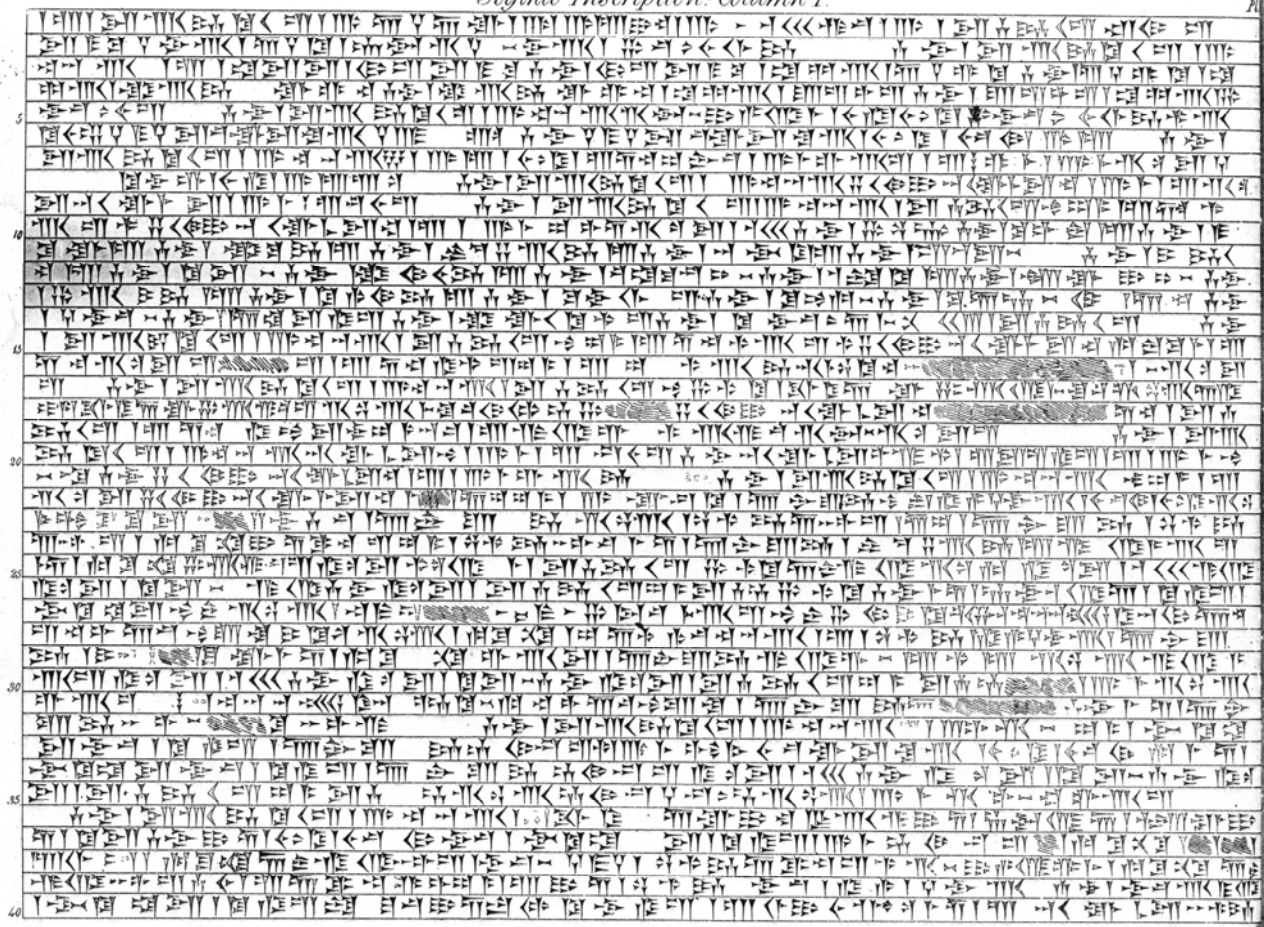


PLATE I.]

COLUMN I.

1. *Hu Ta ri ya va u s Ko r sa r ra Ko Ko fa in na Ko* - Par san ik ka *Ko Ta hi* [ya u s] na *Vi s*
2. *ta as ba sa ak ri R sa va Ru ven yu sa pa ak ri A ka van ni ši ya* hi ak *Ta ri* [ya] *va u s Ko*
3. *na an ri Hu T ta ta Vi s ta ns ba hi ak Vi s ta as ba [T] ta ri R sa m va hi ak R sa m va T*
4. *ta ri Ar ri ya ra m na hi ak Ar ri ya ra m na T ta ri Chi s pi s hi ak Chi* [s pi] s *T ta ri A*
5. *ak ka van ni s* hi ak *Ta ri ya va u s Ko na an ri yu ven pa in ras ki vas Ni ku Ni van s A ak* [ka van ni] ši ya *ti ri*
6. *va ni un sa as na ta ka [ra] ta [tu] ri Sa cho* hu t hi ak *sa as sa ta ka ra ta tu ri Ni van s Ni ka vi* [Ko fa] hi ak
7. *Ta ri ya va u s Ko na an ri VIII Ko fa Ni van s Hu ni na p pu ka Ko vas var ri s Hu IX m* [vas Ko vas] *yu t ta sa*
8. *va ak var Ni ku Ko fa hu t* hi ak *Ta ri ya va u s Ko na an ri va u vi in* [a u ra vas ta na] *Ko vas Hu yu t*
9. *ta a u ra [vas ta] Ko vas Hu tu ni s* hi ak *Ta ri ya va u s Ko na an ri Ta hi ya* [us ye p po] *Hu ni na ti*
10. *ri s ti sa u vi in a u va vas ta na Hu Ko vas p pi ni yu t ta Par san hi ak A far ti* [hi ak Ba pi lu] *fa hi ak As*
11. *su ra fa hi ak [Ar] ba ya fa hi ak Vu t sa ri ya fa hi ak An gau s fa hi ak [S par ta pa* hi] *ak I ya u*
12. *na fa hi ak Va ta pa hi ak Ar vi ni ya fa hi ak Ka ba tu kas pa hi ak Par thu va fa* [hi ak Sar ra] *in kas pa hi ak*
13. *A ri i ya fa [hi] ak Va ras vi ya fa hi ak Ba ak ši s hi ak Su uk tas pa hi ak [Ba r ru pa vi] tha na hi ak*
14. *Sa ak ka pa hi ak Tha t ta ku s hi ak Ar ra u va ti s hi ak Va ak ka van r tar no* [XXIII Ta hi ya u] s hi ak
15. *Ta ri ya [va u] s Ko na an ri Ta hi ya u s y o p [po] Hu ni na ti ri s ti sa u vi in* [a u ra vas ta na] *tas lu ba [vas] Hu*
16. *ni na yu t ta s . . . Hu ni na ku ti s p po Hu p ti ri ya an u vas far va na pa yu t ta*
si(1)
17. *s* hi ak *Ta ri ya va u s Ko na an ri Ta hi ya u s ye a ti va Yo s r ra* [a ri ki tar tu ka] *yu far ri r ku*
18. *uk ti* [Yo s r ra a ri ik ka s] *yu far ri tar tu ka vi al e . . . sa u vi in a u ra vas ta na ni na Ta hi*
19. *ya u s Hu ni na ku uk ta ak p po an ka Hu ik ki var ti ri ik ka yu ven pa yu t ta [s]* [hi] *ak Ta ri*
20. *ya va [u s] Ko [na an] ri a u ra vas ta na Ko vas Hu tu ni s hi ak a u ra vas ta pi* [ik ti Hu ta s ku s] *Hu Ko vas ye*
21. *pa tu hi ak [sa u vi in a u ra vas] ta na Hu Ko vas var ri ya* hi ak *Ta ri ya va u s Ko na an ri] ye p po Hu*
22. *yu t ta [sa u vi in a u ra vas] ta na . [tha] p po Ko ra tu va Kan pu chi ya ge* [si Kur as sa ak ri Ni ka vi] *Ni [van s yu] far*
23. *no am su su ta (1) . hi ak hi ka Kan pu chi ya yu far ri Par ti ya r af pi s* [tha p Kan pu chi] *ya Par ti ya*
24. *r af pi s Tas su nos in ni tar na s p po Par ti ya af pi ka vas ni Kan pu chi ya Vu t sa* [ri ya fa ik] *ki po ri s*
25. *vas ni Tas su nos [a ri ik] ka s ku t ta ti t ki vas Ta hi ya u s a ti va r si ik ki* [yu t tas ku t ta] *Par san ik ki*
26. *ku t ta Va [ta pa] ik ki hi ak ku t ta Ta hi ya u s p po ta hi e a ti va hi ak [vas ni Ru ven ki] r Va ku s*
27. *Gau va t ta ye si yu far ri . na as . . - Kar as - A rak ka tar ri s ye si a vi i* [va ka XIV an na an mon] *s an vi kan na*
28. *s na pi r ka ye [chi] tu i va ka yu far ri Tas su nos P r ti ras ka na an ri Hu Par ti ya* [Ku ras sa ak ri Kan] *pu chi*
29. *ya i . . . va ra vas ni Tas su nos var ri ta Kan pu chi ya ik ki var [pa fa ti fa yu] far ri ik ki po*
30. *ri s ku t ta Par san hi ak ku t ta Va ta pa hi ak ku t ta Ta hi ya u s p po ta* [hi e] . . *Ko vas yu far ri*
31. *var ri s IX an na an an mon s an gar va pa tas na pi r ka ye chi tu Kan pu chi ya . . . [hi] ak vas ni Kan pu*



5



7



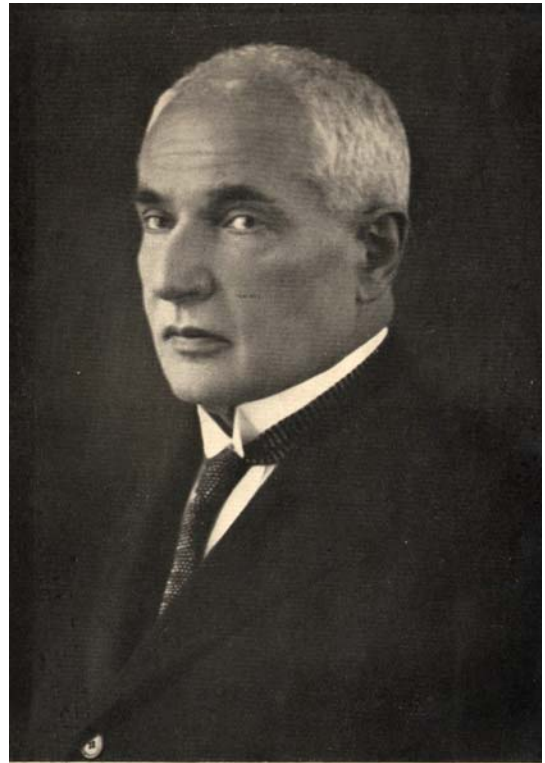
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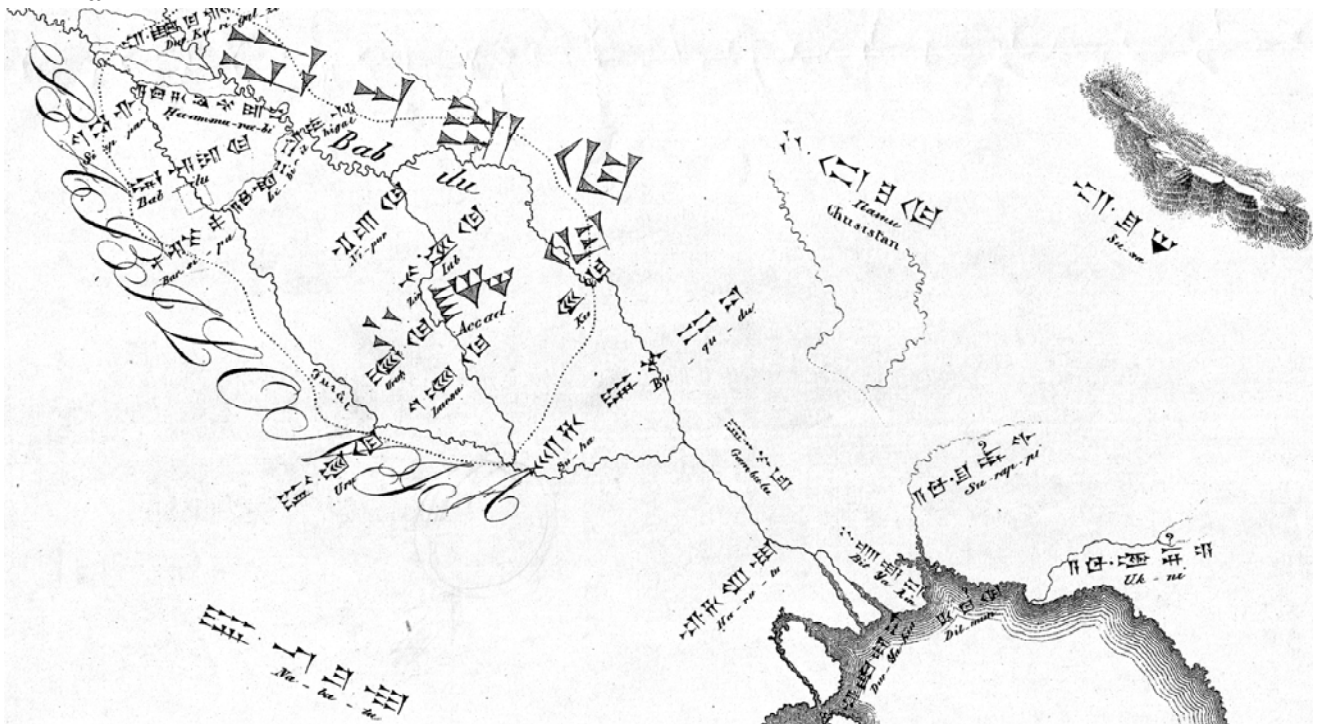
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10

Alfred Cerametti

11a



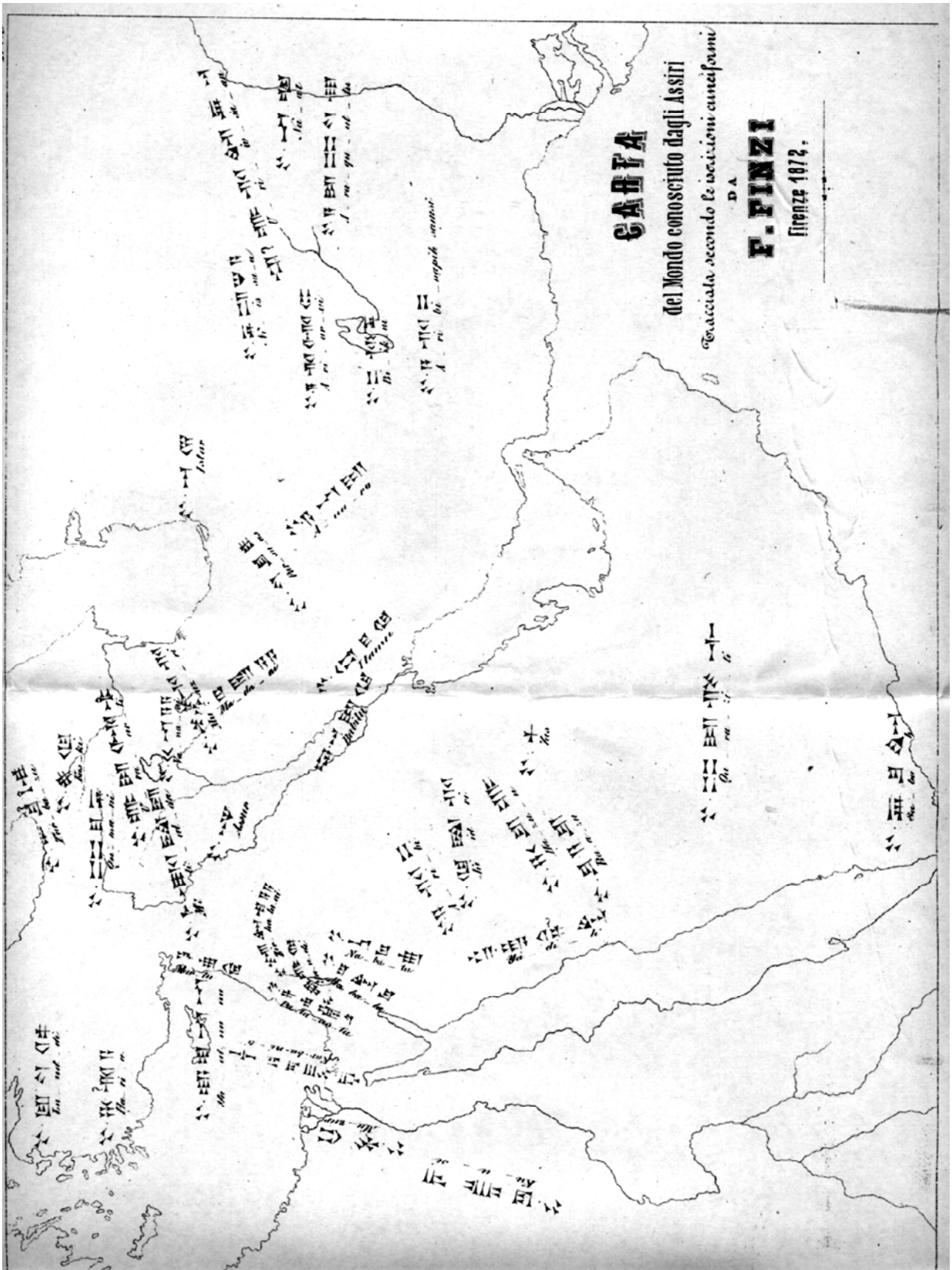
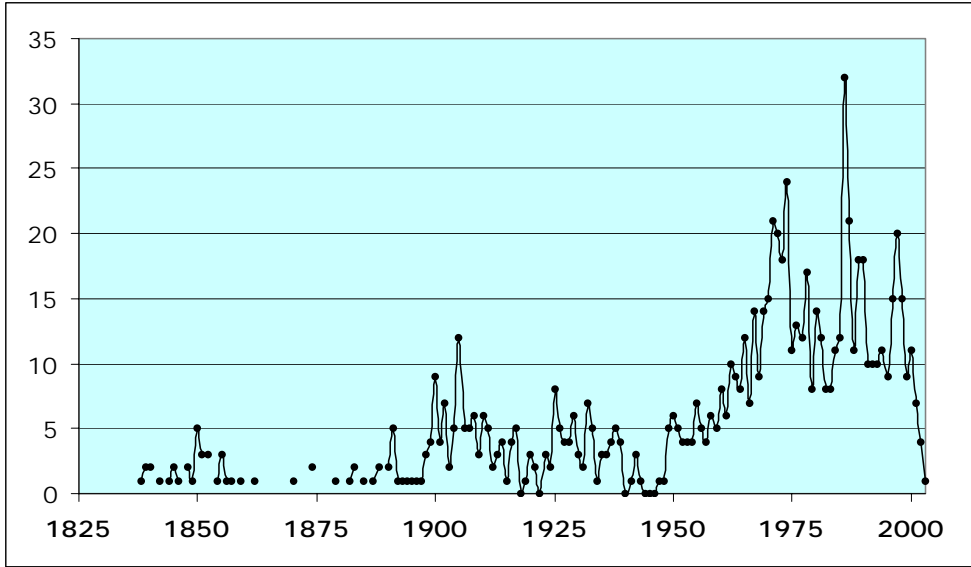


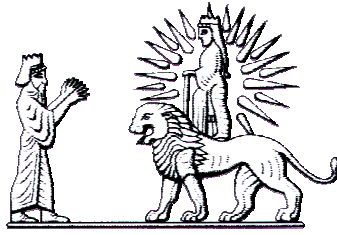
PLATE V



12

13





MELAMMU SYMPOSIA IV

SCHOOLS OF ORIENTAL STUDIES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN HISTORIOGRAPHY

Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Symposium
of the Assyrian and Babylonian Intellectual Heritage Project
Held in Ravenna, Italy, October 13-17, 2001

Edited by

A. PANAINO A. PIRAS

With the collaboration of

G. P. BASELLO



UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA & ISIAO
MILANO 2004

The Assyrian and Babylonian Intellectual Heritage project (Melammu) investigates the continuity, transformation and diffusion of Mesopotamian culture throughout the ancient world from the second millennium BC until Islamic times. A central objective of the project is to create an electronic database collecting the relevant textual, art-historical, archaeological, ethnographical and linguistic evidence and making it easily accessible on the Internet. In addition, the project organizes annual symposia focusing on different aspects of cultural continuity and evolution in the ancient world.

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FOREWORD

The Fourth Annual Symposium of the MELAMMU Project held in Ravenna (October 13th-17th 2001), one month after 11th September, was a very special event and not only from a scientific point of view, as on the one hand it was an important occasion to put together scholars engaged in different fields of research in a friendly and warm context of collaboration and debate and on the other hand it was a crucial moment for reflections and considerations about the humane side of this cultural project and its peculiar target, beyond scientific and academic researches, to promote dialogue among different cultures, languages and frames of mind. The results of those debates during this Conference caused the general assembly to decree the foundation of the “International Association for Intercultural Studies of the MELAMMU Project” that was officially and legally established and provided with its own statutes in those days, as already documented in the Proceedings of the Third MELAMMU Symposium (Milano 2002, pp. 257-264).

The Fourth MELAMMU Symposium of Ravenna, whose subject was “Schools of Oriental Studies and the Development of Modern Historiography,” was organized with the important support of the Assyrian American National Federation and the partnership of the “Alma Mater Studiorum – University of Bologna,” more specifically its Office of International Relationships, the Faculty of Preservation of the Cultural Heritage and the Department of Histories and Methods for the Preservation of the Cultural Heritage, the latter two being located in Ravenna, where the sessions took place. We also would like to thank the Istituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente (IsIAO) and its President, Professor Gherardo Gnoli, the Fondazione Flaminia and the Municipality of Ravenna for their precious collaboration; it is also our pleasure to mention here Dr. Claudia Leurini for her efficient activity in the organizing management of the Conference and Col. Ermanno Calderoni for his kind help too.

The editors are also pleased to express their deep gratitude to Dr. Gian Pietro Basello and to Dr. Federica Crabu (“L’Orientale” University, Naples) for their informatic competence and skilfulness in tidying this fourth volume of proceedings of the MELAMMU Symposium for publication.

Ravenna, June 2004

Antonio Panaino

Andrea Piras

“Alma Mater Studiorum – University of Bologna”

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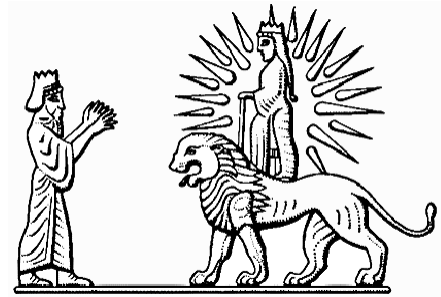
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“Elam between Assyriology and Iranian Studies”

GIAN PIETRO BASELLO

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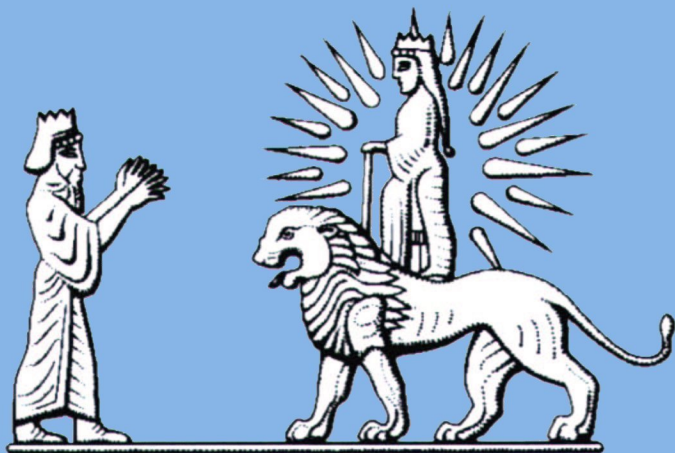
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MELAMMU SYMPOSIA IV



Schools of Oriental Studies and the Development of Modern Historiography

Edited by

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