

A comparative study on Parthian meter and Persian Folk meter

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Lazard (1985; 2007) describes the meter of pre-Islamic Parthian poetry as an accentual meter influenced somehow by the syllabic weight as well. Based on two Parthian poems, "Huwīdagmān" and "Angad rōšnān" (cf. Boyce 1954), he describes each seven- or eight-syllable line of this poetry as a string consisting of two half-lines³, and following Shaked (1970: 395-405) he believes that each half-line is shaped by a pause of *césure* type. Lazard goes on to say that each half-line in turn is consisted of two feet each of which having a final ictus on a heavy syllable.

1a	kēm wišāhāh až harwīn	grīhčag ud zēndān
	- - - / ^a - -	- - / ^a - -
b	čē anambarēnd āwaržōg	čē nē wxaš ahēnd
	^a - - - / - - -	^a - - - / - - -
2a	kēm hēnwār widārāh	čē zrēh ayuštāg
	- - - / - - -	^a - - - / - - -
b	zōnos razmāhīg	kū angōn nē ast
	- - / - - -	^a - - - / - (-)

Tabibzadeh (1382/2003) describes the meter of Persian Folk Poetry as a syllabic-accentual meter mostly with seven- or eight-syllable lines. According to his description each line of Persian Folk poems is composed of two cola (equivalent somehow to Lazard's half-lines), and each colon in turn is composed of two feet. He shows that all cola and feet in this poetry are accented on their final syllables, and also that after each accented syllable there is a pause which sometimes happens to appear within a word. He says nothing about the relationship between the accented syllables and their weights.

ʔætæ | mætæ | | tutu | le

ga | ve hæ sæn | | tje dʒ u | re

næ jir | dare | | næ pes | tun

gavejo bebær | | hendes | tun

Obviously there are great similarities between Lazard's description of Parthian meter and Tabibzadeh's Description of Persian folk poetry. Lazard however shows clearly that there is a relationship between the accented syllable and its weight, whereas Tabibzadeh says nothing about such a relationship. In this paper we show that there is a clear relationship between accented syllables and their weight in Persian folk poetry too.

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Analyzing 200 eight-syllable lines of Persian folk poetry having the same meter of 4,4 (cf. Tabibzadeh1385/2006: 102-112) we reached to the conclusion that 80% of all ictuses in this poetry are placed on heavy syllables (that is cV, cvc, cVc, cvcc and Vcc), and the rest 20% ictuses are placed on light ones (that is cv syllables). The point is that the ictuses placed on heavy syllables must not necessarily coincided with the lexical stresses of words which happen to be the final ones in Persian, but all the ictuses placed on light syllables must coincide necessarily with the lexical stresses, i.e. the final syllables of word. In other words the ictuses are placed either on heavy syllables or on final light syllables of words which are lexically stressed. On the other hand, 58% of unaccented syllables are light ones and the rest 42% are heavy syllables. It means that in Persian folk poetry the ictuses have to be either heavy or lexically stressed but there is no such constraint for the non-ictus syllables. The following tables show all these facts clearly with a more detailed statistics:

Syllable type	Stressed syllables
Cv	%20
Cvc	%41.08
Cvcc	%1.48
cV	%22.27
cVc	%13.69
cVcc	%0.66

Table 1

Syllable type	Unstressed syllables
Cv	%58.16
Cvc	%7.14
Cvcc	0
cV	%35
cVc	%0.68
cVcc	0

Table2

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