

Farnah

Indo-Iranian and Indo-European Studies

in Honor of

Sasha Lubotsky



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A Middle Iranian Word Denoting an Office-Holder

JOST GIPPERT



o Preliminaries

In contrast to the Indic branch of Indo-Iranian, which abounds in textual materials representing its early stages (Vedic and, later, Classical Sanskrit), Old Iranian is much poorer with respect to its written legacy, the whole corpus of the Avesta and the Old Persian inscriptions together barely exceeding the size of the R̥gveda Saṃhitā alone.¹ For investigations into the prehistory of Iranian, we are therefore dependent on materials from later periods (Middle and, to some extent, even Modern Iranian), too, as well as data from the so-called “Nebenüberlieferungen” in languages such as Armenian and Georgian. In the following contribution, I shall deal with a Middle Iranian term denoting a sort of office-holder, with a view to its distribution across the languages concerned and its possible etymological sources.

1 Middle Persian *pasānīg* ‘follower, attendant, courtier’

In his dictionary of Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian, Desmond Durkin-Meisterer (2004:284) provides a M(iddle) P(ersian) lemma “**ps’nyg** /*pasānīg*/” with the meaning given as ‘follower, attendant, courtier’. The only attestation quoted there (and the only one available so far) is from the Berlin Turfan fragment M₃, which contains the plural form *ps’nyg’n* in the narrative on “Mani’s last journey” or his “last audience with King Vahrām I,” edited first by F. W. K. Müller (1904:80–2) in a roman transcription of the time, then by C. Salemann (1908:3) in a Hebrew transliteration, and lastly, in a romanized transliteration, by W. B. Henning (1942:949–50 = 1977:89–90) and M. Boyce (1975:44–5). For easy reference, the passage in question (ll. 4–16 of the recto of M₃)² is rendered in an up-to-date roman transcription in Table 1, together with Henning’s translation (1942:950–51 = 1977:91–2).

¹The actual figures as deducible from the TITUS corpora (titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/texte2.htm#ved and [#iran](http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/texte2.htm#iran)) is 159,114 words for the RVS vs. 22,607 Old Persian words and 143,267 Avestan words, the latter figure including restored repeated formulas. My thanks are due to Alexander Lubotsky, who has contributed tremendously to the TITUS database.

²The manuscript is lost today; however, a black-and-white scan of a photograph is available at http://turfan.bbaw.de/dta/m/images/m0003_recto.jpg.

*ud šāh nān x^wardan bazm būd,
u-š dast abanūnz nē šust.
ud adūd hēnd pasānīgān, u-šān guft ku
mānī āmad ud pad dar ēstēd.
ud šāh ō x^wadāwan paygām frēstād ku*

ēw zamān pāy, dā an x^wad ō tū āyān.

ud x^wadāwan abāz ō ēw kustag īg wēnag nišast,

*dā šāh dast šust,
če x^wad-iz ō nahčīhr franaftan būd.*

“The king was at the dinner-table
and had not yet finished his meal.
The courtiers entered and said (to the king):
Mani has come and is standing at the door.
The king sent this message to the Lord (i.e.
Mani):
wait a moment until I can come to you
myself.
The Lord again sat down to one side of the
guard (and waited there)
until the king should have finished his meal
when he was to go hunting.”

Table 1. M₃ R 4–16.

As the text shows, the translation chosen by Henning (‘courtier’) is not compelling as it stands, given that the persons in question might also have been guardians, gatekeepers, or the like; and Henning did not provide any further argumentation for his translation. In contrast to this, ‘Gefolgsleute’ as proposed by Müller (1904:80) as well as Salemann’s ‘gefolgsman’ were obviously motivated by etymological reasoning, indicated in the latter’s glossary by pointing to *pas* ‘darauf, nachher’ (“von 𐭯𐭥,” 1908:113). However, the word formation process involved was left open by the two authors.

2 Georgian *pasaniḱ-i* and *pasenak-i*

The use of the Middle Iranian term was not restricted to Manichaean Middle Persian, though. In quoting N. Marr, C. Salemann (1908:113) drew attention to Georgian forms such as *pasaniḱi*, *pasanigi*, and *pasenagi* denoting a “leibwächter,” with further reference to the Georgian–Russian–French dictionary of 1840 by D. Čubinašvili, which contains a lemma *pasekani* translated as ‘adjutant’ (sic!; Tchoubinof 1840:397). Marr himself had discussed the Georgian terms in an article of 1906, which was devoted to the “Armenian words in the Georgian Acts of Pilate.” Besides the form *pasenaki* occurring in the text he was dealing with (see below), he also noted the appearance of *pasaniḱi* and *pasanigi* along with secondary orthographic variants such as *pasang-* and misspellings such as *hasanig-*, in the Life of St. Nino, i.e., the legend of the conversion of Georgia to Christianity (Marr 1906:27 with n. 8).³ Quoting the 18th-century lexicographer Sulxan-Saba Orbeliani, who had noted *pasenaki* with the meaning ‘*činašemdgomeli*’ denoting a servant ‘standing in front’,⁴

³The actual source of the information on the Life of St. Nino and the terms occurring in it was probably Wardrop 1903:28 n. 1 (see below).

⁴According to the edition of Orbeliani 1965:618, ms. B of the dictionary has *činaše mdegi* instead (with the same meaning) and mentions *pasanigi* as an additional lemma. In another dictionary of D. Čubinašvili’s, he provides

Marr proposed deriving the words under discussion from N(ew) P(ersian) *pās* ‘guard, night watch, guardian’ (‘straža, nočnaja straža, stražnikъ’), and *pāsān* ‘guardian’ (‘stražnikъ’), with further reference to Armenian *pahnak* (< **pahanak*) and *pahnord* (beside *pahanord*) ‘id.’ (Marr 1906:28). We have thus arrived at two quite divergent interpretations of the words under consideration, one being based upon NP (= MP) *pās* ‘guard, watch’ and one on MP *pas* ‘after, behind’; the latter proposal, which stands in remarkable contrast to Orbeliani’s servant ‘standing in front’, was given concrete expression by M. Andronikašvili, who pointed to the derivative MP *pasēn* ‘following’, NP *pasīn* ‘after’ (1966:262).

Given the two mutually exclusive proposals and also the divergent spellings of the Georgian forms, it seems worthwhile investigating their textual basis in more detail.

2.1 Georgian *pasenak-i*

All textual occurrences of the stem *pasenak-* that can be adduced so far are restricted to the Old Georgian version of the apocryphal *Acta* (or *Gesta*) *Pilati*, also known as the Gospel of Nicodemus, where we find a total of 14 attestations in the nominative, genitive, dative, and ergative cases. Contrasting the Georgian text with the existing Greek, Armenian, and Latin versions, we note that it regularly matches the Gk. term *κούρσωρ*, in its turn reflecting Latin *cursor*, and the Armenian *nowirak*, which denotes a ‘messenger’; all these terms deviate remarkably from the meanings so far proposed for *pasenak-*. Only the second Greek recension comes closer to them, in using *ὑπηρέτης* ‘servant, attendant’ throughout; however, the Georgian text is much closer to the first Greek recension (and the Latin and Armenian versions)⁵ than to the second one. For easy convenience, the interplay of the five versions is illustrated with the first three occurrences contrasted in Table 2.⁶

I.	“Pilate called one <i>pasenaki</i> and said to him: ‘Go and bring Jesus here in peace.’”
Georgian	<i>mouçoda pilate ertsas pasenakṣa da hrkua mas: “mived da mšwdobit šemoiṡvane iesu.”</i>
Greek A	<i>προσκαλεσάμενος δὲ ὁ Πιλάτος τὸν κούρσωρα λέγει αὐτῷ· μετὰ ἐπιεικείας ἀχθήτω ὁ Ἰησοῦς.</i>
Latin	<i>Advocans autem Pilatus cursorem dicit ei: Cum moderatione adducatur Iesus.</i>
Armenian	<i>Կոչեա՛լ Քիլատո՛ւ շնորհակն, Եւ ասե՛. Էջօռա՛լ Եմբ մե՛հ Իսօս.</i>
Greek B	<i>Ἐκβαλὼν οὖν ὁ Πιλάτος τὸ μανδύλιον αὐτοῦ δίδωκεν ἐνὶ τῶν ὑπηρετῶν αὐτοῦ λέγων· Ἄπελθε καὶ δεῖξον τοῦτο τῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ εἰπὲ αὐτῷ·</i>

the meaning ‘*mēpis činaše mdgomi xelʒoxiani, mandaturī*’, i.e. ‘bailiff (lit. staff-holder) standing in front of the king, representative’ (Cubinov 1887:1006). Note that Rayfield (2006:1650) gives the meanings ‘standing by; servant; courtier’ for *činašmdgomeli*.

⁵The same is true for the Coptic and Syriac versions (Revillout 1913 and Rahmani 1904), which are modeled exactly on the Greek text. The Palestino-Aramaic fragment (cf. Schulthess 1905:134–6) does not contain the passages in question; the Slavonic versions are too late to be considered here. Cf. Lzydorczyk and Dubois 1997:30–40 for a survey of the “eastern” versions.

⁶The Georgian text is quoted after the edition of Kurciķiže 1985:38–9; the first Greek and the Latin texts after Tischendorf 1876:217–8 and 338–9; the Armenian text after Tayec’i 1898:314; and the text of the second Greek recension (“m1–m2”) after Gounelle 2008:172ff. (cf. also Tischendorf 1876:288–9).

II.	“And when the <i>ḡasenak̄i</i> went there, he saw and recognized Jesus and bowed before him . . .”
Georgian	<i>da vitar mivida ḡasenak̄i igi, ixila da icna iesu, da taḡuanis-sca mas . . .</i>
Greek A	ἐκβὰς δὲ ὁ κούρσωρ καὶ γνωρίσας αὐτὸν προσεκύνησεν . . .
Latin	<i>Exiens vero cursor et agnoscens eum adoravit . . .</i>
Armenian	<i>Ibrew el nowirakn artak's ew caneaw zna, erkir epag nma . . .</i>
Greek B	Ἀπῆλθε τοῖνυν ὁ ὑπηρέτης καὶ εὐρών τὸν Ἰησοῦν προσεκαλεῖτο τοῦτον . . .
III.	“But the Jews, when they saw what the <i>ḡasenak̄i</i> did, shouted at Pilate (and) said: ‘Why did you not order him to be brought by a <i>sepeḡaci</i> but by a <i>ḡasenak̄i</i> ?’ For when the <i>ḡasenak̄i</i> saw him, he bowed before him . . .”
Georgian	<i>xolo huriata mat vitar ixiles, ray igi kmna ḡasenak̄man man, ḡaḡadebodes pilates mimart, itḡodes: “rad ara sepeḡacita hbrzane ḡemoḡvanebay misi, aramed ḡasenak̄isagan?” rametu vitarca ixila igi ḡasenak̄man man, taḡuanisca mas . . .</i>
Greek A	ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ὃ ἐποίησεν ὁ κούρσωρ, κατέκραξαν τοῦ Πιλάτου λέγοντες· διατί ὑπὸ πραικῶνος αὐτὸν οὐκ ἐκέλευσας εἰσελθεῖν ἀλλ’ ὑπὸ κούρσωρος; καὶ γὰρ ὁ κούρσωρ θεασάμενος αὐτὸν προσεκύνησε . . .
Latin	<i>Videntes autem Iudaei quod fecit cursor, clamaverunt adversus Pilatum dicentes: Cur eum sub praeconis voce non ingredi fecisti, sed per cursorem? nam et cursor videns eum adoravit illum . . .</i>
Armenian	<i>Ew ibrew zayn tesin hrēayk'n, zor arar nowirakn, alalakec'in Pilatosi ew asen. andē'r dahčaw oč' mowcer i nerk's, ayl nowirakaw: k'anzi nowirakn yoržam etes zna, erkir epag nma . . .</i>
Greek B	ὅπερ ἰδόντες οἱ Ἑβραῖοι καὶ μεγάλως ἀγανακτήσαντες ἦλθον πρὸς τὸν Πιλάτον, γογγύζοντες κατ' αὐτοῦ· Πῶς τοσαύτης τιμῆς τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἤξιωσε;

Table 2. From the *Acta Pilati*.

The most remarkable feature of the text passages quoted⁷ is the explicit contrast between *ḡasenak̄i* (~ κούρσωρ = *cursor*⁸ and *nowirak*) and *sepeḡaci* (~ πραικῶν = *praeco*⁹ and *dahič*). Etymologically, the latter term must have meant something like a ‘royal man’ (Rayfield 2006:1180 indicates ‘courtier, royal servant’), which is not quite what Lat. *praeco* or Armenian *dahič* seem to cover, the first being usually translated as ‘herald’ and the second as ‘ὑπηρέτης’, ‘βασανίστης’, ‘*carnifex*’, or ‘*tortor*’ (Awetik‘ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgorean 1836: 592).¹⁰ Nevertheless, it is clear from the context that for the Georgian translator, a *ḡasenak̄i*

⁷The sentence *upalsa iēsos sčiani kicxevden da basrobden — ḡasenak̄i paṭiviscemda da didebit ḡemoḡvanda* ‘the others mocked Jesus and scorned him (but) the *ḡasenak̄i* bowed before him and led him in with majesty’ in the sermons of the patriarch Anṡon Čqondideli (1898:169) is clearly an allusion to the *Acta Pilati*, as will be the occurrence of *ḡasenak̄i* in the unedited collective codex A-1396 (non vidi; cf. Keḡeliḡe 1980:454).

⁸The word was taken over as such into the Coptic and Syriac versions, which have *κουρσων* (Revillout 1913:69) and *ḡwr(q)swr* (Rahmani 1904:g and 11 with n. c; Mingana 1939:79–81).

⁹This word, too, was taken over into Coptic and Syriac: *συρεκων* (Revillout 1913:69) and *prḡwn* (Rahmani 1904:g).

¹⁰According to Conybeare 1896:77 n. 13, the Arm. word in the given context “answers rather to *βασανιστοῦ*.” Cf.

was in a lower position than a *sepeḱaci*, which means that he was probably not a ‘courtier’ but rather someone ‘standing behind’. The connection with MP *pasēn* ‘following’ (only attested in the formulaic *tan-ī pasēn* denoting the ‘ultimate form of existence . . . after the current cycle of millennia’,¹¹ lit. the ‘body afterwards’) thus remains conceivable, all the more since the Georgian word shows no noteworthy variation in the nineteen manuscripts containing the *Acta Pilati*:¹² the voicing of the stem-final consonant (> *pasenagi*) noted for four manuscripts of the 15th–18th centuries¹³ is a common phenomenon of the period in question.¹⁴

2.2 Georgian *pasanik-i*

In contrast to the Georgian version of the *Acta Pilati*, which must be a translation from a model hitherto undetermined,¹⁵ the legend of the “Conversion of Georgia” (*Mokceṽay Kartlisay*) containing the Life of St. Nino, the “apostle” of the Georgians, is usually regarded as an autochthonous hagiographical work.¹⁶ Among its various narratives, it contains a legend of the Christ’s tunic being transferred to the Jewish community of Mtskheta after the crucifixion. Different from the Biblical passages concerning the crucifixion and its circumstances including the casting of lots for the tunic,¹⁷ the legend not only provides the names of two of the persons involved, viz. one Eliaz from Mtskheta (who took the tunic) and one Longinos from Kars, but also uses the term *pasanik-i* to denote the man that nailed the Christ to the cross, who is simply one of the *στρατιῶται* in the NT (Georg. *erisaganta* or *erisa ḱacta* “army men” in Mt. 27:27; Lk. 23:36; Jo. 19:2; *stratiōtta* in Mk. 15:16). The passage in question, which is basically identical in both recensions of the “Conversion” (of Šatberdi and Čeliši, 10th and 13th century, respectively), is synoptically arranged in Table III with its adaptation by Leonṭi Mroveli (11th c.) in the Georgian Chronicle, *Kartlis Cxovreba*, which uses the same term in the given context, and with two metaphrastic versions from the 13th c., which replace it by *mtarvali* ‘tormentor’; in addition, the Table includes the passage from the 13th c. Armenian adaptation of *Kartlis Cxovreba*, the so-called *Patmowt’inn vrac’* (‘History of the Georgians’), which provides the only attestation of *pasanik* in Armenian.¹⁸

Gippert 1993:52–7 on the etymology of the Armenian term and its equivalents in Georgian; the basic meaning proposed there is (German) ‘Scherge’, i.e. ‘henchman, bum-bailiff’.

¹¹Thus Nyberg 1974:190; MacKenzie (1971:66) only gives ‘final, last’ for *pasēn*.

¹²Cf. Kurciķiže 1985:7–9 on the witnesses of the text; the basic manuscript is Sin. georg. 78 (written 1031 AD).

¹³Manuscripts CDEF in Kurciķiže 1985:38 nn. 17 and 18.

¹⁴Cf. Andronikašvili 1966:236; Gippert 1993:301.

¹⁵The proposal by Marr (1906:29) that the Georgian text was translated, if not directly from Greek, via an Armenian text as the “immediate model” (“neposredstvennym podlinnikom”), cannot be argued for on the basis of *pasenaki*, as Georgian possessed enough Iranian loanwords that were not borrowed via Armenian; cf. Gippert 1993 passim.

¹⁶But cf. Gippert 1997 and 2006 on traces of translation processes.

¹⁷Mt. 27:35; Lk. 23:34; Jo. 19:24.

¹⁸The text passage is quoted as follows: for the two recensions of the “Conversion” (Mokc. A and Mokc. B), from Abulaže 1963:128; for Leonṭi Mroveli’s adaptation in *Kartlis Cxovreba* (K.Cx.), from Qauxčišvili 1955:99; for the *Patmowt’inn vrac’* (Patm.Vr.), from Abulaže 1955:94; for the two metaphrastic versions (Nino A and B), from Abulaže 1971:32 and 70.

- Mokc. A *xolo dedasa missa vitarca esma qmay, odes pasanikman žuarsa zeda samščualsa dasca kueri mčedlisay ierusalēms...*
- Mokc. B *xolo dedasa eliozissa esma qmay ierusalemī mcxetad, odes-igi pasanikman žuarsa zeda samščualsa dasca kueri mčedlisay golgota<s>...*
 “But (when) the mother of Elioz heard the noise (from Jerusalem to Mtskheta) when the *pasanik-i* struck the smith’s hammer upon the nail on the cross in Jerusalem (/Golgotha)...”
- K.Cx. *xolo odes damsčuales upali da pasanikman kuerita dahkra samščualta, aka dedasa eliozissa esma...*
 “But when they nailed the Lord and the *pasanik-i* struck upon the nails with the hammer, the mother of Elioz heard it...”
- Patm.Vr. *ew ert’eal’ dipec’an awowrn xac’elowt’ean: Ew ibrew pasanikn pndeac’ zbeweršn, zmayr Eliosi andostoyc’ masn margarēowt’ean, or i nma...*
 “And when they arrived, they came in time for the day of the crucifixion. And when the *pasanik* struck the hammer, the mother of Elios was incited by the portion of prophecy that was in her...”
- Nino A *dġesa mas da žamsa, odes žuars-acues meupe usžulota mat da miamtxwa kueri lusmarsa qelta mat sauplota borotman man mtarvalman adgilsa golgotisasa, masve žamsa miicia qurta gulisata dedisa eliozisisa mcxetas...*
 “On the day and at the time when those infidels crucified the Lord and the bad tormentor struck the hammer on the nail in the hands of the Lord at the place (called) Golgatha, at that very time it came to the ears of the heart of the mother of Elioz at Mtskheta...”
- Nino B *xolo mas žamsa žuar-cumisasa, odes lusmarsa hġra kueri mtarvalman qelta zeda uplisata, žamsa mas miicia qurta eliozis dedisata...*
 “But at the time of the crucifixion, when the tormentor struck the nail on the hands of the Lord, at that time it came to the ears of the mother of Elioz...”

Table 3. From the Life of St. Nino and its adaptations.

While the attestation of the term under investigation here is coherent in the two recensions of the “Conversion,” the transmission in the Chronicle is anything but homogeneous, a fact that has been noted for a long time (see above). According to the apparatus compiled in the edition by S. Qauxčišvili (1955:99 n. 9), the form *pasanikman* used in the critical text does not occur as such in even one of the manuscripts available but was taken over from the “Conversion”; for the manuscripts of *Kartlis Cxovreba*, the editor provides the reading *pasenakman* for ms. A (the so-called “Queen Anna” ms., Q-765, 15th c.) alongside *pasinikman* (ms. C = Q-207, 16th c.), *pasangman* (ms. M = S-30, 1633–46), *pasanigman* (mss. B = Len. 41, 1839, and b = S-25, 1761), *hasanagman* (ms. m = H-2135, 1736), and *hasanigman* for the other mss. consulted (“cet.”). The more recent edition by R. Meṭreveli, which puts *pasanigman* in the text, has *pasinikman* (instead of *pasinikman*) for ms. C and adds *pasangman* for the newly discovered ms. Q (Q-1219, 1697 AD; Meṭreveli 2008:112 with n. 13).

With the stem *pasenak* occurring in just the oldest manuscript of the Chronicle that is available (ms. A), the assumption that this word and the *pasenaki* of the *Acta Pilati* are basically identical gains ground indeed; and remarkably enough, the variants appearing in the *Kartlis Cxovreba* had been proposed to be “probably corruptions of the word *pasenaki*, i.e. royal officer for executing justice, executioner” by O. Wardrop even before the “Queen Anna” manuscript was discovered (1903:28 n. 1). However, there is still a difference in meaning, the executioner of the crucifixion being anything but a ‘cursor’, and the two versions of the “Conversion” as well as the form *pasanik* appearing in the 13th-century Armenian *Patmowt’iwn vrac* greatly antedate ms. A of the Chronicle, which means that the *pasenaki* of the latter witness may well have intruded secondarily under influence of the *Acta Pilati*. It is therefore suitable to look for further evidence outside of the Georgian tradition to determine the interrelationship of the terms.

3 Syriac *pasānīqā*

Basing himself on Müller’s *editio princeps* of the fragment M3 (1904) and Marr’s treatise of 1906 (see above), P. Peeters (1946:90–1 = 1951:140–1) proposed to identify the Syriac term *pasānīq* (stat. emph. *pasānīqā*) occurring four times in the Syriac vita of Mar Abā, a catholicos of the Persian church (540–552), to be identical with MP *pasānīg*, pl. *pasānīgān* ‘Gefolgsleute’ and, further, Georgian equivalents appearing “de forme mal fixée” as “*pasanaki*, *pasanigi* (*hasanigi*), *pasenaki*.” Considering the form of the latter, he proposed “gardien de la chambre” to be the original meaning of the word, which he regarded as consisting of “*pah* ‘gardien’ et géorg. *senaki* (= armén. *սենակ* ‘chambre’)” (Peeters 1946:91 n. 60 = 1951:140 n. 3). This proposal, which erroneously presupposes an ezāfe-construction (quasi **pāl-i sēnak*),¹⁹ was rejected soon afterwards by A. Maricq (1955:276 n. 1) who stated that the formation of the Iranian word was clear enough, consisting of “*pas* + suffixe *ānīk*.”

To determine the true meaning of Syr. *pasānīq*, it is necessary to study the four attestations in more detail. In all these cases, the *pasānīqā* is sent out by the Sasanian king to the catholicos who is accused by the Magi; cf. Table 4 contrasting a transliteration of the Syriac text passages with the German translation by O. Braun (1915:198 and 216), which leaves the term in question open.²⁰

(§14) “Als der Großmagier und seine Genossen diese Worte des Seligen hörten, wurden sie noch mehr ergrimmt. Sie gingen zum König der Könige und klagten ihn an: ‘Dieser Mann, das Haupt der Christen, darf nicht leben, weil er die Religion (dēn) des Hōrmīzd zerstört.’

¹⁹Cf. Gippert 1993:225 for a similar confusion of true compounds and ezāfe-constructions in Iranianisms in another work of Peeters’.

²⁰The Syriac text passages are found in Bedjan 1895:230 and 266. Other terms that were left open in Braun’s translation are HRPDKA (3 × p. 211; *hṣkd’/hṣrtk’*, *hrpdk’/nrptk’* p. 35 n. 2), which has long been identified with Arm. *hraparak* < M.Iran. **fra-pāḍak* “court place” (Gippert 1993:266 and 272 with n. 11 after Nyberg 1931:217), and DZ’DGW (3 × p. 210 and 1 × p. 215, always in apposition with a personal name; see below).

hydyn m' d'lwbyh sgy'yt lmlk mlk': šlh lh
ltwbn' b'ydy psnyq' drwspn: dnpn' ptgm'
lmwbdn mwbd: wllw psnyq': wlmgwš' 'ylyn
dmqtrlyn lh.

Da sie nun den König der Könige sehr bedrängten, ließ dieser dem Seligen durch den PSNIK' DRWSPN melden, er möge vor dem Mōpêtân Mōpêt, jenem PSNIK', und den ihn anklagenden Magiern sich verantworten."

(§36) "Der Katholikos erhob mutig seine Stimme und sprach ...

hydyn 'l psnyq' wtmr ml' hlyn qdm mlk'. wb-
trkn šlh mlk mlk' lnsyh' nyh'yt wbsym'yt: dzl
w 'bd ktyb' lkstyn' d'tr' hw. dtn l' mštnyn
bšbyn' tē' lmnw dmrdrw: n'zlw'n 'lylwn bsyf'
wbg'd' wbgštt': wntkšwn 'mlwn wnhrbwn kl
dq'm bsrwdwt': 'n mgwš' hw w'n yhwdy' w'n
krstyn'. wmn dtpq šlylwt' bd' psnyq'²¹ hw: qbl
dnktwb.

Da ging der PSNIK' und berichtete diese Worte dem König. Hernach ließ der König der Könige dem Seligen ruhig und freundlich sagen: 'Geh und verfasse Schreiben an die Christen jener Provinz, daß, wenn jene Empörer sich nicht gutwillig beruhigen wollen, man mit Schwert, Pfeil und Bogen gegen sie ziehen, mit ihnen kämpfen und jeden, der im Aufruhr verharrt, töten wird, sei er Magier, Jude oder Christ.' Nachdem der PSNIK' die Botschaft überbracht hatte, übernahm er es zu schreiben.

Nachdem (dieser) fortgegangen war, wirkte zuletzt Gott auf den König der Könige ein und man redete ihm zu, daß er befahl, den Seligen von der Kette zu lösen."

Table 4. From the Vita of Mar Abā.

It is clear from these contexts that the function of the *pasānīqā* was quite similar to that of the *pasenaki* of the *Acta Pilati*, both being sent out as a messenger by the king or governor to an accused person, whereas the *pasaniki* of St. Nino's legend plays quite different a role. In this context, the attribute DRWSPN occurring in §14 of the Syriac vita gains importance. Braun, building upon Labourt 1904:181, took this to denote a 'Gefängnisdirektor' (1915: 198 n. 2; Labourt: 'directeur des prisons', 'δεσμοφύλαξ'), which implies that the initial D is the ezāfe-like "relative particle" and RWSPN, a misspelling for *rūzbān* 'executor',²² in contrast to this, Peeters (1946:91 with n. 62 = 1951:141 with n. 1) proposed reading a distinct word *rwspn* here, which might mean 'la garde du jour'. However, the latter word has been established on the basis of a scholion to Judith 5:28, where it refers to Gk. θύρις 'window', to mean something like 'grid, latticework',²³ a meaning that does not match well with the

²¹According to Bedjan (1895:266 n. 1), the word is spelled *psnyq'* here.

²²'executor' in Brockelmann 1928:723a s.v. *rūzbānā*, who compares NP *rōzbān* as appearing in Firdowsi's *Šāhnāme* (see below). The Syriac word occurs, e.g., in the legend of Mar Pethion (Corluy 1888:36).

²³Cf. Schröter 1870:311 and 522; Brockelmann 1928:737a s.v. *rūsānā*: 'saepturn'.

context in the vita of Mar Abā if we do not want to take ‘grid’ (or ‘window’) as a secondary expression for a prison.

We may thus return to the assumption that the *rmspn* in the vita actually meant a *rwzbn*,²⁴ i.e., an ‘executioner’ or the like. If so, the question remains in what relation the term stood to the *pasānīqā* it was attributed to via the “relative particle.” If *pasānīqā* meant some kind of messenger (as elaborated above), the “relativized” attribute might be taken to be either an indication of a superior sending him (‘the P. of the R.’) or an appositional explication of his office (‘the P. acting as a R.’).²⁵ The latter solution seems more probable on the basis of the following assumptions.

For *rōzbān*, the NP equivalent of Syr. *rūzbānā* ‘executioner’ is not at all the only meaning that has been established; the range further extends from a ‘footman’ and a ‘mace-bearer’ via a ‘protector, patron’ up to a ‘porter, especially at the royal gates’ (cf. Steingass 1892:593b s.v. *rozban*), and the latter meaning seems to prevail at least in Firdausi’s *Šāhnāme*.²⁶

If we consider the meaning established for MP *pasānīg* in the Manichaean context, the latter notion comes strikingly close to this, which may mean that we have the common ground here for the combination of Syr. *pasānīqā* and *rūzbān* in the vita of Mar Abā. And if so, we also arrive at a solution for the question of how Georg. *pasanikī* and *pasenakī* might correlate: a porter of the royal gates might just as well have been sent out as a messenger as acted as a tormentor. The meaning ‘courtier’, though, seems no longer sustainable.

4 Conclusions

The question remains whether the two Georgian terms are identical etymologically and what their etymological basis is. Standing as they are, both terms may well derive from both MIr. *pas* ‘behind, after’ and MP *pās* ‘guard, watch’. In the latter case, we must emphasize that the word is clearly distinguishable with respect to the Persian branch, given that it differs strongly from its N.-W. Iranian equivalent, Parth. *pahr*,²⁷ which is reflected, *inter alia*, in Arm. *pahak* and Georgian *pahrak*.²⁸ Both MP *pās* and Parth. *pahr* clearly represent an Old Iranian **pāθra-* (Av. *pāθra-*) ‘protection’. For the terms under discussion, this would indeed be semantically well-founded; however, the missing length of the first vowel in MP

²⁴ Compare the misspelling *rwzbn* occurring two times in the legend of St. Phusik (Bedjan 1891:299; Braun 1915:73). If Syr. *rmspn* reflects MP *rūz(b)ānag* ‘window’ (MacKenzie 1971:72), the internal consonant cluster must have been the same anyway (cf. the spelling *pāspān* for MP *pāsbān* quoted in Horn 1893:62 no. 274). The question whether there is an etymological connection of the two terms must be left open here.

²⁵ A similar interpretation suggests itself for another word that was left open in Braun’s translation of the vita of Mar Abā, viz. Z’DGW occurring 3 × in §27 (p. 210) and once in §35 (p. 215). In all these cases, it is attributed via the “relative” D to a certain “(Ferrūchdād) Hōrmīzd.” It is conceivable that we have the MP word *jādag-gō(w)* denoting a sort of ‘advocate’ here, which also rendered Georg. *žadago* and (in a more archaic form) Arm. *jatagov* (for the latter words cf. Gippert 1993:341–4).

²⁶ Cf. Wolff 1935:448b s.v. *rōzbān*, who provides 16 attestations in the sense of ‘Türhüter, Trabant’ and one in the sense of ‘(Heer-)Führer’.

²⁷ Contained in *pahrag* ‘watch-post’, *pahragbān* ‘keeper of a watch-post’, and *pahr(a)šar* ‘watchman, guardian’ (Boyce 1977:70; Durkin-Meisterernst 2004:274).

²⁸ Cf. Ritter 1986:310 and Gippert 1993:56; cf. also Arm. *pahnak* and *pahnord* mentioned by Marr (see above).

pasānīg is a strong indication against this derivation, and the word formation would remain unclear.²⁹

In contrast to this, a derivation from *pas* ‘behind’ seems more promising, the ‘porter’ being denoted as the person ‘behind’ the door (or ‘behind’ his superior). From the perspective of word formation, this is straightforward for Georg. *pasenaki*, as this may be based upon the adjective *pasēn* as indicated above. For MP *pasānīg*, Georg. *pasaniki*, and Syr. *pasānīqā*, we should accept A. Maricq’s proposal of seeing a formation with a suffix *-ānīk-* here (see above), for which MP *bayānīg* ‘divine’ from *bay* ‘god’ (cf. Durkin-Meisterernst 2004:120) or Parth. *šabānīg* ‘nightly’ from *šab* ‘night’³⁰ may serve as a parallel, even though their basis is a noun, not an adverb. As Georgian *pasenaki* can in no way be regarded as a secondary deformation of *pasaniki*, we are thus still left with two different formations from the same basis, with the same meaning—a constellation that may well be explained by assuming a dialectal doublet within Middle Persian or between Middle Persian and Parthian (or another Middle Iranian language).

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²⁹Note that Marr’s *pāsān* (see above) seems not to be attested anywhere (if not as a plural of *pās*), the usual word for ‘guardian’ being *pāšān*; cf. Horn 1893:62 no. 274 on NP *pās*. NP “*pehre* ‘Wache’” ib. 76 no. 341 must reflect Parth. *pahr-* because of its *-hr-*.

³⁰Cf. Durkin-Meisterernst 2014:163 (§313) who further adduces “*bg’nyg* /bayānīg/ ‘göttlich’” and “*gw’nyg* /gawānīg/ ‘verlangt, benötigt’” from “*gam-* ‘nötig sein’” for Parthian.

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