



MARICQ, ANDRÉ

MARICQ, André, an eminently gifted epigrapher who died prematurely at the age of 34 (b. 29 November 1925 in Genval, Belgium; d. 22 June 1960, Paris, France; [Figure 1](#)).

His life. Maricq attended for twelve years the Athénée d'Ixelles (Brussels) and then enrolled at the Université Libre de Bruxelles to study philosophy and the humanities. Towards the end of World War II, he participated in the movement that in 1944 led to the liberation of Belgium and the Netherlands. In addition to his coursework at the university, Maricq enrolled at the Institut de Langues Orientales et Slaves, where Henri Grégoire (1881-1964) introduced him to Byzantium. Byzantine studies was the first field in which Maricq distinguished himself, and, once he had mastered Greek and Persian, he became interested in Iranian studies. In 1947, he earned his first university degree (*licence*) with an essay about the Roman circus during the Imperial period (Maricq, 1950). After passing the entrance exam for classical philology in 1949 as the best of his class, he began his study of the great trilingual inscription of Šāpur I (r. ca. 239-ca. 272) at the Ka'ba of Zoroaster (ŠKZ). From 1950 to 1955, Maricq was a member of the Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique Belge. But he moved to Paris, and in 1952 he completed his research on the Šāpur inscription (Maricq, 1953). In Paris, Jean de Menasce (1902-73) encouraged him to work on a corpus of Sasanian seals, and so Maricq became a pioneer of modern sigillography.

From 1953 to the summer of 1954, Maricq conducted extensive field research, which yielded important evidence, in the Near East. His goals were to collect



casts of all seal collections in the Near East, to obtain his own impressions of the ŠKZ, and to survey a site in Commagene that Ernest Honigmann (1892-1954) had identified as the convent of the Nestorian bishop [Barṣauma](#) (d. before 496). Maricq first went to Lebanon and Syria, and then traveled on mule to the Kurdish region of Turkey, where he discovered in Birecik the most ancient Syriac inscription known (Maricq, 1962). After his return to Damascus, he traveled to Iraq and Iran. In Baghdad he discovered the site of [Anbār](#) (in *EIr.* II, 5), which he identified as Šāpur's foundation Pērōz-Šāpur.

From 1954 to 1957, Maricq was a member of Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan (DAFA) in Kabul and participated in excavations at Balk and Sorḳ Kotal. On his journeys in India and the mountains of Afghanistan, he discovered the Ghurid minaret of [Jām](#) (see [GHURIDS](#) in *EIr.* X, 590) and the Sasanian fresco of [Doḳtar-e Nošervān](#). Maricq was the first to decipher the great inscription of Kaniška (fl. 1st century C.E.; see [BACTRIA](#), in *EIr.* III, pp. 343), which he identified as being written in the language of ancient Bactria (see [BACTRIAN LANGUAGE](#), in *EIr.* III, 344-49). He discussed this inscription in a number of articles, but H. Humbach resolved issues of anthroponymy that until then had been poorly understood (Maricq, 1960; cf. Humbach).

Maricq became a naturalized French citizen in 1958, and joined the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS). He made the acquaintance of Jean Aubin (b. 1927) who had returned from Iran; Aubin considered Maricq a very talented scholar. In the opinion of the author, both men combined on a very high level the virtues of a philologist with those of a historian. But toward the end of 1959, Maricq fell seriously ill with a renal condition. Jacqueline Pirenne (1918-90) suggested that he should nonetheless work on the dating of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (see [MARITIME TRADE, PRE-ISLAMIC](#)), and her friendship during the last months of his life gave Maricq the courage to pursue this research, which unfortunately remains unfinished (Pirenne). Moreover, he was able to participate in the London conference on the dating of Kaniška (Maricq, 1969).

His contribution to Iranian studies. Maricq's work at the crossroads of Byzantine and Iranian civilizations, and with a byroad to the history of the [Parthian Arsacids](#) was prematurely interrupted, and yet it is quite substantial and wide-ranging. In this context, his contribution to research on Byzantium will not be discussed. But it must be mentioned that in his earliest articles, which were published in Belgian periodicals such as *Bulletin de l'Académie*

royale and *Byzantion*, Maricq discussed different aspects of Byzantine society such as festivals, coins, and language use during the medieval period, demonstrating a remarkable knowledge of Greek.

In his first article on Persian history, Maricq examined the question of when the prophet [Mani](#) (216-ca. 274-77) began his preaching (Maricq, 1951). It is a critical study of those who overestimated the role of Šāpur I in the official recognition of Manicheism. Maricq relied on the accounts of *Kephalaia* 1 and 76 to highlight the poor reception that Mani received between India and Persia on his missionary travels. Only after years of travel was the prophet able to meet with the King of Kings in the year 241/42, which is associated with Šāpur's rise. There were at least three debates between the two men, and those preserved in the *Fehrest* pertain to the legend of Mani (see [FEHREST iii.](#)).

Afterwards Maricq focused on the Šāpur inscription ŠKZ, the text of which he elucidated in numerous geographical and historical studies. In 1953, he published in collaboration with Honigmann his *Recherches sur les Res Gestae Divi Saporis*. In the introduction, the authors stated that they hoped to have been of assistance to those who would prepare a definitive version of the inscription, and almost fifty years later this expectation was met by Philip Huysse's carefully prepared edition. While Honigmann was responsible for the last chapter about the toponyms of Šāpur's second and third campaigns, Maricq wrote the first five chapters, and thus a substantial part of the book: The first chapter provides the Greek version of the ŠKZ. The second continues the discussion of the 1951 article on Šāpur's rise and Mani's early teaching. In the third chapter, he suggested outlines and a relative arrangement of the eight provinces. In the fourth, he examined Šāpur's first campaign against the Roman emperor Gordian III (r. 238-44) and the battle of Pērōz-Šāpur. The fifth chapter combined a study of Šāpur's second and third campaigns against Rome with an essay on the date 256 C.E. and a list of conquered cities. Thus, Honigmann's chapter on toponyms supplements Maricq's preceding chapters.

From 1954 onwards, Maricq published many articles in the periodical *Syria*. These were later collected in the memorial volume *Classica et Orientalia* (1965), which also contained an obituary by Henri Seyrig (1895-1973) and a complete bibliography comprising 33 entries. The important articles explore further issues of historical geography: "Hatra de Sanatrouq" (1955) and "Les dernières années de Hatra: L'alliance romaine" (1957). In 1957 he published "La chronologie des dernières années de Caracalla," and in the following year a long article about the Greek version of the ŠKZ inscription. Since Maricq had



now examined the inscription on site, he had prepared a new translation with an extensive commentary, drawing on the Parthian and Middle Persian versions for his comparative study. Other articles focus on the province of Assyria as created by Trajan (1959), the city Vologesia (1959), and problems of Syriac epigraphy (1957, 1962).

In March 1958 Maricq presented his discovery of the minaret of Jām to the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, and the following year he published with Gaston Wiet (1887-1971) his research on that monument in the *Mémoires de la DAFA*. Maricq described the discovery of the site, which he identified with Firuzkuh, the capital of the Ghurids, and explained the relationship between the minaret of Jām and the Ghurid minaret of the Qoṭb Menār in Delhi (see [DELHI SULTANATE](#), in *EIr.* VII, 246-47 and 248 pl. XXI). Wiet, on the other hand, analyzed the decoration of the minaret and its inscriptions, which draw on sura 19 *Maryam*, and provided a detailed survey of Ghurid history. From his unfinished collaboration with Pirenne, the latter reported his remarks on the *Periplus* (Pirenne).

Finally, one must not fail to recall Maricq's contribution to research on Bactrian, since he discovered the first great inscription in Bactrian, attributed it correctly to Kaniška, and identified its language as that of the Kushans. In a posthumously published article (Maricq, 1960), he defended the term *étéo-Tokharian*, which was undoubtedly abandoned because [Walter Bruno Henning](#) (1908-67) preferred the term *Bactrian*. Writing on the brink of death, Maricq stressed in the same article the importance of his work, reminding his readers that in a single year he had revealed to the learned world the existence of three monuments: the Kaniška inscription, the Greek version of the Šāpur inscription, and the minaret of Jām. His participation in discussions on the dating of the Kushan dynasty documents his concern that history be based on reliable chronological information.

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