

The Etymology of "*Jahrom*" as a "green-land"

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Phonetic signs used in this article:

ā = ا = "a" as in "*father*"

é = "e" as in "*bed*"

ē = "ea" as in "*bear*"

χ = خ = kh = "ch" as in scotish "*loch*"

ž = ژ = zh = "s" as in "*pleasure*"

š = ش = "sh" as in "*she*"

Firdausi (A.D. 940?-1020?) the Persian epic poet who versified in his famous *Book of Kings* (*Šāh-Nāmé*), the mythological and historical events of Persia from the beginning to the Arab conquest, refers to "*Jahrom*", in the story of Ardeshir Bābakān which deals with the uprising of Ardeshir (*Artaxerxes*) who founded the Sassanid dynasty in 224 A.D., a dynasty which lasted more than four centuries before being overthrown by Arabs in 651 A.D.

It is believed that the main source of Firdausi for this episode of his epical work, was *the Chronicle of Artaxerxes* (*Kārnāmak-i- Artaxšēr -i- Pāpakān*), a semi-historical romance written in Pahlavic (Middle-Persian, the official language of Iran during Sassanid period). It is one of the rare stories preserved in its original Pahlavic form from an era which most of its literature has been lost due to a harsh negligence if not completely burned by early zealot Moslems in the social panic and upheaval which followed the invasion of Arabs and swept across Iran (Persia). Here "*Jahrom*", as the name of a province in the Pārs (=Fārs= Pers-) region of Iran, occurs in its original Middle Persian form as:

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transliterated as *zrhm*, and transcribed as "*zar-ham*". Although we may preferably read it *žar-ham* or even *jar-hom* to count for its final development (metathesized as "*Jahrom*").

In fact we can easily translate *zarham*, the original Middle-Persian form, to "green-place". (*zar*=green+ *ham*=place). The first part of the word can be also find in such Pahlavic words as *zar-mayo* (green wine), and *madio-zarm* (=middle of green season, mid-spring); while the second part of the name (*-ham*) is obviously a cognate of a series of Ind-European words, meaning "settlement, village, house", which as a suffix occurs in the name of many places such as *Niflheim* from Old Norse *heim* (=home), and English *Birmingham*, *Durham* etc.

Cf.

English: *home*, *hamlet*, etc.

Old French: *ham* (village)

Old High German: *heim* (home)

>? Persian: *kumé* (=cottage), *-χan* (place: *gol- χan*= "*flower-place*"=*garden*),>? *χāné* (house)

In any case, the occurrence of the name as "zar-ham" (*"jar-hom") disproves any argument which takes *Jahrom* as the original form of the name and follows A. Kasravi, the late Persian historian and philologist, to analyze the name as the combination of two hypothetical words: *jah+rom*, which presumably renders a "warm place" (*jah*= warm + *rom*=place)[?].