

**[TYPESETTER: LINES 9-11 FROM THE END NEED CORRECTION—
WORDS ARE NOT ON THE PROPER LINE.]**

The Etymology of Arabic *xarāj*, Revisited

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An Old Persian term **harka-/*harkā*, disseminated throughout the Achaemenid Empire, is reflected by the following forms: Armenian (< early Parthian) *hark* ‘a tax like the *jizya*; obligation’ (J. R. Russell, orally); Bactrian *vaṛyo* /harg/ ‘rent (for land), hire (for a workman)’; Niya Prakrit *harga* ‘tax’ (the latter two words noted by Nicholas Sims-Williams, “Afghanistan and Its Invaders” [in N. Sims-Williams, ed., *Indo-Iranian Languages and Peoples*, Oxford, 2002, pp. 225–42], p. 227); Sogdian (in Sogd. script) *’rkH* fem. (< **harkā* ?), (in Manichean script and Estrangela) *’rq* /ark/ ‘work’; Pahlavi *hlg* ‘duty, tribute, work, effort’ (D. N. MacKenzie, *A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary*, Oxford, 1971, p. 43); Man. MPers. *hrg* ‘tax, duty’, *xrg* ‘id.’ (D. Durkin-Meisterernst, *Corpus Fontium Manichaeorum: Dictionary of Manichean Texts*, vol. 3, pt. 1, *Dictionary of Manichean Middle Persian and Parthian*, Turnhout, 2004, p. 364). The latter form attests an early MPers. antecedent **/xarg/*, which accounts for Talmudic Aramaic (Targum) *krg*’ ‘Grundsteuer’.

Now, the plural of Man. MPers. *hrg* is attested as *h:rg(n)* (i.e. with two dots over *h*, indicating an abbreviation for *’* somewhere in the rest of the word, and partially preserved *n*) = **hrg’n* /hargān/ (Durkin-Meisterernst, op. cit. p. 183, following Werner Sundermann [*Texte kirchgeschichtlichen Inhalts* = Berliner Turfantexte 11, 1981], p. 93; I thank Dr. Christiane Reck for her sending me annotated references to these works). The latter reading refutes the putative series MPers. **/harāg/* < OPers. **harāka-* < Aram. **h^alākā* in effect posited by W. B. Henning (“Arabisch *harāg*,” *Orientalia* 4, 1935, 291–3) on the basis of his reading Man. MPers. *hr:g* [for *h:rg(n)*], the Masoretic pointing of the Aram., (which must now be corrected to **halkā*, cf. Akkad. *ilku*) and the Arabic vocalism *xarāj*.

Since MPers. only had *harg* and *xarg* (and not also **harāg* and **xarāg*), whence Arab. *xarj*, the Arabic vocalism of *xarāj* must be an inner-Arabic development from *xarj*; the fact that *xarj* was associated with the Arabic root *x-r-j* ‘to go out’ quite probably had some role in the creation of the very viable byform *xarāj* alongside *xarj*.

[TYPESETTER: SUBHEAD LEVEL 1.]

Addendum

A. Tafazzoli, *BAI* 4 (1990), p. 303, in questioning whether Gr. *arkapatēs*, Inscriptional Parth. *hrkpty* (or *’rkpty*) = Inscriptional Pahl. *hlgwpt/hrgwpt*, refers to a (chief) tax-collector, noted that the interpretations supporting this view are “solely based on the assumption [by Henning] that its first element is identifiable with Man. MPers. *harāg*.” He further speculated that Skjærvø’s noncommittal definition of the inscriptional title as ‘Hargbed, an official’ was due to dissatisfaction with the earlier etymology. Tafazzoli went on to

express preference that the word in question be equated with Arab. *ʾrjbed* = MPers. */argbed/ 'citadel-commander'.

Since (1) the title in question is fully compatible with the Middle Persian *harg* ~ (*xarg*) and early Parthian *hark* as the term for a tax, as against the once widely accepted MPers. **harāg*, which I hope to have shown is a ghost-word; and since (2) the Inscr. Pahl. title in question is spelled with *h-* as against the *ʾ-* expected for the (unattested) word for 'citadel-commander'; with putative MPers. **arg-* (cf. Arab. *ari*)- < **ark* < Latin *arx*, acc. *arcem*; and since (3) the Inscr. Pahl. spelling *hlg-* (or *hrg-*) in the title corresponds precisely to the Book Pahl. spelling for the tax term. *hlg* (with noteworthy *g*); and since (4) the Inscr. Pahl. spelling *hlgwpt/hrgwpt* likely represents /harguft/ or /xarguft/ (with *-ft* < **-pt*), which again differs from */argbed/; and, finally, since (5) in the Greek loan contract of 121 C.E. Phraates, the *arkapatēs*, was in the entourage of Manesos, who was (in addition to loftier positions) a tax-collector, the Greek Inscr. Pahl. and Parthian title at issue gains new, stronger evidence for its being interpreted as referring to an official connected with taxation. This would accordingly expand our dossier of the tax term itself.

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