

nian, loan-word from Persian, *aprišum*); hence Arabic *ibarīsam* or *ibrīsam*; Pamir dialects *waršum*, *waršüm*, Šugni *wrežōm*, etc.; Afghan *wrešam*.¹ Certain it is that we have here a type not related to any Chinese word for "silk." In this connection I wish to register my utter disbelief in the traditional opinion, inaugurated by KLAPROTH, that Greek *ser* ("silk-worm"; hence Seres, Serica) should be connected with Mongol *širgek* and Manchu *sirge* ("silk"), the latter with Chinese *se* 絲.² My reasons for rejecting this theory may be stated as briefly as possible. I do not see how a Greek word can be explained from Mongol or Manchu,—languages which we merely know in their most recent forms, Mongol from the thirteenth and Manchu from the sixteenth century. Neither the Greek nor the Mongol-Manchu word can be correlated with Chinese *se*. The latter was never provided with a final consonant. Klaproth resorted to the hypothesis that in ancient dialects of China along the borders of the empire a final *r* might (*peut-être*) have existed. This, however, was assuredly not the case. We know that the termination 'r 兒, so frequently associated with nouns in Pekingese, is of comparatively recent origin, and not older than the Yüan period (thirteenth century); the beginnings of this usage may go back to the end of the twelfth or even to the ninth century.³ At any rate, it did not exist in ancient times when the Greek *ser* came into being. Moreover, this suffix 'r is not used arbitrarily: it joins certain words, while others take the suffix *tse* 子, and others again do not allow any suffix. The word *se*, however, has never been amalgamated with 'r. In all probability, its ancient phonetic value was *si, sa. It is thus phonetically impossible to derive from it the Mongol-Manchu word or Korean *sir*, added by Abel-Rémusat. I do not deny that this series may have its root in a Chinese word, but its parentage cannot be traced to *se*. I do

¹ HÜBSCHMANN, *Arm. Gram.*, p. 107; HORN, *Neupers. Etymologie*, No. 65. The derivation from Sanskrit *kṣauma* is surely wrong. Bulgar *ibrišim*, Rumanian *ibrišin*, are likewise connected with the Iranian series.

² Cf. KLAPROTH, *Conjecture sur l'origine du nom de la soie chez les anciens* (*Journal asiatique*, Vol. I, 1822, pp. 243-245, with additions by ABEL-RÉMUSAT, 245-247); *Asia polyglotta*, p. 341; and *Mémoires relatifs à l'Asie*, Vol. III, p. 264. Klaproth's opinion has been generally, but thoughtlessly, accepted (HIRTH, *op. cit.*, p. 217; F. v. RICHTHOFEN, *China*, Vol. I, p. 443; SCHRADER, *Reallexikon*, p. 757). PELLLOT (*T'oung Pao*, 1912, p. 741), I believe, was the first to point out that Chinese *se* was never possessed of a final consonant.

³ See my note in *T'oung Pao*, 1916, p. 77; and H. MASPERO, *Sur quelques textes anciens de chinois parlé*, p. 12. Maspero encountered the word *mao'r* ("cat") in a text of the ninth century. It hardly makes any great difference whether we conceive 'r as a diminutive or as a suffix. Originally it may have had the force of a diminutive, and have gradually developed into a pure suffix. Cf. also P. SCHMIDT, *K istorii kitaiskago razgovornago yazyka*, in *Sbornik stat'ei professorov*, p. 19 (Vladivostok, 1917).