

## Appendix: *pšgryb'* at Ḥatra

In a preceding brief article I dedicated to the use of the Middle Persian term *pasāgrīw* in the often mentioned papyri from the middle reaches of the Euphrates, I treated some problems relating to the use of the word in Semitic contexts and the cultural as well as political meanings to be attributed to this title in the Edessean context.<sup>284</sup> In this appendix my intention is to present and discuss the inscriptions of Ḥatra regarding this term which could only be glossed over in my previous work because of lack of space.

The earliest evidence regarding the term *ps'gryw* is to be found in Aramaic documents, as no further evidence is available in Parthian and it is found in eight inscriptions, all from the town of Ḥatra,<sup>285</sup> presenting us with some graphical differences that have been attentively analysed by Geo WIDENGREN.<sup>286</sup>

It is impossible to observe any semantic difference in the alternation of the forms *pzgryb'*, *pšgrb'*, *pšgry'*, *pšgryb'* that exist in the eight texts from Ḥatra. Hereafter I cite all inscriptions following the edition by Francesco VATTIONI:

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<sup>284</sup> GNOLI 2002.

<sup>285</sup> *Corpora* of the inscriptions of Hatra (H): VATTIONI 1981; AGGOULA 1991; AGGOULA 1990; AGGOULA 1994. Cf. also SARTRE 2001, 636 n. 132. We are talking about H 28, 36, 195, 287, 367, 368, 375, 376. The inscriptions H 287, 367, 368, 375, 376 have all been published after 1983 and have thus been ignored by most scholars who have dealt with this term. KHURSHUDIAN 1998 wrongly maintains that the term is attested just in three inscriptions of Hatra.

<sup>286</sup> WIDENGREN 1960, 28-29, n. 102.

H(atra) 28,<sup>287</sup> house next to shrine II<sup>288</sup>

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|---|---|
| 1. [... ] <i>smy</i> 'm'                | 1. [ ] <i>smy</i> mother                |
| 2. 'bdsmy' <i>pšgrb</i> '               | 2. of 'bdsmy' the heir to the throne,   |
| 3. <i>br snṯrwq mlk</i> '               | 3. son of Snṯrwq the king               |
| 4. 'l ḥ[y] <sup>289</sup> <i>snṯrwq</i> | 4. for the life of Snṯrwq               |
| 5. <i>mlk</i> ['] 'b' <i>dbnyh</i>      | 5. the king, the father of her children |

H 36,<sup>290</sup> 237/238 A. D. From shrine V

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>byrh tšry šnt D</i>                                | 1. In the month Tišri in the year D-                     |
| 2. XXXXVIII <i>šlmt</i> '<d> <i>dwšpry brt</i>           | 2. XXXXVIII the statue is of Dwšpry daughter             |
| 3. <i>snṯrwq mlk</i> ' <i>br</i> 'bdsmy'                 | 3. of Snṯrwq the king, son of 'bdsmy'                    |
| 4. <i>mlk</i> ' <i>wbtsmy</i> ['] 'm' <i>dy pzgryb</i> ' | 4. the king and Btsmy', mother of the heir to the throne |
| 5. [ <i>dy</i> 'qym lh ... <i>br</i> ]                   | 5. [who posed for her.... son]                           |
| 6. 'bd'gyly <i>br stnbl rḥmh</i>                         | 6. of 'bd'gjly, son of Stnbl, his friend                 |

H 195,<sup>291</sup> from the shrine of Šamaš.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. <i>šlm</i> ' <i>dy snṯrwk mlk</i> ' <i>br</i> 'bdsmy' <i>mlk</i>  | 1. Statue of Snṯrwq the king, son of 'bds-                            |
| 2. <i>d'rb dy</i> 'qym <i>lh nšryhb rbyt</i> ' <i>dmrn</i> <i>br</i> | 2. of 'rb who erected for him Nšryhb the butler of Mrn, son           |
| 3. 'jwyd'lt 'l ḥy' 'bdsmy' <i>pšgry</i> ' <i>brh</i>                 | 3. of 'wyd'lt for the life of 'bdsmy', the heir to the throne his son |

<sup>287</sup> MARICQ 1955, 281-282; POIRIER 1981, 216; AGGOULA 1991, 22; VATTIONI 1994, 44.

<sup>288</sup> VATTIONI 1981 reports «tra i resti vicini al santuario nr. 3», but cf. BERTOLINO 1995, 62.

<sup>289</sup> About this very customary formula in Semitic epigraphy cf. the extensive research by DIJKSTRA 1995.

<sup>290</sup> MARICQ 1955; ROSENTHAL 1967, 46; DONNER, RÖLLIG 1962, 250; AGGOULA 1969, 93; DEGEN 1971, 125; MILIK 1972, 371; SAFAR 1973, 95; POIRIER 1981, 216; AGGOULA 1991, 30; VATTIONI 1994, 45.

<sup>291</sup> ALTHEIM, STIEHL 1967, 261; ROSENTHAL 1967, 47; AGGOULA 1969, 99; SAFAR 1973, 95; POIRIER 1981, 216; AGGOULA 1991, 92; DIJKSTRA 1994, 194; VATTIONI 1994, 56.

H 287,<sup>292</sup> socle of limestone statue.

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|-------------------------------|--|
| 1.                            | 1.   |
| 2.                            | 2.   |
| 3. <i>br klbsl' [ʔ]špzkh</i>  | 3. son of Klbsl' his host                    |
| 4. <i>ʿl hy' snṯrwq mlk'</i>  | 4. for the life of Snṯrwq the king           |
| 5. <i>d'rb'y' w'bdsm'y'</i>   | 5. of the 'rby' and 'bdsm'y'                 |
| 6. <i>pšgryb' brh [w'ʿl]</i>  | 6. the heir to the throne, his son [and for] |
| 7. <i>ḥyyhy [ddh w]ʿl hy'</i> | 7. his life [to him and] for the life        |
| 8. <i>bnyhy [dd]h klh</i>     | 8. of his children, to them                  |
| 9. <i>dy'ḥb</i>               | 9. all                                       |

H 367<sup>293</sup>

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>byt' dbn' l't snṯrwk mlk' br</i>             | 1. House that the king Snṯrwq built in Allat son of                                      |
| 2. <i>nšrw mry' [w]ḥbsmy' pšgryb' brh lṯb dkyr</i> | 2. Nšrw (my) lord [and] 'bsmy' the heir to the throne his son. May he be well remembered |

H 368<sup>294</sup>

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>byt]ḥ dbn [ʔ l't] snṯr[wq ml]k' br nšrw mry'</i> | 1. Hou]se that Snṯr[wq the] king son of (my) lord Nšrw buil[t in Allat]    |
| 2. <i>w'ḥ]sm'y pšgryb[ʔ] brh dkyr lṯb</i>              | 2. and 'ḥ]sm'y' the heir to the throne, his son. May he be well remembered |

H 375<sup>295</sup>

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. .... <i>'bsmy' pš]gryb' br snṯrwq [mlk'] d'rb br nšrw mry'</i> | 1. 'bsmy' h]eir to the throne son of Snṯrwq [king] son of Nšrw (my) lord |
|---|--|

H 376<sup>296</sup>

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>šlm' dy Snṯrwq mlk' br nšrw mry' w'ḥbsmy' pšgryb'</i> | 1. Statue of Snṯrwq the king son of Nšrw (my) lord and 'ḥbsmy' the heir to the throne |
| 2. <i>brh dkyr lṯb</i>                                      | 2. his son; may he be well remembered   |

<sup>292</sup> AGGOULA 1975, 186-187; VATTIONI 1994, 65.

<sup>293</sup> AŞ-ŞĀLIḤĪ 1985, 133; VATTIONI 1986, 613 n° 894; AGGOULA 1986, 363; AGGOULA 1988, 200; AGGOULA 1991, 167; VATTIONI 1994, 77.

<sup>294</sup> AGGOULA 1986, 364; AGGOULA 1988, 200; AGGOULA 1991, 167; VATTIONI 1994, 78.

<sup>295</sup> AGGOULA 1986, 366; AGGOULA 1991, 169; VATTIONI 1994, 78-79.

<sup>296</sup> AŞ-ŞĀLIḤĪ 1985, 132; VATTIONI 1986, 613 n° 894; AGGOULA 1986, 366; AGGOULA 1991, 169; VATTIONI 1994, 79.

The only inscription to be dated with certainty is H 36. The year 549 S. E. corresponds to 237-238 A. D.<sup>297</sup> This fact has led Roberto BERTOLINO to date also all the other texts to the 3rd century A. D.<sup>298</sup> The term *pšgryb*<sup>299</sup> is attributed to two different people, both named ‘Absamyā or ‘Abdsamyā. The former was the son of king Sanaṭrūk (I) bar Naṣrū who himself became king and generated Sanaṭrūk (II) bar ‘Abdsamyā,<sup>300</sup> father of the second ‘Abdsamyā who bore the title of *pšgryb*’ in Hatra. Thus the former of these two figures bearing the title of *pšgryb*’ became king. The latter did not, but just because his father Sanaṭrūk II was the last king of Ḥatra, before the town was conquered by Ardašīr, between April 240 and April 241.<sup>301</sup> We can certainly maintain that also the son of Sanaṭrūk II would have inherited the reign of his father, if the Persian intervention had not put an end to the monarchy in Ḥatra.

As in Edessa,<sup>302</sup> also this evidence from Ḥatra indicates that the title was due to members of the royal family, sons of kings, and that we have to attribute to this term the precise meaning of ‘designated heir,’ ‘successor to the throne.’ The translation of the word should be retained even if the integration *nšrw [pzgrb]’ [br] wlgš* proposed by VATTIONI for H 33 were right,<sup>303</sup>

<sup>297</sup> On the use of the Seleucid Era in Ḥatra cf. the excellent *mise au point* by BERTOLINO 1995, 3-10, in my opinion decisive in order to overcome any perplexities about the adoption of the Seleucid era in favour *e.g.* of the Arsacid era (cf. many works by SAFAR in «Sumer» and above all TEIXIDOR 1966).

<sup>298</sup> BERTOLINO 1995, 62: “Altri testi, per i nomi in essi contenuti (Sanaṭrūq Re e ‘Abdsamyā erede al trono), possono risalire a questi stessi anni: nn. 28 (casa presso il tempio II), 37 (tempio V), 79 (tempio XI), 195 (tempio di Šamaš), 287 (presso il piccolo muro divisorio del *temenos*).”

<sup>299</sup> Here I adopt the most often attested spelling in Ḥatra. All forms attested there, *pzgryb*’/ *pšgrb*’/ *pšgry*’/ *pšgryb*’, are actually local and someway wrong variations. Cf. WIDENGREN 1960, 28-29.

<sup>300</sup> Cf. *supra* H 36, 4.

<sup>301</sup> The dating of the capture of the town by the Sassanians has been made possible by CMC 17, 23-18,16: Editions of the text: KOENEN, RÖMER 1988; GNOLI 2003, 46, 348. Translations of the passage: DODGEON, LIEU 1991, 33.

<sup>302</sup> GNOLI 2002.

<sup>303</sup> It is an architrave found among the ruins at the entrance of shrine V. AGGOULA 1969, 91; MILIK 1972, 363; SEGAL 1986, 63; IBRAHIM 1986, 207; AGGOULA 1991, 27; VATTIONI 1994, 44: “L’epigrafe è stata attribuita alla vittoria del parto Vologeso sui Romani nel 62. *nšrw* e *wlgš* sono certi, il resto è congettura.” I think that this integration is scarcely probable because the *wlgš* of Ḥatra is always called *mry*’, and never *mlk*’, cf. *infra*.

which in my opinion is hardly likely.

The Middle Persian title *ps'gryw*, Sogd. *pš'γryw*, is very rare, as it is attested only in some Manichaean texts discovered in the Chinese oasis of Turfan, the first occurrence being attested in the *Manichaean Confessionary* published by Walter Bruno HENNING,<sup>304</sup> who explained the word as a compound built up from two elements, *pasā* and *gryw*, to be literally translated as 'Nach-Ich,' 'Nach-Selbst.'<sup>305</sup> Out of it HENNING himself derived the meaning of 'Stellvertreter,' which is usually<sup>306</sup> preferred by the Iranists to the above mentioned alternative of 'successor to the throne'<sup>307</sup> on the basis of many possible interpretations for one and the same etymology, as I have already explained elsewhere.<sup>308</sup>

The researches by HENNING and GERSHEVITCH are all outstanding, almost without exception<sup>309</sup> and were perfected, one might say, by BENVENISTE, in whose opinion: "l'intérêt propre du titre *pašāgrīv* vient du terme *grīv*, qui désigne la 'personne,' le 'moi.'" The latter part of the compound derives from Pahlavi *grīw*, av. *grīvā*- 'neck:'

La "nuque", on le sait, est un centre vital, jonction de la tête et du corps, sommet de l'épine dorsale, gîte de la moelle épinière [...] De là vient cette représentation de la "nuque", *grīvā*-, comme siège du principe de vie, puis

<sup>304</sup> HENNING 1936, p. 28, r. 346 [= p. 442]; p. 98-99 [= 512-513].

<sup>305</sup> *IBID.*, 512-513. The presence of different variants of the term in the Aramaic dialect in use in Ḥatra first led Geo WIDENGREN to doubt about the explanation by HENNING, and then to accept it though he stressed the problems connected with it: WIDENGREN 1960, 29 n. 102: "Ich gebe aber zu, daß ich vielleicht die phonetischen Schwierigkeiten einer Entwicklung *pašāgrīv* > *pačagriβ* ~ *pačagriβ* überschätzt habe."

<sup>306</sup> But on the Manichaean occurrences of the term cf. now LEURINI 2004, who adopts the meaning of 'Thronfolger.' Still differently DURKIN-MEISTERERNST 2004, s. v.: 'deputy, representative.'

<sup>307</sup> Also other etymologies have actually been proposed from time to time, but they have failed to find scholars' support: ALTHEIM, STIEHL 1962, 36 n. 6 syr. *pš'gryb*(?) derived the term from *pasu*- 'stock' and *grb*- 'grab' with the meaning of 'Viehgreifender', an idea the two scholars themselves abandoned in ALTHEIM, STIEHL 1964 I (1964), 624. HARNACK 1970, 517-518, on the contrary tried to take over the root *grab*- again as hypothesized by ALTHEIM as second part of the compound and to make out of MP *ps'gryw* the equivalent to Gk *διάδοχος*.

<sup>308</sup> GNOLI 2002.

<sup>309</sup> KHURSHUDIAN 1998, 188: "Aber es gibt keinen Grund, an der etymologischen Analyse zu zweifeln, die W. Benning und I. Gershevitch vorgeschlagen haben und von E. Benveniste ergänzt wurde."

comme symbole de l'être corporel et de la personne [...] Le sogdien nous fait pour ainsi dire assister à l'élaboration de cette notion complexe: on a vu que sogd. *γr'yw* veut dire à la fois "corps" et "être personnel." Le sens de "corps" est encore vivant, mais déjà se prépare, comme pour *tanū-* et autre termes de cette série, le passage au sens du réfléchi "soi-même." En parthe *grīv* est déjà devenu le terme pour "vie" et "être personnel."<sup>310</sup>

The case of Ḥatra illustrated above and the last phase of the history of Edessa I have previously dealt with<sup>311</sup> show how in the case of the Iranian title examined here in its Middle Persian form it is possible to observe exactly the contrary of what occurs in the case of *argapet*. While in the latter case scarce and generic evidence in Greek did not explain the actual meaning the title had to be given, which was to be divined only by means of the correct analysis of the etymology of the term, which had long since acquired by Iranists but not by scholars of ancient history, in the case of *pasāgrīw* the lack of evidence pertaining the word in clear and meaningful contexts in the Iranian world does not seem to allow a choice to be made between the two possible meanings of 'deputy' or 'crown-prince' simply by means of its etymology. Only evidence coming from outside the Iranian world allows us to decide in favour of the correct meaning the title had at the court of Ctesiphon in the 3rd century A. D. This meaning is incontrovertibly that of 'crown-prince.' Scholars who have exerted the strongest influence on the research into this term have exerted the heaviest agreed to choose the former meaning, and have translated it with certainty as 'Stellvertreter,' 'deputy,'<sup>312</sup> and it is with this meaning that the term has entered all dictionaries<sup>313</sup> and most relatively recent research.<sup>314</sup> There is no lack of persons who think that

<sup>310</sup> BENVENISTE 1966, 63; cf. now SUNDERMANN 2002.

<sup>311</sup> GNOLI 2000; 2002.

<sup>312</sup> HENNING 1936, 28 (= 442); GERSHEVITCH 1954, 125 'deputy', cfr. also GERSHEVITCH 1961, 1143; WIDENGREN 1960, 27 "'den Zweiten' als staatrechtlicher Terminus;" BENVENISTE 1966, 64-65 'second après le roi'.

<sup>313</sup> Besides the Sogdian grammar by GERSHEVITCH that has been already recalled in the preceding footnote cf. GHARIB 1995, 300 n. 7479 'deputy', GREENFIELD 1987, 258 'behind/ instead of the self', i.e. 'viceroy', DURKIN-MEISTERERNST 2004, 284 'deputy, representative'.

<sup>314</sup> WRIGHT 1871 II, 241 n. b: "Viceroy;" POIRIER 1981, 212-223, 345: "vice-roi;" SUNDERMANN 1981, 64-65; 1988, 203-206 [=815-818] "Zweiten nach dem König" > παράκλητος; BEYER 1990, 247 "Stellvertreter;" AGGOULA 1992, 393: "le lieutenant, le suppléant;" KHURSHUDIAN 1998, 188: "Vizekönig;" SHAPIRA 1999, 133-134.

*pasāgrīw* might signify 'heir-apparent to the throne,' although it is significant that they all addressed the problem starting from Syriac and Ḥatrean occurrences of the term.<sup>315</sup>

Its rendering as 'successor to the throne' has earned the clear-cut preference of the scholars dealing with Ḥatra and particularly after the stance taken by André MARICQ, in whose opinion:

accepter le sens de 'vice-roi' ce serait décréter arbitrairement l'existence d'une institution dont même la monarchie de type parthe la mieux connue, l'Arménie, ne nous à laissé aucun exemple ... La traduction par prince héritier, au contraire, ne fait pas difficulté: il n'est pas de monarchie sans héritiers du trôn.<sup>316</sup>

But as I have demonstrated above, the clear-cut opposition by Émile BENVENISTE on the basis of the works by HENNING and GERSHEVITCH<sup>317</sup> has deviated most Iranists from this interpretation of the term. Nevertheless it is meaningful that the translation *pšgryb'* = 'successor to the throne' has remained the prevailing one among those Semitists who are directly involved with the history of Ḥatra,<sup>318</sup> with the only evident exception of Basile AGGOULA, who has returned to the subject many times, reiterating support for the translation by BENVENISTE.<sup>319</sup> The firm stance adopted by AGGOULA has led VATTIONI to a less precise position.<sup>320</sup>

<sup>315</sup> PREUSCHEN 1904, 22; MARICQ 1955; HARNACK 1970; SEGAL 1970, 19: "perhaps he may have been not Viceroy, but heir-apparent to the throne. Certainly he was the highest-ranking officer in the kingdom;" TEIXIDOR 1989; 1990: "le prince héritier;" GAWLIKOWSKI 1998; LUTHER 1998; 1999; DRIJVERS, HEALEY 1999: "crown prince;" GNOLI 2000; ROSS 2001, 1, 61; GNOLI 2002; LEURINI 2004. For a possible analogy of this term with OIr *pasā tanūm* occurring in the inscription *XPf* 30-32 see BENVENISTE 1966, 64-65; KHURSHUDIAN 1998, 187; SHAPIRA 1999; GNOLI 2002.

<sup>316</sup> MARICQ 1955, 4-5.

<sup>317</sup> BENVENISTE 1966, 51-56. Also starting from VOLKMANN 1937.

<sup>318</sup> HARNACK 1970; DRIJVERS 1977, 823: "Thronnachfolger;" VATTIONI 1981 *ad loc.*: "erede al trono."

<sup>319</sup> AGGOULA 1991; AGGOULA 1992.

<sup>320</sup> VATTIONI 1994, 8: "Un titolo di un detentore del potere è *pšgrb'*, *pzgryb'*, *pšgry'*, *pšgryb'* che viene considerato o erede al trono o luogotenente," but cf. *IBID.*, 77: "l'erede al trono."

