



BARTHOLOMAE'S LAW

BARTHOLOMAE'S LAW, the name given to a rule of phonetic assimilation in the Indo-Iranian and probably also the proto-Indo-European languages first noted by Christian Bartholomae in 1882. The law is as follows: When a voiced aspirate consonant is followed by a voiceless one, the latter becomes voiced, taking over the former's aspiration. This is best illustrated from Vedic, in which the aspiration is preserved, e.g., when the morpheme *-tá-* (as in *bhṛ-tá-* "carried") is added to the root *dabh-* "to betray" (<**dhabh-*, see grassmann's law) the result is **dabh-tá-*, which gives *dabdhá-*; likewise *b(h)udh-* "to wake" > **budh-tá* > *buddhá-*. The Vedic rule can be formulated as **D^hT* > *DD^h*. Bartholomae's law is also manifested in the Iranian languages, where it explains the development of **ubh-ia-* > **ubdha-* "woven" (= Ved. *ubdhá-* "surrounded," Skt. *-vábhi-* "weaving") > Iranian **ubda-* in Young Avestan *ubdaēna-* "made of woven material," or **augh-ta* "he said" (cf. Gk. *eúkhomai*) > **augdha* > Old Avestan *aogədā*. It is important to bear in mind that the law covers combinations with *-s-*; thus **augh-sa* "you say" > **augžha* > Old Avestan *aoyžā*; **d(h) ibh-s-* (cf. Ved. *dabh-* "to betray," *dips-* "to intend to betray") > **dhibžh* > Old Avestan *dišžaidiiai* "to deceive, cheat." Also noteworthy are phonetic changes such as **-dh-t-* > **-ddh-* > (Ir. **-dd-* > Ir. *-zd-*: e.g., Ved. *vṛddhá-* "increased" (cf. *vardh-* = Av. *varid-* "to multiply") = Young Avestan *vərəzda-*; Indo-Iranian **dha-dh-tai* "he puts" > **dhaddhai* > Old Avestan *dazdē* (see below); Indo-Iranian **žh-t-* > **-`dh-*, as in **g(h)ṛžh-ta* "he complained" (cf. Av. *garəz-* = Ved. *garh-* "to complain" or "reproach") > **g(h)ṛždha* > Old Avestan *gərəžda*.



In the later Old Iranian languages (Young Avestan, Old Persian), however, common morphemes such as the *-ta* of the participle or the *-ta* of the 3rd singular of the middle voice (secondary ending) are reintroduced by analogy (almost always in Young Avestan, always in Old Persian; also in Vedic *dhatté*, for **daddhe*, “he puts” against Old Avestan *dazdē*, see above), e.g., Vedic *baddhá-* “bound” (from **b(h)adh-tá-*) against Young Avestan and Old Persian *basta-*; Old Avestan *aogədā* (see above) against Young Avestan *aoxta*; Vedic *dabdhá-* (see above) against Young Avestan *dapta-* “betrayed;” Vedic *drugdhá-* “harmed” (cf. Ved. *drógha-* “deceitful,” OPers. *drauga-* “treason”) against OPers. *duruxta-* “lied,” etc.

The fact that this phenomenon is found in attested languages as ancient as Old Persian lends weight to the theory that a similar tendency to analogical balancing may be the reason why Bartholomae's Law generally does not apply in the other Indo-European languages. On the other hand its demonstrable effects on non-Indo-Iranian languages (see Mayrhofer, p. 116) indicate that it was probably operative in proto-Indo-European.

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