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STELLINGEN

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The Bakhtiari: An Anthropological-linguistic study of Haft Lang nomads of southwestern Iran

van

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1. The assumed hierarchical structure of the Bakhtiari tribe is not a genealogical branching of this people, but rather a socio-political organisation that was created not earlier than the 19th century by the appointed chiefs and the central government of the time (*Section 2.2.1 of this dissertation*).

2. The study of Bakhtiari flora and fauna reveals certain categorical and nomenclatural behavior that does not support either the intellectualistic or the utilitarian approach to ethnobiology as it is represented in the literature. In the existing taxonomies the role and importance of religious beliefs in shaping peoples' world view and the way they classify all natural and physical beings tends to be overlooked. The Bakhtiari classification, especially the categorization of fauna, seems to have roots in pre-Islamic, and more specifically, in Zoroastrian beliefs as presented in some Avestan and Middle Persian sources (*Section 3.2 of this dissertation*).

3. Family and tribal relationships are of paramount importance for the Bakhtiaris, hence the abundance of vocabulary and terms for addressing these relationships with precision. In comparison with six established basic kinship patterns that anthropologists have observed among various cultures around the world, the Bakhtiari system shares the most with the Sudanese kin classification. This system is the most descriptive of all, in the sense that it assigns a distinct term to each and every member of this network (*Section 3.3.1 of this dissertation*).

4. The word *Lang* in the important Bakhtiari terms Char Lang and Haft Lang does not mean 'leg', but probably has the same meaning as the lexeme in toponyms such as Langrud (a city in Northern Iran), Langān (central Iran), Sālang (Afghanistan) to name just a few. The lexeme signifies a meaning related to pasture, ploughing, location or river, the exact meaning of which needs further investigation (*Section 2.2.2 of this dissertation*).

5. In Bakhtiari, there is a quite frequent allophone of *d* which has been described (Sadeghi 1989: 3) as post-dental, voiced fricative. Sadeghi thinks that its pronunciation is comparable to the one of *ḍ* in classical Persian. I agree with the place of articulation,

but in the speech of most of my informants it sounds more like a voiced approximant. This segment, represented in the present research by [ɖ], does not create a semantic distinction and usually occurs in intervocalic position or word finally. Findings such as this in other Iranian languages can be used in reconstruction of the inventory of the Proto-Iranian language.

6. In order to explain the various past and present stem formations in Bakhtiari, Prods Oktor Skjærvø's description of Parthian and Middle Persian verbs (Skjærvø 2009: 213) proves to be applicable, since the patterns which he identified at the Middle Iranian stage are still valid for Bakhtiari. In other words, it can be said that in Bakhtiari, as in the Middle Persian and Parthian, verbs with past stems ending in *-est*, *-ið* and *-að* are regular. In order to form the present stem, it is enough to remove these endings.

7. The Bakhtiari passive morpheme *-(e/i) h-* can be suffixed to the active present tense of the verb. The past stem is then formed by adding *-est/-ist* to the present passive stem. This morpheme *-(e/i) h-* is historically the same as the passive marker morpheme *-ih* in the Middle Persian, which was lost in New Persian. This shows that Bakhtiari and other Modern Iranian languages are relevant for the reconstruction of earlier stages of Iranian.

8. The terms Lor, Kurd and Baluch do not signify any specific ethnic groups. These tags were probably first used, as indicated in Ferdowsi's *Shahname*, to label different forms of nomadism such as pastoral, agro-pastoral and transhumance nomadic lifestyles, that were practiced by different peoples on the Iranian plateau.

9. Many spiritual teachers advocate the importance of silence as the only way towards THE TRUTH. This is not new information as it has been repeatedly preached in different languages all through the human history. One of the most beautiful phrasing of the same concept is manifested in Rumi's below verses:

حرف و صوت و گفت را بر هم زنم -
تا که بی این هر سه با تو دم زنم

I shall dissolve letters, sounds and words
To converse with Thee, deprived of all those
(Rumi; my translation)

The acceptance of this fact is very disheartening for linguists who have spent all their lives studying letters, sounds and words!