

C. A. Ciancaglini. *Iranian Loanwords in Syriac*. Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2008 (Beiträge zur Iranistik 28). XLVII + 315 pp.

The book under review was written by a scholar whose principal field is Indo-European (and in particular Iranian) comparative philology rather than Semitics, and this does not happen on a regular basis: most studies of contacts between Semitic and non-Semitic languages were done by Semitists. In the past three years, the book has become a standard tool for the students of Aramaic, and for a good reason. It is to be hoped that Claudia Ciancaglini will study Iranian loanwords in the remaining Middle Aramaic corpora and produce their equally thorough descriptions. The high value of Iranian lexical material in *semitischen Nebenüberlieferungen* for Iranian philology is well-known. As far as Aramaic studies go, when all the lexical Iranisms in Middle Aramaic are gathered and analyzed, these data will turn out indispensable for scholars of Aramaic: they will permit deeper insights into the history of Aramaic and its early medieval literary varieties, and into the history and culture of Aramaic-speaking communities.

One remarkable fact about Ciancaglini's contribution is that slightly more than the third of the volume (if one does not count Bibliography and Word Index) is occupied by "Part One: Linguistic and Historical Survey" that reflects the author's interest in the theory of languages' contacts and in the non-lexical features of Aramaic that may be due to its contacts with Iranian languages. Some of Ciancaglini's statements in this chapter invite criticism. It is to be noted that part of the assumed errors originate not with Ciancaglini but in the Aramaistic literature she had to use and, being a non-Semitist, to regard with a certain measure of trust. The intended readership of the introductory chapter is in particular students of Iranian languages (cf. Reimond 2009:336) who are not supposed to control Aramaic data and be able to form independent judgements on matters Aramaic. Therefore it is worthwhile to register possible errors and/or to indicate statements that are less *communis opinio* than Ciancaglini was lead to believe. For the convenience of the user, our observations will follow wherever possible the order of matters in the introductory chapter.

P. 1. “Afterwards the Christian kingdom of Edessa lost its independence and became a Roman colony (213–214 A. D.)” At the time, Edessa was hardly a Christian kingdom. In the *Chronicle of Edessa*, while describing the flooding of the city in A. D. 201, the annalist says in particular that the waters “damaged the nave of the church of the Christians (*ʕəttā da-ḵrestyānē*)” (Segal 1970:24). This means the Christianity was not then the official religion of the kingdom (and see Segal 1970 for all the available information on the early days of Christianity in Edessa).

P. 3. Ciancaglini notes that Turoyo “also shows features of western Neo-Aramaic dialects,” with reference to Macuch 1976:9 and n. 21. Genealogically, Turoyo is an Eastern Aramaic language simply because it developed out of another Eastern Aramaic language in historical times (like, say, both Italian and Romanian developed out of Latin beyond doubt, and this fact cannot be undone by whatever features they display now). Structurally, Turoyo has no conspicuously Western features, in particular less so than Neo-Mandaic: note that even Macuch or Tsereteli did not hold Neo-Mandaic to be a central or otherwise “intermediate” Neo-Aramaic idiom.

P. 7. “The number of Greek loanwords in Syriac is comparable to the proportion of Latin and French loanwords in English; they are often deeply integrated and productive in the receiving language” (with a reference to Schall 1960). This is too high an estimation. R. Voigt’s index to Schall 1960¹ has about 440 words. Schall 1960 does not strive to be exhaustive. Using the glossary in Lehto 2003, one of the present reviewers found that Aphrahat’s *Demonstrations* have some 3100 lexemes. In this sufficiently vast and representative early corpus, there are a bit more than 100 Greek loans² and about 20 Iranian loans (Loesov 2009:622). Among the Greek loans, there are twenty verbs; all of them are denominative by way of inner-Syriac derivation, complying with Ciancaglini’s view that verbs are not usually derived immediately from foreign substantives: these substantives have to be borrowed first.

Claudia Ciancaglini informs S. Loesov in a p. c. (June 22, 2011): “Direi che Afraate non è un buon esempio, visto che Brock dice espressamente che lui ed Efrem sono i rappresentanti degli autori siriaci del IV secolo non ancora ellenizzati, mentre la grande massa dei prestiti dal greco si vede negli autori successivi, dal V al VI secolo, e ancora di più nei secoli dopo, quando cominciano a presentarsi anche i calchi, sia lessicali

¹ Voigt 1998.

² The token frequencies of each of these loaned lexemes were not counted.

che morfosintattici (S. Brock. *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity*. London, 1984. II 1; III 75, 84 ss.; IV 80 ss.; V 107 ss.). E forse anche Schall non va bene, perché si occupa solo dei grecismi nella letteratura siriana più antica e non di traduzione, cioè quella che ha meno prestiti dal greco (cf. Brock 1984 IV 90).” — All this is quite true, but the main thing one wants to know is what lexical loans from Greek were doing in the spoken vernacular Syriac, and not in relatively late literary works. Note that regarding the older stratum of Iranian loanwords Ciancaglini observes that “these old borrowings ... had long been integrated into the Syriac lexicon and probably no longer sounded as foreign words” (p. 27), i. e. some of them became part and parcel of the vernacular Syriac vocabulary. The lexicon of Aphrahat’s theological *opera* is of course far removed from that of everyday speech, but at least it has less non-integrated graecisms than the later literature.

Let us make a note by way of an inner-Middle-Aramaic comparison of graecisms.³ It has recently been found that no less than 20% of entries in M. Sokoloff’s DJPA are Greek loanwords, many of them look like part of the everyday lexicon, e. g. *qdrws* ‘cedar’ < κέδρος, *ʾwrz* ‘rice’ < ὄρυζα, *ʾyštʾnyny* ‘carrot’ < σταφυλίνος, *prskh* ‘peach’ < περσικόν, *ʾlpys* ‘carpet’ < τάπης, *zoni* ‘belt’ < ζώνη, *zog* ‘couple’ < ζυγόν (Nemirovskaya 2009:558–560). A historian would like to know as much as possible about Aramaic-Greek bilingualism in the early centuries A. D. Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia, so a methodologically thought-through comparative analysis of the available data will have to bring results important for our understanding of history.

P. 11. “Notwithstanding the use of different linguistic terms, the scholars agree that the Aramaic of the Achaemenid period is not a homogeneous language: different texts show different dialect features. Consequently, Official Aramaic is simply a chronological label indicating Aramaic language(s) used in documents dating back to the Achaemenid period. This conclusion is relevant for the question of the relationship between Syriac and Official Aramaic, and will be dealt with later.” A non-committal talk about dialects of Achaemenid Aramaic is indeed common in the literature (Ciancaglini refers to several well-known studies by S. Kaufman, F. Rosenthal, M. Folmer, J. Greenfield, E. Kutscher), but their existence has been never proven. Since Ciancaglini does her very best to take our Aramaic studies seriously, she arrives at a logically com-

³ For bibliography, see now SL:XIX. There is no definitive study as yet.

elling conclusion that “Official Aramaic” has to be but an umbrella notion for the Aramaic corpus of the Achaemenid times.⁴ This is of course too unequivocal a conclusion for the school of thought represented for Ciancaglini by the above names, because Ciancaglini’s statement is logical, transparent, and controllable. The bad news is that one cannot have “Official Aramaic” as both the main official written language of the Achaemenid Empire (a proposition that nobody doubts) and “simply a chronological label.”

Claudia Ciancaglini writes in a p. c. to S. Loesov (June 11, 2011): “Ho letto e confrontato quegli autori dopo che tu mi avevi messo il dubbio sul rapporto tra aramaico imperiale e siriano, e mi è sembrato che fossero più o meno concordi nel considerare l’aramaico imperiale un’entità linguistica complessa e disomogenea. Inoltre, mi aveva molto convinta l’affermazione di Kaufman che ho riportato per intero a p. 26.” The cited statement (Kaufman 1974:159f.) runs as follows: “Thus while the characteristic traits of Imperial Aramaic are eastern, it is not Eastern or Mesopotamian Aramaic; nor is it Western or Syrian Aramaic. It must be something in-between. Nor is it necessarily artificial in origin. That is to say, it is reasonable that this dialect mixture arose in the process of normal intercourse between dialect groups and quite possibly even became a native language for some. Thus, quite naturally, each of the characteristics of Imperial Aramaic spread differently through the Aramaic speech community.”

It is difficult to say less in so many words. The main question is now, as it has been during the last forty years, whether Imperial Aramaic had a say in the formation of the Middle Eastern Aramaic, simply put: whether it is the ancestor of the Middle Eastern Aramaic.

In the sentence Ciancaglini omitted from her quotation, Stephen Kaufman says: “Certainly at Elephantine it is difficult to imagine that the private letters on ostraca, which have free word order, were written in a dialect whose syntax was significantly different from the writer’s native speech.” This might well be true, but note that very few Aramaic texts of any dialect or genre have come down to us from the post-Achaemenid Egypt.⁵ The Greek conquerors did no serious harm to the local popula-

⁴ Note, once more, her very clear statement about “the chronological and non-linguistic nature of the label ‘Official Aramaic’” (p. 26).

⁵ For a short recent state-of-art on the role of Aramaic in the early Ptolemaic Egypt, see Stadel 2009. Most scholars (as e. g. Jan Joosten) believe that Aramaic stopped to be spoken in Egypt soon after Alexander the Great.

tion, so this evidence (if it is not a result of archeological chance) shows that writers of private letters and contracts in Ptolemaic Egypt did not see Imperial Aramaic as an adequate linguistic vehicle anymore, while it turned out to be quite appropriate in the (almost certainly Arabic-speaking) Nabataean kingdom, as well as in the Aramaic-speaking Palestine, etc. This means that Imperial Aramaic was a written code with a specific cultural *Stellenwert* (think about reflexes of the Achaemenid norm in the Mandaic orthography).

Ciancaglini dubs various features of Syriac relevant to the study of Iranian influence on pre-modern Aramaic as “inheritance of Official Aramaic,” following the above school of thought in the English-speaking Aramaic studies. Practically, two questions are at stake: the early history of *qtīl l-* and those pre-middle-Iranian loanwords in Syriac that are attested in Imperial Aramaic as well. It is well-known that many of pre-middle-Iranian loans of Syriac are attested in JBA (Telegdi 1935) and Mandaic, less of them appear in JPA, Samaritan Aramaic and CPA. To move the discussion any further, it is necessary in the first place to produce a synopsis of Iranisms in Imperial Aramaic⁶ and the six Middle Aramaic corpora and to see what happens. So we have to content ourselves with a discussion of *qtīl l-* (pp. 31–37 in the book under review), which is *the* burning question in the history of the Aramaic verb. Is it possible to detect, with Ciancaglini and much of previous scholarship, the Iranian trace in the emergence of this verb form? In order to discuss the problem “*qtīl l-* in Aramaic Studies,” we have to distinguish three sub-topics:

- (1) **qtīl l-* in Old Aramaic;
- (2) **qtīl l-* in Middle Eastern Aramaic;
- (3) **qtīl l-* in Eastern Neo-Aramaic.

As for (1), in spite of the impression our secondary literature creates in the mind of an outsider,⁷ the “ergative” *qtīl l-* is not attested in Old Aramaic beyond doubt, the discussion has been revolving for decades around one (probably lexicalized) instance represented by two tokens.⁸ So we will not discuss this point any more.

⁶ For the list of Old Persian loans in Egyptian Aramaic, see Muraoka–Porten 2003:370–373 (72 items).

⁷ Ciancaglini observes: “An important morphological feature borrowed from Old Persian into Official Aramaic, which then deeply modified the verbal system of eastern Aramaic, is the *qṭīl l-* construction; it follows the model of the Old Persian *manā kartam* ‘I made’ construction” (p. 31).

⁸ They are as follows: *šmyš ly* ‘I have heard’ (TADAE A6.10:3), *šmyš ln* ‘we had heard’ (TADAE A3.3:13). See further Loesov 2006:632 for references to previous

As for (2), **qtīl l-* in Middle Eastern Aramaic (hereafter MEA), its being a morphological loan translation of the Middle Persian *man kard* construction is an unlikely solution (*pace* Kutscher 1969 and other scholars more or less followed by Ciancaglini).

In her theoretical discussion of the morphological borrowing, Ciancaglini says among other things: “The socio-cultural conditions in which a morphological borrowing is possible are: the contact between the two languages must be deep and prolonged in time; the source language must exert a strong cultural pressure on the other one, playing the role of the prestige language; finally, there must be a *large number of bilinguals*. The main structural constraints are: the morphological borrowing is always preceded by a *great number of lexical borrowings ...*” (p. 29f., italics added).

Ciancaglini’s glossary of Iranian loanwords in Syriac has some 760 words. Is this *number of borrowings great enough* in the sense of her theory? Compare an important piece of information about the verb in Turoyo. According to Ontikov 2011, the corpus of Turoyo verb roots dealt with in Ritter 1990 (the book mentions most of the verb roots of this language) has 603 roots of Aramaic origin, 706 Arabic roots, 98 Kurdish roots, 27 Turkish roots, and 262 roots with yet unidentified etymology. Aramaic roots are a minority both in lexicon and available text specimens, yet all derivational and inflectional patterns of the Turoyo verb are impeccably Aramaic, i. e. there is not a single morphologically undigested Arabism (four-consonant roots, e. g. borrowings of the Arabic VIII-stem verbs, acquire the shape of the Turoyo D-stem, exactly as in Syriac). The state of nominal inflection is different, in particular there are many borrowed adjectives that are indeclinable (Jastrow 2002:98). Most speakers of Turoyo (as well as those of other Neo-Aramaic languages) have been bilinguals for centuries, perhaps for more than a millennium, yet nothing dramatic has happened to the Turoyo verb on account of this bilingualism. The difficulty about this kind of comparisons is that Turoyo is a spoken language (with a good corpus that was formed due to field studies, although the language has no written tradition), while MEA is a

discussions. It is generally believed that the letter of the Persian prince Arsames (TADAE A6.10) was written from outside Egypt, i. e. probably from Babylon or Susa. Since Arsames hardly spoke Imperial Aramaic, it lies near at hand to suggest that the *šmy^o ly* is in this case due to the Eastern Aramaic mother tongue of the scribe. It could also be a morphosyntactic loan translation from Old Persian, and more things. This problem is the Shibbolet-Incident of Aramaic studies.

sum total of various “streams of tradition” in the sense of Leo Oppenheim, i. e. all our data come from copies (= and not autographs/proto-graphs) of literary texts. According to Stephen Kaufman’s p. c. to S. Loesov (June 26, 2011), in the extant Syriac corpus there are “between 20 to 25 thousand <lexemes>, but it is hard to estimate because of what one counts as freely formed. <In JBA and Mandaic corpora> there are between 5 and 7 thousand <lexemes>.”⁹ In the case of Syriac, morphosyntax (including productive analytical forms) must have been common for all functional spheres, from everyday exchanges (unavailable to us) to scholarly works and poetry, while lexicon was genre-dependent: written texts could harbor words unknown to most speakers of Syriac. All in all, the hypothetical number of Middle Persian lexical borrowings in spoken Syriac does not seem to be big enough to be able to usher important morphosyntactic calques.

Is it true that among the speakers of all three known MEA languages there were lots of Aramaic-Persian *bilinguals*? As far as Upper Mesopotamia and Syria go, the Aramaic-Persian bilingualism was hardly widespread outside certain circles of educated native speakers of Syriac (this is the opinion of Ciancaglini, cf. pp. 14–20). Consider also the findings of J. B. Segal: “In their knowledge of Persian the Christians of Nisibis and the north were backward, perhaps on account of their Syriac-speaking university. ... Even as late as the seventh century there were leading Christian theologians at Nisibis who could converse only in Syriac” (Segal 1955:135f.).¹⁰ To the west of Nisibis (i. e. outside the Sassanid Empire, e. g. in Edessa), speakers of Aramaic had been probably never exposed to heavy contacts with Iranian in pre-Kurdish times. Before the Arab conquest of the Byzantine territory of Northern Mesopotamia, speakers of Aramaic were a majority in a part of this region, so most of them were probably monolinguals.

It looks like the linguistic situation of JBA and Mandaic could have been different, because the speakers of both idioms lived under political control of Arsacids and Sassanids most of the time. Segal 1965:33 makes the following suggestion: “Aramaic was a *lingua franca* throughout Mesopotamia. In the north, however, it was well-nigh universal; in the south it was only the speech of minorities, Jewish and Christian, and of *litterati*, for there the dominant language was Persian.” For the present reviewers,

⁹ The difference is of course due to the fact the Syriac corpus is larger than the rest of Middle Aramaic corpora.

¹⁰ We thank Nikolai Seleznyov for alerting us about this study.

the key word here is “the speech of minorities,” because language minority groups tend to be bilingual to some extent unless they live isolated lives in a kind of ghetto.¹¹ Yet note that Telegdi 1935, still the most important reference work on Iranian loanwords in JBA, arrives at the following conclusion regarding the Iranian loans in Talmud Bavli: “En comparant ces deux séries on arrive à des résultats d’un très grand intérêt. On constate, d’abord, que les mots de la première série, c’est-à-dire les emprunts qui datent sûrement de la première moitié de la période arsacide ou de l’époque achéménide, sont beaucoup plus nombreux que ceux qui constituent la série des emprunts plus récents. On observe aussi que les mots de la première série jouent en général un rôle plus important dans le vocabulaire des divers dialectes des Juifs, ils désignent des notions plus élémentaires, ils sont employés plus souvent, ils sentent moins l’étranger que notre série 2. En d’autres termes: la partie la plus grande et la plus importante des emprunts iraniens, qu’on trouve dans les divers dialectes juifs, ont été faits avant notre ère” (Telegdi 1935:220). By contrast, Ciancaglini estimates only 90 out of her 760 items as “entrati nell’aramaico prima dell’emergere del siriano” (a p. c. to S. Loesov). This corresponds to S. Telegdi’s “faits avant notre ère,” while both judgements rely on roughly the same criteria based on the historical phonology of Iranian. Thus these data do not confirm a suggestion that a noticeable part of JBA speakers were bilinguals.

It is not self-evident that at the beginning of the Christian era the etymological structure of the Middle Persian *man kard* was transparent for the assumed bilingual speakers of Aramaic to the degree that they were able to loan-translate it idiomatically into their respective vernaculars. There are no data about a MEA koine or intensive contacts among the members of the three religious (and linguistic) Aramaic communities. *Rebus sic stantibus*, common sense suggests that independent parallel development (not induced by a contact with Middle Persian) in all known MEA varieties is a sensible solution. This parallel development must have had a shared structural motivation, a kind of inner-language pressure (see Loesov 2011).

As for (3), **qtāl l-* in Eastern Neo-Aramaic (hereafter ENA), Ciancaglini follows those scholars who attribute it to the influence of Kurdish. It is known for a fact that many (and perhaps most) ENA speakers from

¹¹ What was the majority language in the region of Ctesiphon (roughly, the vicinity of today’s Baghdad) in the years 400–500 A. D., Aramaic or Middle Persian? The literature does not give a clear answer.

Kurdistan used to speak some Kurdish, yet it is not clear whether the etymologically split-ergativity structure of the Kurdish verb was still visible to the speakers of Aramaic when they came in contact with Kurdish. Thus it is not evident that we have to posit three epochs of Iranian influence to account for **qtīl l-* in ENA. We do not *need* the Iranian influence to explain the evidence.¹²

The sad fact is that speaking about *qtīl l-* in Syriac we still most of the time manipulate the handful of examples that were collected and cited by Nöldeke 130 years ago. Kutscher 1969 added six more tokens he had found in the Bible (mostly in the NT), Ciancaglini discusses them on p. 35. Peshitta is important for an obvious reason: if *qtīl l-* translates a transitive verb in the active voice, one is on the right track. When we have all the pertinent examples from the Bible, we will doubtless be able to learn something new about what *qtīl l-* was doing in Syriac.

On p. 32, Ciancaglini says that the MEA “*qṯyl l-* construction is employed to express the perfect of transitive verbs (but often of *intransitive ones* too ...), and consists of a past participle in the absolute state (showing *non-agreement in gender and number* with the patiens) and a pronominal agent preceded by the preposition *l-* ‘to, belonging to’” (italics added). As a matter of fact *qtīl l-* of intransitive verbs is attested both in Syriac and Mandaic, but it seems to be extremely rare, the few examples that are now known stem from the two grammars of Nöldeke. In MEA *qtīl l-* of transitives usually does agree with the patient in gender and number, e. g. *da-hwaw ḥšbīn l-ḥon b-ḥubbā yattīrā* ‘[we ask you] that you_{m. pl.} esteem them_{m. pl.} in great love’ (Peshitta 1Th 5:13).¹³ Once more, Nöldeke cites a few (probably rare) Syriac and Mandaic examples where *qtīl* does not agree with the exponent of patient.

P. 33. “Synchronically, in Eastern Neo-Aramaic dialects the old ergative construction *qṯyl l-* is clearly perceived as an active one, as it is also confirmed by the fact that the participle *qṯyl* does not agree in gender and number with the patient (the old grammatical subject) and thus may govern a direct object ...” Generally speaking, the lack of object agreement

¹² See Pennacchietti 1988 (and especially pp. 105ff.) for a review of virtually all logically possible hypotheses, all of which had been formulated in the literature prior to 1988. Nothing new has happened since then.

¹³ καὶ ἠγεῖσθαι αὐτοὺς ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ ἐν ἀγάπῃ, the deponent present infinitive of ἠγέομαι (lit. ‘lead, guide’) has a direct object ‘them’ (αὐτοὺς), its semantic subject (‘you’) is supplied from the left-hand context. The Syriac translation is non-slavish both lexically and grammatically, and extremely faithful to the sense. Cf. BDAG s. v.: “In 1Th 5:13 there emerges for ἡ the sense *esteem, respect*.”

signals that the ergative alignment has 100% converted into the accusative one, yet this is not completely the case with NENA, cf. Khan's article "Ergativity in the North Eastern Neo-Aramaic Dialects," where "ergativity" is tantamount to "object agreement" (Khan 2007).¹⁴ It looks like Ciancaglini was misled by her reference (Pennacchietti 1994:260, n. 4), where it is indeed said "senza però accordarsi in genere e numero."

The author has to be congratulated for a useful survey of the phonological phenomena pertinent to the reception of Iranian loanwords in Syriac (pp. 63–90). Of great interest are, in particular, Ciancaglini's observations on the different reflexes of Iranian *x*, which confirm Telegdi's brilliant discovery made more than 70 years ago (1935:197–202): in the older stratum of loanwords, *x* is represented by *ħ*, whereas in the younger one *k* is found instead. This opposition is well known to be of great relevance for two key problems in the historical phonology of Aramaic, viz. the loss of uvulars and the emergence of spirantization. Note that this aspect of the dilemma went unnoticed in Richard Steiner's excellent account of 2005.

There follow a few remarks on individual etymologies.

P. 120. The author's treatment of *ܥܠܡܐ* (LSyr 98, SL 115) is unclear to us. Brockelmann's translation 'Pascha' does not imply that the Syriac word was understood by him as 'Easter' or 'Passover,' what is meant is certainly a well-known Middle Eastern administrative title. A borrowing from *بائش* is, therefore, quite obvious and it is hard to say why an Arabic origin (so Sokoloff) should be preferred to the Neo-Persian one.

P. 169. An Iranian origin of *ܥܠܐ* 'basket' is rather unlikely in view of the presence of *zabbīlu* already in Neo-Babylonian Akkadian. The Akkadian word has been generally considered an Aramaism (CAD Z 6, AHw. 1501, DNWSI 301), no doubt because of its exclusively late attestation. Kaufman (1974:111) is nevertheless correct to observe that there is no genuinely Aramaic root from which such a noun could be produced, whereas Akk. *zabālu* 'to carry' is well attested throughout the history of Akkadian. It is thus tempting to suppose that we are faced with a late—but genuinely Akkadian—nominal formation subsequently borrowed into Aramaic and, then, spreading to Arabic and Persian (cf. SL 362). Still one cannot exclude that the nominal pattern $C_1aC_2C_2\bar{i}C_3$, virtually unknown in Akkadian, is due to Aramaic influence.

¹⁴ Some remnants of object agreement in Turoyo are well-known as well.

P. 192. The author is undoubtedly correct to reject the Iranian etymology of ܩܩܩܩ ‘cake,’ but does not mention the fact that this word is actually borrowed from Akk. *kukku*, as duly recognized by Kaufman (1974:65, cf. now SL 605 and already LSyr. 326).

P. 240. While it is not impossible that ܩܩܩܩ ‘purslane’ entered Syriac through an Iranian intermediary, the etymological priority of Akk. *papparihû* (CAD P 109, AHw. 824), in its turn possibly borrowed from Sumerian **babbar.hi** (PSD B 31), must be acknowledged as certain in view of its broad attestation already in Old Babylonian (cf. now SL 1248).

P. 258. As seen already by von Soden, ܩܩܩܩ ‘hematite’ is inseparable from Akk. *šadānu* with the same meaning, well attested since Old Assyrian and Old Babylonian on (CAD Š₁ 36, AHw. 1123).¹⁵ This circumstance does not necessarily exclude the possibility of an Iranian intermediary for the Syriac word, but almost certainly means that the emergence of Middle Persian *šāh-dānag* is due to meta-analysis by popular etymology.

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¹⁵ Note that the Old Assyrian form *ša-ad-wa-na-am* makes rather feasible a derivation from *šadūm* ‘mountain’ (Sargonic and Old Assyrian *šadwum*) tentatively hinted at by von Soden.

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