



SCHEIL, JEAN-VINCENT

SCHEIL, Father **Jean-Vincent** (b. Kœnigsmacker [département of Moselle], 10 June 1858; d. Paris, 21 September 1940), French philologist and archeologist.

After his studies at the college of Sierck (Moselle), he entered the Dominican order in 1881 and took the name of Father Vincent. His ecclesiastical studies and his novitiate lasted six years, first in Spain, and then in Austria. During these years, he also wrote his thesis of doctorate in philosophy and theology, which was published in 1889 in Mainz as *De origine gothica Guzmanorum gentis germanice*. In 1887, he became lecturer in theology at the Convent of Saint Jacques in Paris. Very musician, he played harmonium and sang with the offices; his homilies was remarkable, but he admitted that he was not cut out to be a preacher. So, as he knew Hebrew very well, his superiors directed him towards philological studies. He became a titular pupil of the École Pratique des Hautes Études at the Sorbonne, where he studied, among other subjects, ancient Middle Eastern civilizations. By attending courses of Egyptology and Assyriology at the Collège de France and the École du Louvre, he further deepened his knowledge.

In December 1890, he was sent to Egypt as a member of the Institute of Oriental Archaeology in Cairo. There, the discovery of the Assyrian tablets encouraged him to specialize in Assyrian. Towards the end of 1892, Father Scheil directed excavations in the desert close to Baghdad for the Ottoman Imperial Museum. In 1893 he went to Constantinople to classify his discoveries. Ottoman authorities entrusted him with the classification and drafting of a catalogue of the Chaldean, Assyrian, and Egyptian antiquities of



the Museum. Back to France for his publications, he was appointed lecturer at the École Pratique des Hautes Études (section of historical and philological sciences) in November 1895. For two years (1896-98), he dedicated his academic vacations to the classification of the written tablets of the Museum of Constantinople.

In 1899, Jacques de Morgan appointed him as an Assyriologist to the [Délégation Archéologique Française en Iran](#). After the discovery of the Hammurabi's Law Code in Susa (1901), Father Scheil deciphered and published the 250 articles of this stele containing nearly 3,600 lines. It was the starting point of a new field of activity within the Délégation, and of numerous important publications in the series *Mémoires de la Délégation en Perse*, renamed *Mémoires de la Mission de Susiane* when de Morgan retired in October 1912. From this date until 1940, Father Scheil and Roland de Mecquenem jointly directed the Mission de Susiane, the later leading the excavations in Susa while Scheil carried out the scientific and publishing work in Paris. Father Scheil, who had already been elected member of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres in 1908, the same year he received the Légion d'Honneur, the highest French distinction, also became deputy Director of the École Pratique des Hautes Études. He occupied these positions until his death.

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