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Comparison and some similarities between Polish language and Iranian languages (case study of Old Persian, Pahlav, Middle Persian and Lori language)

<https://doi.org/10.34739/his.2019.08.16>

Abstract: *In general the Slavic languages has a lot in common with old Iranian languages. As Polish language and some Iranian languages are a branch of the Indo-European language family. The similarity between two languages seems to be possible. This brief note could give new insight in Indo European cultural relations.*

Key words: Lori, Old Persian, Pahlav, Middle Persian, Polish, language, God, brother, high, earth

Introduction

Lori is a language of one of Iran's major ethnic groups, belonging to Indo-Iranian branch of Indo-European group. The Lori dialects belong, together with Persian, to the southern branch of Western Iranian. It abridges Kurdish and Persian in a linguistic continuum. Both Lori and Kurdish are spoken by both settled and nomadic population over a large area of western Iran¹. The ancient region of Lorestān is located in the mountainous area of Zagros, close to the border of the Iraq. In wider sense, it consists of the part of western Iran coinciding with the province of Ilam, and extends from Kermanshah to Fars². Lorestān was successfully integrated into the Achaemenid, Parthian and Sasanian empires³. Lori language includes many ancient words which

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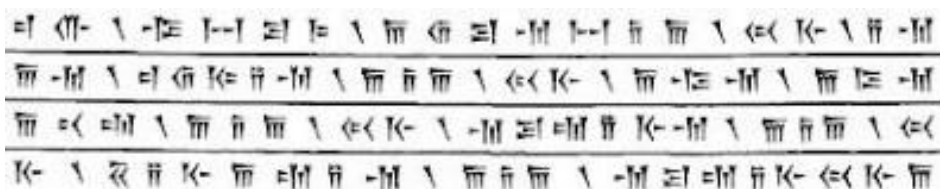
¹ KERIMOVA 1982; SUNDERMANN 1989; MACKINNON 2011; ANONBY 2012: 'The array of related dialects collectively known as Lori (autonym: lurī)'.
² MORTENSEN, MORTENSEN 2014.
³ FRYE 1984.

have survived since Parthian and Sasanian periods up to present time. A book published in 2013 by Karamian in Farsi (title eng. *Parthian and Sasanian words in Lori Language*) provides a study of such parallels, based on reading of ancient inscriptions and written resources from remaining Pahlav or Middle Persian texts⁴. The present paper documents sample similarities between Polish and Lori, Old Persian, Pahlav and Middle Persian.

Trace of Polish word *Bóg* in the inscription of king Darius I in Naqš-e Rostam

Darius I the Great was the third Achaemenid king of kings (r. 29 September 522-October 486 BC)⁵. He was buried at Naqš-e Rostam⁶. The famous inscription of Darius I was made c.490 BC, and it is placed in the top left corner of the facade of the tomb of the king⁷.

DNa 1-4:

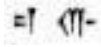


Transliteration:

baga \ vazraka \ Auramazdâ \ hya \ imâm \ bumâm \ adâ \ hya \ avam \ asmânam \ adâ \ hya \ martiyam \ adâ \ hya \ šiyâtim \ adâ \ martiyahyâ

English translation:

‘A great god is Ahuramazda, who created this earth, who created yonder sky, who created man, who created happiness for man, who made Darius king, one king of many, one lord of many’.

The first line of the inscription start with word *Baqa* , which means ‘God’. This word means ‘God’ not only in Old Persian, but in Middle Persian or Pahlav. The word used presently in Lori as *Bag* also means ‘God’. Nyberg refers to *Bag* as a Middle Persian word meaning ‘God’⁸, just as Lori word *Bag*⁹. It is interesting

⁴ KARAMIAN 2013.

⁵ SHAHBAZI 1994.

⁶ VON GALL 2009.

⁷ HULSTAERT 1974: 23.

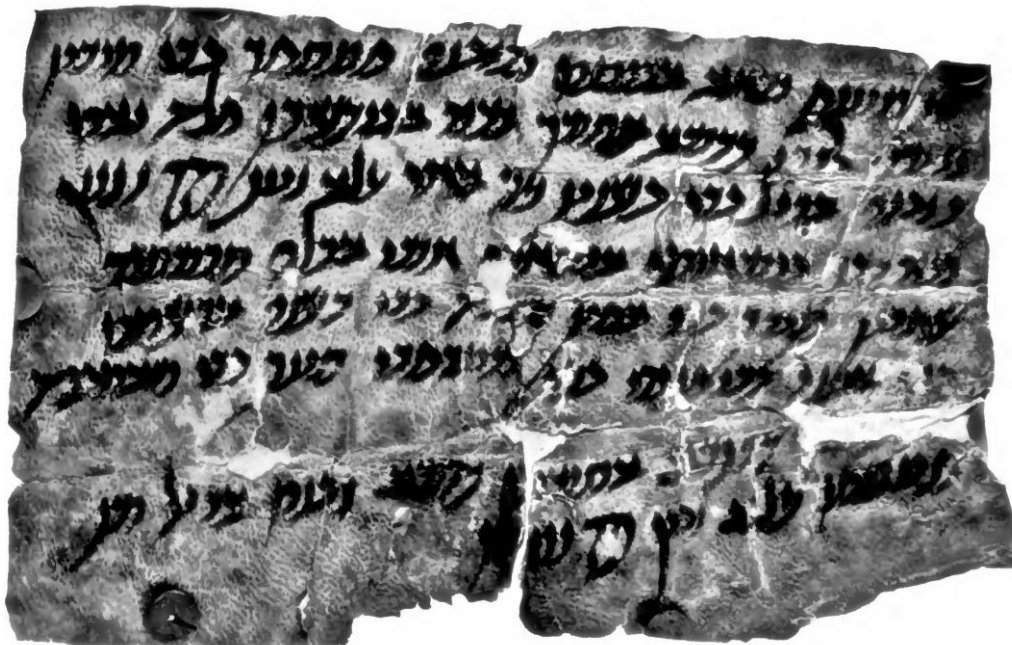
⁸ NYBERG 1964: 42; *bay* in MACKENZIE 1971: 17.

⁹ KARAMIAN 2013: 53.

to note that this word is not in use in modern Farsi (official language of Iran), but *Bag* is still in use in Lori and Polish where it took the form *Bóg* meaning ‘God’.

Polish word *brat* in the Pahlav and Middle Persian text

Polish word *brat* means ‘brother’ similar to *berār*, *brāt*, *brād* all means ‘brother’ in Lori and Laki languages, which are still in use in the Lorestān province¹⁰. This word can be found in the third line of Avroman Parthian text (AV3)¹¹, a parchment found in a cave in the Kūh-e Sālān, near Avroman (on the western frontier of Persian Kurdistan), dated to 33 AD¹².



AV3; after MINNS 1915: pl. III

Transliteration:

sarō 300, māh (h)arwatāt frawaxšed pātasbag pu tīrēn.

čē až (...?) raz asmag čē abikaškan nēm yād.

ūd xarīnēd awīl puhr bašnīn...brād har drahm 65.

če až būm-xwad sōgand ham xwarēd parwān.

wigāhān tīrag puhr ārpīn...puhr rašn arštād.

¹⁰ NYBERG 1964: 49; MACKENZIE 1971: 19; MACKINNON 2011; KARAMIAN 2013: 52.

¹¹ HACKL, JACOBS, WEBER 2010: 556.

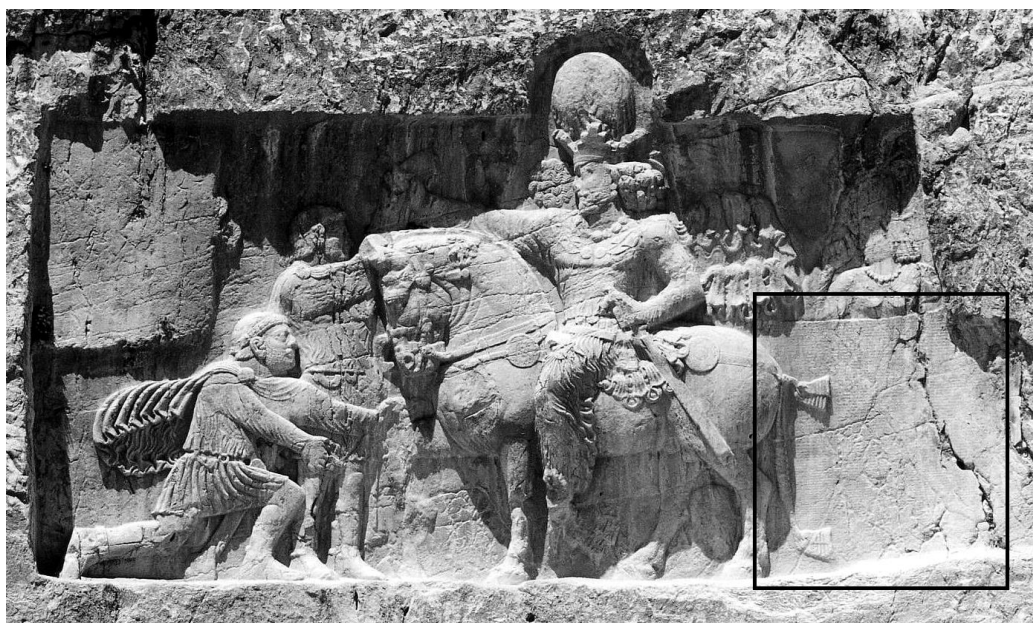
¹² MACKENZIE 1987.

puhr abān gar-panah puhr mihr-frī sēnag puhr mātbōg.
raz...asmagān raz xrīd awīl až
pātasbag har drahm 65.

English translation:

‘In the year 300 in the month of Arwatat, Pataspak son of Tirin, who [comes] from Bod, sold half the vineyard of Asmak, which is by the ploughfields, and Awil son of Bashnin as brother bought [it] fo[r] a total of 65 drachmae, which was charged by the owner. He also swore before the witnesses: Tirak son of Apen, M...g(?) son of Rashn, Arshtat s[on] of Aban, Garpanah son of Mihrfriy, Senak son of Matbog. [.....] vineyard, Awil bought the vineyard of Asmakan from Pataspak for a total of 65 drachmae.’

The word *brād* is also mentioned in Kartīr’s Middle Persian inscriptions in Fārs at Naqš-e Rostam (KNRm)¹³, to the right of Shapur I’s (r. 242-272) triumphal relief. Kartīr was a prominent Zoroastrian *mowbed* in the second half of the 3rd century CE. KNRm had been engraved in c. 290¹⁴.



Šābuhr I’s triumphal relief at Naqš-e Rostam

¹³ MACKENZIE 1989.

¹⁴ SKJÆRVØ 2011.

KNRm 7:


Transliteration:

ud pas kū Ohrmezd šāhān šāh ō bayān gāh šud ud Wahrām šāhān šāh ī Šābuhr pus ud
Ohrmezd šāhān šāh brād pad šahr ēstēd

English translation:

‘And after Hormizd, king of kings, went to the place of the gods and Bahram, king of kings, son of Shapur, king of kings, and brother of Hormizd, king of kings, established himself in the kingdom.’

Trace of polish word *bardzo* in the Middle Persian text

Polish word *bardzo* means a ‘lot’, and reveals strong similarity to *barz* which means ‘high’ in Lori. It seems that both words have a root in Sasanian texts. The word *barz* can be also found in the Middle Persian inscriptions where it also mean ‘high’¹⁵. Different forms of this word can be found in the Sasanian texts. The deity Apām Napāt¹⁶ is also known, as *Burz*, *Borz* or *Borj*, being a reduction of Avestan *bərəzant-*, the ‘high one’. Henning translates the meaning word as *burz* ‘high, tall’¹⁷. ‘In the course of oral transmission by speakers of Middle Persian, the Parthian text came to include many words or constructions influenced by this language, for example, *buland* high, tall (instead of *burzend*)’¹⁸. This word is written with Middle Persian script in Pahlavi text as .

Sīh Rōzag 1, Gāh 3:

Transliteration:

Burz ī xwadāy [ī mādagān ī rōšn] ī ābānnāf, ābiz ī ohmazddād

English translation:

‘(of) Burz, lord [of women, luminous], of the family of the waters, and (of) water, created by Ohrmazd.’

Polish word *Ziemia* and Lori word *Zemi*

Lori word *zemi* and Polish word *ziemia* both mean ‘earth’. It is interesting to note that the word *zamīg* from the Middle Persian text has same meaning¹⁹.

¹⁵ MACKENZIE 1971: 19; KARAMIAN 2013: 53.

¹⁶ BOYCE 1986.

¹⁷ HENNING 1950: 643, n. 12.

¹⁸ TAFAZZOLĪ 1995.

¹⁹ MACKENZIE 1971: 98; 146; KARAMIAN 2013: 11.

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