ON THE ORIGIN OF THE NEO INDO-ARYAN PAHĀḌĪ LANGUAGE OF UTTARAKHAND AND WESTERN NEPAL HIMALAYA[1]

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Abstract. Maheshwar P. Joshi. *On the Origin of the Neo Indo-Aryan Pahāḍī Language of Uttarakhand and Western Nepal Himalaya.* Lingua Posnaniensis, vol. LII (2)/2010. The Poznań Society for the Advancement of the Arts and Sciences. PL ISSN 0079-4740, ISBN 978-83-7654-078-8, pp. 51–65

Drawing on epigraphical sources the present paper purports to trace the origin and development of the neo Indo-Aryan Pahāḍī language of western Nepal, Kumaon and Garhwal. The methodology involves diachronic study of inscriptions found in the above-mentioned three regions, and their inter-area relationship with one another especially in terms of palaeography, orthography, contents, diction, syntax and vocabulary. Certain linguistic uses peculiar to the entire zone under reference were noticed in the very earliest inscriptions, some of which have survived to date. These records show the existence of proto Pahāḍī and proto Hindi (precursor of Avadhī, and Braja/Saurasenī) languages in the eleventh-thirteenth century AD and fully developed Pahāḍī from the fourteenth century AD onwards. In conclusion, epigraphy, can add considerably to our knowledge of history of language, and help us deconstruct myths related to philology.

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Common or similar words denoting kinship in the Indo-European languages seemed to yield information regarding Aryan social organization in their original homeland, before their numerous tribal groups separated for migration in various directions. That the word might have migrated with the social institution and concept of relationship, without substantial travel on the part of Aryan people, was not considered a serious possibility. The English word *daughter*, german *Tochter*, *thygatêr* in Greek, *dear* in Irish, Lithuanian *dukte*, *doch* in Russian are of common derivation with the Sanskrit *duhitṛ*. The Sanskrit root *duh* means 'to milk', so the word was, according to this theory, originally *dogdhrī* = 'she who milks', to indicate that it was the daughter of the primitive Aryan family who did the milking… Unfortunately this attractive conjecture still fails to explain why the Aryan languages preserved a common word for 'she who milks' without a common word for 'milk'. It might be noted in passing that the pastoral life is usually admitted to be patriarchal; milking the cow comes at a comparatively late stage in herding what was male property, so that it would not be primitive Aryan, nor at first the work of women. It has been remarked by derisive

philologists that there exists a common root-derivation for 'foot', but none for 'hand' in the Indo-European languages, whence the same logic consistently applied would demand the conclusion that the unseparated Aryans possessed feet, but not hands, which must have sprouted after the separation! (KOSAMBI 1975: 5–6)

INTRODUCTION

The above relatively long quote is a question mark on the early linguistic studies devoid of archaeological base. However, this sort of interpretation of Sanskrit word *duhitṛ* is not accepted by modern scholars of linguistics (Prof. Zoller: personal communication). Language is the most articulated symbolism mankind has ever created, and therefore it cannot be studied in isolation from archaeology and history. The present study purports to present the origin of Grierson's 'Central' and 'Eastern Pahāṛī' (read Pahāḍī)[2] language groups as unfolded by archaeology. According to Grierson's classification the 'Inner Sub-Branch' of the 'Indo-Aryan Languages' has three groups, namely, the 'Eastern Pahāṛī' (known as Nepālī), the 'Central Pahāṛī' (having Kumaunī and Garhwālī dialects) and the 'Western Pahāṛī' (Jaunsārī, Sirmaurī, Baghāṭī, Kiūṭhalī, Satlaj Group, Kulu Group, Mandi Group, Chamba Group, Bhadrawah Group, and Unspecified) (GRIERSON 1927: 181–182). Grierson believes that the 'Pahāṛī' was spoken by the Khaśa-s who were the principal inhabitants of the Himalayan region extending from Kashmir to Nepal, hence the principal dialect of 'Kumaunī' is known as 'Khasaparjiyā' (GRIERSON 1916: 109), and that of Nepal 'Khasa Kurā' (GRIERSON 1927: 181). Grierson's opinion rests on the two-wave theory of the Aryan migration into India advocated by HOERNLE (1880). Grierson has also traced influence of Rājasthānī and Gujarātī on 'Central Pahāṛī' (1927: 181–184). Following him, scholars have traced origin of 'Central Pahāṛī' to Dardic, Paisāchī, Khaśa (CHATTERJEE 1926: 6–8; SHARMA 1983: 39–40) and Śaurasenī (VARMĀ 1949: 48) languages, relying mainly on certain linguistic usages. Sadly, no linguist/historian has attempted to identify the ur language of the 'Khaśas' supposedly spoken in antiquity from Kashmir to Nepal, despite existence of a vast corpus of epigraphical records. At least on the basis of written/spoken records from Nepal and Uttarakhand (India) examined by me existence of the so called language of the Khaśa-s cannot be established. In fact, while presenting the first ever 'as nearly complete a picture of the [Kumaunī] language as possible within limited time and resources' APTE and PATTANAYAK (1967: 2) observe:

> Grierson posits a Khasya substratum of the Kumauni language. According to him, the Khasya tribe, which came under Rajput rule at one time, was assimilated and lost their original language which was more akin to Kashmiri, Khower, and Shina. During the nine centuries of Rajput rule the transformation was so complete that the tribe came to be known eaither Brahmins or as Rajputs and the features of their language changed so much as to change its affiliation from Pisāci to western indic. Though such a situation may have been created in the isolated, yet changing Himalayan scene, at this point it is hardly likely that direct evidence of such a transformation would be available.

Significantly, recent studies have shown that the Khaśa migration in Uttarakhand Himalaya is a myth (JOSHI, M.C. 1990; JOSHI 1990a: ch. 7; 1998a). It seems that Grierson had in his mind the migration and diffusion hypothesis relative to the Aryans, which he applied

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[2] According to the system of Romanisation and transliteration of vernacular words as adopted in this essay Grierson's 'Pahāṛī' be read as Pahāḍī.

to the Khaśa-s as well, for the Khaśa-s were held as the early wave of the Indo-Aryans (see Joshi, L.D. 1929). The Aryan myth has not withstood the test of rigourous scientific analysis, especially with the application of DNA tests carried on the skeletal remains from the region said to have been frequented by the Aryan invaders (see Kennedy 1997; Hemphill & Christensen 1994; Walimbe & Musraf 2007). Therefore, based on the testimony of a vast corpus of epigraphical and archival records found in western Nepal and Uttarakhand, ignored by scholars, the present paper purports to deconstruct the origin and classification of the Central and Eastern 'Pahāṛī' as suggested by the linguists and philologists. The source material used in this study is frozen in time, and therefore its authenticity is redoubtable.

ROOTS OF THE 'CENTRAL' AND 'EASTERN PAHĀṚĪ'

The earliest evidence showing local literary activity in 'Central' and 'Eastern Pahāṛī' languages area is the set of Fourteen Rock Edicts of the Mauryan Emperor Aśoka found at Kalsi (District Dehradun, India), which was issued in the second and third quarters of the third century BC. Although he does not offer any explanation, yet M.C. Joshi (1990: 199) aptly remarks:

> The verbal structure of Kumaoni and Garhwali linguistic groups has hardly any affinity with the northern or north-western languages. The extant languages in Uttarakhand appear to be a logical development of early historical Prakrit as reflected in Aśokan records at Kalsi.

On the authority of Bühler, Nautiyal (1969: 190) suggests presence of local elements in the Kalsi Rock Edicts, particularly: 'The frequent use of *s* and *sh* after the X edict', which became 'very frequent and its assimilation was so deep rooted that even today there is no distinction between *s* and *ś* or *sh* among the people of this region' (i.e. Uttarakhand). However, a closer examination of the texts of Girnar, Shāhbāzgarhi, Kālsī, and Mansehra versions (Bühler 1894) of Aśoka's Rock Edicts shows that indiscriminate use of various *s* sounds is common in all versions. It seems that use of various *s* sounds may have been due to the local practice of using alternative consonant of the same group (*varga*) of letters, in this case *y-varga* (*y, r, l, v, ś, sh, s,* and *h*). Significantly, the Kalsi version is singularly different from the rest of the Aśokan inscriptions in that here consonant *r* is totally absent, either is has been substituted for *l*, as in *lājā* for *rājā; pule* for *pure/purā* (showing use of alternative consonant), or else omitted, for example, *piya piyadasi* for *priya priyadasi*; *sahasāni* for *sahasrāni* (RE I, and throughout the following edicts). Another peculiarity of this version is the total exclusion of the consonant *ṇ*, as in *pāna* for *prāṇa* (Sanskrit *prāṇa*, RE I), *baṁbhana* for *bramaṇa* (Sanskrit *brāhmaṇa*, RE II), *dhammachalanena* for *dhamacharaṇena* (RE IV). Interestingly, these linguistic uses change in the next few centuries when we find use of both *r* and *ṇ* in the Kuṇinda coins dated between second century BC and third century AD, as may be noted in the the legend on the Amoghabhūti type of Kuṇinda coins that reads *Raña Kuṇidasa Amoghabhūtisa Maharajasa* (see for details, Joshi 1989: ch. 4). However, the practice of substituting a consonant of the same *varga* by another survived in subsequent centuries as well. Thus, in one of the Almora type of Kuṇinda coins, datable to *circa* first century BC, the legend reads *m-g-bh-t-sa*. Powell Price (1945: 216–217) restores it as *Amoghabhūtisa*. If we accept this suggestion we find an example of substituting *g* for *gh*, in the *g-varga* of consonants. Yet another example is

noticed in the Anonymous type of Kuṇinda coins, dated to third century AD, the legend on which reads *Bhāgavata Chatreśvara Mahātmanaḥ*. Here Chatreśvara is intended for Chhatreśvara, meaning lord of *Chhatra*, showing use of *cha* in place of *chha* in *ch-varga* (see for details, Joshi 1989: Appendix). This practice is also noticed in later inscriptions, for example, *th* for *dh*, as in *sutratharaḥ* instead of *sutradharaḥ* (Dwarahat Śeshasāyi Vishṇu image inscription (Joshi 2009: 360), *jh* for *j* as in *pujhā* (*puja* = worship, Doti copper plate of Nirayapāla of Śaka 1284 = AD 1362) (Pāṇḍeya 2065 VS: 78–79), *y* for *l*, as in *Pāya for Pāla* (Bachkot Copper Plate inscription of Tilaka Pāla, Joshi 2009: 340–341), *g* for *k*, as in *gari* (*kari* = done, Doti document of Raikā Dīpa Sāhī of Śaka 1712 = AD 1790) (Pāṇḍeya 2065 VS: 158) to quote a few. Such linguistic uses are found to this day as may be noticed in the place-names of certain settlements situated in the banks of the Kali, for example, the cis Kali part in Indian side is called Dhārchūlā, the trans Kali part Dārchūlā, likewise, the cis part is called Jhūlāghāṭ, and the trans Kali part Jūlāghāṭ, and in words of common parlance: *rāgsasa* for *rākshasa*, *kyova* for *kyola*, *bhova* for *bhola*, *khāva* for *khāla*, etc. (see also, Joshi 1989: 61–63). Admittedly these uses may not be exclusive to 'Eastern Pahāṛī', but they do indicate certain linguistic uses in 'Eastern Pahāṛī' from at least the Mauryan times such as not found in Hindi. More importantly, these early records do suggest that 'Central Pahāṛī' speaking area did practice some or the other linguistic uses in different epochs of history, for example, total absence of *r* and *ṇ* during Mauryan times, substituting a consonant for another of the same group, and the likes pointed out by Sircar as noted below, and which need to be investigated adequately by scholars of linguistics and philology.

Then we have two Talesvara Copper Plate inscriptions (Gupte 1915–1916) belonging to the Paurava-Varmans of Brahmapura datable to *circa* late sixth and seventh centuries AD. Among other things, in these Copper Plate inscriptions we come across certain place-names, for example, Bhelamastaka (*mastaka* = summit of *Bhela*), *bhela* appears to be Sanskritized form of modern 'Pahāṛī' *bhyola*, meaning steep hill, Devakhāla (*khāla* of Deva), in modern 'Pahāṛī' *khāla* is a plain geographical formation in mountain folds, Nimbasāri (*sārī* of Nimba), *sārī/serā* denotes a patch of agricultural field in modern 'Pahāṛī'. Placenames with '*khāl*' (e.g., Jahrikhal, in Garhwal, and Ghodakhal, in Kumaon), and '*sārī*' (e.g., Kansari, in Kumaon, and Kulsari in Garhwal) suffixes are still in vogue in Central Himalaya. These inscriptions are followed by the Katyūrī Copper Plates dated to ninth and tenth centuries, which further bear upon the development of later 'Pahāṛi' language. Thus, about the Plate of Padmaṭadeva, datable to tenth century AD, Sircar (1955–1956: 284) observes:

> [It] exhibits considerable influence of local pronunciation. This is indicated by the occurrence of cases like *asva* for *aśva* in line 13, *kisora* for *kiśora* and *āhīra* for *ābhīra* in line 14, *yathārahaṁ* for *yathārhaṁ* in line 16, etc. It is also interesting to note that final *n* has in a number of cases been changed to *anusvāra;* cf. *⁰gatāṁ* for *gatān* and *sthāṁ* for *sthān* in line 10, etc. But the *anusvāra* is replaced by *ñ* in ⁰*anyāñś=cha* in line 16 and *ṅ* in ⁰*viṅśati* in line 26.

Interestingly, more peculiarities of language and orthography in vogue in the region under reference are noticed in the Plate of Subhiksharājadeva, son and successor of Padmaṭadeva:

> Both the *visarga* and the *upadhmāniya* have been applied in *⁰tpannaḥḫ=parama⁰* in line 11. The *anusvāra* has been wrongly used for the final *n* in *niyogathāṁ* in line 13 and has been further modified to *ṅ* in ⁰*niyāṅ=khaśa⁰* in line 17. It is substituted by *ṅ* in *anuyāṅś=cha* in the same line and by *n* in *⁰r=vvinsa* in

line 26 and in *sansāra* in line 31 and by *ṇ* in *chañchala* in line 33. In some cases the *anusvāra* has been used superfluously; cf. *khāṁṇḍa* in 35, *sukhāṁm=pāra⁰* in line 37. In *śriyaṁ* (line 42) *ṛi* has been used for *ri*... We may note also the use of *traya* for *tri* and *dvaya* for *dvi*. Interesting is the use of *rājānais⁰* in place of *rājabhis⁰* (line 39). Although the rules of *sandhi* have not been observed in the prose portion in some cases (cf. *khaṇḍaṁ ashṭa* in line 19) the last word of the second *pāda* of a verse has sometimes been joined in *sandhi* with the first word of the third *pāda* (cf. lines 39–40) (Sircar 1955–1956: 290).

I am inclined to attribute these orthographic irregularities to local linguistic practices which continued in the subsequent centuries. In this connection I have two interesting examples to cite. The copper plate of Subhiksharājadeva uses the term '*satka*' suffixed to the names of the plot of the land, for example, '*Bhogāru-satka*, *Śubhaṭṭāka-satka*, etc.' in the sense of 'belonging to' (Sircar 1955–1956: 290, 294–296). Interestingly, this use of the term '*satka*' seems to have survived in the suffix '*saita*' occurring in the copper plate inscription of King Kīrti Chandra of Kumaon issued in Śaka 1425 (AD 1503) (Chauhāna 2008: 46–50). The relevant portion of the text reads '*Rāji kā chheḍa saita kari… Ḍibhuñā kā saita kari…*', in the sense of '*Chheḍa* land of *Rāji* was made to belong to… *Ḍibhuñā* land was made to belong to…'.[3] Likewise, in several letters of the Chandra kings of Kumaon the title reads '*Rajā jī ko rajāisa*' (meaning, order/letter of the king), sounding the word '*rājānais⁰*' as noted above by Sircar. Thus, although the language of these copper plates is Sanskrit, some elements of proto 'Central Pahāṛī' had already come into existence. However, later inscriptions from Central Himalaya clearly show that by the eleventh century AD Sanskrit was gradually transforming into a language, which foresees not only the later 'Central' and 'Eastern Pahāṛī', but also the 'Śauraseṇī'/'Rājāsthāni/Hindi' of Grierson and his followers.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE 'CENTRAL' AND 'EASTERN PAHĀṚĪ'

In the earlier section of this essay I have pointed out certain features suggestive of local linguistic influences on the official languages of the times to which they belong. These features are found both in Pali, and Sanskrit inscriptions up to the tenth century AD. There is no doubt that these early copper plate inscriptions are the products of elites and we do not know the then current language of the masses. However, from eleventh century AD onwards local inscriptions, invariably in Nagari characters, use a language which epigraphists have termed as 'local dialect' (for example, ARIE 1960–1961: 113, B-613; see also, Sircar 1965: 55), and 'Sanskrit mixed local dialect' (ARIE 1963–1964: 50, B-478) meant for masses, that is why even the names of individuals are written in the same manner as they were pronounced in local language. These early Nagari inscriptions add new dimensions to the history of neo Indo-Aryan language groups, as may be noticed in the following extracts of some of the representative types of inscriptions bearing upon the history of 'Pahāṛī' and proto Hindi languages.

Dingas temple inscription (Joshi 2009: 363), Kumaon:

Śrā [*Śrī*] *Śāke 1027 Śrī Mahiṁdabhaṭa*(*ḥ*) *Mahesvara sthāpītaṁḥ* || *Hārāvumīḥ 1 Pāṁchathā*(*ptriḥ*) || *Pujā*(*dh*)*dhūta* ||

To the best of my knowledge this is the earliest dated inscription of its kind bearing on the development of 'Pahāṛī' language. As may be seen the vocabulary of this inscription is

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[3] Chauhāna (2008: 49) wrongly interprets this term either as 'to include land' or else 'fief of Saita = Saiyyada'.

derived from Sanskrit but not the grammar, for example, simultaneous use of *anusvāra* and *visarga* as in *sthāpītaṁḥ*; a practice somewhat similar to the plate of Subhiksharājadeva mentioned above. There is no doubt that this inscription of Śaka 1027 (AD 1105) renders Sanskrit words into local dialect, for example, *Mahiṁda* for Mahendra and *Hārāvumīḥ* for Hara-Umā. It is said that it takes about two centuries for a language to evolve from a spoken dialect to a written language (cf. GRIERSON 1927: 125). It would, therefore, appear that the spoken 'Pahārī' dialect in Uttarakhand started appearing in about ninth-tenth centuries, a fact indirectly corroborated by the Katyūrī inscriptions referred to above. By eleventh-twelfth centuries AD it started taking shape as a prototype of 'Pahārī' language, as evidenced in the above cited inscription and similar others from Garhwal, Kumaon, and western Nepal, for example:

Undated Gopeshwar stone slab inscription,**[4] Garhwal:[5]

[1] *Svasti Śri bhu*(*v*)*ana cha Śiva prarsādro Gopisthala asthānenaḥ praṇa kī lā ki dra…* [2] *atri chaṁ Sri Chunar*(*ddi*)*bhye Gūsiyaḥ śvasti Śri Rudrabhumi cha vo* (*du*) *ka ṭhā tā...* [3] i [4] *Gusiyā*(*ju*) *nṛi chiṁtana so ichhā rāja bhigāna danai 8 ||*

 Written in Nagari characters of late 11th/early 12th centuries AD, this inscription combines elements of Sanskritized proto Hindi-'Pahārī' (lines 1–2), and proto Hindi-'Pahārī' (line 4).

Dwarahat Śeshasāyi Vishṇu image inscription (JOSHI 2009: 360), Kumaon:

[1] *Siddham*[6] *| Svasti Śrī Sākesmina 11*(*3*)*6 mā 11 Māgha sudi sa* [2] *ptamī Guru dine Revatī nakshatreḥ || Śrī Bhaṭa Āsā* [3] *vara Tevānī Tevānilika purāḥ putra Sonade* [4] *va nāva*[7] *gaḍhāi || Valhāmaidu Rāula Hiu* [5] *pāla sutratharaḥ ||*

Here the expression '*Guru dine Revatī nakshatreḥ || Śrī Bhaṭa Āsā vara Tevānī Tevānilika purāḥ putra Sonadeva nāva gaḍhāi*' though based on Sanskrit, clearly shows elements of 'Central' and 'Eastern Pahārī' as well as proto Hindi. In subsequent centuries these traits develop into a common 'Pahārī' language having its own characteristic features as noticed in the charters of western Nepali, Kumaoni, and Garhwali princes (JOSHI 1990a: 98–99). Parallel to these developments inscriptions bearing corrupt Sanskrit or else proto Hindi-'Pahārī' traits also continued. The following extracts from various inscriptions, literary works, and folklore arranged in chronological order are illustrative of this suggestion:

SANSKRIT BASED PROTO 'PAHĀRĪ'

Dadeldhura, Rupal 5 Pandeya-gau Copper Plate inscription****[8] (PĀṆDEYA 2065 VS: 77), western Nepal:

Sāke 1235... Rājā Jagatī Pāla Thapalā grāma pālo 1 sirisa chālīsa ko kheta paṇḍita Sudarśanātha dattām || Tathā Kedāra yātrāyām upallo Thapalā pālo 1 masā 15 ko Sūrya grahaṇa dinū ||

 Here the expression '*pālo 1 masā 15 ko Sūrya grahaṇa dinū*' is clearly Pahari.

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   [4]   Final readings of inscriptions marked with ** asterisks may vary slightly.

   [5]   Reading is tentative, from photograph, courtesy of Dr. D.N. Dimri, Archaeological Survey of India, Dehradun.

   [6]   Denoted by a symbol.

   [7]   *Nāva* (water reservoir) is a variant of later *nauva/naul* of Central and *naulo* of Eastern 'Pahārī'.

   [8]   Inscriptions marked with *** asterisks have not been published with photographs; as such accuracy of the reading cannot be verified. For this very reason translation of these inscriptions has not been attempted. Translation of the remaining ones have already been made (see the references in parenthesis in the running text).

PROTO HINDI-'PAHĀṚĪ'

Garser-Vaijnath Temple Inscription (Joshi 2009: 360–361), Kumaon:

[1] *Oṁ svasti Sri Śāke 1252 māsāni* [2] *3 tithya 10 nakshatra 27 Sukra vāre* [3] *Rājā Jai Chaṁda Deva ki Trī sthāpanā* [4] *Jai Chaṁda Deva Kuūra Vrahmapāla da* [5] *tra ma 34 Uli Ma(dyā)i de sī ta* [6] *ri ko pāilo je ni de so pātaka lī* [7] *i*

This extract combines corrupt Sanskrit (lines 1–2), Hindi (lines 3–4), and 'Pahāṛī' (lines 5–7) elements.

PROTO HINDI

Satya-Narayana Temple inscription, Vaijnath (Joshi 2009: 362), Kumaon:

[1] *Srī Śāke 1274 Rājā Hamīra Deva* [2] *Liṁgarāu Deva Dhāraṇa Dei Gaṁgolā* [3] *Sovaṇa kalasa chaḍyāyo*

It may be noted here that in Hindi a noun can be used as an adjective as in the present case '*sovaṇa kalasa*' (pitcher of gold), whereas in 'Pahāṛī' it is invariably followed by preposition *ka*, (see for example, *Tevānili̱ka* in the Dwarahat Śeshasāyi Vishṇu image inscription, cited above); and *chaḍyāyo* (offered) is used in both Hindi and 'Pahāṛī'.

SANSKRITIZED 'CENTRAL' AND 'EASTERN PAHĀṚĪ'

These inscriptions begin with corrupt Sanskrit followed by 'Pahāṛī'. The vocabulary is derived from Sanskrit. Note the names of the individuals, which are written in the same manner as were pronounced in 'Pahāṛī'.

Doti, Niralika Kailani, Copper Plate inscription*** of Niraipāla, (Pāṇḍeya 2065 VS: 77–78), western Nepal:

Oṁ || Svasti || Śrī Śāke 1274... Śrī Niraipāladevaḥ chiraṁ jayatu | Chaita Bhāṭa bhāsha pasā bhai || Palā 3 tin palā Buḍishatyānā kā | Hastodaka ghāli tamā sāsan ki | Lāga bhāga sahita pasā kia | Hilapāṇi adhula sāhuli | Sarva kara vivarjita || Ekādaśī Āditya kā bāra udaka ghālyo || Atra sāshi...

Niraipāla figures as the founder of the Pāla dynasty of Askot (Kumaon), one of the branches of the Later Katyuri dynasty. He may be identified with 'Niraya pál' of the Almora (Kumaon) inscription of '1348 A.D.' (Atkinson 1884: 534). He has also issued a copper plate in Śaka 1275 in favour of 'Ratu Joisi' of 'Vatiuli' (modern Batyuli, District Pithogarh, Kumaon). Its language and text are no different from that of the Doti document (see Joshi 2009: 339–340). These and following inscriptions clearly show that the language of the people of far western Nepal, Kumaon, and Garhwal was almost absolutely common from the fourteenth through seventeenth centuries AD.

Almora Copper Plate inscription of Abhaya Chandra (Joshi 2008), Kumaon:

[1] *Oṁ svasti || Śrī Sāke 1296 samaye cha | Chaitra sudi 15 Bhauma* [2] *dine | Rājā Śrī Abhaya Chaṁdraśchiraṁ jayatu | Rājā lai datta dinhi* [3] *Guṇākara Pāṁḍe lai datta pāi | Suṁduṁgara gāvaṁ jiulā 2 askā* [4] *saṁkalpa dinhu | Aśkā jiulā lāgo ḍālo voṭṭa Kāthalo ko* [5] *irālo ghara sho paḍo | Sheta pāta Guṇākara Pāḍe ki sāshā lai bhuṁcha* [6] *ṇu | Rajā ki sāshā lai pratipālaṇu | Anyathā nāsti ||…*

Dadeldhura inscription*** of Tribhuvana Malla (Pāṇḍeya 2065 VS: 83), far western Nepal:

Oṁ svasti Śrī Śāke 1317 Saṁvat 1452 Mārgasira māse Ravivāsare dayādharāya Bhūtabhairavāya namaḥ || Śrī Rājādhirāja Tribhuvana Malla chīraṁ jayatu | Raikājyu le pala pasā kī akarī || Joisinā ki pāla Madhu Bhāṭa sarvakara akara pāi || Atra sākshi...

Bachkot Copper Plate inscription of Tilaka Pāla (JOSHI 2009: 340–341), Kumaon:

[1] *Oṁ svasti || Śrī Śāke 1343 Chaitra vadi Paṁchamyāṁ tithau Chaṁdra dine (Mū)la cha [na]* [2] *kshatre || Śrī Rājādhirāja Parama Maheśvara Tilaka Pāla Bhūpāla Sānnaḥ* [3] *pura śaparivāra pādā(śchi) raṁjaya(ntu) | Rajavāra Pāya śaṁkalpa paśā ki* [4] *yo | Prabhākara Upārdhyā lai pāū | Kābhaje Tilātharo gāuṁ viśa 4 ka* [5] *ri paśā kiyo | Lāga bhāga śahit | Pāṁcha saṁkalpā ki rita nirvvaha* [6] *ṇu |...*

Devaprayag Copper Plate inscription*** of Jagatapāla (PAṀ VĀRA 1985: 1), Garhwal:

Śrī Saṁvat 1512 Śāke 1377 Chaitramāse Śukla pakshe chaturthī tithau Ravivāsare Jagatīpāla Rajavāra le Śaṁkara Bhāratī Kṛishṇa Bhaṭṭa ko Rāmachandra kā maṭha sarvabhūmī Jāshanī kītī jo vāṁṭho maṭha silakā maṭha Lachhamana kā maṭha dīnoṁ sarvakara akara sarvadāna gudāna nāṭa kī naṭālī bhūvai kī autālī akāsa ko ṭhiṭara pātāla kī nidhī Rāmachandra le paunī likhita pātaka yedu lakhī Jaitūpura Soraisarū sahaja yāma chalalu Surajana jai bhāsa Jagatapāla Rajavāra le dinī tai māsa karīka lī Rajavāra lai Śaṁkarananda Kṛishṇa Bhāratī ko dīnā...

Dadeldhura inscription*** of Prithi Malla (PĀṆḌEYA 2065 VS: 96), western Nepal:

[1] *Oṁ svasti Śrī Śāke 1410 samaye Phāla* [2] *guna vaḍhi Punimā tithau Budhavāsare Śrī Rā* [3] *adhirāja Śrī Māhārāja Prithimalla chiraṁjayetu Va* [4] *jimoḍā kā palā 12 saṁkalpa Gosurāulale dī* [5] *nā Raikājyu Pāña saṁkalpa gari dinu Chaṁda Bhāṭalai* [6] *Khalu Bhāṭalaii pāyo sarvakara akara sarva dosha kī* [7] *sudha kari pāyo nāṭha aputāli muḍili peṭālī sarga ko* [8] *ḍhiḍo pātāla kī nīdha pānīsota dhuvānīkāsa hila pā* [9] *ni dhula sāuli Motu Dāmulai pāyo...*

Champawat Copper Plate of Kīrtti Chandra (JOSHI 1980), Kumaon:

[1] *Uṁ svasti sī Śāke 1427 māsāni Mārgaśira dina 5 śesha* [2] *Ravivāsare Rājādhirārājamāhārāja Śrī Kīrti Chaṁdra le saṁkalpa* [3] *pūrvaka kari Dhaulapura ki vāsaṇi kā maśā 5 Kimvāḍi kā* [4] *māśo 1|| Hamaṇasheta kī bhumi dini Kishṇā Rāuta le pāi* [5] *śāḍhechha maśā lagati ghara kuḍi vaṇa chhoḍi gāḍa ghaṭṭa leka ija* [6] *ra nāṭha naṭhāli gaḍili peṭili ḍuma ko ḍhero sarvakara aka* [7] *ra sarva dvaṁda viśuddha kari Rājā Kirti Chaṁdra ki saṁtati le bhuchāu* [8] *nu Kishṇā Rāutaki saṁtati le bhuchaṇu ghoḍālo kukurālo voi* [9] *jola chhāla bashariyāko śabha toḍi akarbharo kari dinu bhujapa* [10] *tra ko tamāpatra jirṇadhāra kari Mahārāja Śrī Bhīshama Chaṁdra le dinu* [11] *Rāuta Kishṇā le pāyo patra sākshi...*

Devaprayag Bell inscription*** of Sahajapāla (Raturi 1910, vide KAṬHOCHA 2006: 208), Garhwal:

Śake1482 Saṁvat 1617 māsāni 10 vārāni 2 nakshatrāṇi 26 tithyāni 5 Śrī Rājādhirāja Rāmachandra ko ghāṇḍa karāyo [|] Kshetrapāla devatāna...

Dadeldhura inscription*** of Hari Sahi (PĀṆḌEYA 2065 VS: 103), western Nepal:

Oṁ Śrī Śāke 1518 samaye Mārgasira māse Kṛishṇa pakshe dasamyau tithau Śukravāsare Śrī Rājādhirāja Māhārāja Hari Sāī pādaśchiraṁjayatu Raikājiu Pāyalai mayā chitai Balībhadra Jośile pāi Pāḍe ko pālo pāya vaḍī saṁkalpa kari pāi gāḍaki vagaḍ lekaki ijarī anyathā nāsti...

Champawat Copper Plate inscription** of Rudra Chandra (JOSHI 1998b: 97), Kumaon:

[1] *Svasti śrī Sāke 1519 samaye Kātika su dī Chaṁdra vāsare Vāśika Saṁkrāṁtau* [2] *Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Rājā Rudra Chaṁda Deva le saṁkalpa pūrvaka kari dīnu Vaka* [3] *si kā paraganā mā Yuvaseliyā kā (samako) Kimvaḍi (bhaga ta ṭha) 8 ā* [4] *ṭha (Nasharoru kā dinā) Sugaturājātava Śivachauli le pāyā [|] Itu masa laga* [5] *to ghara kuḍi vana chuḍi gāḍa ghāṭa leka ijara nāṭha nāṭhāli gaḍili peṭila* [6] *Sarga ko ṭhiḍo Patāla kī nīdhī sava payo vashariyā kī masīka toḍi* [7] *pāī [|] Sarva kara ākaro sarva dvaṁda visuddha kari pāyo...*

Haldwani Copper Plate inscription** of Dilīpa Chandra, Kumaon:

[1] *Oṁ śvasti Śrī Māhārājādhirāja Śrī Rājā Dilīpa Chaṁdra Deva saṁ* [2] *kalpa pūrvaka bhūmi dinī Kishṇākara Vāsudeva Raserā le pāi (Dau)* [3] *rā maja vi 7|| sāḍesāta visi tai ko veuro visi 4|| sāḍe* [4] *chāra kuḍa maja bhula pahari ko visi 3 Dhanyāri Piḍāri kī* [5] *pāi sāḍesāta visi lagato gāḍa ghaṭha leka ij ghara kuḍī va* [6] *na chhuḍī sava pāi sarva kara akaro sarva dvada visudha kari pā* [7] *yo ākāsa ḍheḍo pātāla kī nidha gaḍeli peṭhali nāṭha naṭhāli* [8] *ghoḍālo kukurālo pahari vajaniyā sava akari kara pāye* [9] *Māhārājādhirāja Śrī Rājā Dilīpa Chaṁda Deva kī saṁtati le* [10] *bhuchāvanu Kishṇākara Vāsudeva Raserā kī saṁtati le bhuchanu a* [11] *nyathā nāsti Sāu Ratagali Kamina ko dhakā nāi sākī...* [12] *Sāke 1545...*

Hatgaun charter*** of Pṛithvīpati Śāha (KAṬHOCHA 2006: 213), Garhwal:

Śrī Rāmaḥ [|||] (1) *Śrī Sāke 1579 Saṃvat 1714 Kārtika mā* (2) *se dīna 17 gate pratīpadā tīthau Vīsāshā nakshatre* (3) *Śrīnagra subhasthāna Śrī Mahārājā jyu le bhagāpatra* (4) *dīnu* [|] *sahī* (5) *Duragu Haṭavāla kau paṃcha puretu bīthī 4) jyu* (6) *lā Māṭī Gothalā reu... dīnī...* (8) *ṇa deṇu* [|] *Vṛittī haraṇa nī karaṇu* [|] *sāshī...*

Champawat copper plate inscription** of Bāja Bahādura Chandra (JOSHI 1998b: 98), Kumaon:

[1] *Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Rājā Bāja Bahādura Chaṃdra Deva le tāmāpatra ka* [2] *ri Kumāu kā* _____ *ko maṭha dinu* [|] *Haṃsāgiri le pāyo* [|] *Maṭha Vīchhajogī* [3] *na diji gachhyo* [|] *Phiri Rāmagiri ki bhāki Dasanāmasaṃnyāsīna dinu* [|] [4] *Paravata Chaurāsīmāla ki karā akarā mo thā prati nālī eka pāuni* [5] *Māla mahatiyā prati Ṭaṃka eka bheṭa goīra prati sera sola ghiu kāma* [6] *lo eka vāre peṭha kī kuḍi Dugāni guni āda sera luna pāunu* [|] *Māla parva* [7] *ta kā ji gāu Mahārudra chaḍāu chhana ti ughāunā* [|] *Jo paradesi saṃnyāsi* [8] *saṃsāḍi jā taiki vasta Mahārudra kā bhaṃdāra magāuni* [|] _____ *kī bhāki* [9] *maṭha dinu Rāmagiri kī bhāki maṭha chalāunu Mahārudra ki puja karāu* [10] *ni dharma sadāvarta chalaunu* [|] *Sāchhi...* [15] *... Sāke 1586...*

Doti inscription*** of Māndhātā Sāhī (PĀṆḌEYA 2065 VS: 124), western Nepal:

Śrī Śāke 1619 samaye Jeshṭa vadī 6 Śrī Mahārājādhīrājā Śrī Raikā Māṃdhatā Sāhī padāta chīraṁ jetu Śrī Raikājyu Pāyalai mayā chitoi Vauda pharī māthī jo gāḍasvāla raiḍyā ḍeḍa sheta 1|| Aurī sheta pāyo raiḍyā yeka 1 Valibhadra Bhaḍārīle pāyo saṃkalpa garī atra sāchhi...

Copper Plate inscription*** of Pradīpa Śāha (PAMVĀRA 1985: 52; KAṬHOCHA 2006: 225), Garhwal:

(1) *Śrī Śāke 1648 Saṃvat 1783 Pausha 28 gate Bu* (2) *dhavāre Pushya nakshatre Śrī Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Pra* (3) *dīpa Śāha Deva jyu le bhāshāpatra kari dīnyu* (4) *Ramoli maṃḍala māṃjha mushīma gāuṁ māṃjha kī yeka jī* (5) *ulī 1) julī pujārāuṁ vālī chha* [|] *Syā pāchha* (6) *bī śaṃkha-pāṇī kaika Sema kā Nāgarājā devatā ku* (7) *chaḍāñī thī* [|] *Aba hamale bhāshāpatra lekhī dīnyu sa* (8) *rvakara akari kaika chaḍāī* [|] *Īṁ jyulī māṃjha kaina shau* (9) *shachora nī karaṇo* [|] *Īṁ jyulī lāgado gāḍa ko chhā* (10) *lo dhāra ko pālo pujārāuṁ ku shāna kamauṇa deṇo* [|] (11) *Īṁ jyulī māṃjha yeka kolī chha taiko taṃdakara bī deva* (12) *tā ku chaḍāyo taṃda kara lāi kaina kīchhu nī bola* (13) *ṇo* [|] *Pujārāuṁ le devatā sapujya rāshaṇo* [|] *Yā* (14) *jyulī shāṅī kāmauṇī* [|] *Sākshi...*

Text of Pahari translation of Sanskrit *Rājanītiśāstra* of Chāṇakya, Śaka 1650, Kumaon:

Śāstra śuṇi bera dharma jāṇaṁ chha durmati kana chhāḍana chha jñāna pauṁ chha moksha kana prāpta huṁchha || *Jo śāstra śuṇi paḍi vera gaṭi vastuna vishe virāga nī ho dharma nī ho śāṁti nī ho tai śuṇiñā paḍiyā le kyā karaṇu chha śo ta kavā ko vāśaṇo jaśopa chha* || (*Laghu Chāṇikya I.5-6*, see JOSHI 1983: 3).

The colophon in the manuscript containing this translation reads that it was copied from a manuscript in Śaka 1650 (AD 1728), suggesting an earlier date for the original translation. The manuscript contains 212 stanzas of which two are repetitions. Significantly, only three words of Arabic origin have been used in the entire translation, the remaining ones are of Sanskrit and Hindi(?) derivations.

Gangolihat Copper Plate inscription** of Mohan Chandra, Kumaon:

[1] *Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Rājā Mohana Chadra Vahādura Deva jyu le* _____ *tamā pātra ka* [2] *rī Āṭha Maṃḍala Gaṃgolī mali Vela kā Garshā mai adhyālī yeka Gavaḍagāu mai Mahatta valī* [3] *chothyālo yeka Tunāḍa mai Vare vālo yekatra jyulo* ||| *pauṇa bhumi chaḍaī* [|] *Ye bhumi laga(t)o* [4] *gāḍa ghaṭa lesha ījara suddhā chaḍāyo* [|] *Nitya śera 2 duī chāṁvala āda śera S*|| *dāla Ṭakā* [5] *yeka bharī ghiu Ḍhapuā S- yeka bharī luṇa ko bhoga* _____ *lāyanu* [|] *Dui śera chāvala S2* [6] *pu(j)yārā kā vaikara k(o) diṇu* [|] *Śarva kara akara sarvadvaṃda viśuddha karo ghoḍyālo kukurālo* [7] *vājadāra vajaniyā vashariyā ko sarvva kara ttoḍi dina sargā ko ṭhiḍo patāla kī nidhi* [8] *śuddhā chaḍāī* [|] *Śākshī...* [13] *Sāke 1700...*

Doti Copper Plate inscription*** of Pāhāḍi Sāhī (PĀṆḌEYA 2065 VS: 160), western Nepal:

Śrī Śāke 1718 samaye Phālaguṇa vadi 2 Soma vāsare Śrī Mahārājādhīrāja Śrī Raikā Pāḍā[*hā*]*ḍi Sāha pādā chīraṁjayatu Raikājyu Pāyalai mayā chītoi Koṭī Gāu tāgo gāḍakī vagaḍī lekaki ijarī sameta Narapati Sāile Bhagīrata Sāikī Haḍālī ko huno pāyo atra sāchhī...*

Doti, Gadasera inscription*** of Pāhāḍa Sāhā (PĀṆḌEYA 2065 VS: 162), western Nepal:

[1] *Svastī Sāke 1742 Saṁvat 1876 sāla sudi 15 roja 5 mā Śrī Māhā* [2] *rāja Pāhāḍā Sāhā Pāya le mayā chitoi Siṁega ko jagā lagā pāta sa* [3] *met Jayaklaśa Masudeva Bhaḍārījyu le pāyo shes pāsho tai gāu ko raka* [4] *m kalama sāgā pāta ḍaṁkakuṁḍa beṭhavogārī timile shānu bhani sarva ka* [5] *ra akara gari diñyuṁ hāmrā saṁtāna bhara le dinu timrā saṁtāna le shā* [6] *nu hamrā saṁtāna le shova delā na di jo shosa ta kāga ko shuṭṭo* [7] *ikanara Bhaniri gāu timilāī diṁñyuṁ* |

EXTRACTS FROM FOLKLORE[9]

Manuscript – 1: story of Rāma, from Askot region, Kumaon:

Hera diyau barahmaṇa janama kuṁḍalī [|] *Barahmaṇa rāī lai kuṁḍalī herīchha* [|] *Tumaro re jajamāna bhārī pāpa hunchha* [|] *Bārā barasa laika bhānīja hatiya chha* [|]

Manuscript – 2: story of Rāma, from Askot region, Kumaon:

Hanumaṁta vāṭikā jālo [|] *Sīturānī vāṭikā chhana* [|] *Vāṭikā chauki vasīchha* [|] *Hanīo vāṭikā gayo* [|] *Rukha me aulopa bhayo*

Rāmāyaṇa from Jarauli (PANERU 2065 VS: 214–215), western Nepal:

Sambharyā laṅkiniko bachan ra ti gayā Aśoka banmā tasai [|] *… Gharkā antarakā lukyā ti Hanumān rukh kā upar mā gayā* [|]

Jāgara of Kaṁsa (CHĀTAKA 1996: 36), Garhwal:

Jāṁdī vakta rāgasana gharyāle rāgasī rūpa pavana rekhā jī, rāṇī vai dekhī khaḷei gai pavana rekhā jī |

PHĀGA (AUSPICIOUS SONGS)

Nyutāko phāga (PANTA 2055 VS: 206), Doti, far western Nepal:

Nyutūṁ maiṁ nyutūṁ maiṁ Gaṇeśa devā unale sagunu dinnā [|] *Nyutūṁ maiṁ nyutūṁ maiṁ Sarasatī devī unale maṅṅala dinnī* [|] *Nyutūṁ maiṁ nyutūṁ maiṁ Viraspati devā unale lagana dinnā* [|] *Nyutūṁ maiṁ nyutūṁ maiṁ Chaturmukhī Barmā unale rekhī hālannā* [|]

Āju badhāe nyūmtiye (JOŚĪ 1982: 108), Kumaon:

Āju badhāe nyūmtie | *Prāta jo nyūṁtuṁ meṁ Sūrija kiraṇa ko adhikāra* | *Samāe badhāe nyūmtie* |... *Gaṇapati nyūṁtuṁ meṁ kāja soṁ, Baramā Bisnu nyūṁtuṁ meṁ kāja soṁ* |...

Saṁskāra gīta (SAHAGALA & MAMAGĀĪM 2006: 91), Garhwal:

Piṁjarī kā suā aṭārī kā suā, deā suā tū suhāgaṇyo nyūtū | *Sūna paṁkhī suā lāla ṭhaṁḍī suā, deā suā tū suhāgāṇyo nyūtū* ||

ERGO

The extracts of various documents cited above clearly show that the roots of 'Central' and 'Eastern Pahāṛī' language groups may be traced to at least third century BC in the very earliest inscribed records of South Asia. The source material noted above also illustrates successive regional developments in linguistic uses resulting in the formation of a proto 'Pahāṛī' language based on Sanskrit by circa eleventh century AD, and a fully developed neo Indo-Aryan 'Pahāṛī' by fourteenth century AD in western Nepal, Kumaon, and Garhwal,

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[9] Circumstantial evidence suggests that contents of these manuscripts are significantly old (JOSHI & TAMTA 2009).

which area once formed one, single polity under the Katyūrī dynasty. On the basis of art, architecture, social practices, local traditions, etc., also, this entire region comprises one, single culture area.[10] Therefore, development of a common language in Garhwal, Kumaon, and western Nepal was a logical historical development of a socio-cultural and political praxis. Preliminary study of some five hundred published and unpublished inscriptions and a vast corpus of manuscripts undertaken by me leaves no room for doubt that like any other neo Indo-Aryan language (SIRCAR 1965: 53–60), the combined 'Central-Eastern Pahāṛī' developed independently from Sanskrit-Prakrit, and that the vocabulary of the early inscriptions (between 12th and 15th centuries AD) is nearly absolutely derived from Sanskrit (JOSHI 2009: Appendix). Inscriptional evidence suggests that from about seventeenth century AD this language started proliferating into three main regional languages, namely, Nepālī, Kumāunī, and Garhwālī with predominanly Sanskrit based words (cf. TRAILL 1828: 164). This can be evidenced in the official records of the Raikā-s of Doti-Dadeldhura (western Nepal) (PĀṆḌEYA 2065 VS: 77–173), Chandra-s of Kumaon (see for details and bibliography, JOSHI 2009; cf. RĀMA 2002, 2007; CHAUHĀNA 2008), and Paṁvāra-s of Garhwal (PAṀVĀRA 1985: 2–52; KAṬHOCHA 2006: 206–236). By at least Śaka 1650 (AD 1728) translation work of classical Sanskrit texts like the *Chāṇakyanīti* into Kumāunī had taken place (JOSHI 1983). The last work dispels the generally held view that the literary history of 'Central Pahāṛī' cannot be traced beyond the Serampore translation of the New Testament into Central 'Pahāṛī' in the nineteenth century (GRIERSON 1927: 182; APTE & PATTANAYAK 1967: 1). Therefore, in the light of above-mentioned evidences Grierson's classification of three 'Pahāṛī Languages' calls for replacement. Obviously, geoculturally there existed only two 'Pahāṛī' Language groups, namely, the Western 'Pahāṛī' (same as suggested by Grierson), and the Eastern 'Pahāṛī' (that included Nepali, Kumaoni, and Garhwali), the dividing line being the Jaunsar-Baur region of Garhwal (JOSHI 1990a: 98–99). On the basis of these evidences, it is logical to call the language of the eastern group as Eastern 'Pahāṛī' (JOSHI & NEGI 1994). Incidentally, neo Indo-Aryan language apart, the 'Pahāṛī' language area under discussion is equally rich from the viewpoint of early history of linguistics follows from the fact that Zoller has discovered archaic Vedic Language surviving in Baṅgāṇī, a dialect spoken in Bangan region of western Garhwal (ZOLLER 1988). On the basis of his subsequent researches he comments (personal communication):

> West Pahārī (spoken between Kashmir and Jaunsar) is much closer to Dardic and Nuristani than East Pahārī is. East Pahārī was perhaps much stronger influenced by Indian languages of the plains than West Pahārī… I see no possibility to connect this with some Khasa stories, but what is clear is that if you compare Nuristani, Dardic and West Pahārī then you see a movement from *older* to *newer*. Nuristani has preserved some pre-Sanskrit features, and Dardic and West Pahārī have also preserved a lot of features which are very close to Sanskrit. One may argue that languages in remote areas tend to be conservative, but you don't find anything comparable at the other end of the Indo-Aryan world, for instance in Oriya. With regard to East Pahārī this means that in former times it was perhaps also close to Dardic and Nuristani. However, apart from some very few incidences I have until today not found much substantial evidence.

Prof. Zoller's comments prompt me to recall THAPAR'S (1978: 155, 160) following statement:

> That speech was the chief component indistiguishing the Aryan from the others is clearly indicated in a text from the later Vedic literature. That the northern region was once the land of 'the pure speech' is stated with

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[10] My studies in history, culture, art, architecture, social practices, local traditions, etc., are in progress.

reference to the Udīcya (northern region) where peoples such as the Uttarakurus and the Kuru-Pañclas are held up as the model in speech and it is recommended that brāhmaṇs be sent there to learn language.

Directionally, the Uttarakurus need to be situated in relation to (Dakshiṇa-) the Kurus who inhabited modern Delhi and surrounding western U.P. and Haryana. Therefore, the land of Uttarakurus may be identified with modern western Uttarakhand and eastern Himachal Pradesh (see, Raychaudhuri 1953: 133–134; Joshi 2002). Significantly, the Bangani speaking area is situated within this very region. I venture to add that it is in this part of Udīchya where '*brāhmaṇs*' were advised to go to learn 'the pure speech'. Archaeology unfolds that already during the protohistoric times (*circa* third to second millenium BC) the people of Central 'Pahāṛī' speaking area had started contributing to the make up of the Ganga Valley Copper Hoard culture (Joshi 1990b). It would not be out of place to add that recent studies on the skeletal remains from Pakistan, adjoining eastern Iran and Afghanistan have shown that movement of peoples impacting demographic profile of South Asia is noticed either between 6000 and 4500 BC or 800 and 200 BC (Hemphill & Christensen 1994; Kennedy 1997).[11] The latter phase coincides with 'the age of invasions' in Indian history, first of the Achæmendid Empire of Persia towards the close of sixth century BC, followed by Alexander of Macedon in the latter half of the fourth century BC, then between second and first century BC the north-western region faced a series of invasions by different peoples, first the Bactrian Greeks followed by respectively Scythians, Parthians and the Yüeh-chihs (Basham 1993: 48–50, 58–63). It is during this time that the peoples of Central 'Pahāṛī' speaking area under the hegemony of the Kuṇindas established closer contacts with the peoples of north-western India. Due to commercial considerations the Kuṇindas introduced biscriptual coins using Brāhmī and Kharoshṭhī, although their territory lay outside the Kharoshṭhī area. The Kuṇinda coins date between circa second century BC and third century AD (see for details, Joshi 1989: chs. 2–5). Significantly, during this very time we notice certain important changes in the linguistic uses in 'Pahāṛī', particularly, introduction of *r* and *ṇ* as noted above. I venture to add that whatever Western 'Pahāṛī' influences are noticed in the Eastern 'Pahāṛī' should date from this period. Therefore, on the testimony of epigraphical records we can suggest that the Eastern 'Pahāṛī' speaking area did practice certain linguistic uses which already existed during the Mauryan times, probably one of which – substituting a consonant of the same *varga* for another – exists even today, a practice not found in Hindi.

I would also add briefly that the region under reference has an exhaustive repertoire of widely current *Phāga/Saguna* (ritual songs), and Holī-festival songs (Panta 2055 VS; Jośī 1982; Sahagala & Mamagāīm 2006). Interestingly, some of these songs are influenced by the cults of Rāma and Kṛishṇa, and their langue is Avadhī/Śaurasenī/Braja mixed 'Pahāṛī'. Likewise, the region also possesses a vast corpus of the *Sābara-mantra*-s and the Gorakhapanthī and Āyurvedic texts, written in proto Hindi.[12] Inscriptional evidence suggests presence of the Gorakhapanthī sect in this region from at least fifteenth century AD. These evidences may possibly explain the influence of Hindi in 'Central Pahāṛī' lan-

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[11] http://www.bharatvani.org/books/ait/

[12] There is no evidence to support the opinion of Rāhula Sāmkrityāyana and Avodhabandhu Bahuguṇā that the language of the literature of the *Nātha* sect should be dated between AD 800 and 1200. The latter ads that the origin of Gaḍhavālī language may be traced to the literature of the *Nātha* sect (see for details, Kukareti 2060 VS: 186–197).

guage group as suggested by Grierson, but this development took place when 'Pahāṛī' had already emerged as an independent neo Indo-Aryan language. However, as may be seen in the records cited above by no stretch of the imagination the language of these inscriptions can be ascribed to the 'Khaśa', and therefore Grierson's (1927: 181) view regarding the language of the Khaśa needs to be thoroughly examined. In conclusion while admitting my ignorance of linguistics I must add that our source material tends to show that the Eastern 'Pahāṛī' Language area is one of the regions in which archaic Hindi was also used in official documents, and therefore, while tracing the history of Hindi, this region should not be ignored. Incidentally, it is the Eastern 'Pahāṛī' Language area where the earliest use of Hindi is found in the official records, for in the Hindi heartland the earliest known official Hindi documents cannot be dated earlier than the sixteenth century AD (cf. Sircar 1965: 55). Obviously, Hindi was not the language of the Muslim rulers of the Hindi heartland.

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Allatum die 30 mensis Augusti anno 2010