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ARMENO-IRANICA

I. Av. raēva-, raēvant-; Arm. Bagrewand, Gk. *PHOYHNA.

Av. raēva- ‘rich, splendid, opulent’ is an adjective formed from the base ray- ‘wealth’ (Gāthic rāy-, YAv. rayay-) with the suffix -ya-¹. An analogous adjective raēvant- ‘possessing wealth’ is formed with the suffix -vant-. The concept of wealth is of particular significance in Zoroastrian theology. In the Gāthās, Zarathuštra asks of Ahura Mazdā rāyō aṣīṣ vanhūs gaēm manag[hō ‘the rewards of wealth and a life of good thinking’ (Ysn. 43.1); according to S. Insler, these specify the attainments of the material and spiritual worlds which are sought from Ahura Mazdā. The measured enjoyment of the good things of life, specifically of material wealth, is enjoined as a positive virtue in Zoroastrianism, which rejects otherworldly asceticism as a denial of the good creation of Ahura Mazdā. It is believed that the world was created, not as a place of testing or as a thing inferior to the spiritual world, but as a natural augmentation of the latter. The pollution of the material world by the onslaught of Angra Mainyu is regarded as a state to be fought, not a necessary concomitant of earthly life that must lead man to reject this world as a place of sorrows. The importance of the concept of wealth in Zoroastrianism is thus a moral attitude indivisible from the spiritual values of the religion, not a form of philosophical materialism separate from them, and accordingly the association of Phl. xwarrah (Av. xwarnah- ‘glory’) with rāyōmandih, the possession of riches, is frequent in the Phl. books, and in Skt. translations MP. rāyōmand ‘possessing riches’, rendering Av. raēvant- and raēva-, is translated by both rddhimant- ‘rich’ and tejasvin- ‘majestic, splendid’³. Various yazatas are invoked by a formula in which their wealth and

² S. Insler, tr., The Gāthās of Zarathuštra (Acta Iranica 8), Leiden, 1975, 231.
glory are coupled (ahe raya x\v{a}r\v{a}na\v{y}h\v{a}s\v{a} t\v{a}m yaz\v{a}i surunvata yasna 'by the wealth and glory of this one shall I worship him with audible worship', Ysn. 57.3, etc.), and Ahura Mazda is customarily called ra\v{e}vant- and x\v{a}r\v{a}nahu\v{a}nt- (Ysn. 4.3), and is invoked in Phl. by the formula pad n\v{a}m i d\v{a}d\v{a}r Ohrmazd i r\v{a}y\v{o}mand i xwarrah\v{o}mand 'In the name of the Creator Ohrmazd, the rich, the glorious'. The chronicler of the conversion of the Armenians to Christianity by St. Gregory reproduces with scorn the prayer of Tiridates III for liut'iwn parartu'tean yaroyn Aramazday 'fullness of abundance from manly Aramazd' (Agathangelos, para. 127). Arm. parart 'fat, rich', apparently a Mlr. loan-word⁴, conveys the same meaning as the Avestan and Pahlavi terms discussed above. Since other boons are asked of other yazatas in the prayer of Tiridates, it must be assumed that richness was regarded as a particular attribute of the Creator Himself by Armenian Zoroastrians.

The Mlr. form r\v{e}w, from Av. ra\v{e}va-, is attested alone in the Georgian proper name urovision Rev (lk\v{a} Rew in Arm. translation): according to the 8th century historian Leonti Mroveli, Rev was a 2nd century prince, son of one Vologases, and the grandfather of Bakur (Pacorus)⁵. These are both good Parthian Arsacid names, so it is reasonable to assume that Rev, too, is an Iranian name. In compounds, the element r\v{e}w- is found in Gk. transcription in the theophoric name Rh\v{e}omithr\v{e}s, mentioned by Arrian and Diodorus Siculus, a Persian whose son was appointed by Alexander of Macedon the satrap of Persis⁶. The name is found in Phl. in the patronymic form lywmtr\v{a}n *R\v{e}w-Mihr\v{a}n in an inscription at Persepolis⁷. R\v{e}w-Arda\v{s}\v{a}r 'Rich is Arda\v{s}\v{a}r', a city in P\v{a}r\v{s}, became a metropolis of the Church of Persia under the Sasanians between 415 and 420⁸.

⁴ A. Meillet, 'De quelques mots parthes en arménien,' Revue des Études Arméniennes II, 1922, 2, on Sgd. pr\v{s}t.
⁵ Leonti Mroveli, C'xovreba k'art uelt'a mep'er'a, ed. by S. Qubanei\v{s}vili, Jveli k'art'uli literaturis k'restomat'ia, I, Tiflis, 1946, 57-8, cit. by C. Toumanoff, Studies in Christian Caucasian History, Georgetown University Press, 1963, 83 n. 105; H. A\v{c}\v{a}rean, Hayoc' anjnanumneri bataran, repr. Beirut, 1972, IV, 317.
⁶ Arrian, III, 18, 11; PW s.v. Rheomithres; F. Justi, Iranisches Namenbuch, Marburg, 1895, 260.
⁸ A. Christensen, L'Iran sous les Sassanides, 2nd ed., Copenhagen, 1944, 96; V. G. Lukonin, Kultura sassanidskogo Irana, Moscow, 1969, 72, 69; J. M. Fiey, Commen\v{c}\v{u}ts syriaques en Iran et Irak des origines à 1552, London, 1979, I, 281 et passim. The ruins of the city, now called R\v{a}\v{s}\v{a}h, lie 10 km. S. of B\v{u}\v{s}\v{a}h (Razm\v{a}râ, Farhang-i joghraf\v{a}i-yi Ir\v{a}n, VIII, Tehr\v{a}n, 1330 S., 120).
But the most important name connected with the epithet ‘rich’ in Iranian, particularly during the reign of the Arsacids, is that of Mount Rëwand, Av. Raëvant, where, according to Zoroastrian tradition, was enthroned Ādur Burzēn Mihr, a Zoroastrian sacred fire of the highest grade (Phl. Ātaxš i Wahrām). This fire seems to have been the most exalted in Parthian Iran, an object of devotion and pilgrimage. Burzēn Mihr, a personal name meaning ‘Exalted is Mihr’, is presumed to be the name of the founder of the fire; Burzēn is a Pth. form. In the Sasanian period, Ādur Burzēn Mihr was downgraded with respect to the two great western Iranian fires, Ādur Farnbag and Ādur Gušnasp; the latter were held to represent the classes of the priesthood and the warriors, while the guardianship of the lowly third estate of Iranian society, that of the herdsmen and farmers, was relegated to the Parthian fire. The precise location of Mt. Rëwand is not known, but the site is most likely to be identified with a spur of the Nišāpūr mountains in Xorāsān, in a district once known as Rëwand ⁹. The 5th cent. Arm. historian Łazar P’arpec’ī calls Rëwand by the name Rewan, geawlın moguc’ ‘the village of the Magi’ (Ch. 57), and locates it ‘six parasangs from Nišāpūr, or perhaps still more, according to the measurements of the Persians’ (Ch. 55).

The word ‘rich’ is itself an important religious epithet in Zoroastrianism, and, wherever the temple may have been, it is at least evident that because of its fame the mountain on which it stood gave its name, Rëwand, to the surrounding district, and it is suggested that a nearby village, Borzēnān, may likewise preserve an element of the name of the sacred fire itself ¹⁰. In the 10th cent. there is mentioned in the Persian geography Hudād al-‘ālam a town named Rāvīnī, whose name V. Minorsky associated with Rëwand ¹¹. The alternation of -ēn- and -ān- in NP. is attested locally in the nisba Rāwandi ‘from Rāwand (i.e., Rëwand)’ (12th cent.) ¹². The original name of the village was probably *Rēw-ēn, with the adjectival suffix -ēn (cf. Pth. Burzēn, NP. Borzēn-ān),


and it was most likely named after Mt. Rëwand, where the sacred fire was enthroned.

Since it will be suggested presently that two Armenian toponyms are borrowings of the Parthian Arsacid period and are connected to the cult of the fire of Burzên Mihr, it is appropriate here briefly to note a similar case, for it is a common enough phenomenon in the history of the great religions for toponyms connected with important events or sacred precincts of a faith to be used in founding new settlements and places, or in renaming—and thus consecrating—old ones. According to Yt. V. 108, təm yazata barzaiōš kava vištāspō pašne apəm frazda-
naom ‘Kavi Vištāspa of lofty insight worshipped her (i.e., Ardvī Sūrā Anāhīta) in sight of the water of Frazdānu’. In the Phl. Šahrīstāniḩā i Ėrān, this legend is repeated: štrʿst’n ZY bst bstwl (ZY) zlyl’n krt PWN ZK g’s AMT wšt’spš’h dyn’ yšt’n PWN pred’n YHWWNt W bwnk ZY wšt’sp W ‘p’ryk w’spwhlk’n BYN YTYBWN’st. Šahrīstān i Bast Bastwar (1) Zarērān kard pad ān gāh kā Vištāspštān dēn yaštān pad Frazdān būd ud bunag i Wištāsp ud abārīg wāspuhragān andar ništāst.

‘The provincial capital Bast was built by Bastwar the son of Zarēr at the time that king Vištāsp was at Frazdān to worship the Religion, and the abode of Wištāsp and the other courtiers was founded there’. 13

13 Phl. bunag ‘baggage; abode, camp’ (D. N. MacKenzie, A concise Pahlavi dictionary, London, 1971, 20); the Arm. loan-word bnak ‘dwelling’ is found also with the ending -ut’iw, with the same meaning. The latter form is used interchangeably in some Arm. texts with the abstract noun bn-ut’iw ‘nature’, formed from the base bun ‘stem, base, origin’, also a Mfr. loan-word, from which are formed the adjectives bnik, bnak ‘native’ (see H. Hübbschmann, Armenische Grammatik, Leipzig, 1897, 121, 123). The words bnakut’iwn ‘abode’ and bnut’iw ‘nature, origin’ are of similar appearance, and the alternation of the two in MSS. must be due in some cases to scribal error. But they are associated also in meaning, for one’s home can be also the place of one’s origin.

In Arsacid Armenia, as in Iranian society, the legitimacy of a ruler rested on his hereditary claims to a domain—real or invented—and not upon mere possession, and the Arsacids are frequently impressed upon the reader of Classical Arm. texts as the bnik or bnak lords of Armenia, even when their deeds are condemned. Yet Parthia is still maintained as their bnut’iw or bnakut’iw. (On the use of the term bnik tēr ‘native lord’, see N. G. Garsoian, ‘The Epic Histories Attributed to P’awstos Buzand’, intro. to P’awstos Buzand, Classical Arm. Text Reprint Series, ed. J. Greppin (in publication) and ‘Prolegomena to a Study of the Iranian Aspects in Arsacid Armenia’, Handès Amsōrey 90, Vienna, 1976, 180 and notes, on Arsacid legitimacy.) The ‘home’ and ‘origin’ of the Arsacids of Armenia were regarded, then, as one and the same thing, even if this led to logical inconsistencies—how could one be native to both Parthia and Armenia? The only apparent resolution would have been to include Armenia within Ėrānštāhr. In the pre-Christian centuries this was probably done; the daughter of the Armenian Artaxiad king Tigran II (95-56 B.C.) was named Ariazatē (attested only in Gk. transcription), i.e., ‘daughter of an arya-’ (see N. C. Debevoise, A political history of Parthia, Chicago, 1938, 47). The Parthian Arsacids of the 1st cent. A.D., according to Tacitus (Annales, XII, 52) regarded Armenia as an ancestral appanage.
The Phl. epic Ayādgār i Zarērān is apparently part of a larger epic cycle (of which only this fragment survives in its original verse form) acquired by the Persians from the Parthian minstrels of the northeast 16, and the lake of Frazdān is located by the Bundahišn in Seistan; in Zoroastrian apocalyptic literature the seed of Zarathustra is said to be preserved in the lake, and the three Saviors will arise from there 17. The various strands of Kayanian legend concerning the lake of Frazdān and its association with the Zoroastrian faith were brought together by the Arsacid period (if not, indeed, earlier), when Iranian cultural and religious influence in Armenia was strongest, and the name Hrazdan, a NW Mr. form, was given to the tributary of the Araxes which flows through the modern Armenian capital, Erevan. The name is first attested as getn Hurazdan ‘the river Hurazdan’ 18 in the History of Sebēos (7th cent.), while Movsēs Xorenac’i uses the apparently older form Hrazdan 19. The Armenian Arsacid kings knew Parthia itself and regarded it as their homeland. King Tiridates III declares in a speech on his own prowess in various matters: Zi zYunac’ ašخارn ew zHoromoc’ k’aj gitem, ew zmer Part’ewac’ kolmansn, vasn zi bnut’iwn isk ē mer, ew zAsorestan ew zTaḵkastan ew zAtpatakan. ‘For I know the country of the Greeks and that of the Romans very well, and our regions of

The terms bnut’iwn and bnakut’iwn are relevantly attested in Agathangelos, para. 26: in return for the murder of the Arm. king Xosrov, the Sassanian king promises to an Arm. Arsacid nobleman of the Suren Pahlaw house named Anak (Pth., ‘evil’, more likely an epithet applied later to the regicide than his personal name) zbnut’iwn (var. zbnakut’iwn) part’ewakan, zjer sep’akan Paḥawn ‘the Parthian *nature (abode), your own Parthia’ (G. Tēr-Mkrtč’ean, S. Kanayean’, ed., Agat’angelay Patmut’tiwn Hayoc’, Tiflis, 1909, p. 20 lines 11-12).

14 With the verb nišāstan ‘to found, establish’, causative of nišāstan ‘to sit’ (see J. H. Kramers, ‘The military colonisation of the Caucasus and Armenia under the Sassanids’, BSOS VIII, 1935-7, 618, who cites also the Phl. form nišāstag ‘settled’), it seems to be implied that Wištāsp founded his abode at Frazdān rather than merely pitching camp there; the more sedentary meaning of Arm. bnak-ut’iwn is discussed in the preceding fn. An appreciation of the greater prestige of Frazdān according to this distinction may be gained by comparing in American history the proverbially numerous notices ‘George Washington slept here’ to Mount Vernon.


19 The -u- must be anaptyctic rather than a false etymology from Mr. hū- ‘good’, which in Arm. is represented in loan-words by h:- hnr, cf. Mr. hunar.

19 G. V. Abgaryan, ed., Patmut’tiwn Sebēosi, Erevan, 1979, 84 and n. 26, where a MS. var. Hrazdan noted by an earlier editor is cited; although Xorenac’i may be a later author, Hrazdan must be the original form in Arm. (see Hübschmann, Atm. Gr., 48).
Parthia—for it is even our home—as well as Asorestan, Arabia and Atropatene (Agathangelos, para. 203). Ctesiphon had replaced Nisa centuries earlier as the administrative capital of the Parthian empire, so the main reason for any trip by an Armenian Arsacid monarch of the pre-Christian period to Parthia would have been religious pilgrimage. There were a number of holy places in the area he may have visited, some of them well known to foreign writers of the period such as Isidore of Charax: the pyr athanaton ‘immortal fire’ at Asaak, where Arsaces I was crowned; or the basilikai taphai ‘royal tombs’ of his own ancestors at Parthaunisa and the holy fire of Burzên Mihr itself, with the nearby cypress of Kišmar.

The sacred city of the Armenian Arsacids, Bagawan, with its sacred fires, statues of the yazatas, and shrines of the royal ancestors, was in the province of Bagreward. The name of the province in the latter form is found in numerous Armenian sources from the 5th century on, and in the Parthian period it is given by Ptolemy in Greek as Bagrauandêni. Al-Balādharî has the name Bayrewand. Markwart suggested that the name be derived from OIr. bâya.raivanta- ‘rhubarb garden’ but later proposed another etymology, from *baga- raêvanta- ‘of the rich Provider (Mithra)’. The first etymology must be rejected, for although OIr. bâga- ‘allotment, garden’ is to be preferred to baga- ‘god, provider’ in the month of the Old Persian calendar Bâgayâdi, since a number of the names in that calendar apparently concern seasonal activities of sowing and harvesting, there are a number of toponyms from Iranian in Armenian with baga- ‘god’: Bagawan, Bagaran, Bagayâci, etc. The common pre-Christian name for an altar or shrine was Arm. bagin, a MIr. form with the base bag- ‘god’. Although MP. bay

20 Asorestan is to be identified as Sasanian Mesopotamia; see R. W. Thomson, tr., Agathangelos, history of the Armenians, Albany, N.Y., 1976, 455 n. 19.6.
21 Isidore of Charax, Mansiones Parthicae, XI (see most recently Gk. text with Arm. tr. and commentary by E. L. Danielyan, Patma-banasirakan Handes, Erevan, 4, 1971, 171-81).
22 Ibid., XII.
24 Ptolemy, Geog., V.12.9; Lazar Parpeci, ch. 76, Bagawan i nahangin Bagrewanday ‘Bagawan in the province of Bagrewand’.
27 J. Merkwart, Südarmenien und die Tigrisquellen, Vienna, 1930, 111.
from bag was used by the Sasanians mainly as a honorific, as in the phrase LZNH bg im bay ‘his Majesty’, the title of the Bayân yašt preserves the older meaning of ‘god’, and nowhere is the word limited to the yasata Mithra. Rather, it is seen that raëvant- is an epithet of Ahura Mazdâ par excellence, to whom belong all the riches of Creation (cf. for instance Y. 12.1, in which all good things are attributed to Him). Bagrewand would then be translated ‘of the bounteous God (Ahura Mazdâ)’, an epithet fully in keeping with orthodox Zoroastrianism and doubly consecrated by the association of Mîr. rëwand with Rëwand in Parthia.

Another form of the epithet ‘rich’ in Mîr., from *rëw-ên (v. above) or rëwand, may be attested in Armenia, a word in Greek read *PHOYHNA rhêouêna inscribed on the base of a broken terracotta statuette found in the southeastern graveyard of the Armenian Artaxiad and Arsacid capital, Artašat (Gk. Artaxata). The inscription, apparently preserved in full, is in two lines of Greek, read by the archaeologist Ž. D. Xač’atryan as PHOYHNA / IA and tentatively explained as the name of the owner of the statuette, followed by the number eleven, perhaps a date. The Greek diphthong ou between vowels

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29 Ž. D. Xač’atryan, Artašat II: Antik dambaranadašter (1971-77 t’r. pelumnera), Hnagitanak pelumner Hayastanum 17, Erevan, 1981, p. 169 and pl. XXVII.3. We have the pleasure here gratefully to acknowledge the generous assistance of the Committee for Cultural Relations with Armenians Abroad of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, which promptly supplied at our request the above volume. The production of terracotta votive figurines was widespread in Syria, Mesopotamia, Armenia, Parthia and Sogdia in the Arsacid period: a large number of figurines found in Armenia and Parthian Mesopotamia show a rider in relief, probably Mithra (see Ž. Xač’atryan, ‘Irana-haykakan dic’abanakan alersner harc’i şur’, Lraber hasarakakan gitut’yunneri, Erevan, 2, 1981, 54-72, pls. I, 2). Depictions of rider gods are common in Palmyrene art (M. Collinge, The art of Palmyra, Boulder, Co., 1976, 43-5, fig. 26 and Pl. 43) and in Mithraic iconography (as in the Mithraeum at Dura, see J. R. Hinnells (ed.), Mithraic Studies, Manchester, II, 24); in the Sasanian relief at Naqš-i Rustam of the investiture of Ardašir I, Ohrmazd is shown on horseback. The second most common type found in Armenia shows a frontally seated woman in robes and tiara, with one or more naked male infants (see B. N. Arak’elyan, Aknarkner hin Hayastani arvesti patmu’yan, Erevan, 1976, Pls. 84-86): the scene belongs to the ancient Asianic cult of Cybele and Attis, and in a developed version of the myth of the divine pair from Roman times, the Great Mother Cybele is replaced by Nana, daughter of the river Sangaris. This is most likely an explanatory legend of the fusion of the Asianic cult with that of the Sumero-Akkadian goddess Nana, whose worship spread from Armenia and Western Iran to Sogdia, where Attis was equated with the Iranian hero Siyâvaxš (see Henning, BSOAS, 1948, 602-3 and BSOAS, 1964, 252 and n. 68 on texts reflecting the myth; on the iconography of the cult, see G. Azarpay, ‘Nanâ, the Sumero-Akkadian Goddess of Transoxiana’, JAOS XCVI, 1976 and V. A. Meshkeris, Koroplastika Sogda, Dushanbe, 1977, 23 and n. 34, fig. 2.1). In Parthia, reference is made to a temple-estate of Nana in the same texts where Zoroastrian proper names and month names are extensively used, so it is likely that some Zoroastrians at least worshipped
normally renders ṣ or ṻ in foreign words, such as Artaouasdēs, the
name of the Arm. Artaxiad king Artawzd, who reigned at Artāṣat ᴾ⁰
or Rhaouenna (var. Rhabenna), the city of Ravenna in Italy. The suffixes
-ēna and -ana are found in Gk. transcriptions and versions of foreign
toponyms, including Iranian forms in Armenian, e.g. Artaka-ēna,
Zarou-ana and Naxou-ana, the latter being the name of the Arm.
province of Naxijewan, Naxcawan ᴾ¹. It is therefore possible that
*Rhēouēna is a toponym, Arm. Ṝew-ēn or Ṝew-an. In the latter case
one may compare Arm. Ṛewan in Sebēos for Rēwand, and the form
Bagrewan for Bagrewand in the long version of the Arm. Aṣxarhacʾoycʾ
‘Geography’ ᵃ². Although there is no town called Ṛewan in Armenia at
present, Erevan, named after the ancient Urartean fortress of Erebu,ni,
is called in NP ڕێوەن رێوان and in Kurdish Ṛewan ᴾ³. The Arm. ṛplwš
Erewan is first mentioned in the 7th century A.D. Girkʾ Tʾlʾocʾ ‘Book
of Letters’ ᵃ⁴ and in the Persian of Şafavid times and later the name of the
city is found also as ێڕۆوان ᴾ⁵, undoubtedly a rendering of the Armenian,
which must have been used continuously from ancient times. It is
possible that in ancient times Erevan was known also as Ṛewan by
certain of its inhabitants, who engraved a Greek form of this name on
the base of the votive statuette found at nearby Artāṣat. Final -ē or -a
would seem to be a conventional way of Hellenizing the name, for in a
Greek inscription of the Armenian Arsacid Tiridates (perhaps Tiri-
dates I, who reigned in the latter half of the 1st cent. A.D. and had a
Greek inscription made at Gaṇi) found at Aparan, the name of the

Nana (see I.M. D’yakonov, V.A. Livshits, Dokumenty iz Nisy I v. do n.e., Moscow, 1960,
111). Of the statuette with our inscription, only the pedestal and two human feet remain,
but it is evident from the stance of the latter that the object was a frontal statue of a
young soldier in Parthian leggings and cape, like another found at the site (Xač’atryan,
pl. XXVII.5), perhaps representing Mithra or Verethragna. None of the other terracotta
objects found in Armenia bears any inscription. Inhumation was widely practiced in
Arsacid Iran, e.g., at Şahr-i Qumis (Hecatompylos), and the use of images in Zoroa-
stinian worship was forbidden only in the Sasanian period; neither the Arm. statuette nor the
circumstances of its discovery — a burial — need necessarily disprove that its owner was a
Zoroastrian.

³⁰ See Movsēs Xorenaci’, Patmut’yan Hayoc’, II, 22.
³¹ See AON, 455 and F. Dornseiff, Rückläufiges Wörterbuch der griechischen Eigen-
³² Text cit. in N. Adontz and N.G. Garsoian, Armenia in the Period of Justinian,
Louvain, 1970, 121*.
³³ T.X. Hakobyan, Erevari patmut’yun, Erevan, 1969, 98; M.B. Rudenko, Kurd-
skaya obrядовавая поэзия, Moscow, 1982, 71.
³⁴ Girkʾ Tʾlʾocʾ, Tiflis, 1901, 151.
Arm. district of Nig is rendered as Gk. *Nigē(n)* (acc. sg. f.)36. If our supposition is correct, the inscription from Artašat is the earliest mention of Erevan, albeit the name would be a pious folk-etymology based on the name of the place of Ādur Burzēn Mihr in Parthia. The number IA (= 11), if indeed it is a number, remains even more hypothetical. Numerous monuments of the Greco-Roman world have engraved lists of the members of cultic societies, with numbers of members or the amounts of their contributions reckoned with Greek letters or Roman numerals. The average Mithraic *spelaeum* seats ten to twenty worshippers comfortably, not more; and it is recalled that in Jewish synagogue worship, which evolved in the same period, ten men constitute a quorum. Eleven is an appropriate number for the members of a small religious society in the Hellenistic period, but in the Greek inscription at Garni IA (= 11) represents a date37, so Xač'atryan's suggestion is also possible.

II. Arm. *Masis*

The use of generic terms as toponyms is a common phenomenon in many languages: in Armenia there are several towns called T’il, from Semitic *tel* ‘hill’, and the name of Duin also means ‘hill’, but comes instead from Mİr.38, and may be compared to the name of Mount Damāvand in northern Iran, which means ‘possessing slopes’39. Another Mİr. generic name for a hill or mountain found as an Arm. toponym is Čakat-k’ in Ayrara40, with *pluralis tantum*, cf. Phl. *čk’t’ čagād* ‘peak, summit’ (MacKenzie). Mountains may be named for their slopes, their summits, or their size. In a Khotanese text, sin is mentioned *sumirā garā mase* ‘as large as Mount Sumeru’41. YAv. *mas*- ‘long, great’, comp. *masyah-, subst. masan-* ‘greatness, size’, is cognate to Gk. *makros*. The comp. grade of the adj. is found in Buddhist Sgd. *msy-’tr* ‘greater’, where -’tr is the comp. suffix; the same word is a

36 See M. Rostovtsev, ‘Aparanskaya grecheskaya nadpis’ tsarya Tiridata’, *Aniisskaya Seriya* 6, St. Petersburg, 1911, 6.
40 AON, 364.
laudatory title in a Sgd. letter. A second word for ‘great, large’ is GAv. maz-, subst. mazan-, comp. adj. mazyah-, cognate to Gk. megas. In MMP mazan is used to translate Gk. gigas ‘giant’, cf. Phl. māzan(-ig), Sgd. Mznyn ḏyw, rendering the Av. adj. mazainya- ‘giant’ applied to daēvas. The adj. māzandar, in the comp. grade, means ‘gigantic’, cf. the name of the region of Māzandarān. In Persian literature, Māzandarān is the abode of diwān with its high mountains; and it may be that the province is named for its māzandar ‘greater’ peaks, the loftiest of which is Damāvand, the snow-capped crown of the Elburz chain, where Āzī Dahāka is said to be imprisoned.

In Armenia there are three mountain groups bearing the name Masis, the acc. case of a pl. tantum form *Masi-k’ (cf. Čakat-k’ above): (i) Azat ‘Noble, Free’ Masis and P’ok’r ‘Little’ Masis, named anhistorically by Arm. Christians Greater and Lesser Ararat, Tk. Ağrı dağ; (ii) Nex Masis, north of Lake Van Gk. Baris, Tk. Sübhān dağ, this form an arabicised homonym from the older Arm. Sip’an or Cip’an; and (iii) a branch of the Taurus above Nisibis called by Strabo (Geog. XI.xii.4) to Masion oros, Arabic Jabal Jūdi. In the first two cases the mountains called Masis are strikingly larger than those nearby, and Jabal Jūdi in Gordyene was associated with the Biblical legend of the Ark in early Christian times, so that it, too, was considered to have been the highest of mountains, at least in the days of the Flood. The base of the name seems to be *māsi-, suffixed with the nom. sg. neut. adj. ending -on in Gk. and various endings in Arm., as in Maseaq-otn ‘the foot of Masis’, cf. Aragac-otn, otm Aragaco ‘the foot of Aragac’. In the Syriac version of the Alexander Romance the acc. pl. Arm. form Māsi is used as nom., as in Armenian. The Tk. name of Greater Ararat, Ağrı, seems to be related to Tk. aģir, ‘heavy’, and one may see in Gk. Baris a form related to baros ‘weight’, barys ‘heavy’, etc.: these
would be translations of *masi-, explained as a Mr. form of Olr. masyah-, cf. the interpretation of the name Māzandarān above. Masis, then, appears to be an Iranian loan in Armenian meaning ‘greater/gigantic (mountain)’; the Arm. cognate of Gk. megas is mecn ‘great’, whilst an Arm. cognate of makros would have to preserve PIE *r.48 An Arm. folk etymology cited by Movses Xorenac’i and quoted by Yovhannes Kat’olikos Draxanakertc’i derives the name of Azat Masis from the personal name Amasia- probably a folk etymology from the name of the city of Asasia (Tk. Amasya) in Asia Minor49. The 11th cent. Arm. writer Grigor Magistros calls Greater Ararat by a Persian name, Masik’oh, i.e. Masi + NP kōh ‘mountain’50, in comparing the Arm. legend of the imprisonment of King Artawad in Ararat to Iranian traditions about Mt. Sabalān in nearby Atropatene. The form is apparently genuine, preserving the Mr. base *masi-.

It was noted above that Gk. and Tk. names of mountains called Masis in Armenian seem to be translations. Greater Ararat is called Azat Masis, and the familiar loan-word azat from Persian is translated as Ar. al-Ahrār ‘the Free’ by al-Baladhūrī as the name of the river Azat, in the same district as Azat Masis51. The epithet Nex of Sīp’an, Nax Masis, is not satisfactorily explained by the Arm. noun nax ‘rot, stench’; it may be a dialectal form of an Ir. base *naxva- ‘first’, with Arm. loan-words nax, nax-arar, nah-atak, etc.52 Arm. sources mention the Armeno-Iranian border region of Nihorakan53, and khazar P’arpec’i gives the name of a 5th century Sasanian envoy, Nixor Všnaspat54 (i.e., Gušnaspād ‘given by Gušnap’, the latter being the name of the sacred fire of Media in the Sasanian period). The alternation of -x- and -h- is seen in the examples given for nax-, and Nixor, with his surname honoring the Atropatene fire, must have been a member of the noble *Nixor-agān family after whom Nihorakan, SE. of

49 Movses Xorenac’i, Patmut’iwn Hayoc’, I, 12; Yovhannes Cathlicos Draxanakertc’i, Patmut’iwn Hayoc’, Tiflis, 1912, 16-17.
51 Cit. by A. N. Ter-Gevondyan, Armeniya i Arabskii Khalfiat, Erevan, 1977, 42.
53 Garsoian/Adontz, 177-8; P’awstos Biwzand, IV, 50.
54 Khazar P’arpec’i, ch. 88. Justi and others read Arm. Nixor as Mr. *Nixwār (cf. Phl. xwardig, Arm. loan-word xortik ‘food’). The name may thus be derived from Ir. ni- ‘downwards’ and *xwār ‘down, low’ (on the latter meaning see Mackenzie in Cambridge History of Iran, III (2), 1244), hence, ‘one from the lowlands’.
Urmia, was named. In Arm., *nex 'primus' would regularly become *nix-, *nih- in compounds, and the form should come precisely from the region of Atropatene, as most of the MIr. loan-words in Arm. preserve features of the ancient dialect of that area.