



BOZPAYIT

BOZPAYIT, Middle Persian name attested only in Armenian of a Zoroastrian school or body of religious teaching in the Sasanian period. Elišē, probably a contemporary of Ʒosrow I (539-71), in his chronicle of the resistance of the Armenian Christians under their commander Vardan Mamikonean to the violent campaign of proselytism of the Sasanian king Yazdegerd II (438-57), mentions one Mazdean priest who was particularly zealous in the persecution of Christians. He was a *mogpet* “chief magus,” *išxan* “prince,” and *denpet* “chief of the [Zoroastrian] religion” from Abaršahr, and “was better informed in the Zoroastrian laws (*zradeštakan awrinac’n*) than many of the wise,” and was therefore called *hamakden*, explained in a marginal gloss by Arm. *amenahawat* “(having) the entire faith.” The text continues, “He knew also the *ampartk’as*, had studied also the *bozpayit*, and had the *pahlawik* and *parskaden* as well. For these are the five schools [*kešt-k*] which define all the laws of Magianism [*moguṭ’eann*]: but outside these there is also a sixth, which they call *petmog*” (Tēr-Minasean, ed., Elišē, pp. 143-44). To understand the meaning of *bozpayit* we need to discuss the other terms used.

Hamakden is the only specialized term in the list known in Zoroastrian usage; it appears also in the text of the tenth-century Armenian historian Դովմա Arcruni (see Russell, 1987); it is glossed with the other Iranian terms, including “Zoroastrian” (see Russell, 1985-86, pp. 3-10).

Benveniste explained *ampartk’as* as “a treatise on penalties,” from **hamparta-*(*t*)*kaiša-* (in *Handēs Amsōrya*, Vienna, 1927, p. 763, cited by Zaehner, 1955, p. 29 n. 6). One Armenian gloss has *lusamit* “of enlightened mind,” as a result of



misreading the *z-* of the acc. sing. as *-t-*, with Greek loan-word *lambār* “lamp”; another has *zerku mecamecac’ zgituṭ’iwn unēr* “he had the wisdom of the two greatest ones,” perhaps understanding *amp-* as Gk. *amphi-* “both,” with *k’eš* “teaching, sect” (a Middle Iranian loan-word used most often pejoratively in Armenian, see Asmussen, 1982, p. 115 n. 15). The word may be a synonym of *hamāgdēn*, meaning something like “the compilation of the teaching,” as Christensen suggested (*Iran Sass.*, p. 117), cf. New Persian *ambārd* “filled,” and Pahl. *hambār* “store,” Armenian loan-word *ambar* “idem.”

The Pahlawik and Parskaden are evidently Parthian and Persian schools of teaching, each perhaps with its own *zand*, or body of translation and interpretation of Avestan doctrine. One recalls that the archmage came from Abaršahr, i.e., the regions of Parthia, and that the Armenian martyrs were taken to Rēvand, the site of the major Parthian fire-temple Ādur Burzēn Mihr, to be executed (Łazar P’arpec’i [5th cent.], chap. 57, cited by Russell, 1985, p. 449). *Petmog* looks like *mogpet* inverted, and a gloss explains it thus; H. W. Bailey suggested in a written communication that it may be from **patimagu-* “a book in support of the Magi,” cf. *Vīdēvdād*, the book which is against the demons.

As to *bozpayit* Benveniste suggested that *bozpayit* meant something like “a confession of crimes committed,” from **baz-patit*, but it is difficult to derive *boz* from *baz(ak)* “sin,” which the Armenians seem to have recognized in the Hebrew word *bezek* “lightning” in their explanations of Biblical names (Russell, 1985, p. 8 n. 13); the intervocalic *-t-* of Av. *paitita-* “repentance” is not lost in Pahl. *patēt*. The Armenian gloss still has *melac’k’awaran* “repentance of sins,” but this may perhaps be explained by a Pahl. phrase *abāz pāyēd* “he stays himself (against sin),” i.e., resolves to refrain from it in future by confessing and condemning it. One may compare the use of *abāz dāštan* “restrain, prevent” with reference to Ahriman in the *kustī* prayer *Ohrmazd xwadāy*, with its penitential aspect, and to the heretic Mazdak in the *Zand ī Vohuman Yasn* 3.28 (see Asmussen, 1965, p. 45 on *abāz dāštan*, and p. 83 on abstention after repentance). The word may thus refer to a penitential prayer in which the Zoroastrian condemns Ahriman and declares his will to restrain himself from sin and to guard against it. Without full confession and repentance of sins, no Mazdean could hope to go to Heaven after death; mastery of the intricacies of the confessional was therefore, one may assume, an important part of a priest’s training in the Good Religion, as in contemporary Manicheism and Christianity (it is indicative of the importance of confession



in Sasanian Zoroastrianism that the Iranian term for it entered Christian Armenian usage as the loan-word *xostovanuṭ'īwn*).

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