



GRĪW

GRĪW, a Middle Iranian word (in Manichean Mid. Pers. script *gryw*, rarely *gryyw*; in Sogd. script *kryw*; in Pahl. script rendered by the ideogram, q.v., CWLE) meaning “neck, throat” and “self, soul.” David Neil MacKenzie also mentions a homonym *grīw*, defined as “a grain measure, *modius*, peck” (MacKenzie, 1971, p. 37; Boyce, 1977, p. 42).

In other Middle Iranian languages the word is attested as: Sogd. *γrīw* (in Manichean and Nestorian script *γryw*, in Soghdian script *γryw(h)*, *γr'yw(h)* “self, body, soul” (Gharib, p. 170, fem. as the Av. word), Chor. *γrīw* (*γryw*) “soul, body, self” (Benzing, p. 293).

Grīwin Old Iranian languages. *Grīw* goes back to the Old Iranian *grīuuā-*, which is attested once in Avesta (*Vd.* 3.7) as the name of a mountain ridge. The name is derived from a postulated basic meaning “throat, neck,” which Christian Bartholomae translated as neck etc. of *daevic* beings (see *DĒW*), and mentioned *manaoθrī-* as the corresponding ahuric word (*AirWb.*, cols. 530, 1126; cf. Old Ind. *grīva-* “neck,” *grīvā-* “the back part of the neck, nape, neck,” see Monier-Williams, p. 374; on this subject and on the etymology of further related Indo-European references which, among other things, mean “mane, mountain ridge,” see Szemerényi, pp. 517-19; Mayrhofer, p. 509). “Nape” is in any case the original meaning of the word, from which all the others have been derived. This was already considered by Paul Tedesco (p. 136) and recognized by Hans Reichelt (pp. 240-41).

Grīw in Middle Iranian languages. The fact that the basic meaning “nape” has

been preserved in Middle Persian is evidenced by its heterographic rendering of Aram. *šawwāreh* “his neck” in Pahl. CWLH (Nyberg, p. 77). In the Manichean-Sogdian “Book of the Head and Book of the Limbs” (Ch/So 16201 = T III T) (C)[WRH] “neck” in line 46 can safely be supplemented (after *ʾ(šd)[kw]* “neck” and before *(β)[ykʼ]* “shoulder.” Some instances: Mid. Pers. *band ēw ō grīw kunēd* “he puts a noose around his neck” (*Dādīstān ī dēnīg* I, pp. 80-81), Ohrmazd puts his arm around the neck of Spandarmad, who is his daughter and his wife; *uš dast pad grīw āwurd estād* (Williams, ed. and tr., *Pahlavi Rivāyat*, secs. 8a.2-4). From the Parth.-Man. literature: *hw phrgbʼn ky ʼd hw bstg bwt zyncyhr ʼc qyrbkr gryw byh ʼstd* “The guardian who was fettered with him [i.e., Mani] took the chain off the benefactor’s neck” (Sundermann, 1981, p. 75, M 4573/V/ii/13-15/).

That “nape” can be used as an image for a mountain ridge, and thus the use of its derivative Mid. Pers. *grīwag* “hill, ridge” (New Pers. *gariva*) in the sense of “hill, ridge” is a natural development. As *Arezur grīwag* it designates the ridge of the mythical mountain (*Vd.* 3.7) on which the demons assemble (e.g., *Bundahišn* 9.10, ed. and tr. Anklesaria, pp. 94-95; Williams, ed. and tr., *Dādīstān ī dēnīg* I, pp. 104-5; Williams, ed. and tr., *Pahlavi Rivāyat*, sec. 50.1; in vol. 2, p. 241, *grīwag* is assumed to be the “crater of a volcano,” which hardly corresponds with “nape,” the basic meaning of the word.

In the Middle-Iranian period, *grīw* assumed the meaning “self,” “person,” “body,” and “soul.” The meaning “self” is already attested for the Sogdian language through Ancient Letters (q.v.; after 311 C.E.; letter 3, ll. 3-4, see Sims-Williams, 1990, p. 54). The question as to how the meanings “self,” “person,” “body” and “soul” could have developed from “nape, neck” has been much discussed.

An interesting, though not exactly corresponding, parallel is the area of meaning from Hebrew *nefeš*, which not only implies “breath” and “soul,” but also “throat” and “gullet” (see Imschoot), but this precisely is not *grīw*.

Émile Benveniste’s explanation, which is similar to that of Hans Reichelt (pp. 240-41), was that: “The nape is known as a vital center, the juncture between the head and the body, the top of the dorsal spine, the center of the spinal chord; executioners and sacrificers kill their victim with a violent blow on the neck. Hence this representation of the “neck,” *grīvā-*, as the seat of the principle of life, and therefore as the symbol of the corporal body and of the person” (Benveniste, p. 63). There is no doubt about the correct explanation of



this development as an inner-Iranian linguistic phenomenon. Problematic, however, is the concept that this evolution should have led by way of the concept “life” to “self.” In view of the further dissemination of *grīw* “self” in many Middle Iranian languages and religions, this is improbable, the more so because “life” does not belong to the characteristic meanings of *grīw*.

An alternative possibility consists of starting out with phrases such as Mid. Pers. *pad grīw padīrēd*, or else *ul ō grīw padīrēd* “he takes upon his neck,” that is “upon himself” (*Dēnkard* VI, tr. Shaked, secs. 80-81, 305), just as *ō grīw padīrēd*, *ōgrīw ī xwēš padīrift ēstēd* (*Dādistān ī dēnīg* I, pp. 52-53, pp. 64-65) and deriving from them a semantic shift from “nape” to “self.”

The development from “neck” to “self,” etc. was contested by Wojciech Skalmowski (pp. 329-31), who traced back “self, soul” by way of a postulated meaning “form” (in the sense of “a shell for formation”) to Old Iranian *grab-* “to seize” and connected the latter with the homonym *grīw* “a measure.” One, however, would wish for an attestation of the meaning “form.” The quoted Parthian text M 4578 contains “form” in the sense of “outline, appearance, face, person” (see below).

Examples for *grīw* “self” are found in all the texts mentioned here. In Middle Persian and Parthian, *xwēš/xwēbaš grīw*, *xwēbē(h)grīw*, or *grīw* alone is used for “self” and is almost synonymous with the Mid. Pers. *xwēš tan* (lit. “oneself,” cf. New Pers. *xvištan*); cf. Man.-Mid. Persian *’n’ y tw xwyš gryw d’n* “thou, however, know thyself” (Andreas and Henning, p. 312, ll. 6-7, similarly Sundermann, 1973, p. 27, ll. 351-52, the latter certainly going back to Gk. *gnōthi seauton*). Of the contact of manual workers with fire, Man.-Parth. M 4577/R/ii/11-12/ says: *gryw ’c hw p’yd* “he is on his guard” (Sundermann, 1981, p. 61). Sogd. *xēpaθ yrīw* “self” is used in Christian, Manichean, and Buddhist texts and *ryrw* in Sogdian and Choresmian, but it is very rare in Zoroastrian texts (cf. *Dēnkard*, in Zaehner, pp. 371-72, esp. last line on p. 371, where *gētīg grīw* “the self of the material world” is from *Dēnkard* III). It is remarkable that Middle Persian (*xwēš*) *grīw* “self” occurs more frequently alone in the *Wizīdagīhā ī Zādsparam*, whose author may also have been open to Manichaean ideas (*Zādsparam*, 3.24, 30.20, 40; Sundermann, 1991, pp. 19-20).

The meaning “self” could lead to developments in various directions towards “body,” “person,” and “soul”; this is a semantic connection which has also been observed in the developments of other words (Av. *tanū-*, Mid. Pers. *gyān*, cf. Gershevitch, 1962, pp. 82-83).

Grīw “body” is reliably attested as *γrīw* in Buddhist-Sogdian (cf. the examples in Benveniste, pp. 60-61, 63). where it is used as a Buddhist term for Skt. *kāya*- and Chin. *shen* “body, self” (MacKenzie, 1976, pt. 2, p. 182, no. 74.2), and thus also in the translation of many compounds of this word, e.g.: Skt. *buddhakāya*, Chin. *fo shen* ([triple] Buddha body = Sogd. *pwty γr'yw* (MacKenzie, 1976, pt. 2, notes etc., pp. 164-65, no. 9.5), Skt. *dharmakāya*, Chin. *fa shen* “immaterial, spiritual, immortal body” = Sogd. *δrymk CWRH* (MacKenzie, 1976, pt. 2, p. 185, no. 85.5), Skt. *rūpakāya*-, Chin. *se shen* “material body” = Sogd. *γwnC CWRH/γr'yw*, literally “colored body” (MacKenzie, 1976, pt. 2, p. 194, no. 139.0). We have also reliable examples from Christian-Sogdian texts: *zb'q xcy pr 'ncmny γrywy srw* “He is the tongue in the head of the Church’s body” (Sims-Williams, 1985, p. 114, fol. 54/R/24/); *r'zy 's'mnty mšyh' γrywy pcy'z-'mnty xcy* “the taking of the Mystery [i.e., the Eucharist] is the receiving of Christ’s body” (Sims-Williams, 1985, p. 114, fol. 57 /V/6-7/). Ilya Gershevitch’s assumption, to which I also adhered, of a transitional term “upper body” situated between the “neck” and “body” that was inferred from a passage of the Manichean-Sogdian book of parables (Sundermann, 1985, p. 45) no longer appears to me as conclusive, but compare New Pers. *gerībān*, which translates Arab. *jayb* “chest” in the *Qor'ān-e qods* (sura 24.31 and 27.12; reference provided by Ela Filippone).

We may assume that *γrīw* “body” became *γrīw* “person” in the same way as OPers. *tanū*- and Middle and New Persian *tan* came to signify “body” and “person.” Again there are reliable examples from Sogdian. Chr.-Sogd. *xw xrypθ γrywy prw z'yt* “He shall speak in his own person” (gospel of John 9, 21 in Sundermann, 1975, p. 66), translating Syr. *hw hlp npšyh nml* “He shall speak for himself.” These include the titles of the representative (of the king, in Manichean terms of the Paraclete, cf. Sundermann, 1988) Mid. Persian *pasāgrīw* (Man. *ps'gryw*) and Sogd. *pašāγrīw* (*pš'γryw*) and **pačā-γrīw* (Syr. *pšgryb'*) “the person after (the king)” (cf. Gershevitch, 1954, pp. 124-26; Benveniste, pp. 58-65, referring to OPers. *pasā tanūm*). Man.-Parth. M 4578/1.S./ii/ (Sundermann, 1981, pp. 64-65) describes the nature of the five worlds of darkness. Here *gryw* is placed next to the “body” (*tnb'r*) and the “soul” (*gyān*) of the worlds. The parallel Coptic version has a corresponding *ho* “face.” If it translated Syrian *appē* “face,” Parthians could have understood this as “person” (Costaz, p. 17).

The obvious development from “self” to “soul” is abundantly attested in the Manichaean texts, where *grīw/γrīw* assumes great importance as a concept of



religious terminology.

The semantic parallel of Syr. *naṣṣā* and Mid. Pers./Parth. *grīw* “self” and “soul” was already noticed at an early stage (Schaeder, in Reitzenstein and Schaeder, p. 249; Polotsky in Schmidt and Polotsky, p. 71), but an explanation of the Iranian meanings from the Aramaic/Syrian pattern, as contemplated by Hans Heinrich Schaeder, has rightly been abandoned. It might merely be considered that the particularly important part played by *grīw* etc. in the Manichean texts was stimulated through the linguistic usage of the Syrian texts, which constituted their pattern and often their source.

Grīw designates the individual soul of men and, distinguished by honoring attributes, the universal soul. Some examples for “individual soul”: Parth. *ky n’s’g gryw bwyj’d ’c wdng* “who delivered innumerable souls from distress” (M 6/97-100/, in Andreas and Henning, 1934, p. 867); Parth. *’rd’w zrhwšt kdyš wy’wrd ’d gryw wxybyy* “the just Zarathustra, when he spoke to his soul” (M 7/86-89/, in Andreas and Henning, 1934, p. 872); Parth. *gryw ’wd tnb’r cy pydr rwšn* “soul and body of the father of light” (M 6650/V/18-19/, in Waldschmidt and Lentz, p. 116); Mid. Pers. [*byc*] *gryw ny hwnywš* “[but] the soul is not well-informed” (M 382, in Sundermann, 1973, p. 91, ll. 1771-72); Mid. Pers. *kw gryw’n pdyš p’cyh’nd* “that the souls may be purified by it” (M 1/201-3/, in Müller, p. 17).

“Universal soul”: The “universal soul” is usually rendered as Mid. Pers. *grīw zīndag*, Parth. *grīw žīwandag*, Sogd. *žwande yrīw* (Sundermann, 1979, p. 99; idem, 2001, p. 125, no. 2/4.1.2.), which goes back by way of Syr. *npš’ hyt’* to the Gk. *psykhēn zōsan* of 1 Cor. 15, 45 (Polotsky, 1935, col. 251). The fact that Mani here rendered *psykhē* by a Syriac word which implied both “soul” and “self” is explained by Hans Jakob Polotsky from the following communication by Theodor bar Konai: The divine emanation which was sacrificed to the powers of darkness and which constitutes the “soul” as against the material nature of the demonic, is at the same time a part of God’s own “self” (Polotsky, 1935, col. 251). The Iranian renderings ideally reflect this Syriac double concept. They are marked terms, therefore, not to be replaced by *grīw ī zīndag*, *giyān žīwandag*, etc. “Living,” however, can be replaced by other epithets such as *āfrīdag* “praised” (Mid. Pers.), *aryāw* “noble” (Parth.), *burzist* “most highly” (Mid. Pers.), *došist* “most beloved” (Mid. Pers.), *hasēnag* “primordial” (Parth.), *kalān* “great” or “pure” (Parth.), *rošn* “light” (very frequent, almost only Parth.), *wuzurg* “great” (Parth.), and without an adjective *giyān* can also mean the universal soul, as in the title and text of *Giyān wifrās*, the “sermon of the

soul.” The universal soul is the subject of a great many hymns (see Boyce, 1960, p. 149), and there is also the Middle Persian and Sogdian cycle of hymns *Gōwīšn ī grīw zīndag* “The speech of the living soul” (Boyce, 1960, p. 149; Sundermann, 1985b, II, pp. 629-50). Both groups of texts are still largely unpublished.

Some examples: Parth. *gryw jywndg ky hrw 'gwc d'rwbdg 'wd 'myxtg* “The living soul, which is everywhere crucified and mixed-in” (M 5530/V/4-5/, in Waldschmidt and Lentz, p. 74); *ymyc gryw jywndg ky pd pyd 'wt d'lwg* “Even this living soul, which (is) in flesh and wood” (M 42 /89-90/, in Andreas and Henning, 1934, p. 881); *'rw'n rwsn' kl'n gryw' rwsn'* “Oh soul of light, *great soul of light” (Henning, 1937, p. 47, text d /14/); Mid. Pers. *ch'rdh xyym 'y grywzyndq* “The fourteen wounds of the living soul” (M 12 /headline/, in Sundermann, 1985c, p. 291; idem, 2001, p. 636).

The fact that *yrīw* in the sense of “soul” is foreign to the Sogdian-Buddhist texts is not surprising. It is due to the absence of the concept of soul in Buddhist doctrine. In Christian-Sogdian texts, on the other hand, *yrīw* “soul” sometimes occurs: *ms frm'n ptywšc n' wn't mwrty n'qty tw' prywy 'ztwny* “Nor let inanimate silver enslave your soul’s freedom” (Sims-Williams, 1985, p. 90, fol. 51 /R/18-19/); *wšwqy pryw* “the soul of the hungry (man)” (Sims-Williams, 1985, p. 17, fol. 102 /V/27/, Syr. corresponds with *naḫšā*). Nor is the concept “soul” foreign to the Middle Persian (Christian) psalter translation (*Ps.* 130 [or 131], 2, in Andreas and Kaj Barr, pp. 109-10).

It is remarkable that *grīw* “soul,” if at all attested in the Middle Persian language of the Zoroastrians, appears very rarely. A few relevant translations may be understood quite differently; for instance, in *Dēnkard* (V, secs. 23, 29), where *ud čim pad tan ud grīw brāh . . . (ī) yazad-paristagān frāyīh nē paydāgtar kū pad dēw yazagān*, which is translated by Jāleh Amouzegar and Ahmad Tafazzoli (pp. 76-77) as follows: “Pourquoi, dans le corps et dans l’âme des adorateurs de dieu, l’abondance de brillance . . . ne sont-ils pas plus manifestes que chez les adorateurs des démons?” But the translation “body and outward appearance” would also make sense here, especially since the soul is not visible.

It follows that the word *grīw* in its meanings “self” and “soul” (?) is most rarely used in the Middle Persian texts of the Zoroastrians. The reason for it can only be that the Zoroastrian texts shut themselves off from a linguistic evolution that is richly attested in the Iranian literatures of the Manichaeans, Christians,



and Buddhists. If the New Persian and other New Iranian languages are not familiar with the meanings of these words, it is perhaps because they remain in the tradition of the Middle Iranian literary language marked by Zoroastrianism.

Middle Iranian derivations of grīw. Parth. *grīwēn* “spiritual” (M 5858/V/2/ *gy’nyn* ‘*wd grywyn*); Mid. Pers. *grīwag* “hill, ridge” (New Pers. *geriva*) and *grīwbān* “neck-guard, gorget” (MacKenzie, 1971, p. 37; for *grīw-bān* cf. Rundgren, p. 49, who points out that the Lat. *clibanarius* “armored knight” goes back to this word); Parth. *grīw-hangīft* “arrogance,” lit. “self-stretching” (Sundermann, 1992, sec. 30 with n. 6, pp. 66-67, 99); Mid. Pers. *pasāgrīw*, Sogd. *pašāyrīw* (see above).

Grīw in New Iranian languages. The New Persian development of the word, *garī*, is only mentioned in dictionaries (Dehḡodā, *Loghat-nāma*, s.v., quoting *Borhān-e qāte’*, see *ibid*, ed. Mo’in, pp. 1804-05), but derivations have been preserved such as New Pers. *geriva* “hill, incline” as well as “mountain pass,” from Mid. Pers. *grīvag* (Eilers, pp. 12-14 and *passim*), New Pers. *garībān* “collar, tunic,” and (unverified) New Pers. *garīgāh* (the place in the pilau pot where the neck of the lamb lies, see *Borhān-e qāte’*, ed. Mo’in, p. 1807). In Eastern Iranian languages, the word is still used: Pashtu *grēwa*, *grawa* “collar bone, collar” (Morgenstierne, 1927, p. 24), Wanetsi *gərwi* “collar,” Wakhi *yarāy* “collar,” Ormuri *gru-wiē* (Morgenstierne, 1938, p. 14*). I am grateful to Ela Philippone for the following references proving that this word survives in other New Iranian languages and dialects, albeit often in the semantic combination with “neck,” “nape” on the one hand and “throat,” as well as organs in the neck and pharynx area on the other. Thus it is sometimes difficult to decide whether these words are descendants of the word *grīw* or relatives of New Pers. *galu*, Av. *garō* “throat, neck.” Philippone mentions words that probably belong to *grīw*: Yidgha *γurvo* “gullet,” Monji *γərwa* “gullet,” and in western Iranian languages Tati *geri*, Harzani *giri*, Sangesari *gæri*, Semnāni *gerya*, all of them meaning “throat.” Baluchi *grī(h)* is “throat” and “collarbone.” Further forms such as Kor-mānji Kurdish *gewrī*, Sōrāni Kurdish *geru* “throat” with the variant *gelu*, and in the Fārs dialect of Gāvkošaki *gori* certainly belong to New Pers. *galu* “throat.”

Grīwas a grain measure. Mid. Pers. and Parth. *grīw* certainly does not belong to this word (Phl. *glyw* ‘, Parth. on the inscriptions and Man. texts *gryw*) with the definition of a grain measure. It is attested in Mid. Pers. *Ayādgar ī žāmāspīg* (see Bailey, p. 589), in the Parthian version of the inscription of Šāpur I at the

Ka'ba-ye Zardošt (Gignoux, p. 51, corresponds with Gr. *hēmisis*) and in Man.-Parth. M 6040 /V/9, 13/ (Sundermann, 1981, pp. 87-88). Heinrich Hübschmann has pointed to Armenian *griv*, New Pers. *garī(b)*, Syr. *gryb'* and Arab. *jarīb* (*Armenische Grammatik* I, p. 131) and derived the word from a postulated OPers. **grība-* (*Persische Studien*, p. 181, sec. 75a). In my opinion, Carl Brockelmann's assertion that the word is based on Akkadian *kirūbu* (Brockelmann, p. 130, s.v. *gryb'*) is questionable. Wojciech Skalmowski (1991, pp. 320-21) suggested a derivation from OIr. *grab-* "to seize," which may be supported on the basis of OInd. *grāha-* "a cup-full" and *grābha-* "what can be seized," from *grabh-* (cf. Mayrhofer, pp. 505-7; cf. also Old Ind. *grbhi-* "hold-ing, containing" in Harmatta, p. 345). As Nicholas Sims-Williams has recognized (pointed out to me by Adriano Rossi), the Bactrian term for "a measure of grain" (*agrēoi*) is connected with this word (Sims-Williams, 1997, p. 12; idem, 2000, p. 177). Sims-Williams considers it possible that the term for the grain measure is also derived from Av. *grīuuā-* for "neck." On the other hand, Dan Shapira derives the Mid. Pers. *grīw* from a word that means "vessel, container, measure," proceeding from an untenable presupposition that the meaning "self, soul" represents the result of a development that was brought about through Manichean tradition (see Shapira, esp. pp. 134-35).

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