

## AN INVESTIGATION INTO SOME SASANIAN PAHLAVI WORDS IN THE BOIR-AHMADI DIALECT

### **Reza Rezaei**

Yasouj University,  
Kohgiluyeh and Boir Ahmad Province, Iran  
reza.rezaei1@yu.ac.ir  
ORCID ID :0000-0002-7636-6135  
(corresponding author)

### **Keshvad Siahpour**

Yasouj University,  
Kohgiluyeh and Boir Ahmad Province, Iran  
K.siahpour@yu.ac.ir

### **Mohammad Saadat Asl**

Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran  
m.seadat1370@gmail.com

Since the late Achaemenid period, the Sasanian Empire legitimated Middle Persian as the language of religion and government. Widespread in southwestern Iran, this language which was a continuation of Old Persian and was used in inscriptions and books for several centuries after Islam, gradually became obsolete and lost its place. Today, in the light of precise and scientific knowledge of Iranian languages, including Middle Persian, and because of in-depth studies of historical linguistics, it is possible to identify many words and expressions of this language being preserved in the local dialects of southwestern Iran. Among these dialects are Boir-Ahmadi, Mamasani, and Bakhtiari belonging to the southwest branch of Iranian languages and dialects known as Luri. These linguistic varieties are the continuation of the ancient languages of Iran in terms of linguistic evolution. The present study investigates and introduces some words of Middle Persian preserved in the Boir-Ahmadi dialect and spoken by successive generations. This study aims to identify and introduce several Sasanian Pahlavi words that are present and used in the Boir-Ahmadi dialect and, where possible, discuss their etymology and phonetic evolution from Avestan and Old Persian to Middle Persian languages of the Sasanian era.

**Keywords:** Luri language, Sasanian Empire, Middle Persian, Historical linguistics, Boir-Ahmadi dialect

## АНАЛИЗА НА НЕКОЛКУ САСАНИДСКИ ПАХЛАВСКИ ЗБОРОВИ ОД БОИРАХМАДСКИОТ ДИЈАЛЕКТ

### Реза Резае

Универзитет Јасоуц,  
Кохгилујех - Боир Ахмад, Иран

### Кешвад Сихапоур

Универзитет Јасоуц,  
Кохгилујех - Боир Ахмад, Иран

### Мохамад Садат Асл

Универзитет Шахид Бехешти,  
Техеран, Иран.

Уште од доцниот ахајменидски период, Сасанидското Царство го утврдува средноперсискиот јазик како јазик на религијата и на владејачките структури. Широко распространет во Југозападен Иран, овој јазик, којшто е продолжение на староперсискиот јазик и се користеше во записите и во книгите неколку века по исламот, постепено застаре и го изгуби статусот. Денес, со оглед на прецизните научни сознанија за иранските јазици, меѓу кои и за средноперсискиот јазик, и поради деталните проучувања на историската лингвистика, може да се утврдат многу зборови и изрази од тој јазик, зачувани во локалните дијалекти на Југозападен Иран. Меѓу тие дијалекти се боирахмадскиот, мамасанскиот и бахтијарскиот, што припаѓаат на југозападната гранка од иранските јазици и дијалекти, позната како луриска. Овие јазични варијанти се продолжение на старите јазици на Иран, според јазичната еволуција. Во овој труд се истражуваат и се претставуваат неколку зборови од средноперсискиот јазик, зачувани во боирахмадскиот дијалект, којшто се зборува со генерации. Целта на ова истражување е да се утврдат и да се претстават неколку сасанидски пахлавски зборови, коишто се присутни и се користат во боирахмадскиот дијалект, при што се зема предвид, онаму каде што е можно, нивната етимологија и фонетска еволуција од авестискиот и од староперсискиот јазик, сè до средноперсиските јазици од сасанидската ера.

**Клучни зборови:** луриски јазик, Сасанидско Царство, средноперсиски јазик, историска лингвистика, боирахмадски дијалект

## 1 Introduction

The language used by Iranian tribes after the separation of their races probably at the end of the second and the beginning of the first millennium BC was called by linguists Early or Old Persian. This language is the mother of all Iranian languages and, based on the historical changes, it is divided into three different periods called ancient, middle and new period (Rezaei Bagh Bidi, 2009: 19–23; Skjærvø, 2012: 344–377). Middle Persian (Pahlavi), derived from the ancient Persian language used during the Achaemenid era, is considered a Middle Iranian language and was spoken from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC to the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> century AD (Emmerick and Macuch, 2009: 116). Etymologically, ‘Pahlavi’ comes from the ancient Persian word ‘Parthava’, the name of the Parthian satrapy in the Achaemenid era. During the Sasanian times, it was referred to as "Pahlavi" in the language of that state, or ‘Pahlavanig’, as mentioned in the Parthian Manichean texts (Amuzgār and Tafazzoli, 1996: 13–14; Boyce, 1975: 40). The post-ancient period of Iranian history coincides with the great Sasanian Empire ruling the Iranian plateau and large parts of the Middle East for around four centuries. Throughout this era and until a few centuries later, the Middle Persian script and language were widely used as the official writing system and language of the Sasanian government and Iranian civilization. The oldest works in this language are short inscriptions on the coins of local Persian kings belonging to the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century BC (Dresden, 1974: 4–6).

Throughout the Sasanian period and a few centuries later, the writing and language of Middle Persian continued to survive. Its extent is illustrated by inscriptions and tablets, such as the Azd al-Dawla Deylami’s inscription (belonging to 970-969 AD), the Radkan inscription on the east of Astarabad, the Lajim tower inscription of Savad Kuh (belonging to 410-422 AD), the Indian works discovered (copper tablets discovered in Quilon<sup>1</sup> belonging to the 9<sup>th</sup> century AD), and the crosses discovered in the valley of the "Travancore"<sup>2</sup>, which were the result of the activities of the Christian Iranians, in addition to the life of the Middle Persian writing and language – after the collapse of the Sasanian Empire (ibid, 11). Additionally, during the early centuries of Islam, especially during the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, the Zoroastrian community in Iran began to collect and compile many of their important religious books written in Middle Persian, especially Dēnkard, Bandeshhan, Zand, and Haman Yasen.

Among all the famous dialects and languages of pre-Islamic Iran, including Sogdian, Balkhi, and Kharazmi, Dari was the sole language that became the official

---

<sup>1</sup> City in India

<sup>2</sup> An Indian kingdom from c. 1729 until 1949. It was ruled by the Travancore Royal Family from Padmanabhapuram, and later Thiruvananthapuram.

language after Islam. Ibn Nadim<sup>3</sup> quotes from Abdullah Ibn Muqaffa<sup>4</sup>, who narrates: “Dari was the language of people living in cities, and was attributed to the royal court” (Ibn Nadim, 2002: 22). Dari, which is derived from *Dar* ‘court, gate or capital’ (Lazard, 1975: 599), along with Middle Persian, which was the administrative, religious and written language of the Sasanian era, was mostly used for everyday speech and oral communication.

The genesis of Dari, as some linguists have guessed, probably dates back to the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD, following the spread of Middle Persian to the eastern parts of the Sasanian Empire and its coexistence with languages such as Parthian (Rezaei Bagh Bidi, 2009: 162). After the Muslim conquest and for almost the first three centuries of Islam, many dialects and languages were prevalent in all parts of the Iranian plateau, many of which were subjected to Arabic after the Islamic conquest and gradually lost their use. Among these varieties, Dari, the language of the mass, which was used only in spoken form, spread eastward after the Arab conquests and settled in the center of the Iranian dynasties, including the Taherids, Saffarids, and Samanids, far from the center of the Islamic Caliphate of Iraq and Syria. Borrowing from a variety of dialects and languages of eastern Iran, Dari gradually established its position as a cultural and written language throughout Iran. It should be noted that Dari was spoken in Khorasan, and was mainly influenced by Transoxiana languages, especially Parthian and Sogdian; although the dialects of southwestern Iran in Persia were not just in interaction with northern dialects and languages, both morphologically and syntactically as well as lexically, they were also completely similar to Middle Persian. (Lazard, 1975: 601).

In view of this background, the present article aims to introduce and analyze some Sassanian Pahlavi (Dari language) words in the Boir-Ahmadi dialect. The research hypothesis is that the trace of several Sassanian Pahlavi words is evident in the Boir-Ahmadi dialect. To this end, the present research tries to answer the following question: What are the major morpho-syntactic and semantic properties of the so-called Sassanian Pahlavi words?

## 2 A Brief History of the Boir-Ahmadi Dialect

The dialects of Lorestan, such as Feyli, Bakhtiari, Kohgiluyeh Boir-Ahmad, Mamasani, etc., as well as the dialects of the Fars province, have been

<sup>3</sup> Abū al-Faraj Muḥammad ibn Ishāq al-Nadīm, also ibn Abī Ya'qūb Ishāq ibn Muḥammad ibn Ishāq al-Warrāq, and commonly known by the *nasab* (patronymic) Ibn al-Nadīm (died 17 September 995 or 998) was a Muslim bibliographer and biographer of Baghdad who compiled the encyclopedia *Kitāb al-Fihrist* (*The Book Catalogue*).

<sup>4</sup> Abū Muhammad ‘Abd Allāh Rūzbih ibn Dādūya, more commonly known as Ibn al-Muqaffa’, (died c. 756/759), was a Persian translator, philosopher, author and thinker who wrote in the Arabic language.

considered by linguists as the group of languages and dialects of southwestern Iran (Rezaei Bagh Bidi, 2009: 180). According to previous research, speakers of Luri languages reside in almost 10 provinces of Iran, but the majority are in two provinces, Lorestan Kohgiluyeh and Boir-Ahmad. In the Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari provinces, the ratio of Persian speakers to Luri speakers is almost equal (Anonby, 2012). In 2003, the number of Luri speakers was estimated at 4.2 million, or about 8% of Iran's population, and nine years later, in 2012, at about 5 million (idem). The Luri dialects are generally divided into two well-known branches, great Luri and small Luri. It is worth mentioning that some proponents of this division have proposed other categories, such as Northern Luri and Southern Luri (MacKinnon, 2011).

This study focuses on the branch of Southern Luri, which includes the dialects of Kohgiluyeh and Boir-Ahmadi, Mamasani, and Bakhtiari. Much more studies have been done on the Bakhtiari dialect (composition, language, poetry, epics, etc.) than on the other dialects. Among this research is the prominent work of David Lurimer. He collected many poems and songs of Bakhtiari, but could not publish them between 1906-1908 and 1913-1914. D.L. Lurimer's posthumous work was corrected and published in 1994-1995 by Fereydoun Wahman and Garnik Asatrian. In this book, for instance, famous folk tales, lullabies, and poems of the great Bakhtiari tribe are quoted (see: Wahman, 1995: 33–83: 85–127). Linguistic research on the dialects of Kohgiluyeh and Boir-Ahmad has been much more limited. The first person who studied the Boir-Ahmadi dialect scientifically was Gernot Windfuhr. He published his research in an article entitled "Boir-Ahmadi" in 1989 in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*. In this article, Windfuhr points out the similarities of this dialect with those of Luri Mamasani and Bakhtiari and its dissimilarity with northern dialects and languages like Kurdish.

In addition, he paid particular attention to the linguistic categories of this dialect such as verbs, grammar, nouns, adjectives, etc. For example, some consonants like *j* in words like *Juma* 'shirt' and *b* in *bak* 'frog', some verbs such as *has* 'to be' or *nisi* 'not to be', some sentence structures and compounds like *zonal rate ta jun-e xubi-ya* "women went and saw that he is a good young man" (Windfuhr, 1989: 327–329), were discussed in detail. In the Boir-Ahmadi dialect, which is one of the important sources of the field, the author discussed the grammar of Luri Boir-Ahmadi. The Luri dialects of the Boir-Ahmad region and largely Kohgiluyeh and Mamasani, as three main types of Luri dialects, together with Bakhtiari and Luri, which are spoken in Lorestan province, are remnants of Middle Persian and Old Persian (Taheri, 2012: 76). Another valuable source of the Boir-Ahmadi

dialect is *Boir-Ahmadi Dictionary*, compiled by Moghimi et al. (2015), in which the authors have shown the similarity of some lexical items of this dialect with Old Persian and Middle Persian. Another important source in this case is the *Luri Dictionary and Expressions*, compiled by Seyyed Abolhassan Hosseini Boirahmadi (2002).

The Boir-Ahmadi dialect has preserved the Sasanian Pahlavi words due to the mountainous nature of the residential areas where it is spoken and the ecology which is geographically similar to Middle Persian. On the other hand, interference and constant interaction with Iranian cultures have played a key role in preserving the originality and longevity of the Boir-Ahmadi dialect for many centuries. The words analysed in the present study were extracted from diverse Pahlavi linguistic dictionaries, including *A Manual Of Pahlavi* by Henrik Samuel Nyberg, *A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary* (1971) by David Neil Mackenzie – which contains about 4,000 common words in Middle Persian today and is considered a reference for this language –, *The Dictionary of Middle Persian* (2006, 2010) by Bahram Farahvashi, *Dictionary of Manichaeic Texts (Vol. 3, Part I)* by Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst, and, finally, *Old Persian Dictionary* by Christian Bartholomae (1961). Except for dictionaries, some Middle Persian texts, such as the short treatise of *Bundhishan*<sup>5</sup>, *Dēnkard*<sup>6</sup> V, the book of *Arda Viraf*<sup>7</sup>, *Khosrow*, and *Ridag*<sup>8</sup>, the selection of *Zadsparam*, and the narration of Aturfarnbag-i Farruxzatan<sup>9</sup>, were also used.

<sup>5</sup> It is the name traditionally given to an encyclopedic collection of Zoroastrian cosmogony and cosmology written in Book Pahlavi.

<sup>6</sup> It is a 10<sup>th</sup> century compendium of Zoroastrian beliefs and customs during the time. The *Denkard* is to a great extent considered an Encyclopedia of Mazdaism and is a valuable source of information on the religion, especially during its Middle Persian iteration.

<sup>7</sup> *The Book of Arda Viraf* (Middle Persian: *Ardā Wirāz nāmag*, lit. 'Book of the Righteous Wirāz') is a Zoroastrian text written in Middle Persian. It contains about 8,800 words. It describes the dream journey of a devout Zoroastrian (the Wirāz of the story) through the next world.

<sup>8</sup> *Khosrow Ghobadan and Ridak* (Shah Khosrow and Ridak), also known as Khosrow and Ridag, is a work of Middle Persian literature in Pahlavi with details about Sassanian culture in the era of Khosrow II (known as Khosrow Parviz in the story).

<sup>9</sup> Ādurfarrōbay ī Farroxzādān was a 9<sup>th</sup> century Zoroastrian high priest who served as the leader of the Zoroastrian community of Fars in Iran. His first name has the meaning 'The (Sacred) Fire Farrōbay', the Farrōbay fire being one of the three preeminent Ādurs of Iran. He was the son of a certain *Farroxzād*, and is known to have held a religious disputation in 825 at the Abbasid court with the former Zoroastrian turned Manichaeic named Abālīs / Abdallāh, called "an apostate", with the former Iranian name Dēn-Ohrmazd. Ādurfarrōbay managed to win the debate and Abdallāh was removed from the Abbasid court.

### 3 Sasanian Pahlavi relic words in the Boir-Ahmadi dialect

In this section, some of the most important relic words of the Sasanian Pahlavi are reviewed and introduced. All these words have been preserved in the actual Boir-Ahmadi dialect

- (1) *Alūs*  
'white'

*Alūs* is an old word used in the past with a slight phonetic change (*r* to *l* conversion) in the dialect of Luri Boier-Ahmadi meaning 'white'. Of course, this term is mainly used for goats that are black and white or white; hence, they are called *alūs*. According to Hosseini (2002: 15), a goat whose color is black and white is called *an alūs*. *Alūs* has been specifically recorded as a "white goat" (Moghimi et al., 2014: 69). Moghimi et al. (ibid, 409) have also correctly recorded this point. It is also worth mentioning that, from time to time, and in some cases, beautiful children, teenagers, and young people were called *alūs*.

Dehkhoda has shown *alūs* as *arūs* 'bright and polished' (Dehkhoda, 1998: 1934). Usually in the Sasanian Pahlavi, the word *spēd* is used to indicate something white. However, in some cases, the word *arūs* is also used, which has been transliterated to [*lws*] *arūs* (MacKenzie, 1971: 11; Farahvashi, 2010: 311). This word is used in Gahan (Yasen 50, verse 10) as *aēurūš* 'dawn' (Humbach, 1994: 94).

- (2) *Xars*  
'tears, watery eyes'

Tear, which is pronounced as *xars* in the Luri Boir-Ahmadi dialect, refers to 'eye-water'. This word was written and transliterated in the Sasanian-Pahlavi as [*ls*] *ars* and in Manichaean texts, [*(ars)rs'*] (MacKenzie, 1971: 136; Nyberg, 1974: 30; Farahvashi, 2010: 31; Durkin-Meisterernst, 2004: 53). In the Pahlavi text of Ardaviraf's letter (chapter 16 / paragraph 5), it is stated:

*Arsn ars adādīhā be rēzēnd ud ō ōn rōd abzāyēd*  
'They shed tears against the law and this river grows...'

- (3) *Rima, Rim, Riman*  
'dirt, dampness, filth'

The word *rima* is common in the Boir-Ahmadi dialect and used in the form "rima" meaning white pus in the corners of the eyes. In addition to this meaning, pus between the eyelashes is also called *rima* (Moghimi et al., ibid: 336). It also

refers to a purulent substance that comes out of the lambs when they are born (Hosseini Boirahmadi, *ibid.*: 126).

Most likely, the word *rimiz* is derived from the words *rime* and *rim*, which are both used in some regions of Boir-Ahmad for damp, dirty, and polluted places. After a while, these humid and polluted areas give birth to tiny insects, also called *remiz*. The word is spelled and transliterated in the Sasanian Pahlavi as [*lym/lymn*] *rēm/rēman* (MacKenzie, 1971: 71), and in Manichaean [*rymg*] *rēmag*, [*rymn*] *rēman*, which means ‘pollution’, ‘a dirty place’ or ‘a wet place’ (Durkin-Meisterernst, 2004: 303). In Sasanian Pahlavi texts, like the text of the fifth Dēnkard (Chapter 24 / paragraph 19), dirty places are considered the place of Dev.

*Ud rēmanīh hamāg dēwīh ud az dēwān har kū dēw mehmāntar nīh wēš*  
 ‘Riemeni (impurity) belong to demons and is from Dev, and wherever there are more demons, there is more Riemani’

In *ZAND ĀBĀN* hymn (Dhalla, 1908: 118), which is a part of *Avesta* and a summary of *ĀBĀN YAŠT*, it is said:

*Ka Pāk ud Xūb, nē abāg Xōn ud Rēm*  
 ‘Which is clean and good, not with blood and Rim’

(4) *Zežūk/Zožūk*  
 ‘hedgehog’

*Zežūk* or *zožūk* is a common word and name in the Boir-Ahmadi dialect. The word *zuzuk* is used among the ‘Jalil’ tribe – one of the subtribes of the Boir-Ahmad tribe – specifically for ‘hedgehog’. Although hedgehogs have very small spines on their backs, the real and big hedgehog is another type of this animal called *jūla* or *jūla* in the local dialect and is much larger than *zežūk*. In the Luri Boir-Ahmadi Dictionary, *zežūk* and *jūla* both mean ‘hedgehog’ (Moghimi et al., 2014: 209 and 341), while these two are different and are considered two different animals. However, *jūla* is a relatively large lamb — weighing fifteen to twenty kilograms — which has sharp, long spines on its back, that can throw its spines more than ten meters away to protect itself from predators.

The word *zežūk*, spelled and transliterated in the Sasanian Pahlavi as [*zwzck*] *zūzag* or *zūzak*, is commonly used for hedgehogs (MacKenzie, 1971: 100; Farhoshi: 193). This word has been frequently used in *Bundahishn* (Part 9: About how animals are categorized in five forms) (Bahar, 1999: 79; Pakzad, 2005: 172). In the text it is said:

*Ud kē xār pad puūt dārēd zūzag*  
 ‘The animal who has the spine on its back’

This word is known and familiar to those who speak the dialects of Luri Boir-Ahmadi and Mamasani. *Zozūk* is composed of the suffix ‘-uk’, which is a remnant of Middle Persian ‘-ug’, and forms nouns and adjectives, for example, *narūk* ‘donkey’ or *ūarm* in the dialect of Boir-Ahmadi (Taheri, 2012: 86). *Zozū* is a remnant of the ancient Persian word *jajūka* ‘hedgehog’. Its Avestan, Sanskrit, and Persian equivalents are *dužuka*, *jáhakā*, and *jouje*, respectively (ibid, 86).

- (5) *Sərō*  
‘horn’

In the Boir-Ahmadi dialect, the word *sərō* refers to ‘horn’; for example, *sərō-y bōz* ‘goat horn’. In some cases, which are allegorical and surprising, both words ‘horn’ and *sərō* are alternatively used. They say *ma šax ō sərō dare* “Do they have horns and sərōs”. In Middle Persian languages, such as the Sasanian Pahlavi, *Sərō* is transliterated as [*slwb*] *srū* / *sarw* / *srūk* / *srūg*, and in the Manichaean texts as [*Srwy*] *srūy* (MacKenzie, 1971: 74; Farahvashi: 309; Durkin-Meisterernst, 2004: 321). In the Pahlavi text of Ardaviraf’s letter (chapter 79 / paragraph 2, in the transliteration of paragraph 2) it is stated:

*U-š pad šānag (ī) dō srū ī rōyēn tan hamē randīd...*  
‘And with the shoulder two impregnable horns, they grated his body’

Furthermore, in the text of Bundihasn (Bahar, 1999: 43; Pakzad, 2005: 35), ‘sarvi’ *sru/srui* is mentioned as the sixteenth house of ‘Qamar’.

In the *Avesta*, these words are used as *srū*, *srvā*, *sravō*, and similar forms in the sense of ‘horn’ or sometimes ‘fork’ (Bartholomae, 1961: 1647). This word is mentioned in *Kian Yasht* (*Zamyad Yasht*<sup>10</sup> = 19th Yasht / verse 40) as [*sruuarəm*], an adjective for the poisonous horned dragon *gandarəwa* [*gandarəwa*] which is destroyed by Garshāsb Narimān (Humbach, 1998: 39–40. See also: Christensen, 1974: 22–28). The word *soro* in Persian was also used in some other Indo-European languages; for example, in Lithuanian, it is *kārve*, and in Latin, it is *Cervus* (Taheri, 2012:130).

- (6) *Sel*  
‘ladder’

In the Boir-Ahmadi dialect and some parts of Persia, such as Mamasani, the word ‘salt’ or ‘soil’ is used for ‘scale’. In Middle Persian, both words are usually used to refer to scales; one as [plk’n<sup>1</sup>] *pīllagān* / *pīlakān*, which appears in Manichaean texts as [pylg] *pīllag* (Farahvashi, 2010: 519; MacKenzie, 1971: 69; Durkin-Meisterernst, 2004: 289), and the other as [slt] *srād* (MacKenzie, 1971: 76).

<sup>10</sup> *Zamyad Yasht* ‘Hymn to the Earth’

The latter was used in some important Zoroastrian texts; for example, in the excerpts from *Zadsparam* (Gignoux and Tafazzoli, 1993: 136) and a chapter on the Resurrection, the three pillars of heaven are described as three important steps from which the stakes ascend to heaven. According to this religious text, which describes the events after the death of people, the dead soul moves to the Chinvat<sup>11</sup> Bridge at dawn on the 4<sup>th</sup> day after death. If the dead soul is pure and righteous, it can safely cross the bridge and reach the sky Groudman using a device called a set of the three heavens, which symbolizes good thought, good word, and good deed (Tafazzoli, 1970: 87-88). In the Pahlavi text, it was thus mentioned (p. 136, paragraph 43):

*Homānāgīh ī sard- ē bawēd ī sē pāyag ī zarrīn homānāg u-š ahlawān pad- īš abar ō wahišt šawēnd pad weh- menišnīh abar ō star pāyag pad weh- gōwišnīd x pšyag ō*

‘These branches are like a golden ladder, on which the stakes go to heaven. With benevolence towards the basic star, with benevolence towards the basic moon, with benevolence towards the basic sun’

The word is found in the Avesta as *sarə* ‘to connect’ (Bartholomae, 1961). According to Tafazzoli (1970: 87-88), this word has another alternative phonetic form which is *sard*; he believes that this form shares the same meaning as the Avestan word *sar* ‘to connect’.

(7) *Kelo/Kolo*  
‘locust’

Among Boir-Ahmadi speakers and most of the inhabitants of Kohgiluyeh and Boir-Ahmad provinces and the Mamasani region, the term, which refers to locust, is pronounced and spoken in two forms, *kelo* or *kolo*. Although this insect was a serious and terrible pest for farms, in times of hardship and famine, it was used as food; such as *Ma Donyāna Kelo Xarde* “Has the world been eaten by locusts?” and “We say it when we want to explain to others that the world has its rules” (Moghimi et al., 2014: Ibid., 541). In *Bundahishn*, the locust (Bahar, 1999: 97; Pakzad, 2005: 255) is also considered a vermin. In Middle Persian, *kelo/kolo* was transliterated as [*kwlkʰ*] *kullag* and *mayg* (MacKenzie, 1971: 52). Farahvashi (2006: 340) has recorded this term as *kulak*.

(8) *Guwar*  
‘calf’

Among Boir-Ahmad inhabitants, *war* is the name given to a ‘calf’. According to Taheri (2012: 120) in the Bakhtiari dialect, this word was changed first to *gōyar*

<sup>11</sup> Its Avestan form is Čīnvat Peretum

and then to *guwar*. In the Boir-Ahmadi dialect, the same phonetic transformation has taken place. This word is a modified form of Middle Persian *gōdar*, which in Old Persian had the form \*gau-tara (ibid.). In this phonetic transformation from Middle Persian to the dialects of Luri Bakhtiari, Boir-Ahmadi and Mamasani, ‘d’ has changed into ‘y’; just as the Middle Persian form *dīdār* became *diyâr* ‘obvious’ in the eyes of the Bakhtiari and Boir-Ahmadis (ibid.). In Middle Persian, the form *godar* for ‘calf’ is therefore spelled and transliterated as [gwtl] *gaydar* (MacKenzie, 1971: 36). In the short treaty of Khosrow and Ridag (Jamasp-Asana, 1913: 30), in verses 30 and 31, it is mentioned among the best meat dishes:

*Gāw ud gōr ud gawazn ud ...gōr ī jūwān kē pad aspast <ud> jaw parward ēstēd  
ud pih dārād*

‘Cows, graves and deer, calves that are raised with alfalfa and barley and have tallow’.

- (9) *Mīra*  
‘husband’

*Mira*, still commonly used in the Boir-Ahmadi dialect, means ‘husband’. *Mira* is the same as *mirage*, which is taken from the Avestan word *mairya* (Bartholomae, 1961: 1145), and in middle Persian and Manichaean was mentioned as [mylkʰ] *mērag* / *mērak*, (*myrd*, *merd*), respectively, being a title for ‘husband’ (MacKenzie, 1971: 55; Nyberg: 132; Durkin-Meisterernst, 2004: 236). In the jurisprudential treatise of Aturfarnbag-i Farruxzatan (Question 66, paragraph 2, 50–51) we read:

*Ziyānag az mērag abām stānēd*  
‘The wife borrows from the husband’

- (10) *Mīsa/ Mīz*  
‘to urinate /urine’

The word *misa/miz* is one of the original and ancient words used for ‘urinating’ in Iranian languages. The word is written in *Avestan* as *maēz* (Bartholomae, 1961: 1108) and in Middle Persian as [mys/mstn] *mist/mēz* (Mackenzie, 1971: 56). The important text of the extracts from *Zādspram* (Gignoux and Tafazzoli, 1993: 70.6) specifies:

*Ĵāy jādūg agmag-ē stad u-š awiš mist...*  
‘This witch took a cup and urinated in it’

*Mistan*, also used as *mishtan*, is now used as *misa/misa/miz* or in a verb form as *mizidan* in the Boir-Ahmadi dialect. Both forms *misa* and *miz* are simultaneously used. For example, they say:

- a. *Bera Mīsata kōn*  
‘to urinate’
- b. *Bera bemīz*  
‘going to urinate’
- c. *Vayčo Namīz.*  
‘Do not urinate here’
- d. *Ma Mīz Mīzak Grote?*  
‘Does he/she urinate frequently?’

The last phrase is used for someone who suffers from frequent urination.

- (11) *Wīr*  
‘mind/memory’

*Wir* is an ancient word that has preserved its original and earlier form in the Boir-Ahmadi dialect and represents different meanings such as intelligence, memory, and thought (see: Moghimi et al., 2014, *ibid.*, 779; Hosseini, *ibid.*, 285).

The word *wir*, which is spelled and transliterated in Manichaean texts as [*Wyrwmdyy*] *wīrōmandī*, and in Middle Persian as [*wyl*] *wīr*, means ‘understanding, comprehension, intelligence and memory’ (MacKenzie, 1971: 91). For example, in the text of the extracts from *Zādspram* (Gignoux and Tafazzoli, 1993: 104.36) and the chapter on the genesis of people, one of the things that is said about spirituality or the knowledge of man is to have virtue (memory), stable intelligence and wisdom of choice.

*Dānīšnīg sē wīr xwāhēd oš pāyēd ud xrad wizīnēd*  
‘Scientist wants three: Weir (memory, perception), stable intelligence, and wisdom’

In the Avestan texts this term is used as *vīra* ‘in the sense of mind, insight and awareness’ (Bartholomae, 1961: 1453).

#### 4 Conclusion

The Boir-Ahmadi dialect, like the other Luri dialects of Kohgiluyeh, such as Mamasani and Bakhtiari, as a branch of southwestern Iranian Luri dialects, has an ancient linguistic background. Due to its long life in the main center of the Sasanian Empire, the Boir-Ahmadi dialect has retained many common words from the Sasanian Pahlavi language. In this regard, the deep understanding and pure etymological analysis of the words analyzed in this research show the originality

and the great capacity of Luri Boir-Ahmadi lexical items in historical linguistic research. One of the main reasons for the originality of this important dialect of Luri is the existence of speakers, most of whom have lived in rural and inaccessible areas and have had minimal contact with the outside world. In this regard, it is a rich and valuable source of words and various terms. A thorough investigation of these linguistic aspects is necessary for scientific and comprehensive research, and this article has been the first attempt to this end. In particular, except for a few articles and books, no scientific and research work has been done on the Boir-Ahmadi dialect. The current research has introduced and analyzed original and ancient Persian words available in local dialects. Explaining and preserving these words, which are only a few among many, will add to the richness of the Persian language, and consequently Indo-European languages worldwide, and give scholars a better understanding and insight. Therefore, in addition to explaining the Boir-Ahmadi dialect, its importance, and its affinity with the Sasanian Pahlavi, this article has presented several important words related to the Sasanian Pahlavi language which Boir-Ahmad inhabitants have preserved for centuries.

## Bibliography

- Amouzgār J. and Tafazzoli A. (1996). *Zābān e Pahlavi, Adabiyāt va Dastour e ān*. [Pahlavi language, Literature, and Grammar]. Tehran: Moein.
- Amouzgār J. and Tafazzoli A. (2006). *Ketāb e Panjom e Dinkard. Avānevisi, Tarjome, Ta'lighāt Vāje Nāme va Matne Pahlavi*. [The Fifth Denkart, Transliteration, Translation, and Pahlavi text. Tehran: Moein.]
- Amouzgār J. and Tafazzoli A. (2012). *Rishe shenāsi kalamāt dar Guyesh e Bakhtiyāri . Vije Nāmey e Farhangestān e Zabān e Fārsi ( Zabān ha va Guyesh hāye Irani)*. [Etymology of words in the Bakhtiari dialect. *Special issue of Persian Language Academy (Iranian languages and dialects)*. Spring and summer period].
- Anonby, E. (2012). Lori language ii: sociolinguistic status of Lori,. [Online] *Encyclopadia iranica* Available from: <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/lori-language-ii> (Accessed: 10.7.2024).
- Bahar, M. (1999). *Farnbagh Dādgi*, [ Bundahishn], Tehran: Tous.
- Bartholomae, C. (1961). *Altiranisches Worterbuch*. Springer: Berlin.
- Boyce, M. (1975). *A Reader in Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian* (Acta Iranica 9). Leiden: EJ Brill.
- Christensen, A. (1974). *Creation of the Ziānkār in Iranian Narratives*. Tabriz: University of Tabriz.
- Dehkhodā, A. (1995). *Farhang e Loghat*. Markaz e Nashr e Daneshgāhi Tehrān. [Dictionary, Tehran: Publishing and Printing Institute of the University of Tehran].
- Dhalla, M.N. (1908). *The Nyaishes or Zoroastrian Litanies*. New York.
- Dresden, M.J. (1974). Middle Iranian Languages. *Historical Reviews*, 353, 6–9.
- Durkin-Meisterernst, D. (2004). *Dictionary of Manichaean Texts*. 3. Part I, Brepols: Turnhout.
- Emmerick, R. and Macuch, M. (2009). *The Literature of pre-Islamic Iran*. Companion Volume I to A History of Persian Literature, London: I.B.Tauris.

- Farahvashi, B. (2006). *Farhang e Loghat e Pahlavi*. Tehrān. Enteshārāt e Dāneshgāh e Tehrān. [*Pahlavi Language dictionary*. Tehran: Tehran University Press].
- Farahvashi, B. (2010). *Farhange Fārsi e Pahlavi*. Enteshārāt e Dāneshgāh e Tehrān. [*Persian dictionary in Pahlavi*. Tehran: Tehran University Press].
- Gignoux, P. and Tafazzoli, A. (1993). Anthologie de Zādspram. *Studia Iranica, Cahier 13*. Paris: Association pour l'Avancement des Études Iraniennes.
- Ibn Nadim, Muhammad Ibn Ishaq. (2002). *Al-Fihrist*, be kusheshe Reza Tajadod, *Tehrān ,Asātir* [*Al-Fihrist*, by the efforts of Reza Tajadod, Tehran, Asatir].
- Lazard, G. (1975). *The rise of the new Persian language*. In R.N. Frye (ed.) *The Cambridge history of Iran*, vol. 4, Cambridge University Press.
- MacKenzie, D.N. (1971). *A concise Pahlavi Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- MacKinnon C. (2011) *Lori Language i. Luri dialects*, [Online] *Encyclopaedia Iranica*. Available from: <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/lori-dialects> (Accessed: 18.3.2024).
- Moghimi A. et al. (2014). *Farhang e Loghat e Luri Boir –Ahmadi*. Farhang-e- Mana. [*Dictionary of Luri Boirahmadi*, Farhang-e- Ma'na]
- Pakzad, F. (2005). *Bundahishn*. Tehran, Center for the Great Islamic Encyclopedia.
- Rezaei Bagh Bidi, H. (2009). *Tārikh e Zabān hāye Irani*.; Markaz e Da'eratol Ma'aref e Eslāmi- [*History of Iranian Languages*, Tehran: Center for Islamic Encyclopedia].
- Skjærvø P.O. (2012). Iranian Languages and Scripts. In *Encyclopedia Iranica*, 8, 344–377.
- Tafazzoli A. (1970). *Notes pehlevies*. *Journal Asiatique*, tome CCLVII 1-2, 87–94.
- Taheri E. (2012). *Rishe Shenasiy e Barkhi Vājegān dar Luri- Boir –Ahmadi*. Pajuhesh hāye adabi, shomareye vije zabān va guyesh. [*Etymology of several words in Luri Boir-Ahmadi. Literature Research*. Special issue of Language and Dialect, 20, 75–88].
- Windfuhr, G. (1989). Boir Ahmadi II: The Dialect. *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, 4(3), 327–329.