Eduard GRANTOVSKY

SCYTHIAN ETHNOGENESIS.
THE EVIDENCE OF LANGUAGE[1]

It is universally accepted that the Scythians and the Sarmato-Alans spoke Eastern Iranian dialects. The Eastern Iranian marker of the plural, -*t(a)*, is documented for the Scythian language of the 7th-5th centuries; it was with this particle that the Scythians' ethnonym of **škuδa-* (or **skuδa-*) [δ in the conventional iranological transcription stands for the interdental voiced D], rendered by Assyrian words denoting the Scythians and their country, i.e. *ašguzāi, asguzāi, iškuzāi, Iškuza* and Hebrew **aškūz*, was affixed. Proper and ethnic names from Scythia recorded by classical authors and undeniably going back to **skuδa-*, such as, for instance, Σκύλης (for the δ>*l* change see below) and Σκόλοτοι, i.e. **skula-ta*, show in the former case the word-base proper, and in the latter case – the same word-base with the plural marker common in tribal names (cf. Μασσαγέται, Σαυρομάται, etc.). One can also distinguish typical examples of Eastern Iranian lexemes, such as *kapa-* 'fish'[2] (cf. Pashto *kab*, Khotan Saka *kapa*, etc., versus Western Iranian *masya-*, Old Indian *mátsya*) and *sāna* 'enemy' (cf. Khotan Saka *sāna* 'foe')[3]. [Owing to the scarcity of the data at hand, up to the early 1990s no attempts had been made to find out the inherent, not merely chronological, differences between Scythian and Sarmatian, if any, in order to trace the subgroup affiliation of the former It was tacitly agreed that, since Scythian had been very close to Sarmatian, which was in its turn very close to Alano-Ossetic, the Scythian language was simply bound to belong to the same subgroup. However, the Scythian words recorded by classical authors enable one to determine certain phonetic traits of this idiom]. According to the Scythian creation myth (HERODOTUS IV, 5-7), the first man, progenitor of the human race, had three sons: Λιπόξαϊς, Ἀρπόξαϊς, and Κολάξαϊς. Under their rule golden objects, namely a yoke and plough, a battle-axe, and a libation cup, came down from the sky. Only the youngest brother – Kolaxais – had seized the fiery gold and became king. From him, "the youngest of them, [originated] kings called *Paralatai*" (ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ νεωτάτου αὐτῶν

τοὺς βασιλέας, οἱ καλέονται Παραλάται). Herodotus further mentions that the Scythians call themselves *Skolotoi* (Σκόλοτοι), while Greeks call them Scythians (Σκύθαι).

Since, as Benveniste (JA, t. 230, 1938, 532-534) pointed out, Herodotus's account makes the impression of being directly translated from Scythian, it is safe to assume that it contains a genuine Scythian term denoting the warrior, resp. the princely, caste as well as genuine Scythian ethnonyms.

It has long since been noted that the Greek Παραλάται is an exact parallel to the Avestan name of the mythological first kings – *paraδāta* (the word can be translated either as 'placed in front' or as 'first law-givers'). The parallel reflects the *δ>l* change in Scythian that can also be seen in Σκόλοτοι (**skuδa->*skula-*; hence **skula-ta*, a plural formation in **-ta*) as well as in Scythian proper names recorded by classical authors, e.g. Σκύλης (Skula, the name of a Scythian king) and *Scolopitus (*Skulapitā-* 'Father of the Scythians', the name of a Scythian king mentioned by Justinus). The name of one of the last Scythian kings, Πάλακος- **Pālak(a)<Pāδaka* displays the same regular phonetic trait; the name clearly derives from *pād* 'foot', cf. the name of a Persian ([LÚ]*parsai) Pa-da-ak-ka* in a Babylonian document of 508 B.C. and a Scythian or Sarmatian name from Olbia – Πάδαγος[4] [This feature affiliates the dialect of the Royal Scythians with Southeast Iranian languages, such as Pashto, Munji, Yidga, and the extinct Bactrian, rather than with Ossetic]. It can be said with confidence that, contrary to a widespread opinion, this change took place at an early date, since the name *Bāhlika,* corresponding to the Avestan *Bāxδiš*, was known in India as early as in the 5th-4th centuries B.C. Such forms as *Bāhlika* and Old Indian *lipi-* 'writing' (from Western Iranian *dipi,* ultimately from Sumerian through Elamite) as well as the variability of the latter word in Asokan inscriptions – *dipi* and *lipi* – is probably due to the existence of Iranian dialects either having undergone the *δ>l* change or characterized by an alternate *δ/l* pronunciation in Eastern Afghanistan on the Indian border Judging from Achaemenian inscriptions and accounts of classical authors (Scylax, Hecataeus, and Herodotus), the same areas east and south-east of Bactriane and north-west of the Indus valley in the 6th-5th centuries B.C. were inhabited by Iranian-speaking Saka (in Old Persian) or Scythians (in Greek), including the Saka Haumavarga of Persian inscriptions, resp. Herodotus's Σάκαι ᾿Αμύργιοι whom J Marquart (1901, 226) on historical-geographical grounds regarded as the ancestors of the Munji. Now Marquart's conclusion can be substantiated by the above-mentioned Scythian-Bactrian-Pashto-Munji isogloss.

However, the Iranian onomasticon recorded since the 7th-5th centuries B.C. reflects yet another dialect differing from the Scythian and Sarmato-

Alanian, i.e. a Western Iranian idiom. In this connection it is worth noting that phonetically Western Iranian lexemes can be encountered in quite a number of Eastern Iranian languages. Thus, Henning (1958, 108) highlighted some specific common traits shared by the 'South-Western' Old Persian and 'Eastern' Sogdian yet alien to the 'North-Western' Iranian languages of the area between Fars and Sogdiana. Old Persian also shares certain features with some other Eastern Iranian languages; their speakers sometimes bear ethnic names similar to that of the Persians, e.g. the Afghans' own name for themselves, *Pashtun*[5] These facts, however, by no means imply that the Persians migrated to Western Iran from Central Asia or Eastern Iran where they had lived side by side with Eastern Iranian speakers (as, for instance, stated in Frye, 1963, 43, 46) or that Eastern Iranian tribes, such as Chorasmians, came to Central Asia from Western Iran where they formed a single subgroup with Persians (as was maintained by F Altheim, W. Brandenstein, et al.). Old Persian, in spite of its sometimes unexpected phonetic developments, belongs to the Western Iranian subgroup and does not show any specific Eastern Iranian traits (the latter do not include certain features that Old Persian share with certain Eastern Iranian languages). Moreover, at the time of the presumed contacts between the ancestor language(s) of Old Persian and those of some Eastern Iranian languages the spatial distribution of Iranian dialects differed substantially from their spread in the historical period.

Irregular "Persian" elements in other Iranian languages are also indicative of prehistoric contacts having taken place outside the territory of Iran. Such facts were observed in Ossetic, Pashto, Khotan Saka, and other languages; certain "Persian" forms entered Tocharian A and B, Finnish, Hungarian, Turkic and Caucasian languages, etc. (see ABAEV, 1945, 1949, 138-143, 175; 1958, 360 et al., BAILEY, 1957, 68, 69; cf. also SZEMERÉNYI, 1951). Traditionally such phenomena were ascribed to the influence of Old Persian from the territory of Ancient Iran. However, Abaev (1945; 1949, 240) raised, with regard to "Persian" forms in Ossetic, the question whether contacts between Scythian and Old Persian had taken place "during the oldest period of Iranian unity when the Proto-Scythian and Proto-Persian could be neighbours, or one has to do with later influences" In a number of cases the first alternative seems preferable. It was pointed out by Morgenstierne (1927, 39) with regard to Pashto *las* "hand" going back to "Southwestern" **dasta* instead of the expected **źasta* (the same "Southwestern" form is reflected in Pamir languages, Khotan Saka, Sogdian and Yaghnobi as well as in Caucasian languages and Kurdish), and then by Bailey (1957) and some other authors (cf. also IVANOV, 1958).

It should be noted that some of the allegedly "Persian" words are unknown in the Persian language. A striking example of this phenomenon is

"Southwestern" *paraθu- 'axe' (Greek πέλεκυς. Old Indian parašú-, Common Iranian *parasu->Yazgulami parus, see ABAEV, 1958, 451). The Persian for 'axe' is tabar (<*tapar), the same form is reflected in a number of other Iranian languages, in Slav, Finnish, etc. It has been surmised that *tapar was a metathesized form of *paraθu-. Be it as it may, regardless of the ultimate origin of *tapar, it was from time immemorial characteristic of Persian and other Western Iranian languages (cf. Balochi tapar, Kurdish tafär, Tati tever, as well as an Iranian loanword in Armenian, t'ap'ar), while the terms for 'axe' recorded in the languages of the areas situated further north, e.g. in Khotan Saka, Tocharian and Eastern Finnish languages, in Chuvash, etc., go back to the "Southwestern Iranian" reflex of the Aryan etymon *parašu, i.e. *paraθu-. Therefore Ossetic færæt 'axe' (undoubtedly from *paraθu-) could not have been borrowed from Iran. The same is true of Ossetic rætæn 'rope' going back to *raθana- (cf. Old Indian rašaná-), while in Persian we find a reflex of *rasana-. rasan. Similarly, Ossetic dæstæg 'handful of ears' from "Southwestern" *dasta- 'hand' (in a regular Eastern Iranian reflex of Proto-Iranian žasta one would expect the initial *z-) can hardly be regarded as a result of late Persian influence. Yet another "Old Persian" form in Ossetic, talm 'elm' (cf. Old Persian θarmi-, Middle Persian sarv 'cypress'), does not seem likely to be an Old Persian loanword from Southwestern Iran either.

Such names of Scythian kings of the 7th – first half of the 5th centuries B.C. as Σπαργαπείθης[6] and 'Αριαπείθης[7] (HEROD. IV, 76, 78) are also "southwestern" forms independent of the alleged Achaemenian influence. The name of Σπαργαπείθης, who was a great-grandfather of a contemporary of Darius I and therefore lived in the early-mid 7th century B.C., as well as that of 'Αριαπείθης contain a Southwestern reflex of Common Iranian *paiśa- 'outlook; decoration' with "Southwestern" θ instead of the regular s. For the regular "non-Southwestern" form of the former name, cf. the name of a Massagetes: Σπαργαπίσης (HEROD. I, 211, 213).

A Scytho-Sarmatian name 'Αρδαρος can also be treated as a "Southwestern" form. This name (recorded also with the Iranian suffix -ka – 'Αρδάρακος) is quite widespread (see ZGUSTA, 1955, 68, 69) and, as was repeatedly pointed out (Vs. MILLER, F. JUSTI, M. VASMER, V ABAEV et al.), undoubtedly affiliated with Ossetic (Iron) ældar (<*ardār, cf. Digor ærdar) 'elder; chief; prince' The name was borrowed into Hungarian: aladár 'centurio cohortis praetoriae', 'noble' as well as a proper name, and into Mongolian languages: Mongol aldar '(martial) glory', Kalmuck 'master', recorded in the 13th century as a Mongol proper name (ABAEV, 1949, 34, 63 ff., 154, 199; 1958, 126-128). Probably the word originally meant 'a renowned warrior', 'war chief', hence, as usual, 'noble', 'prince'[8]. The existing etymologies (those

of Abaev· from *armadāra deriving from *arma 'hand' and *dar 'to hold',
'Handhaber', 'wielding [power]' and Bogoljubov/Smirnova: from *hartar, cf.
Avestan harətar- 'overseer', 'guard') do not seem convincing either phoneti-
cally or semantically However, all the difficulties may be resolved if one as-
sumes that the term in question goes back to a "Southwestern" form: *ardāra-;
cf. Avestan arəzah 'battle', arəzayant- 'fighting', 'warring' In this case
*ardāra is either formed from *arda with the suffix -ra/āra (cf. the Avestan
proper name Vanāra, seemingly from the verb root van- 'win') or is a com-
pound of *arda and the verb stem ar- 'move', 'set in motion', i.e. 'moving in
battle' or 'setting the battle in motion', cf. the Avestan compound arəzah and a
semantically close to ar- verbal root šyāv-: arəzo.šūta 'led into battle'

Thus, it appears from the above that the spread of Iranian speakers in
Southeast Europe was not due solely to the migration of the Scythians from the
East in the 8th century B.C. It seems likely that the Iranian-speaking population
settled in the North Pontic area in the Prae-Scythian epoch. The Scythian lan-
guage that included various Eastern Iranian dialects spread over earlier West-
ern Iranian dialects in the North Pontic area and, probably, in Ciscaucasia and
the Caucasus, hence Southwestern Iranian elements in the Scythian language
(although some of them could have been borrowed as a result of earlier con-
tacts of the bearers of already dispersed Iranian dialects). [To summarize, there
are good grounds to believe that the bearers of "Southeastern" Iranian dialects,
affiliated to modern Pashto, Yidga, Munji, and the extinct Bactrian (hence the
d>l change), of "Northeastern" Iranian dialects, affiliated to Ossetic, Khotan
Saka, etc. (hence the plural formed with *t(a)), and of "Southwestern" Iranian
dialects (hence the *ś>θ change) participated in the ethnogenesis of the Scy-
thians.]

REFERENCES CITED

ABAEV, 1945 V.I. ABAEV "Drevnepersidskie elementy v skifskom jazyke" *Iranskie
jazyki, I.*

ABAEV, 1949 V.I. ABAEV *Osetinskij jazyk i fol'klor* Vol. 1. Moscow

BAILEY, 1957 H.W BAILEY "A Problem of the Indo-Iranian Vocabulary", *Rocznik Ori-
entalistyczny* XXI, Warszawa.

BOGOLJUBOV and SMIRNOVA, 1963 M.N. BOGOLJUBOV and O.I. SMIRNOVA. *Sogdijskie
dokumenty s gory Mug,* III. Moscow.

FRYE, 1963. R.N. FRYE, *The Heritage of Persia,* Cleveland and New York.

GRANTOVSKY, 1970 E.A. GRANTOVSKY *Rannjaja istorija iranskix plemën Perednej
Azii.* Moscow.

HARMATTA, 1951 J. HARMATTA. "Studies in the Language of the Iranian Tribes in South Russia" *Acta Orient. Hung., T I, fasc. 2-3.*

HENNING, 1958 W.B. HENNING. "Mitteliranisch" – *"Handbuch der Orientalistik"*, I, Bd IV, Abschnitt 1, Leiden-Köln.

IVANOV, 1958 V V IVANOV "Problema jazykov *centum* i *satem*", *Voprosy jazykoznanija,* no. 4.

MARQUART, 1901 J. MARQUART, Eranšahr nach der Geographie des Ps. Moses Xorenac'i, Berlin.

MORGENSTIERNE, 1927 G. MORGENSTIERNE. *Etymological Vocabulary of Pashto.* Oslo.

SZEMERÉNYI, 1951 O. SZEMERÉNYI. " 'Südwestiranische' Lehnwörter in Ungarischen und Türkischen", in: F. Altheim, *Geschichte der lateinischer Sprache,* Frankfurt am Main.

ZGUSTA, 1955. *Die Personennamen griechischer Städte der nördlichen Schwarzmeerküste.* Praha.

Э. А. ГРАНТОВСКИЙ

ЭТНОГЕНЕЗ СКИФОВ ПО ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИМ ДАННЫМ

РЕЗЮМЕ

Лингвистический материал позволяет утверждать, что ираноязычное население появилось в Юго-Восточной Европе еще до миграции туда с востока скифов. Скифский язык, сформировавшийся на основе различных восточноиранских диалектов, наложился в Северном Причерноморье и, возможно, в Закавказье и на Северном Кавказе на западноиранский субстрат. Есть основания полагать, что в этногенезе скифов приняли участие носители юговосточноиранских наречий, родственных современным пашто, йидга, мунджанскому и мертвому бактрийскому, о чем свидетельствует наблюдаемый в скифском характерный юговосточноиранский переход $d>l$ (ср. название скифской касты царей у Геродота Παραλάται и авестийское наименование мифических первоцарей *paraδāta),* северовосточноиранских языков, родственных хотано-сакскому, осетинскому и т.п. (откуда, в частности, в скифском формант множественного числа *-t(a)),* и югозападноиранских диалектов (откуда переход иранского *ś* в *θ,* как в именах скифских царей Σπαργαπείθης и 'Αριαπείθης, где вторая часть представляет собой рефлекс общеиранского *paiśa-* "облик; украшение").

[1] Tlie present jottings on the Scythian language were extracted from the late Edwin Grantovsky's works, bearing on Indo-Iranian prehistory and the history of early Iranian tribes in the Near East and, therefore, largely unnoticed by scythologists. These observations, however, are of primary import for the study of Scythian. They were translated by Sergey Kullanda, who has also supplied the additional passages in square brackets.

[2] Recorded in the name of the Bosporan capital, *Pantikapaion*< *Panti-kapa*< The Way of Fish, from the name of the Kertch strait on whose shore the city was situated.

[3] Recorded in the name of the Scythian king Σάνευνος< *Sāna-vana*, Vanquishing the Enemies (J. HARMATTA, 1951, p. 96-98). The king in question was mentioned by Hellanicus (Oxyrh. X, 2 ff.).

[4] L. ZGUSTA'S (1955, 81, 82) attempt to compare this name with such names as Βαδάκης and Βάδαγος is hardly justified, all the more so since he mentions O. Klíma identifying it with Middle Persian *Pāδay*.

[5] For more details see GRANTOVSKY, 1970, 164-169.

[6] The name goes back to Common Iranian **Spargupaiśa* (traditionally translated as 'looking like a young sprout'/?/ – cf. Avestan *sparəya* 'sprout, shoot' but more likely meaning 'having a headdress decorated with sprouts' – a widespread detail of representations of Iranian princes.

[7] The name goes back to Common Iranian **Aryapaiśa* 'Of Aryan outlook'

[8] The mediaeval Hungarian meaning 'chief bodyguard' that M. Bogoljubov and O. Smirnova (1963, 110) regard as the original one seems likely to be secondary (probably from 'detachment commander'). It is recorded neither in Ossetic nor in Mongolian languages, while the Hungarian word also meant 'warlike' and 'noble'.