Late rulers of the second Turkish Qaghanate (682-745) left behind some inscriptions in Turkish in the mid of what is today Mongolia, known as commonly Turkish or Orkhon Inscriptions. The ethnonym Türk was firstly used by this state, and the word “Türk” first time occurs in Turkish in those inscriptions. During the short life of this qaghanate, its boundaries extended to vast areas from the Khingan Mountains in the east to the Sogdiana in the west, and Bilğä Qaghan (716-734), who erected those stones, ruled over a lot of Turkish and non-Turkish peoples in Central and Inner Asia. The inscriptions give very important information about the founding of the Qaghanate in 552, its following splendor, some specialties of early Turkish states, the period of the second Turkish Qaghanate, the neighboring kingdoms, and in short, human geography of Central Asia and the Near East in those ages.

In this article, I will tell on a place-name or ethnonym, (A)Par or Par, which still keeps its mystery, according to the Turkish inscriptions and some early Medieval Armenian sources.

We have not any formal documents written in Turkish about the first Turkish Qaghanate which was founded by Bumïn (552-553?) and Istemi (552-574?) in 552, and our data are based on only Chinese annals. However, the two inscriptions dated to the second qaghanate period fortunately give us very important and formal information through Bilğä Qaghan’s words.

1. Apăr in the Turkish Inscriptions of the VIII. Century

In the aforesaid inscriptions, known as Bilğä Qaghan and Köl Tigin in respect to their owners, a word “(A)Par Ҩý1” is mentioned (BQ-East 5, KT-East 4), by counting representatives of the countries and peoples, who participated in the mourning rites (“yogh”) in Turkish headquarters then in Mongolia, for Bumïn (Tumen according to Chinese sources) Qaghan’s passing in 552. A similar narration is repeated for Köl Tigin, his elder brother, in 732, and for Bilğä Qaghan, who died in 734, similarly in his inscription erected by Tängri Qaghan, his son and successor, in 735:

KT-E 4 / BQ-E 5: “(Özi anča) kergek bolmïş. Yïγčï siyïtï öngre kiin toysïkda Bökli Çöllüg il, Taβyać, Tïüï, (A)Par, (A)Purum, Kïrïkï, Üç Kurïkan, Otuz Tatar, Kiïtanï, Tatabï… bunçâ bodun kelipen siyïtamiš, yoïlamïš. Antag kïlïgï kayïn ermiš”.1 [They thus passed away (lit.: ‘became lacking’). As mourners and lamenters there came from the east, from where sun rises, the representatives of the people of the Bökli plain, the Chinese, the Tibetan, the Avar, the Byzantium, the Kirghiz, the Üch Qurïqan, the Otuz-Tatar, the Qïtan and the Tatabï... This many peoples came and mourned and lamented. So famous kagans were they.]2

It can be easily deduced from the order of the ethnonyms or place-names that they are told according to clock direction, that is, from east through south to west, and then to north. The studies on the Bökli Çöllüg il showed that it, or at least its first component refers to “the state of Mo” (Gaojuli Kingdom) to the east of the Turkish land and in the north of China.3 And Tabïgaç is frankly once the very famous dynasty in Northern China, known as Toba / Wei. However, during the first days of the First Turkish Qaghanate, the dynasty ruling over the North China was not yet Tabïgaç, but the Sui (581-618), of Chinese origin. During the Second Turkish Qaghanate the

2 The translation of the text was cited from Tekin 1968, p. 264. Also see Enoki 1970a, p. 25.
power was at the hand of the Tang Dynasty (618-906). It seems that, for the second phase of the qaghanate, either it was not known by the Turks the throne had passed from the Tabgač to the Chinese (Tang), which is not very likely, or during the later times name of this old dynasty of “Turkic” origin, Tabgač came to denominate China as a whole in all times, as shown in some Turkish texts of the later periods (for example, those of the Uighur period). The third name Tüpüt is already an equivalent of today’s Tibet.5

Some earlier and late studies on the word or phrase *(A)Purum / Ap(a-U)rum* in the same line of the text [and even, *(A)Par Purum*, in the joint form with the previous word which I will try to explain below] pointed out that the Turks had mentioned the Roman Empire, or at least its eastern part, the Byzantium, in that way. A certain *Apurum* occurs in the form of *prwmyn* in the Inscription of Shapur I of Sasanian (242-272).6 S. Kljashtorni conjectured that this word was a memory of the Byzantine ambassador Valentinus’ visit to Istemi Qaghan in 576.7 Since it is already known that the Kür già and other peoples mentioned in the text dwelled in the north and north-east of the Central Asia and the second Turkish Qaghanate, there remains a sole problem for the text: Where did the *(A)Par* seat, and, more importantly, who were they?

Now, the problematic and mysterious word *(A)Par* occurs between the nations or countries Tüpüt hMNH (Tibet) and *(A)Purum* H>1 (Byzantium). Once some scholars tried to read it as Par, and recently Sertkaya repeated the reading Par9, referring to Doerfer’s famous rule of the Turkic philology.9 However, as in the Orkhon Turkic texts the vocals a / ä at the beginning of the words were not written, and according to P. Aalto’s the famous rule for ancient Turkic and Mongolian, it should be a word of foreign origin,10 and must be read as Apar: “Neither the Turkic nor the Mongolian languages possess an initial p- in old original words.”11 Some researchers explained it either as the Avars (Ruan Ruan or the European Avars?),12 or the whole Iran country,13 and even the “White Huns” (Ak-Huns)14 in northeastern Iran, from the point of views of some historical and linguistic opinions.15 However, none of them took account of information out of some Armenian sources from the Vth and VIIth centuries.

In this paper, I will try to make a comparative study of the data in the Turkish inscriptions and the Armenian sources. According to the order in the text, we should look for *(A)Par* in the area what is today Afghanistan and Iran. The text narrates some activities during the times of Bumîn (d. 553?) or Istemi (d. 574 or 576?) qaghans, and then burial rites after the former or latter qaghan’s death. Given the following developments between 553-563 in Central Asia, the dead ruler here should

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5 DTS 1969, p. 598.
6 This problem was disputed for a long time. W. Radloff read it wrongly as *Parpurim* and later *Parpurum* together with the previous word (Radloff 1895, p. 45; Radloff 1897, p. 131), and W. Thomsen corrected it as *Apar* and *Apourim* (Thomsen 1896, p. 98). H. N. Örkün followed Thomsen and read it *apar apurïm* (See Örkün 1936, p. 30-31; 1941, p. 151-152). Eventually B. Ögel wrote a long article on this problem and accepted the form “*Apurim*”. Indeed, this word was an ancient Turkic form of Fröm ~ Früm (=Byzantine Empire) as J. R. Hamilton explained (see Hamilton 1974, p. 111-117, cited after Sertkaya 1999, p. 25). About this matter, see, Ögel 1945, pp. 70-85; Kljashtorni 1964, p. 73 (“Purum”); Gumiley 1967, p. 34, fn. 42; Aalto 1971, p. 34; Sertkaya 1995, s. 135, especially 142, 145-147, 150-152 (“apa urum” = ‘the Great Rom’, owing to its spelling in Turkish :Rom > Rum > Urum).
7 Kljashtorni 1964, p. 73.
8 Sertkaya 1999a, p. 25; Sertkaya 1999b, p. 42.
9 Doerfer 1983, p. 91: “*p*- in the main Turkic was kept as –p- in Uigur Turkish, but *-b- (after a vocal) in the main Turkic becomes –w- in Uigur”.
10 M. Ölmez also suggests that it is a word of foreign origin, see Ölmez 1997, p. 175.
12 For example, see Malov 1951 (Avarî), p. 36; Haussig 1983, p. 6, 140 (Juan-juan). According to Haussig, the word *Aba* in the Chinese sources stands for *Apar* in the Turkish Inscriptions.
13 See Sertkaya 1999a, p. 25 (“the name of the whole Iranian country”).
14 Gömeç 1999, p. 32, supposed that the Akhuns and the Hephthalites were the same, whereas they were completely different dynasties, and the latter succeeded the former.
15 For the various theories on *Apar* and some arguments about them see Enoki 1970a, pp. 25-27.
be Bumin, and the following burial and embassy activities belonged probably to that period, but not the events after 574 or 576, by the same political reasons. Supposing Bumin died in 553 and taking into account the following dates, there were at that time the Sasanian Empire in Iran; the Hephthalite Empire on the territories north and north-east of Iran, including the eastern part of today’s Khorasan. As before stated, in some recent works, (A)par was considered as the name for either the whole Iran, in broader sense, or the Hephthalites (or, wrongly, the previous Akhun dynasty).

Another important issue to pay attention here is that the names mentioned in Chinese and Turkish sources point out really either to a tribe and nation, or a place, thus we are not sure at the first glance whether the name “Apar” is a geographical or political one. In the Chinese sources, relating to the areas in the east of Iran, the mentioned names are not geographical, rather refers generally to political structures (for example, Kangju, Sute, Daxia, Kibin, Wuishanli). In the Turkish inscriptions, it seems that the equivalents of some of the above-mentioned names are also political ones (Kāngārās, Bārčākār, Buqaraq ulus, Altı Čub Soydaq etc.).

Unfortunately, Chinese sources are not much useful to help enlighten the problem. In the Chinese sources, contemporary of the Sasanians, Iran or Persians are mentioned as Bossu [puâsie]. As for the Hephthalites, their country was Ida or Yeda, but the polity Hua. On Bossu (Pers, Iran) of the Chinese sources, Hamilton pointed out that in the name Apar one could not see a reference to the word Pārs, but to Awar. While this word (Pars) does not stand for the whole Iranian domain, relating to the Pars / Pers / Fars, we can see a name Bārčāk-ār, usually explained as Fars, in the Turkish Inscription (KT-N 12). For this reason, Apar can not be Iran or the Sasanian country. However, according to Sertkaya, a Sanskrit word Pahra / Pahla is more suitable for Par but not (a)par. There are other opinions, more reasonable both historically / ethnically and geographically: the name Apar, according to both Turkic and Armenian texts in context stands for the region of Khorasan of Hephthalite empire, which I will take in hands again in the Conclusion.

2. The Armenian Sources in the Vth - VIIth Centuries and Apar

In this connection, we have some important and pertinent Armenian source from the Vth and VIIth centuries, in which a certain word “Apar Ուղիղ” is mentioned, related to the events that happened in the west and east of Iran in those times: Egishe Vardapet, Ghazar Parpets’i and Sebēos.

Our first source, Eghishe Vardapet was one of the prominent authors of the Vth century and so-called “eye-witness” of some wars between the Sasanian Empire and some Armenian formations, especially those at the end of the first half of the Vth century: Though it was claimed by Ter-Mkrtchian that he had participated in the well-known “Avarayr Battle” in 451 between the Armenian nobles under the leadership of Vardan Mamikonian and the Sasanians, and that he was a contemporary of the events during the rule of Yazdagird II, the Sasanian king (439-457) because this fact could be deduced from some clues given by him, Prof. R.W. Thomson rightly showed that this first phase of Eghishe’s life is very doubtful and rather late. Thus, he writes,

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16 See Gumilev 1967, p. 34.
18 For example, see Harmatta 1971, pp. 135-137,140-141; Ecsedy 1977, p. 228, 233, 235; Cannata 1982, p. 72, 78, 84; Daffinà 1983, p. 121; Malyavkin 1989, p. 235, fn. 479.
21 With a changing of the sound r ~ l : skt. Paha / Pahra > at. Pahr > Par. See Sertkaya 1999a, p. 25. However, K. Enoki criticizes this idea: “Persia (Pārs, Pārsa) has never been called “Par”, though it could have been called either Pas or Pāsā”, see Enoki 1970a, p. 26, and fn. 6.
22 I am very grateful to Prof. M. Bais, who gave me important knowledge and some corrections on the Armenian sources.
“the thirteenth-century Kirakos [of Gandzakets’i] mentions the tent and altar of Trdat, used in the Armenian camp at the time of the holy Vardanank’. This seems to be a unique reference to that tradition, but Kirakos does not connect it with Elishe. As a historian Elishe is placed between Moses Khorenats’i and Lazar by Kirakos, as by Stephen of Taron, whereas in the next century the chronicler Mkhitar of Ayrivank’ places Elishe after Lazar, which strictly speaking would render invalid Elishe’s claim to have been an eyewitness.”

Anyway, Eghishe has been giving information on the wars of the Sasanians against Kushank [i.e. the Hephthalites; the settled nations such as Chinese, Iranians, Greeks and Armenians used to call all successive nomadic peoples and polities with the name or title of an earlier well-known nomadic formation] in the years 442-448. Even, it is claimed that he had been in the country of “Apar” in military service during those wars. He later became “vardapet” and then, produced a history book titled “History of Vardan and the Armenian War”, which was written probably a few years after the finish of the Armeno-Sasanian wars in the second half of the V. century, and which covers Armenian history from the collapse of the Armenian dynasty Arshakids in 428 to the years 464 / 465. In relation to the wars of the Sasanians with the Hephthalites, he mentions a country in the Northeastern Iran as “the upper lands” or “the land of Apar Ապար” That region is possibly an equivalent for today’s Khorasan, with Nishapur its main city. He also mentions “the land of the Kushans” in connection with serial campaigns of the Sasanians against them in the years 442-449, 450-451 and 453-454.

Ghazar Parpets’i, another Armenian author of the Vth century, wrote his “History of Armenia” by the order of Vahan Mamikonian. He undertook to write a history of Armenians, as a kind of a continuation of the “History” by Phaustos Byzantios [whose work, according to M. Abegian and N. Garsoian, was written in the second half of the Vth century, but C. Trever dates it to the end of the IVth and the beginning of the Vth centuries] and completed this work around 500. Ghazar’s story begins from where Phaustos concludes, that is, the division of Armenia between the Romans and Sasanians by an agreement in 387, and comes to the year 428, when the Armenian Arshakid House collapsed. For the events after that date, it is proposed that he used the work by Eghishe, as well as some other authors of the previous era. He died at the end of the Vth century or, the beginning of the VIth century. Ghazar names a land in the East of Iran as “Kushank country” or “Apar country”, just as Eghishe did.

As a very important Armenian source of the VIIth century, Sebēs was an episcope and had participated in the council held at Dvin in 645. He wrote a History of Emperor Heraclius which includes a whole history of Armenia from the very beginning up to 661, the time of Islamic conquest, which he witnessed. Some Armenian specialists divide his work “History” into
two main parts: the first part generally called as “Primary History” and the second one. According to general accept among the specialists, the attribution of the whole text come to us to Sebēos is at least doubtful. Probably only the second part of this “History” is Sebēos’ work, while the first part, dealing with more ancient events is not attributed to Sebēos. He also speaks about the “country of the Kushans” and their rulers, and narrates the “contemporary” events between the Byzantine and Sasanian Empires during the rules of the emperors Mauricius (582-602) and Khosrow II (A)Parviz (590-628) respectively. He names Khosrow II as “Aparve:z”.

In connection with both the Armenian uprising in 451 and the place where the Armenian nobles were martyred, and the events taking place at the beginning of the VIIth century Sebēos calls a country a “country of the Kushans” which evidently is the same as Eghishe’s Apar, whereas the earlier writers used to the term Armenian Apar ashkharh.

As for the last source, the Aḵsarhač’oyc’ by Ananias of Širak who lived between ca. 610-685, its original and long version accepted to be written between 591 and 636 mentions the countries of Persia and Aria and their bounding parts, and names a part of Aria as “Ap(a)r-Shahr”, together with Koshm and Wrkan.

3. About Aparshahr and the Aparni

It seems, according to the explanations in the Armenian sources and some scholars’ opinions, that the land of Apar was arrived soon after going through Hyrcania; thus it should be nowhere but the region of Nishapur (however, not the city Nishapur, the main center of Khorasan). During the campaigns of both Yazdagird II in the 450s against to the Hephthalites [Haytals according to the Islamic sources] and of Khosrow II Aparviz at the beginning of the VIIth century Nishapur was used as a military base. Since the Sasanians first started to call the region as Khorasan, soon after the events that the sources deal with, one can directly associate Khorasan with the expression the region of Nishapur. Th. Nöldeke, H. Hübschmann, R. N. Frye, A. Christensen and K. Enoki always identify the Aparshahr / Abarshahr / Abharshahr or Abrashahr with “Khurasan” or “Nishapur”. According to H. W. Haussig Aβaršahr means

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39 Ter-Mkrtichian 1979, pp. 34-35.
40 Ter-Mkrtichian 1979, pp. 58-59. According to Balazuri, the local ruler in Sistan was also called as Aparviz (See Christensen 1993, p. 327, fn. 9). About the relating words and titles with Aparvez in Iranian sources see Justi F. 1895, 19: “Aparwēz” (I am very indebted to my colleague, C. Lo Muzio who sent me this reference).
41 See Ter-Mkrtichian 1979, p. 60; Thomson 1982, p. 30 (“... How the holy martyrs of Christ were seized by the heathens and were martyred in Apr Shahr near the city of Nivshapuh in the place called T’eark’uni...”); Thomson 1999, Part I, p. 50 and n. 314; Part II, p. 101, 187-188. The place name T’eark’uni here was not known by Eghishe or Ghazar. About it and Thomson’s opinion see Thomson 1999, Part I, p. 2 and n. 10.
42 After S. T. Eremyan and R. H. Hewsen, see Hewsen 1992, p. 12, 15.
44 Ter-Mkrtichian 1979, p. 63; Hewsen 1992, p. 74-74A: “The thirty-third country of Asia is Ariana which is east of India, by Hyrcania and part of Scythia.... The Holy Scriptures call all of Ariana “Parthia”.... This region is called Xorasan by the Persians, i.e., “Eastern” [K’usti Xorasan]. Here are said to be the following provinces: Kosma [or, Komš], Vrkan [Gurgan, ancient Hyrcania], Apršahr, Amr, Mrot, Hrew, Gadšan, Gozkan... and Gozbon...”
45 Trever mentions Apar-shahr as Tos [Tûs] region (Trever 1954, p. 142), but the region Nishapur seems more suitable for it. P. Christensen says that Nishapur was also called as Abrashahr (Christensen 1993, p. 193)
46 Christensen 1993, s. 194.
47 Nöldeke 1879, p. 17, fn.2 (“Abrašahr ist der ältere name für die Stadt oder eigentlich wohl den District des späteren Nêwšâpûr, (jetzt Nišâpûr, arab. Nišâbûr)”; Hübschmann 1962, pp. 20-21 (“Persische Landschaft mit der Hauptstadt Niwshapowh, Niv-shapuh (in Parthien)”). I am very grateful to Prof. M. Bais who kindly gave me this knowledge, together with a lot relating data in the Armenian sources; Frye 1962, p. 180 (“or the Nishapur region”);
“Reich der Abar” and should be sought in south-western territory of the Western Turkish Empire.48

There is also another opinion which suggests that Apar might be concerning with a very old name Aparni / Aparna in the classical sources, which was one of the three tribes of the confederation of the Dahae on the Ochos (today’s Tejend) river; and the Aparshahr or Abarshahr was a district of the Aparnis.49 J. Markwart suggests that Apar-shahr became in the forms of Apar ašxart (and Apar ašxarb in older form) in Armenian, and Abarshahr in Arabic, and it meant “the country of Aparnak”,50 i.e. the Aparni, but not “the upper countries, upper lands, Oberland, Hochland”, which Frye also supposes.51

However, there are some problems with reading and understanding this “Aparshahr”. Although many scholars accepted the form in the original text of Res Gestae Divi Shapuris [dated from 262 A.D.52] of Shapur I as “Aparshahr” / “Abarshahr” or “Abharshahr”, it appears only in the Parthian version, but not in the other versions given by A. Maricq, whereas the other place-names are mentioned.53 Thus, one can think even that there was not an original name Aparshahr in the IIIrd century A.D., and it is mentioned in the later sources written after the coming of the tribes of certain Huns (or Akhuns), or the Hephthalites (from the second half of the IVth century, or the beginning of the Vth century A.D. up to Islamic period, cf. especially Tabari).

Nevertheless, it must be sought only in the north-eastern parts of Iran, and between Gurgan, Marw and Balkh, according to the order of the place-names in the sources.54 Thus, Apar is to be connected with the so-called Aparshahr, later Khorasan, and was not the whole Iran.

The Aparni or Parni were “probably the leading tribe” migrating “from the area of Khwarazm into Parthia in the first part of the third century B.C.” According to this opinion and also Strabo’s record, the (A)parni were “a part of the larger Dahi [Dahae] confederation”55 and “the Dahae had occupied the region in Achaemenian times from their plain of Dihistan… From the late 4th century A.D., Chol and Kidarite Huns pressed upon the province [Hyrkania / Gurgân] from Dihistan… From the reign of Yazdagir II periodic campaigns were necessary to contain their penetration within the province.”56 In this connection, some scholars also identified the Aparni with later Avars. However, it is not acceptable “either historically or linguistically”, just as Frye said.57

Frye 1984, p. 206, fn. 5 (“later the Nishapur area”), 294 (“present Khurasan”), 300; Christensen 1936, p. 84 (“le Khorassan dans le sens moderne du nom”), 133 (“Nēv-Shāhpuhr=Abharshahr”); Enoki 1970a, p. 21, 26 (“Aparshahr means nothing but Nishapur”).

51 See Frye 1962, p. 180; Frye 1984, p. 206, fn. 5; Maricq 1965, p. 64, fn.7.
52 Lukonin 1969b, p. 21.
56 Brunner 1983, pp. 767-768. About coming of the Aparni / Parni / Parnoi, as a tribe of Dahae, out of Dihistan to Seleucid lands and an identification Aparnak = Nishāpūr see Herzfeld 1932, p. 36 and fn. 1; Daffinà 1967, pp. 35-40; Daffinà 1982, pp. 36-38.
57 Frye 1984, p. 206, fn. 5.
4. Conclusion

In my opinion, the name “Apar” in Turkish Inscriptions of the VIIIth century (Bilgä Qaghan and Köl-Tigin) is not a geographical, but political, just as some other names occurring in both Chinese and Turkish sources (Kibin, Kangju, Wuishanli, Anxi etc., and Tabgač, (A)Purum / Byzance, Kyrkyz, Uch-Kurykan, Otuz Tatar etc.). But the name “Apar” and its component in Armenian sources seem to show a geographical area (Khorasan), which might also intimate a political formation once there. This formerly possession might be of the Hephthalites, but not the Akhuns [“White Huns”] because the two dynasties were completely different from another, and the first replaced the second.

The purpose of this paper is not to discuss here the Awar / Avar and Ruan Ruan problem and to descend the Hephthalites directly from the Ruan Ruan in Mongolia. But, one of the main reasons of the studying the problem Apar together with the Hephthalites and Ruan Ruan is that the tribes War and Hun (Varchonitae) took place both in the Hephthalites and Ruan Ruan. As known well, according to a Chinese record, the Hephthalites descended from a Ruan Ruan tribe called Hua in the Qeshi region (Turfan area). This tribe came to Tokharistan and soon settled also in eastern regions of Khorasan at the beginning of the Vth century. About the same days, the Avars / Awars appear in the sources. Having submitted earlier to the Huns or “White Huns” there, the Hephthalites took over the whole Tokharistan in the course of time, and began to struggle with the Sasanians for Khorasan, earlier Aparshahr, where in the earlier times the Kidarite Huns were in possession. After the Kidarite Huns or from the coming of the Hephthalites, the country was named after them (“Apar-shar”, that is, the country of the Apar). The names Apar or Aparshahr appear in neither Iranian nor Armenian texts, and nor the Sasanian coins have it, at least before the first half of the IVth century A.D., because Aparshahr (Nishapur) was founded in ca. 350-360, that is, when the Chionitae (Huns) in the east were submitted to the Sasanians. Again, in his well-known Atlas of China, A. Herrmann shows the eastern regions of Khorasan, Tokharistan etc. as a dominions of Afu / Hua / Avars / Hephthalites at the times between ca. 440 and 500 A.D., relying on the identification Hua = Uar = Awar.

58 About the Uar and Xun / Xunni / Chunni (Varchonitae, Warhuniten) and this opinion see Grignaschi 1980, pp.221-233; Haussig 1983, p. 6; Schreiner 1985, p. 188.
59 About the theories of the origin in Qeshi and Gaoqi, and their relations with China see Enoki 1959, pp. 12-13; Herrmann 1925, pp. 564, 568-569, 578-580. However, there is also another theory that Hua may be connected with Ghûr on the river Harî-Rûd in Afghanistan. About it see Enoki 1970b, pp. 38; Czeglédy 1980, pp. 215.
60 The first mention of the Hephthalites in the region is about 442 by Egishe, but that of the Avars is about 463 by Priscos. See Szadeczky-Kardoss 1990, p. 206; Livinsky 1996, p. 135. About this first phase of the Hephthalites see Wesendonk 1933, p. 342-345; Enoki 1970b, pp. 38-44; Enoki 1984, pp. 118-122.
61 In Sasanian coins the name Apar or Aparshahr is mentioned in the form ‘PR or ‘PRŠ as a sign of the mint-place of the coin. See Aalto 1971, p. 33; Chegini-Nikitin 1996, p. 52.
62 Though there are some various opinions about the time of its foundation under Shapur I or Shapur II, it seems reasonable to accept the time of Shapur II. For example, According to Lukonin its foundation time is relating to shahanshah Shapur I’s first expedition of the conquests on the boundaries of the eastern lands in 245-248. See Trever-Lukonin 1987, p. 13 (“In result, in the region of Aparshahr was built a new “tsarskii” city, Nishapur...”). About this matter see Honigmann-Bosworth, “Nishapur” (under Shapur I); http://65.1911encyclopedia.org/N/NI/NISHAPUR.htm (under Shapur II).
63 See Chegini-Nikitin 1996, p. 38: “The victorious return of Shapur II [309-379] must have taken place some time before 360; it was apparently at this time that the city of Abarshahr [the city of Nishapur] was founded and used as his headquarters.”
According to Islamic sources, the Sasanians renamed the region as *Khorasan* after they reconquered the area, and one ruler [Khosrow II] assumed himself the title “*Aparve:z*”\(^{65}\) claiming that he had taken possession of the earlier “*Apar*” land. In spite of his acceptance of some losses in the west to Byzantium, he insisted until the end of his life on not giving territory in the east to both local Hephthalite princes and Turkish rulers. Especially under the leadership of Bahram Chubin, the governor of earlier Hephthalite territories, this Sasanian policy went on.\(^{66}\) In this connection, I should note that when the Sasanians once conquered and subdued the lands of the Kushans in the time of Shapur I, they renamed it as “*Kushanshahr*” and gave its administrators the title “*kushanshah*”\(^{67}\). For this reason, it should not be surprising for us to see the conquered / subdued lands of the Huns / Khionitae or Hephthalites in Khorasan renamed by the Sasanians as “*Aparshahr*” and their Sasanian rulers titled after it as “*Aparshah*”.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


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\(^{65}\) The etymology of *Aparve:z* has a little problem. Being compared with *Parviz* in New Persian it is said that *Aparve:z* also means “victorious”. H.S. Nyberg (*A Manual of Pahlavi*, Part II, Glossary, Wiesbaden 1974 II, 22 s.v. “*Apar*”) compares it with the Armenian Loan-word “*ve:ch*”, a component from OIr. in the meaning “Streit, Zwist” in German. In this case, it seems as a compound-word. And the first word “*Apar*” means OIr. *upari-“above”*. (I would like to thank to my colleague, Dr. P. Lurje to whom I am indebted this knowledge).

\(^{66}\) About his struggles for Khorsan against the local Hephthalites and the Turks see Akbulut 1984, pp. 124-131.

\(^{67}\) Lukonin 1969b, p. 36-37.
Honigmann E.–Bosworth C.E., EI ², “Nishāpūr” (CD Version). 
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