



AFGHANISTAN VII. PARĀČĪ

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vii. Parāčī

Geographical distribution. Parāčī is an Iranian language now spoken northeast of Kabul in the Šotol valley, north of Golbahār, and in the Ğočūlān and Pačaġān branches of the Neġrao valley, northeast of Golbahār. The names of the Šotol villages have been given by Farhādī as Sang-e Laḡšān, Māra (“the pasture”), and Deh-e Kalān (G. Morgenstierne, “Istālif and other place-names of Afghanistan,” *BSOAS* 33, 1970, pp. 350-52). Andreev omits the first, but adds Andorsot (Farhādī: Andrāw-sāt “village between streams”), and in 1924 two of my informants said that they came from Rūydarra at the top of the valley. Benveniste gives 3-400 speakers of Parāčī for Ğočūlān, the northern branch of Neġrao, and 1,500 for the southern branch, Pačaġān, where one Pašaī village in the middle of the valley splits up the Parāčī territory. According to Benveniste, 200 years ago Parāčī was spoken all over Neġrao. From the uncertain and partly contradictory information given we can only venture to guess that Parāčī is not spoken by more than a few thousand persons (Morg., sec. 5). According to Masson (Morg., sec. 1) Parāčī was spoken “in and near Panjšīr” at the beginning of the 19th century; Andreev (Morg., sec. 4) in 1926 found that it was still spoken in Kuroba (Pašaī -r-) in lower Panjšīr, but his brief notes on Parāčī have never been published and are not now to be traced. Andreev also states that Parāčī had been brought to the Sālang valley west of Šotol, but had been given up for Persian. In 1967 I found no trace of Parāčī being spoken in lower Panjšīr, but in 1924 I was told in Šotol that it had been spoken in Panjšīr



(Ferāj, Zamōnkōr, Dōstomkēl villages) “till a couple of generations ago,” and in 1970 that it had survived in Kuroba until about 1940. Old inhabitants of Parāčī village, above Paḡmān, west of Kabul, stated in 1975 that Parāčīs living there had left for the north, “towards Nūrestān,” a few generations ago. But opinions varied as to whether they had spoken a language of their own. It is at any rate impossible to tell whether they had been secondary immigrants or represented a real earlier extension towards the south of Parāčī territory. Finally it may be mentioned that Došī, the name of the topographically most striking confluence of the Andarāb and Kondūz rivers, north of the Hindu Kush, can most easily be explained by Parāčī *dī-šī* “two-forked plough” (cf. Pers. *do-šāḡ*, also used in toponyms; see Morg.² add. sec. 6). *Šī* “horn, branch” (< *srū-*) is not known to me from any other Iranian language, and it is possible that Došī may point to an earlier expansion of Parāčī.

Sources. The earliest reference to Parāčī is given by Bābor in the 10th/16th century (I, p. 224); he includes it among the eleven languages spoken in the neighborhood of Kabul. He is followed later in the same century by the Turkish admiral Sīdī ‘Alī, who mentions the Farāšī tribe as living in the vicinity of Parvān, close to Šotol (Markwart, *Ērānšahr*, p. 287). The first Europeans to mention Parāčī are Elphinstone and Masson (Morg., sec. 1); but they also use the word “Purauncheh/Perāncheh” to denote a different ethnic group, i.e., Hindu converts to Islam who were spread over a large area from Kabul to the Panjab and lived as (cloth-) merchants. Cf. also Paštō *pārā(n)ča* (Wazīrī dial. *parāčī*) “cloth-merchant, Hindu convert to Islam,” Panjšīr *parāca* “a Muslim caste of pedlars.” We must assume that two similar names have been confused. Grierson, in a note on Bābor, derives the name from *prāčī* “eastern,” but we might also think of Skt. *parācī* fem. “outside of, distant,” referring to some remote tribe or ethnic group.

In Kabul in 1924 with Bābor as my guide, I succeeded in tracking down Parāčī speaking informants from Šotol (Morg., sec. 3ff.), two of whom were very good, and in having brief interviews with a man from Ġočūlān, and later in Peshawar, with one from Pačaḡān. In 1962 a team from the *Atlas linguistique d’Afghanistan (ALA)*, to which I belonged, worked in Pačaḡān and Ġočūlān, and on several occasions up to 1970 (Morg.², p. 417) I collected some further information on the Šotol dialect. I have also availed myself of the Paḡto Ṭoləna and *Sāl-nāma* vocabularies. In 1947 Benveniste made notes from Neḡrao and Šotol, which are being edited by Redard. The *ALA* material will in due course be published, as probably also additional information gathered by Kieffer. We



are still in urgent need of a comprehensive study of all varieties of this receding, but interesting language.

Traditions. All local traditions seem to agree that Nejrāo is the “original” home of Parāčī, relatively speaking (Morg. sec. 5; Morg.², add. sec. 5, p. 417). When the tradition claims an immigration from Ġūr at the time of ‘Alā’-al-dīn Ḥosayn Jahānsūz (d. 556/1161), it is probably devoid of any historical value. As we possess no written sources, we must depend entirely on linguistic evidence to determine the position of Parāčī within Iranian. The differences between the various dialects are insignificant and do not enable us to reconstruct a more archaic “Common-Parāčī.”

Phonemic system. It would require further investigations to establish with certainty the vocalic system of Parāčī, because vowel phonemes, especially the short, liable to much variation owing to stress and other factors (see Morg., sec. 16); but it seems likely that there are four short vowel phonemes (*i, e, a, u*), and five or six long ones (*ī, ē, ā, ō [ō?], ū*). The *ā* is rounded in Šotol, and Šotol *ō* in many cases corresponds to Nejrāo *ō ǝ?*). The consonant phonemes are: *q* (in loanwords), *k, t, p, č, g, d, b, j, x, γ, m, n, y, w, r, l, s, š, z, ž, h*. The stops, affricates, nasals and *r, l* can be combined with *h* (*kh, nh, rh*, etc.), but it is probably more correct to consider these combinations to be clusters, not stops.

Position within Iranian. From the historical viewpoint most striking phonetical feature of Parāčī is the retention of Iranian *g, d, b, j* (e.g., *gir* “stone,” *dūč-* “to milk,” *bāš* “rope,” *jan-* “to beat;” cf. Morg., sec. 49, and the *Sāl-nāma* vocabulary, s.v.). This feature is shared by Ōrmuṛī and separates the relict languages of southeast Iran in a decisive manner from the northeastern ones, which have, apart from a few regressions and other, local, changes, fricative *γ*-, *δ-* (*l-*), *v-* (*β-*), *ž-*.

An important innovation common to Parāčī and Ōrmuṛī is **w- > γ(w)*. Thus Par. *γaf* “to weave,” *γār-* “to rain,” *γarp* “snow” (Orm. *γaf, γōr, γoš*). According to Henning (“Mitteliranisch,” p. 86) Zābolī *γuzbe* “elm” does, “as might be expected,” show relationship (*γu- < wi-*) with Parāčī and Ōrmuṛī. It also seems possible that the varying forms given of Gundofarr, etc., the well-known ruler of the Kabul region, may resent attempts to render Southeastern Iranian *γ-*. In Northeastern Iranian only a couple of (loan-?) words in Wākī have *γ- < *w-*; in Khot. there are traces of a similar treatment of **w-*.

Par. *ž-* *< y-* (*žō* “barley,” etc.) recalls Orm. *j-* (through *ǰ-*) *< y-* (*ja-i* “husband’s



brother's wife," *jāšr* "liver"), no similar change of *y-* is known from Northeastern Iranian. The loss of *-t/d-*, intervocalically and after *n*, is shared by Ōrmuṛī and is found in some Western Iranian dialects, but not in Northeastern Iranian. Also **dw > b-* (Par. *bōr*, Orm. *bar* "door") is known from Persian, etc., in Northeastern Iranian only from Wākī. Par. *š*, Orm. *š^r < θr*, *s(t)r* is a not very characteristic common feature, as similar developments are found as well in Western as in Northeastern dialects. The loss, or reduction to *y*, of intervocalic *-š-* (Morg., sec. 69) (Par. Orm. *gū*, Orm. *goī* "ear") is the only phonetical change which seems to be more akin to Northeastern (> *ž*, *l*, etc.) than Western Iranian. But also in some Western Iranian dialects we find a voiced *ž*, e.g., in the word for "ear."

Parāčī differs from Ōrmuṛī in the development of **rt/d* (Par. *muṛ* "died," *zuṛ* "heart," but Orm. *mull-uk*, *zli*), both, however, agreeing, just as Paštō, in merging two Iranian groups. Parāčī differs also from Ōrmuṛī in the development of *-k-* (Par. *sayōn*, Orm. *skan* "cow's dung"). Such and other differences point to a rather early separation between the two Southeastern Iranian languages. But it does not seem probable that the parallel phonetical developments should be due merely to a secondary contact between the two languages.

Phonetical development. For an attempt to give a more complete account of the phonetical development of Parāčī see Morg. secs. 25-74. Here it is possible to mention only a few details not referred to above. 1. Vowels: Stressed Ir. 'a > Šotol *ō* (Nejrao also *ō*); *ū*, *ai* > *ī*, but *au* > *ū* and *ā/āya* > *ē*; *āēwa* > *ō/ō*. With umlaut *aⁱ* > *e*; *āⁱ* > *ē*; *a^a* > *a*. Ir. *r* > *ur*; **wi* > *yu*. 2. Consonants: *St* > *št* after *i*, in Šotol merging with Iranian *št* (Šotol *yušt* "twenty," "finger," but Nejrao *yušt*, *yušt*). *F/xt* > *t*, but *ršt* > *ṭ*. *Fr-* > *rh-* (*rhayām* "spring"), but *f/xr-* > *rp/kh* (*γarp* "snow," *surkhō* "red"). Initial aspirates (or clusters with *h*) develop through the transposition of a following **h*. Thus *ghīt* "took" < **giht* < **gi(r)ft*, *rhīne* "light" < **rūhn-* < *rauxšna-*, *phök* "cooked" < **pakh(w)* < **paxwa-*, *dhōr* "saw" < **duhr* < **dṛšta-*, *thān* "thirsty" < **ta(r)hn-* < *taršn*. *Khör* "ass" may be a loan-word from Pašāī, or with secondary *kh* < *x-*, as in *khan-* "to laugh." But it is perhaps not excluded that in this border dialect initial aspirates could have been retained. Cf. also *phī* "spade," *menth-* "to smear," *mākhân* "our" (see Morg. secs. 58-61).

Morphological and lexical relations to Ōrmuṛī. It is not possible to point to any special morphological similarities between Parāčī and Ōrmuṛī, apart from the formation of the infinitive from the past stem + *-aka* (Par. *xuṛō*, Orm. of Kaniguram *xwalak* "to eat"). The loss of the distinction of gender in Ōrmuṛī of



Lōgar is probably due to Persian influence, and in Parāčī it may be comparatively recent (*yan* “oak” < **wanā-* fem., etc.; cf. Morg., sec. 26). The system of pronominal prefixes, very characteristic of Ōrmuṛī, is no doubt of Paštō origin. In contrast Parāčī morphology bears the stamp of ancient and strong contacts with Pašaī, for which see below.

The Parāčī vocabulary shows striking affinities with Ōrmuṛī, although the list given by Morg. (sec. 8) has to be reduced. The most remarkable case is the verb Par. *tēr-*: *thōṛ*; Orm. *tr-*: *tatak* “to drink” which is quite unique in Iranian. Also Par. *gap-ār* “fireplace”: Orm. *gap* “stone” looks remarkable, but may be due to some kind of secondary contact. Note also Par. *žamā*, Orm. *zāmāk* “winter,” with **-āka*, not known to me from other Iranian languages. But it must be admitted that the number of words shared especially with Northeastern Iranian is larger. Thus: *bāš* (Orm. *bēš*) “rope,” Shugh. *vāχ*, Paštō *wāχ*, etc.; *dhōṛ* “saw,” Munjī *lišk*’, *yarw-* “to boil,” Shugh. *warv-*, etc.; *dōš* “hair,” Sar. *δors*, etc.; *panān* “road,” Shugh. *pū^wnd*, etc.; *sūy* “word, affair,” Shugh. *sūg* “tale;” *xāra* “summer” (< **hu-wāhrt-*), Paštō *wōṛay*, Sar. *wug*, Sogd. *wrtty* “spring.” Nevertheless it is only to be expected that ancient Southeastern Iranian should in many cases agree with its neighbors to the north; even if we are willing to assume the former existence of a separate Southeastern Iranian group, now only represented by the relict languages Parāčī and Ōrmuṛī. We might even be tempted to put forward as a hypothesis, not to be proven, that the third version of the Dašt-e Nāwor inscription, written in a kind of differentiated Kharoštī, could represent an attempt to put into writing a local Southeastern Iranian dialect (cf. Fussman, “Documents épigraphiques kouchans,” *Bulletin de l’École française d’extrême-orient* 61, 1974). For many years before the discovery of this inscription one might have wondered why such an attempt should never have been made in eastern Afghanistan, south of the Hindu Kush.

Relations to Pašaī. A most important factor for determining the character of Parāčī is the profound influence exerted upon it by its nearest Indo-Aryan neighbor, Pašaī. The loanwords are numerous, and many could be added to the list given by Morg. (sec. 12); if the vocabularies of both languages were more fully known, the number would doubtlessly increase still more. In some cases the borrowing must have taken place at an early date. Thus, Nejrao *yara(-bālō)* “bridegroom” might phonetically belong to Iranian *war* “to choose.” But the semantic development in Iranian of this root does not go in this direction (cf. e.g., Orm. *ywar* “oath”), while Skt. *vara-* “suitor” just meets our



requirements. A corresponding word has not, till now, been recorded from Pašaī. But it may easily have existed there and have been taken over by Parāčī before the change of *w-* > *γ-*. Also Par. *γun-* “to find” is probably derived not from Av. but from Indo-Aryan *vinda-* (Pašaī *wənd-*, etc.). An extended form of the root is Pašaī *windaṛ-*, *wədaṛy-* “to search for, find,” from which Par. *γudaṛ-* “to search for.” A few words seem to show that Parāčī was in early contact with other Dardic-Kafiri languages (Morg., sec. 11). Note especially *pāšp* (Benveniste) “side, flank,” which must have been borrowed from a Dardic language with *šp-* < *śv-* which is not the case in Pašaī—and ultimately go back to Skt. *pārśva-*. Regarding the Pašaī influence on the development of the Parāčī “aspirates,” see above.

All morphological parallels between Parāčī and Pašaī (Morg. sec. 13) do not necessarily belong to the same category; e.g., Parāčī *ān* “I;” cf. Turfan Pahl. *an*, Semnānī *ā*, though its position may have been reinforced by Pašaī *ā*. In the Pačaḡān Pašaī village, which is wedged between lower and upper Parāčī speaking parts of the valley, *ā(n)* has been influenced by Parāčī, as also *bīn* “was,” with *-n* as in Parāčī. No conclusions can be based upon the similarities of the Parāčī and Pašaī pronominal suffixes, such as 1st per. sing. *-m*, 1st per. plur. *-n*, 2nd per. plur. *-u*, etc. The situation is more complex when we consider Parāčī *sī* “it exists” (Pačaḡān dial. 3rd per. plur. *sen*). Phonetically it can be derived from Av. *saēte* “is lying.” But while in Dardic derivatives of Skt. *śete* commonly acquire the meaning of “(it) exists, is,” no such semantic development is known from Iranian. Parāčī *sī* may simply have been borrowed from Northwestern Pašaī *šī* “it is,” with substitution of *s* for *š*; or a still existing Parāčī *sī* < *saēte* may have been semantically absorbed by Pašaī. The Parāčī present formative *-tōn*, plur. *-tan* (< **-tanā*), Neḡrao *-ta*, etc., is no doubt connected with and borrowed from the functionally identical Northwestern Pašaī *-tō*: thus Parāčī *ḡantō*, Pašaī *hantō*, etc. “is killing.” In both languages the present and imperfect tenses are formed by adding the present or the past of the auxiliary, and in both languages the old present is used as an indefinite present or future (“aorist”).

Parāčī has a present participle, active or passive, in *-’en*. As a passive it corresponds exactly in form and meaning with southwestern Pašaī *-’en* (Par. *deh’en čhēn* “they were beaten,” Pašaī *han’en bitīk* “he has been beaten”). As an active, used only in combination with a verb of movement, its function corresponds exactly to northwestern Pašaī *-mana* (Par. *deh’en deh’en . . .* “beating and beating [him drive him out of the city!];” *xušwaxtī kan’en u*



khan'erjāya “he came, making merry and laughing,” northwestern Pašaī *xušālī kamana yēič* “she came, being pleased”). Parāčī of Pačaḡān has a noun of agency in *-kālā*, which corresponds to and is certainly borrowed from the local Pašaī dialect. It may be added that Parāčī has adopted the northwestern Pašaī causative in *-ē/ěw-*, and also that the formations of the perfect and pluperfect are not so exactly parallel as they are in Persian, Paštō, etc., even if they do not differ so completely as they do in Pašaī. Pašaī also possesses various special tense forms, which have no parallels in Parāčī.

Pašaī has undoubtedly been the dominant part in the interlingual connection with Parāčī, but unfortunately we know nothing of the relative geographical position of the two languages in ancient time. Reliable traditions about Parāčī only carry us back to Nejrao as its “homeland,” and any speculations about its earlier history and geographical position would be futile. We can only mention the theoretical possibility that in pre-Islamic times when Pašaī was a language representing a highly developed Indian civilization, it may have expanded towards the northwest, encroaching upon and engulfing Parāčī territory. Of a much more recent date is the influence of local Darī on Parāčī. Besides incorporating a large number of loan-words, Parāčī has also to some extent been influenced by Persian morphology and syntax, adopting the *ežāfa* construction and modifying its use of the agentive (“pseudo-passive construction”) (Morg., sec. 204; Morg.², add. p. 420).

Morphology. Morg. (and Morg.², add.) contains a description of Parāčī morphology based upon the admittedly fragmentary material at our disposal. Here it is possible to draw attention only to a few salient and additional traits. The only true cases are the abl. in *-ī* and the gen. in *-ika*, with proper names in *-ān* (Morg., secs. 89-94). The preposition *ma* denotes a definite object (= Pers. *-rā*), but is also used in a local and temporal sense. For the other prepositions, mostly of Pers. origin, see Morg.¹, sec. 220. The postpositions are *-kun* “to,” etc., *-pen* “with,” *-tar* “in, to from,” *-wanō* “towards” (< Pašaī). The obl. of *ān* “I” is *mun*, and the gen. *manān*. Further: *tū* “thou,” *tō*, *tan*; *mā* “we,” *mākhān*; *wā* “you” (< *(y)ušā- cf. Sorḡai *huž*, etc.; NTS 19, p. 103), *wākhān*. The demonstratives denote, as in Persian, only two types of deixis, and are based on *ē* “this,” *ō* “that,” but with a rather complex system of inflection and enlargements (Morg., secs. 124ff.). The personal inflection of verbs appears from *hēm* (*-im*) “I am,” *hē*, *hā*, etc., *hēman*, *hēr*, *hēn*. With the 1st per. plur. cf. Sogd. *-ymn*, Ṭaleš *-mān*, Kermānšāhī *-m(ə)n* (I. Gershevitch, *A Grammar of Manichean Sogdian*, sec. 721, with references to Khot. and Khwarazmian). It is



difficult to analyze and explain 2nd per. plur. in *-ē/ōr*, but an attempt has been made (Morg., sec. 189). The pret. of *hēm* is *hastam*. Also the root *b-* is used, in various forms, as an auxiliary; and *par-* (pret. *čh-*) “to go” may also mean “to become,” just as Pašai *par-* and Pers. *šodan*. There are various classes of aorists (ancient presents). Thus *jan-'em* “I beat” (< **jan-a-*), *mer-'em* “I die” (< **mṛ-ya-*), *mēr-'im* “I kill” (< **mār-aya-*), and *par-'am* “I go” (< Pašai). The past is formed in the usual Iranian way (Morg., sec. 189). Thus *dā* “gave,” *jō* “struck,” *buṛ* “carried,” *bōst* “bound,” etc.; intrans. *'āyēm* “I came,” *čhīm* “I went,” but trans. *k'ur-um*; *-um/mun/ān kuṛ*, or even *-um kuṛ . . . -um* “I made.”

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Sāl-nāma-ye maǰalla-ye Kābol, 1313/1895-96, pp. 148ff. Unpublished



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