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wešeña ~ wešeño 'voice' and pest ~ päst
'after, away'**

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Citation

Peyrot, M. (2003). Matters of linguistic distribution: Tocharian B wešeña ~ wešeño 'voice' and pest ~ päst 'after, away'. *Esse Sīran Sen Labban Quāitin, Festschrift For Jenny Helena Larsson On The Occasion Of Her 30Th Birthday 18 October 2003*, 60-67. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/15201>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

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Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/15201>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

esse sīran
sen labban quāitin

Festschrift for

Jenny Helena Larsson

on the occasion of her 30th birthday
18 October 2003

Edited by

Adam Hyllested, Anders Richardt Jørgensen
and Thomas Olander



Editiones Olander

Copenhagen 2003

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1. ed. (2003)

Printed in Denmark 2003

ISBN 87-91009-02-2

Editors

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esse sīran sen labban quāitin, from the Old Prussian *Enchiridion* 95,14,
is a translation of *von herzen mit gutem willen* of the German original.

Matters of linguistic distribution: Tocharian B *wešeña ~ wešeño* ‘voice’ and *pest ~ päst* ‘after, away’

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A major task of a linguist is to describe the distribution of variant forms in language. This may concern the distribution between the absence and presence of a composition vowel in Lithuanian compounds (Larsson 2002: 222-227), or it may much more basically concern the distribution of the English forms *walks*, *walk*, *walked*. It turns out that *walks* and *walk* express the non-progressive present of 3sg. and non-3sg. subjects respectively, and that *walked* is used for a past tense. In other words, describing a language is principally an answer to the question: when is which form used? If one were asked to describe the distribution of the forms *walk* and *wolok-*, however, the obvious answer is that they belong to the different language varieties English and Tocharian B.¹

Most likely nobody ever bothered about the distribution of the Tocharian and the English forms, but in other cases one may overlook the possibility of a distribution based on different language varieties rather than different linguistic contexts within one variety. An example of this is Thomas’s effort to explain the distribution between the Tocharian B gerund fpl. *-llona* and the rarer alternate form *-lyana* as a confusion of adjectival and substantival flexion types, considering Tocharian

¹ By quoting this example I do not insist on a genetic relation between these words.

B a homogeneous language variety (1952: 39, 51). Winter later demonstrated that the forms in *-lyana* have a notable distribution: they all occur in texts written in the ‘eastern’ dialect (1955: 224).² Winter did not offer an explanation for this distribution, but with his remark he completed this little paragraph of the description of Tocharian B.

Stumpf (1990) interpreted Winter’s western, central and eastern dialects as representing at least the cores of subsequent linguistic stages: Winter’s western dialect is in many aspects more archaic than the central dialect which in turn is more archaic than the eastern dialect. Stumpf introduced the characterisations IA-IB, IC and II for these respective stages.³ He thus offered an explanation for the distribution of *-llona* and *-lyana*: *-llona* is the original form which by analogy with the nominal flexion was changed into *-lyana* (1990: 94).⁴

In this squib article I am concerned with two similar problems. The first is that in the Tocharian B noun class VI,3aβ (Npl. *-añ*, Oblpl. *-am*, Oblsg. *-ai*, palatal final of the stem) some words have two forms for the Nsg. (Krause and Thomas 1960: 135). These words are: *preśya* ~ *preśyo* ‘time’, *wertsya* ~ *wertsyo* ‘assembly’, *weśeña* ~ *weśeño* ‘voice’ and *katkaunña* ~ *katkaunño* ‘joy’.⁵ I checked the distribution of these double forms and it seems that they too have a particular distribution, albeit of a different type than *-llona* :: *-lyana*. The material is scanty, but in IA-IB texts one finds exclusively the Nsg. forms

² Thomas apparently did not agree with Winter’s solution: ‘Diese Formen beruhen wohl eher auf Vermischung mit der Substantivflexion [...] als auf dialektischem Unterschied, wie W. WINTER [...] meint.’ (Krause and Thomas 1960: 148)

³ It seems that the spoken language at the beginning of the seventh century was of the most developed (II) type (Stumpf 1990: chapter 4, Pinault 1987: 130-132, Schmidt 1986).

⁴ I myself do not see why other adjectival classes with fpl. *-ana* could not have favoured this change.

⁵ In this paper I will not pay attention to spelling alternations that are of no relevance to the phenomenon under discussion.

in *-a* and in II texts exclusively the Nsg. forms in *-o*, whereas in IC texts both can be found.⁶ If Stumpf was right with his hypothesis that these text types represent different linguistic stages, this leads to the conclusion that of these double forms the nominatives in *-a* are original and that those in *-o* have been created analogically.

The analogical model that motivated this change is easily found: class VI,3aα has exactly the same characteristics as VI,3aβ, except for the final of the stem which is not palatalised. In this latter class there is no such variation between nominatives: they all end in *-o*. The direction of this analogical change can be seen as a justification of the classification of nouns by their plural endings – apparently in the mind of the speakers of Tocharian B these were, at least in this case, real categories.

As my counting was restricted to nouns of class VI,3aβ with a double Nsg., the natural question arises what happened to the other nouns of the same class. If the above scenario is right, one would naturally expect that all nouns that shared the relevant characteristics ended up with a Nsg. in *-o*, because the Nsg. in *-a* only became more isolated. However, it cannot be stated a priori that all nouns of this class from the beginning had a Nsg. in *-a*, it could well be that there were already some

⁶ Unfortunately in Stumpf (1990) nowhere an overview of his new classification is given. I give the attestations I found for these Nsg. (between brackets I give the text type and the page where Stumpf indicated the type of that text): *prešya* B27b7 (IC, 139); *prešyo* B289b1 (II, not classified by Stumpf, but see Winter 1955: 222, where it is in group III of the eastern dialect); *wertšya* B409b2 (according to Winter west I, broken line); *wertšyo* ? (cited by Thomas and Krause 1960: 135, but I could find no examples); *wešeña* B214b5 (IB~IC, 114), B571b4 (Winter's west-VI), B85b5 (IC, 139), B183a3 (IC, 141), B589b6 (IC, 141); *wešeño* B199b5 (II, 122); *katkañña* B275b2 (IA, 141, ending not certain) B119a6 (IB, 141), B119b1 (IB, 141, ending not certain), B14a4 (IC, 139), B78a2 (IC, 139); *katkañño* B601b5 (this seems a standard IC text).

nouns in *-o* that favoured the change of the nouns in *-a* to nouns in *-o*. Such a word could be *skiyo* ‘shadow’, because this has a Nsg. in *-o* and it is attested in a IA text: B255a3.⁷

For some other nouns we could hypothesise on the basis of a formation very similar to one of the nouns with two Nsg. forms, that they too had these double forms, but that these are simply not attested. This could be true of *läk_utsauña* ‘brilliance’ (parallel to *katkauña*) and of *šmoñña* (parallel to *wešeña*) which both are not attested in II texts.⁸ (Of Oblsg. *nšeññai* ‘place’ not even a Nsg. is known, but it could belong here.) About the Oblsg. forms *atıyai* ‘grass’ *ploryai*, an instrument, and Oblpl. *pošiyam* ‘wall’ too few is known for a statement. It could be that in the pair *meniyo* ‘he-tiger’ and *menya* ‘she-tiger’ the latter stayed stable because of the gender motivation (cf. *onkolmo* ‘he-elephant’ and *onkolma* ‘she-elephant’ in class VI,3aα). Both *škwarya* ‘liane’ and *peñiyo* ‘splendour’ could fit in the analogical development, but for *škwarya* I found only one attestation and for *peñiyo* no attestations at all.⁹

The second problem is of the same kind, but it has some rather difficult complications. As Hackstein saw, the Tocharian B adverbs *pest* and *päst* ‘after, away’ have a striking distribution (1997: 45-46).¹⁰ According to him, *pest* and *päst* are syn-

⁷ In Sieg and Siegling’s edition (1953: 156) this word is transcribed as <skiy[o]>, but the picture of the manuscript seems to give an unambiguous reading <skiyo>, at least not <skiyā>. As we do not have the pl. of *skiyo*, it is also possible that this in fact was a word of class VI,2aβ, where among words with Nsg. *-o* :: Oblsg. *-ai* we also find palatalised variants, such as *pyäpyo* :: *pyäpyai* ‘flower’. Other occurrences are: B25b5 (IC, 141) and in the text parallel to B255: B254a1.

⁸ I found the following attestations: *läk_utsauña* B135a6 (IA, 131), B154b2 (Hoernle, a IC text), B158b3 (IC, 141), B311a3 (Winter’s west-I), B562.4 (IC, 141); *šmoñña* B73b3 (IC, 139), B154a3 (Hoernle, a IC text).

⁹ *škwarya* is attested in B11a8 (IC, 139).

¹⁰ In this article I am not concerned with the variant *päs*, because I consider this matter settled by Winter (1955) and Stumpf (1990: 65

onymous and ‘verwendungsgleich’ (they both occur in the construction *pest/päst ri(n)*- ‘to leave behind’), but vary on dialectal and stylistic levels: all occurrences of *pest* are in western texts and in metrical passages. Then he etymologises these words as related on a Proto-Indo-European level, that is to say, they reflect an old difference in Proto-Indo-European *-o*- and *-e*-vocalism (1997: 47).¹¹ He further analyses *postäm* (mostly) ‘after’ as a derivation of *pest*.

Four arguments, though none of them decisive, make this theory unattractive. Firstly, this theory gives no explanation whatsoever for the distribution: *pest* would be just accidentally restricted to the western dialect. Secondly, the expected outcome of Proto-Indo-European **pest-* is ***pist* instead of *päst*, (cf. *piś* ‘5’ < PToch. **pāiśa* < PIE **pénk^he*), but it should be admitted that if these words were really variants from the proto-language onwards, the **p̥-* of the proto-form of *päst* probably would have been levelled out against the **p-* of the proto-form of *pest*. Thirdly, *päst* is exclusively unaccented (Hackstein 1997: 47) whereas its proto-form is precisely the accented variant of the two (see note 11). (Whether *pest*, with the unaccented proto-form, is accented or not, can of course not be seen because of the vowel *-e-*, which does not change under the accent.) Fourthly, Hackstein needs a proto-form with Proto-Indo-European *-e*-vocalism that is not attested in other languages. It is true that there are parallel pairs with both *-e-* and *-o*-vocalism (cf. Gk. *ὀπί-* ~ *ἐπί-*), but apart from the word under discussion these pairs are not found in Tocharian.

When the attestations of *pest* are contrasted with Stumpff’s classification, it is striking that all forms occur in texts form

and passim). The attestations of *pest* are: B133b3, B133b4, B135a2, B273a5, B273b1, B275b5, B285a4, B295a5, B514a8. I restricted my counting to the Berlin texts.

¹¹ He reconstructs **po-sth₂u-* and **pé-sth₂u-* respectively.

the oldest phase: IA.¹² Moreover, it seems that in these texts there are no occurrences of *päst*. This would then lead to the conclusion that *pest* might be the older variant of exactly the same word, and that *päst* developed somehow out of *pest* in Tocharian B times. This second possibility comfortably eliminates all four of the above objections, but inevitably leads to the question: *how* could *pest* become *päst*? I assume that we have here a phonetic development, although a sound law $e > ä$ is not well established.¹³ This could be an example of an exceptional reduction due to the particle-like status of this adverb.

Still, it cannot be excluded that Hackstein is right. This is because in the case of the double nominatives in *-a* and *-o*, it is easy to identify these forms as variants of the same word. Moreover, a rather credible analogical model is ready at hand to explain the development, so that even few forms suffice to make the idea probable. The second case is different – there it is more difficult to show that the forms are real variants of one word *pest/päst* and to explain the change of *pest* to *päst* the assumption of an irregular sound development is needed. However, in the word class of *pest/päst* irregular sound change is not necessarily irregular language change, and so these two small examples give in my view further support to Stumpff's theory and Stumpff's theory in return gives a neat explanation for these variant forms of Tocharian B with a distribution that was up to now not well understood.

¹² I gathered from pages 54, 73, 78, 107, 112, 131, 141, 115 of Stumpff (1990) that at least B133-147, B224-227, B228-230, B245, B255, B273-275, B282-283, B295, B338-344, B365, B514-515 belong to IA.

¹³ Of course the phonetic shape of words can change under analogical pressure too (cf. Lith. *liežūvis*), but I can think of no model.

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