

**Similarities between Pāli and Gīrnār**

What about the other resemblances between Pāli and the western dialect? Let us re-examine Lamotte's list of similarities (1988, 565), which are based mainly on morphological rather than lexemic or phonological considerations:

1. P. has a nom. sing. in *-o* for *a*-stems, as does Gir. But so does hähbüzgarhī. M. has nom. sing. in *-e* (Brough ¶76) which might also account for such P. forms traditionally thought to be "Magadhisms" (Lüders 1954, ¶1f).
2. P. has ablative in *-ā* for *a*-stems as sometimes does Gir. Sh. has ablative in *-a* (Hultsch, xc), although whether this was long or short *-a* is impossible to tell, since vowel length was not noted in *Karosthī* script (Salomon 1998, 75). K. has abl. in *-ā*.
3. P. has a locative of *a*-stems in *-e*, *-asmīṇ* and *-amhi*; Gir. has loc. in *-amhi* and *-e*; Sh. has loc. in *-aspi* and *-e*. As we have seen above, *-m-* and *-p-* are closely related.
4. P. has the accusative plural in *-e* as does Gīrnār. Sh. has it in *-ani*. Neuter plurals are the same for Gir. Sh. and P.
5. P. has instr. of *-an* stem form as *raññā* and gen. as *rañño*; in Gir. the instr. is *rāñā* and the gen. is *rāñā*. Sh. has instr. as *rāñā* and gen. as *rāñā*.
6. In Gir. and P. the demonstrative *ayam* functions as nom. sing. in both masculine and feminine. Sh. has *ayaṃ* for masc. and *aya* for fem.
7. Gir. and P. has the 3<sup>rd</sup> person sing. ending in *-e* and *-ey(y)a* and the middle opt. in *-tha*. Sh. apparently has no dedicated opt. form except for the verb *as* (*siya* and *siyati* compared to P. *siyā* for 3<sup>rd</sup> pers. sing). Kālsī has *-eyā* as 3<sup>rd</sup> opt.
8. P. and Gir. both have the development *-u- > -a- < Skt. guru*. But, as noted above, on two out of three occasions, Gir. retains *guru* while it is Sh. and K. which have *garu*.
9. The change of Skt. *khalu > kho* is noted by Lamotte as an isogloss between P. and Gir., but it is common to all the REs.
10. The replacement of *-ṛ-* by *-a-*, *-i-*, or *-u-* is, per Lamotte another correspondence between P. and Gir. However this is also common to K. and Sh. Dh. and J.
11. The retention of *-ṛ-* in the stems is common to both P. and Gir., but this is also the

case in Sh. and M. (e. g. *gaṇa-* in RE 3 E or *samaṇa* in RE 4 C or *carāṇa* in RE 4 D).

12. Changing *-bh-* > *-h-* in instrumental plural (common to all REs) and
13. The collapse of the three sibilants, ś, ṣ and ṣ to one (s). Both K., Sh. and M. retain the differentiation of the sibilants, the latter two following Skt., and the former indiscriminately (Hultsch, lxxvi). The eastern dialects also collapse the sibilants, although the palatal *s* > to *c* in the root *√sak* (Separate RE 2 G: Dh.).
14. The shortening of long nasalized vowels esp. in the gen. pl. is done in Gir. and in P. But it is also prevalent in Kālsī (Hultsch lxxiv), Sh. and the other REs (e. g. RE 4 A: Skt. *bhūtānām* > Gir., Eṅg. *bhūtānaṃ*, K. *bhūtānaṃ*, Dh. *bhūtānaṃ*, Sh. M. *bhutaṇaṃ*).

In Summary, considering all 14 points of convergence outlined by Lamotte, there is only one or two points (masc. accus. pl. in *-e* of *-a* stems and the levelling of the sibilants to the dental *s*) which are peculiar to P. and Gir., with the others being common to the northern and north western dialects, or sometimes to all. Plus there are many points of dissimilarity between the two dialects, leading one to believe, with Norman that "there is probably no connection between Pāli and the Girnār dialect of the Aśokan inscriptions" (2006B, 128). Yet there does appear to be a strong connection with the north and northwest.

### Conclusions

1. Pāli is a composite language, younger and more phonologically evolved than the Aśokan Prakrits. It has many and varied Correspondences to the dialects, but the strongest by far are to Sh. and K., northwestern and northern.
2. We know that Pāli was not written down until the first century B. C. in Śri Lanka (Bechert 1992, 45); however writing existed in India from at least Aśokan times, and probably earlier. Scholars are generally agreed that the earliest writing in India was in the Karoṣṭhī, Aramaic script and was extant from the fourth century or possibly the fifth century (Salomon 1998, 46). Karoṣṭhī was older than Brāhmī and quite possibly its precursor and model (ibid, 54).
3. It would not be an unreasonable hypothesis therefore to suggest that the first

Buddhist teachings were written down in Karoṣṭhī in the north west to which Buddhism spread from its earliest times through the existing trade routes; Buddhism had a special appeal to merchants, for the new philosophy validated and encouraged their profession (Thapar 2000, 926).

4. Assuming the Pāli teachings had a Karoṣṭhī source or influence, this would account for the significant number of northwestern dialects. It does not of course prove derivation. The morphological correspondences between P. and Gīr. and P. and Sh./K./M. Are equally strong.
5. In this spirit, Appendix 3 shows a comparison of all forms of (randomly chosen) RE 4 which supports this hypothesis of a north/north-western origin of Pāli, with 43% of the words in K. Sh. and M. being closest to Pāli, while only 19% are closest to Gīr. This short compilation treats data on a unitary basis and does not weight for important common words like Pāli *Brāhmaṇa* which is closest to the NW form - *Bramaṇa*, but its change to *Brāhmaṇa* in Pāli may also be a later back-Sanskritization as Norman suggests (2006B, 134).
6. The Pāli- *Shāhbāzgarhī/Mansehrā/Kālsī* connection also helps to explain some of the strange phonological anomalies in the edicts, like the use of the common word *ātman*. The eastern and Pāli form is *atta*, but Gīr. has *atpā* and M. has *atva*. Sh., although it preserves elsewhere the *-m- > -v* change (e. g. *asmin > aspi* in loc. sing.) has *atta*. Yet AMg., also an eastern dialect, preserves the form *appa*. This leads to the conclusion that *atpa/atva* is a northwestern form and that the AMg. and Māgadhī form *appa* was borrowed from there, while the other eastern dialects (Dh. J.) chose the *atta* form. A derivation from the east to the northwest is precluded by the Dh. J. preservation of the *atta* form (since *-t-* never changes to *-p-*). Alternately we are simply witnessing the confusion noted by Pischel (§277) of *atman > atpa > appa* or by metathesis *atman > apta > atta*.

The Pāli - north/northwest connection also helps to clarify the many lexical ambiguities we encounter in Pāli through the use of inter- vocalic glides which are subject to multiple interpretations: e.g. a compound like P. *pacceyabuddha* which is traditionally interpreted to derive from Skt. *pratyekabuddha* ("a private Buddha") but probably comes from *pratyayabuddha* ("a Buddha awakened by specific conditions; i.e. not by a Buddha's teachings"); or the ambiguity between *viraja* ("free from passion"), *virata* ("stopped", "ceased") in corresponding versions of the

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*Sabhiya-sutta* (in Pāli *Suttanipāta* and BHS *Mahāvastu*) which goes back to an underlying word *virāya*;<sup>8</sup> there are dozens of these ambiguities in the Pāli writings, some of which have been isolated in Levman 2009. As the most advanced of the Aśokan dialects, *Shāhbāzgarhī* - which is already extensively softening consonants, dropping them or replacing them with glides - could well be the source of, or at least a significant influence on these linguistic anomalies.