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[Chronologie des nations \(Al-āthār al-bāqiya ‘an al-qurūn al-khāliya\)](#)ItemI. Chapitre
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calendaire sous Yazdgird I^{er}

I. Chapitre V. Sur la nature des mois en usage dans les ères précédentes. - Une réforme calendaire sous Yazdgird I^{er}

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Fück, J., «Sechs Ergänzungen zu Sachaus Ausgabe von al-Bīrūnīs "Chronologie Orientalischer Völker"», in J. Fück (ed.), *Documenta Islamica inedita*, Berlin, 1952, p. 69-98.

Références bibliographiques

- Kennedy, E. S., «Al-Bīrūnī», *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, II, ed. C. C. Gillispie, New York, 1970, p.147-158.
- Strohmaier, G., «Al-Bīrūnī», dans D. Thomas, A. Mallett (eds), *Christian-Muslim*

Relations: A Bibliographical History. IV. 1200–1350, (History of Christian-Muslim Relations 17), Leiden, 2012, p. 73-80. Voir bibliographie.

Liens

Édition du texte arabe par E. Sachau, 1878, sur le site archive.org

Indexation

Noms propres [Ābān-Māh](#), [Alexandre](#), [Ardašīr I](#), [Perses](#), [Šābuhr II](#), [Šāhryar](#), [Yazdgird III](#), [Yazdgird Alhizarī](#), [Yazdgird Ier](#), [Zoroastre](#)

Toponymes [Fārs](#), [Hizar](#), [Istāhr](#)

Sujets [calendrier](#), [dastūr](#), [Epagomenæ](#), [nowrūz](#), [réforme](#)

Traduction

Texte

Chapitre V

Sur la nature des mois en usage dans les ères précédentes

- Une réforme calendaire sous Yazdgird I^{er} -

[trad. Sachau p. 38] [ar. p. 33] Now, although in bringing about this measure much ingenuity has been displayed, Naurūz has not thereby returned to that place which it occupied at the time when intercalation was still practised in the Persian empire. For the Persians had already begun to neglect their intercalation nearly seventy years before the death of Yazdajird [Yazdgird]. Because at the time of Yazdajird ben Shā[b]ūr they had intercalated into their year two months, one of them as the necessary compensation for that space of time, by which the year had moved backward (it being too short). The five Epigomenæ they put as a mark at the end of this intercalary month, and the turn had just come to Ābān-Māh, as we shall explain hereafter. The second month they intercalated with regard to the future, that no other intercalation might be needed for a long period.

Now, if you subtract from the sum of the years between Yazdajird ben Shā[b]ūr and Yazdajird ben Shahryar 120 years, you get a remainder of nearly - but not exactly - 70 years; there is much uncertainty and confusion in the Persian chronology. The Portio intercalanda of these 70 years would amount to nearly 17 days. Therefore it would have been necessary, if we calculate without mathematical accuracy, to postpone Naurūz not 60, but 77 days, in order that it might coincide with the 28th of Haziran. The man who worked out this reform, was of opinion, that the Persian method of intercalation was similar to the Greek method. Therefore he computed the days since the extinction of their empire. Whilst in reality the matter is a different one, as we have already explained, and shall more fully explain hereafter. (...)

[trad. Sachau p. 55] [ar. p. 45] Further, people relate: When Zoroaster arose and intercalated the years with the months, which up to that time had summed up from the day -quarters, time returned to its original condition. Then he ordered people in all future times to do with the day-quarters the same as he had done, and they obeyed his command. They did not call the intercalary month by a special name, nor did they repeat the name of another month, but they kept it simply in memory from one turn to another. Being, however, afraid that there might arise

uncertainty as to the place, where the intercalary month would have again to be inserted, they transferred the five Epagomenæ and put them at the end of that month, to which the turn of intercalation had proceeded on the last occasion of intercalating. And as this subject was of great importance and of general use to high and low, to the king and to the subjects, and as it is required to be treated with knowledge, and to be carried out in conformity with nature (i.e. with real time), they used to postpone intercalation, when its time happened to occur at a period when the condition of the empire was disturbed by calamities; then they neglected **[trad. Sachau p. 56]** intercalation so long, until the day-quarters summed up to two months. Or, on the other hand, they anticipated intercalating the year at once by two months, when they expected that at the time of the next coming intercalation circumstances would distract their attention therefrom, as it has been done in the time of Yazdajird [Yazdgird] ben Sābūr, for no other motive but that of precaution. That was the last intercalation which they carried out, under the superintendence of a Dastūr, called Yazdajird [Yazdgird] Alhizarī. Hizār was an estate in the district of Ištakhr in Fārs, from which he received his name. In that intercalation the turn had come to Ābān Māh; therefore, the Epagomenæ were added at its end, and there they have remained ever since on account of their neglecting intercalation. (...)

[trad. Sachau p. 121] [ar. p. 118] Further, we are informed by traditions, the correctness of which is proved by their mutual agreement, that the last intercalation was carried out at the time of Yazdajird [Yazdgird] ben Shā[b]ūr, and that the Epagomenæ were put at the end of that month, to which the turn of intercalation had [ar. p.119] come, viz. the eighth month (Ābān-Māh). If, now, we count the interval between Alexander and Ardashīr as 537 years, we find the interval between Zoroaster and Yazdajird ben Shā[b]ūr to be nearly 970 years, in which eight leap months are due, since it was their custom to intercalate one month in every 120 years. But if we count that interval (between Alexander and Ardashīr) as 260-270 years, or something more, as 300 years, as most authors do, we get a sum of about 600 years, in which only five leap months would be due, whilst we have already mentioned their report stating that eight leap months are due in that period. The latter is therefore an irreconcilable supposition (viz. that the interval between Alexander and Ardashīr is not more than 260-300 years).

Traducteur(s) C. Edward Sachau

Description

Analyse du passage

La durée et la chronologie du règne de Yazdgird ne font pas l'objet d'un consensus dans la documentation, qu'elle soit grecque, syriaque, arabe ou persane. Nikolaus Schindel en a commodément synthétisé les principales données, qui varient entre 21 ans (chez Agathias, Élie de Nisibe et Ferdowsī), 21 ans et quelques mois (9 mois pour l'*Histoire syro-orientale* de Séert, 5 mois pour Euty chius d'Alexandrie ainsi que différentes versions d'al-Tabarī ou d'al-Bīrūnī, 10 pour al-Mas'udī), 22 ans pour la *Passion syriaque de 'Abdā et ses compagnons* (BHO 6), 22 ans et 5 mois (une version de Tabarī) voire 23 ans (al-Bīrūnī d'après al-Kisrawī). Schindel, N., *Sylloge Nummorum Sasanidarum Paris - Berlin - Wien. Band III/1. Shapur II. - Kawad I. /*

2. *Regierung*, Wien, 2004, p. 510-512, Appendix IV (2.18). Voir aussi Herman, G., *The Last Years of Yazdgird I and the Christians*, in G. Herman (ed.), *Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians: Religious Dynamics in a Sasanian Context*, (*Judaism in Context*, 17), Piscataway NJ, 2014, p. 67 n. 2.

D'après l'extrait d'al-Bīrūnī, le calendrier aurait été modifié dans le courant sous le règne de Yazdgird Ier avec l'insertion de deux mois épagomènes de trente jours assortis des cinq jours supplémentaires après le huitième mois. S. H. Taqizadeh estimait que cet ajout de mois et de jours intercalaires avait affecté le mois d'avril-mai, reporté sur juillet-août. Taqizadeh, S. H., «Some Chronological Data relating to the Sasanian Period», *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* 9, 1937-1939, p. 132-133; voir aussi: Bickerman, E., «Time-Reckoning», *The Cambridge History of Iran* 3/2, p. 787. Dans un autre passage, al-Bīrūnī évoque encore cette réforme qu'il situe alors sous le règne de Pērōz, sans doute par erreur. Cf. Bickerman, p. 787 n. 2.

Sur les différents calendriers en usage à l'époque sassanide, voir Nyberg, H. S., *Texte zum mazdayasnischen Kalender*, Uppsala, 1934, p. 83-85; Higgins, M. J., *The Persian War of the Emperor Maurice (582-602). I. The Chronology, with a Brief History of the Persian Calendar*, Washington, 1939, p. 1-23; Christensen, A., *L'Iran sous les Sassanides*, (*Annales du Musée Guimet. Bibliothèque d'études* 48), Copenhague, 1936, 1944², p. 169-173.

E. Sachau note (p. 383) que le personnage de Yazdgird Alhizarī est également mentionné par Yāqūt, tout en soupçonnant néanmoins que la source d'information du géographe arabe fut sans doute cet ouvrage d'al-Bīrūnī.

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