

al-Khaṣībī, the founder of the sect, did not reject one of the most important tenets of Nuṣayrī theology, the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, though Winter notes that he did (p. 15). Furthermore, oppression of the sect did have a major influence on the sect's various immigrations, a point that Winter denies. Moreover, the most important immigration, that of al-Khaṣībī and most of his pupils from Iraq to Syria, occurred following his persecution and imprisonment in Baghdad. Winter himself provides several examples of deadly religious and economic persecutions of the sect in the Mamluk and early Ottoman periods. Winter makes reasonable efforts to avoid religious explanations for the political policies of Sunni authorities. Nevertheless, it was the *fatwā* of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) demanding that the Nuṣayrīs be exterminated for their "heretical beliefs" that provided religious justification for Nuṣayrī persecution. For example, the sect's revolt in 1318 against the Mamluks in Jabala was not only about taxation, as presented by Winter, but also had clear religious motives. The Mamluks built mosques in Nuṣayrī villages in order to suppress the practice of their faith and prohibited the *khiṭāb* (initiation to the sect). In addition, the Nuṣayrī uprising was messianic in nature. This policy of persecution and killing of Nuṣayrī villagers in Syria continued to the beginning of the Ottoman period (sixteenth century), as demonstrated by Winter, and as confirmed by the Tehrir Defteri (taxation record).

Although Nuṣayrī sources from the period between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries are unavailable, Winter succeeds (in chapters 3 and 4) in reconstructing the location of Nuṣayrī villages, their economic life (mainly tobacco cultivation), and their tribal and feudal-like organization. Winter tries to prove that the Sunni policy of oppressing the Nuṣayrīs was inconsistent. In fact, the semi-autonomy of the Nuṣayrīs during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries does not reflect Ottoman tolerance or the renunciation of anti-Nuṣayrī policy by Sunnīs, rather it was a result of the Ottomans' weak central authority and their inability to impose direct rule.

Winter's combination of Ottoman and Turkish sources and French foreign office documents render the two last chapters more original. He addresses the oppression of the sect in the nineteenth century, the temporary rule of the Egyptian Ibrāhīm Pasha, and the imposition of mosques and the Sunni educational system during the *tanzimat* reforms.

Though Winter's book cannot be seen as a breakthrough in the study of medieval Nuṣayrī-Alawī history, it certainly fills a void in Western research for the period between the medieval and modern history of the sect.

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JEAN KELLENS:

*Cinq cours sur les Yašts de l'Avesta.*

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doi:10.1017/S0041977X1800023X

The present volume collects five presentations of the *Cours* specifically dedicated by Jean Kellens to the subject of Avestan hymnology, with the additional inclusion of three other of his most pertinent articles regarding the Avestan *Yašts*. As explained in the *Avant-Propos* (pp. 5–7), these five lectures belong to different periods: the first three were delivered during the years 1997–2000 (*De la naissance des*

*montagnes à la fin du temps: le Yašt 19* plus the two entitled *Promenade dans les Yašts à la lumière de travaux récents*), while the last two were presented in 2008–09 (*La notion d'âme préexistante*) and 2010–11 (*Le panthéon mazdéen*). The choice to include the article *Caractères différentiels du Mihr Yašt* (1978) is fully justified for the objective reason that this contribution, although in part to be revised and updated (as noted by Kellens himself, p. 5) has opened a new debate on this literary genre. The other two articles (*La saisons de rivières* [2001] and *Les Fravaši* [1989]) offer a more finely balanced representation of the continuous evolution of Kellens' approach to Young Avestan studies. I must also remark that Kellens has been and is still a most original scholar, and has contributed in an original and independent way to a deep transformation of ancient Iranian studies, in particular to the field of Old and Young Avestan. Although, as is to be expected, on some occasions we have not shared the same interpretations, his advice and doctrine have represented a point of reference and orientation, so that this new collection of a few of his articles is certainly a welcome gift for any Orientalist.

The temporal hiatus placed between the two periods covered by the articles selected for this volume has seen an enormous transformation in the methodological approach to the critical evaluation of the whole Avestan corpus, the role of the textual intercalations, and in particular the central function of the liturgical dimension. To a certain extent some general problems concerning the definition of the theological dimension in which the category of ancient Zoroastrianism must be placed have been differently framed, so that we must observe that the debate has become more technical and less polemic. I must also observe that the most crucial philological points concerning the editorial difficulties of the Avestan liturgies are less relevant for the practical edition of the *Yašts*, whose manuscript tradition does not present the same complications emerging in the case of the so-called "longer Liturgies", such as that of the *Wispered* and of the *Widēwdād*, where the structurally different redactions (with and without Pahlavi, Persian or Sanskrit/Gujarātī translations) compel Avestan philologists to command new skills and observe a high number of technical caveats. The Pahlavi or Sanskrit translations of the *Yašts*, in reality very few and of limited philological relevance, bring to light other problems, which are less significant from the point of view of textual criticism.

The book is well edited and presents a general bibliography of the quoted works in all the articles. We have to thank Dr Céline Redard for her great care in the technical organization of the volume. A brief, but very useful index (pp. 189–92) closes the volume and helps the reader in the identification not only of the pertinent Avestan passages, but also of the most important notions and subjects. In this way the volume will be very useful to scholars interested in comparative religions and the history of Zoroastrianism, and not just to specialists in Avestan philology. The material here selected is very dense and of extreme importance. For this reason the realization of a compact edition of these different *Cours* and of related articles results in great value. Furthermore, it helps specialists in Iranian studies to reflect on the extraordinary evolution of the field, and on the progressive transformation of the internal debate, which has strongly increased and transformed in the last fifteen years.

Some foundational problems of Avestan (and Mazdean) studies constitute a recurrent subject along the pages of this volume as the *x<sup>v</sup>arənah-*, the *frauuāši-s*, the role of the *Saošiiant-* (as a single or as a group of sacrificers), plus a number of other dramatically debated subjects, such as those concerning the different articulations of Zoroastrian mythology and its Pantheon. The *fil rouge* of the text strictly concerns the problem of Avestan mythology, a subject that has an absolute importance in the comprehension of the Old Iranian cultural and religious world, and which has not always been considered in its proper significance. In particular, we

must observe that among many other scholarly merits, Kellens has fittingly emphasized the antiquity of the Mazdean millenarian cycle, thus confirming the close links between this pattern and certain mythological allusions scattered in the Young Avestan sources, and in particular in the *Yašts*. In the framework of this reflection, the approach to the definition of the cosmological role of the *Frauuāši*-s, who, as Kellens has shown here (see pp. 91–3, 160), took an essential part in the process of initial motion of the world, i.e. underpinning the phase that later Pahlavi sources will define as the *gētīg* period of 6,000 years, is very important. This observation shows the tremendous importance of a general reconsideration of the intellectual originality developed by ancient Iranian thought, generally considered less independent in these para-philosophical aspects. Actually, various recent research concurs to demonstrate that the Iranian speculations on “time”, in its different aspects, as limited and/or eternal, have assumed an intellectual insight so deep in earlier historical phases, and in spite of the limited competence of these civilizations for technical astronomy.

In conclusion, the present book offers many interesting subjects for discussion and critical debate, which cannot be analysed here, but that certainly confirm the enormous impact of Kellens’ contribution to Avestan philological and religious studies.

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#### SOUTH ASIA

F. GRIMAL, V. VENKATARAJA SARMA and S. LAKSHMINARASIMHAM:

*Pāṇinīyavyākaraṇodāharaṇakośaḥ; La grammaire paninéenne par ses exemples; Paninian Grammar through Its Examples. Vol. IV: Taddhitaprakaraṇam; Le livre des dérivés secondaires; The Book of Secondary Derivatives (prathamabhāgaḥ dviṭīyabhāgaḥ ca; première et deuxième parties; first and second parts).*

(Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha Series, nos 302 and 303; Collection indologie, vols 93.4.1 and 93.2.2.) xvi, 1397 pp. Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, 2015. ₹570 each. École française d’Extrême-Orient: ISBN 978 2 85539 219 6; 978 2 85539 222 6. Institut français de Pondichéry: ISBN 978 81 8470 209 5; 978 81 8470 214 9.

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Examples constitute one of the three aspects of a grammar, the other two being rules and a metalanguage. Beginning from this premise, and turning to Pāṇini’s *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (the most durably renowned attempt to describe the Sanskrit language) for the rules and technical terms, the authors have embarked on an ambitious project to catalogue exhaustively a large number of examples used in the Sanskrit grammatical tradition (*vyākaraṇa*, “analysis”), each accompanied by its *prakriyā*: derivation by a step-by-step application of the rules.

In terms of the scope of the larger project, nine volumes are planned: a master index (Volume I) plus eight volumes of examples with derivations. Following Volume 1 (2006), two others have been published: Volume II (*samāsaprakaraṇam*, “the book on compounds”, 2007) and Volume III.2