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Traces of language contact in Niya Prakrit: Bactrian and other foreign elements

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CHAPTER 5 Grammatical borrowings from Bactrian

This fifth chapter examines potential instances of grammatical borrowings from Iranian languages into Niya Prakrit, with a particular focus on features likely adopted from Bactrian. After some preliminaries (§5.1), I first propose that two appurtenance suffixes were borrowed from Bactrian into Niya Prakrit (§5.2). Afterwards, I investigate the possibility of structural borrowings on the basis of two case studies, one about reciprocals and reflexives (§5.3) and one about the Niya Prakrit preterite formations (§5.4).

5.1 Preliminaries

5.1.1 Matter and pattern replication

In contact linguistics, a distinction is drawn between “material borrowing” (Haspelmath 2009: 38) or “matter replication” (Matras 2020²: 160 *et passim*), on the one hand, and “structural borrowing” (Haspelmath 2009: 38f.) or “pattern replication” (Matras 2020²: 257f. *et passim*), on the other.

In the first type of borrowing, “concrete, identifiable sound-shapes of words and morphs” (Matras 2020²: 160) are adopted from the source language into the recipient language. The Iranian loanwords discussed in Chapters 3–4 all belong to this category, but grammatical features, such as phonemes or affixes, can also be subject to borrowing.

“Structural borrowing” or “pattern replication” can be defined as “a change to an inherited structure of the ‘replica’ language, inspired by a structure of the ‘model’ language” (Matras 2020²: 257), whereby “pivotal features of the model construction are identified and replicated in the replica language” (Matras 2020²: 261).⁷⁴² This type of transfer can again be seen in various linguistic domains, from semantics over phonology to morphology and syntax (see e.g. Thomason & Kaufman 1988: 65ff.; Thomason 2001: 59ff.).

5.1.2 State of the art and the scope of this chapter

So far, not much attention has been paid to structural borrowings from Iranian languages into Niya Prakrit (and Gāndhārī at large). The main reference point remains Burrow’s one-and-a-half-page overview of “Iranian idioms in Niya Prakrit” (1935a: 789f.).

⁷⁴² See in more detail Matras & Sakel (2007).

Under this heading, Burrow listed, for example, some instances of loan translations (calques).⁷⁴³ One such case is Niya *śavatha khad-* ‘to eat an oath > to swear an oath’ (CKD 577; 820), an expression which should probably be compared to Pers. *sōgand xwardan* ‘idem’.⁷⁴⁴ Another likely example is the use of Niya *śiro* < OIA *śiras-* ‘head’ to mean ‘end’ in CKD 187, similar to how Pers./Parth. *sar* signifies both ‘head’ and ‘end’. There probably are still more loan translations of this type to be discovered,⁷⁴⁵ but this subject falls outside the purview of this book.

Another topic exceeding the scope of this study is phonological influence. In the past, it has, for instance, been observed that the occasional loss of aspiration in Gāndhārī may be due to bilingual speakers of Iranian languages lacking aspirated consonants (KI: ci; Salomon 1999a: 128; 2008: 340; 2011b: 187),⁷⁴⁶ and that the Gāndhārī voicing of OIA intervocalic *-s-*, a sound change not found in other MIA languages, may have been influenced by the existence of a phoneme /z/ in neighbouring Iranian languages (KI: cix). Recently, Ollett (2024) has argued that the reduction of final syllables in Gāndhārī and Apabhraṃśa is due to influence from Middle Iranian languages, where the same phonological process was active.

Instead, this chapter examines two types of influence that despite their relevance in determining the nature and intensity of a particular contact situation (cf. §1.2.2), have hardly been touched upon in previous scholarship, i.e. morphological and syntactic borrowings. The only significant study on this point is a recent article by Barchi and Peschl (2022), whose hypothesis

⁷⁴³ “an extremely common (and often unnoticed) process whereby a polysemy pattern of a donor language word is copied into the recipient language” (Haspelmath 2009: 39).

⁷⁴⁴ This legal formula finds its ultimate background in Akkadian legal terminology (Charpin 1997, but see also Schwartz 1989).

⁷⁴⁵ One hitherto unnoticed example concerns the pleonastic addition of *ma(m)nuśa* ‘man’ after a noun of profession, in *acoviṃna ma(m)nuśa* ‘border official’ (CKD 133; 323; 563), *śpāśavaṃnaga maṃnuśa* ‘guard’ (CKD 541, 2x), *cora manuśa* ‘thief’ (CKD 345, 2x), and *dajha manuśa* ‘slave’ (CKD 143; 324 + 328). These instances are comparable to e.g. OP *daraniyakara- martiya-* ‘goldsmith’, Parth. *xumbgar mard* ~ *xumbgar* ‘potter’ or Sogd. *mr’z mrtyy* ‘hireling, workman’ (cf. Benkato 2017: 52). Niya *dajha manuśa* even finds an exact parallel in Bactr. *μαρηγο μαρδο* and Sogd. *βntk mrty* ‘slave man’.

⁷⁴⁶ One could draw a comparison with the disappearance of aspirated consonants from the phonemic inventory of Sinhalese due to contact with Dravidian (e.g. Masica 1991: 132).

of Khotanese substrate influence on the alignment of the Niya preterite I will discuss in §5.4.

Were Chapters 3–4 intended as a more or less comprehensive investigation into lexical borrowings from Iranian languages into Niya Prakrit, this chapter should instead be seen as a collection of case studies. The reason for this is a practical one: studying morphological and syntactic influence requires a time-consuming synchronic examination of the relevant features in Niya Prakrit and Bactrian. Reaching the same level of comprehensiveness as in Chapters 3–4 is therefore unrealistic.⁷⁴⁷

Conclusions will be presented after each case study individually and not in a separate section at the end of the chapter.

5.1.3 Why Bactrian?

A methodological issue concerns the exact source of “Iranian-looking” morphemes and syntactic structures in Niya Prakrit. Were these features all borrowed from the same Middle Iranian language, and, if so, from which?

In contrast to lexical borrowings, for which phonological or semantic arguments act in many, though not all, cases as a relatively trustworthy guide, determining the most likely donor language is more challenging in the case of morphosyntactic interference. The reason for this difficulty is that, at least regarding the features under discussion here, the morphosyntax of Middle Iranian languages tends to be relatively homogeneous. Yet, this chapter will, at the expense of other Iranian languages, mainly focus on comparisons between Bactrian and Niya Prakrit.

I proceed in this way because of the following considerations. First and most importantly, the lexical examination conducted in Chapters 3–4 has put it beyond doubt that Bactrian has exerted the most considerable influence on Niya Prakrit. As grammatical borrowings and pattern replication generally require more intense contact (cf. Thomason & Kaufman’s 1988: 74–76 oft-cited borrowing scale), this makes Bactrian *a priori* an appropriate language to concentrate on. A second reason not to discuss other Middle Iranian languages in the same detail as Bactrian is that a more extensive scrutiny of other languages would have enlarged the chapter to excessive lengths. Thirdly, for some of the grammatical features discussed, e.g. the reflexive

⁷⁴⁷ Possible topics for future case studies include a comparison between the syntax of relative clauses in Niya Prakrit and Bactrian or light verb constructions with the outcomes of OIA $\sqrt{kr}$ ‘to do’ and $\sqrt{bh\bar{u}}$ ‘to be(come)’.

pronominal adj. *tanu(vaga)* ‘one’s own’ or the verbal adj. in **-taka-*, there is also evidence from South Asian Gāndhārī. In such cases, languages like Sogdian and Khotanese are less likely donor languages for geographical and historical reasons.

Even though starting from the default premise that Bactrian is the most likely donor language of “Iranian-looking” morphemes and syntactic structures, I will make it explicit for each case individually when there is not much concrete evidence in favour of this assumption.

5.2 Two appurtenance suffixes

This section concerns the appurtenance suffixes *-ani* and *-ci*. In §5.2.1, I will argue that the first is borrowed from Bactr. *-avo* /ānə/ < **-āna-* or *-aviyo* /ānīgə/ < **-ān-iya-ka-*, and in §5.2.2, I propose that the second is a loan from Bactr. *-σ(ε)ιyo* /tśīgə/ < **-čiya-ka-*. The final section (§5.2.3) contextualises the main findings from a typological perspective.

5.2.1 The suffix *-ani*

The adjectival suffix *-ani* is mostly attached to male personal names. A list of attestations is given below.⁷⁴⁸

Attestations

Aṃñayani: CKD 117

Aśogani: CKD 621

O ? kani: CKD 66

Kaṃciyani: CKD 384

Kapgeyani: CKD 437 (2x); 706

Kalaṣḍhani: CKD 706

Kenigani: CKD 235

Koteyani: CKD 176 (2x)

Kolýiṣani: CKD 15

Carakani (*Carakāni*): CKD 706 (2x)

Anugayani: CKD 629

Aṣgarani: CKD 110; 536

Kaṃgucani: CKD 471

Kaṃjagani: CKD 74

Karmayani: CKD 326 (6x)

Kungeyani: CKD 129

Koñayani: CKD 571

Koletani (*Koleyani*): CKD 525; 558

Camagani: CKD 66

Calmasani: CKD 552

⁷⁴⁸ In contrast to earlier publications, I will write *-ani* attached to the preceding word, as is the common practice for other Niya Prakrit suffixes, such as *-ci* or *-i*. *-ani* is usually attached to a personal name on its own, but sometimes also to the combination of a title and a personal name (e.g. CKD 28 *kala Purnabalani*). As they would be highly exceptional, I do not consider *puruṣa ni hetu* ‘on behalf of the man’ and *istri ni hetu* ‘on behalf of the woman’ in CKD 231 examples of the suffix under discussion.

<i>Cinaṣenani</i> : CKD 375	<i>Cinikani</i> : CKD 552
<i>Cimolani</i> : CKD 244	<i>Jeyakani</i> : CKD 210
<i>Jeyaśani</i> : CKD 320	<i>Ḍhagiyani</i> : CKD 552
<i>Ḍhamajani</i> (<i>Ḍhamaśani</i>): CKD 581; 586	<i>Taṃjakani</i> : CKD 117
<i>Tsinani</i> : CKD 415	<i>Ramakani</i> : CKD 517
<i>Ricikani</i> : CKD 547	<i>Rutra(ya)ni</i> : CKD 74; 667
<i>Larsuani</i> : CKD 74	<i>Lýiptani</i> : CKD 587
<i>Vasulani</i> : CKD 552	<i>Śāpukani</i> : CKD 368
<i>Daroṇi</i> : CKD 695	<i>Dharmaladani</i> : CKD 652
<i>Namarajhmani</i> : CKD 163	<i>Patraani</i> : CKD 614
<i>Purnabalani</i> : CKD 28; 358	<i>Pulayani</i> : CKD 552
<i>Ponigani</i> : CKD 266	<i>Priyatatiyani</i> : CKD 87
<i>Mañgeyani</i> : CKD 587	<i>Maṣḍhigeyani</i> : CKD 152
<i>Micgeyani</i> : CKD 116; 558	<i>Muldeyani</i> : CKD 574
<i>Mogatani</i> (<i>Mogayani</i>): CKD 579; 588	<i>Yitayani</i> : CKD 117
<i>Yipiyani</i> : CKD 582	<i>Śarsenani</i> : CKD 593
<i>Śirmitrani</i> : CKD 117; 601	<i>Śronapremani</i> : CKD 79
<i>Samgilani</i> : CKD 318 (2x)	<i>Samceyani</i> : CKD 558
<i>Sagimani</i> : CKD 580	<i>Signayani</i> : CKD 572
<i>Suḡitani</i> : CKD 552	<i>Sunaṃdani</i> : CKD 516
<i>Sunayani</i> : CKD 117	<i>Sumatani</i> : CKD 117
<i>Suryamitrani</i> : CKD 552	<i>Socarani</i> : CKD 6
<i>Svarcikani</i> : CKD 631	

Due to its attaching to male anthroponyms, *Niya -ani* often resembles a patronymic suffix. Yet, it more generally functions as an appurtenance suffix (cf. LKD: 100 s.v. *nī*).⁷⁴⁹ *Kenigani* ‘son (?) of Keniga’ in sentence (5.1) is a typical example.

(5.1) CKD 235 under-tablet obverse 2

Kuunge viṃṇayeti yatha edaṣa miṣi bhuma anahetu Kenigani Suḡika achiṃnati.

“Kunee reports that Suḡika (son ?) of Keniga is appropriating *miṣi*-land belonging to him without just reason.” (TKD: 44).

⁷⁴⁹ One of the indications that *-ani* is not a patronymic suffix is that it can be used for alienable possession. Cf. e.g. gen.sg. *Mogatani bhumaṣa* ‘land belonging to Mogata’ in CKD 579.

Contrary to Burrow (1935a: 790; LKD: 100 s.v. *ni*) and some other scholars (e.g. KD: 352), I take the suffix to be *-ani* and not *-ni*, given that the vowel before *-ni* is without exception *-a-*, and an *-a-* is added when the suffix is attached to personal names that do not end in *-a* otherwise. The form *Larsuani* (CKD 74), for instance, derives from the relatively frequent name *Larsu*, not ***Larsua* (cf. also §3.4.2 s.v.). Another noteworthy form is *Carakāni* in CKD 706,⁷⁵⁰ where the additional length mark on the *-a-* suggests that the vowel of the suffix may be long.

Because of this alternative view on the form of the suffix, I likewise do not accept Burrow's idea (cf. also CDIAL: no. 7181) that the suffix under review is etymologically derived from Skt. *nija-* 'own'. Yet, even if the suffix would be *-ni* and not *-ani*, Burrow's etymology seems improbable, as Skt. *nija-* and its MIA cognates are used as an adjective or as the first member of a compound (e.g. *nijakarman-* 'one's own work'), whereas Burrow tacitly assumes a reanalysis as a suffix that would require several insufficiently motivated intermediary steps.⁷⁵¹

As part of his argument about the etymology of *-(a)ni*, Burrow further compared this suffix to Khot. *hāvya-* / *hivya-* 'own' < **hwa(i)-paθya-* in its function as a reinforcement of a genitive. See example (5.2), where the acc.sg. *hīvī* 'own', agreeing in case with acc.sg. *hvanau* 'speech', is added redundantly after the gen.sg. *gyastā balysā* 'Lord Buddha'. The underlying Sanskrit text has *bhagavato bhāṣitaṃ* 'the speech of the blessed one' (von Hinüber 2021: 127), and one would suspect that ***gyastā balysā hvanau* 'the Lord Buddha's speech' would already be sufficient as a translation of the Sanskrit.

(5.2) *Saṅghāṭasūtra* §261.2

u bāśśe lova gyastā balysā hīvī hvanau ātaudānde u [ysūṣṭānde].

"... and all people desired and [valued] the Lord Buddha's own speech"
(Canevascini 1993: 116).

⁷⁵⁰ In the same document, the form without length mark (*Carakani*) occurs too.

⁷⁵¹ Incidentally, no other secure trace of *nija-* has been found in Niya Prakrit, nor in Gāndhārī more generally: Falk's (2020–21: 122) reading *nija deti* 'he gives for his own sake' ~ Skt. *nijaṃ dadāti* in CKI 1177 has been corrected to *ñjadeti* 'he hands over' < Skt. *niryātayati* (cf. Baums and Glass 2002a– s.v.), and Falk's (2020–21: 120) reading *ñia śpiho* 'as our own, for ourselves' ~ Skt. *nijaṃ svīyaṃ* in CKI 328 is not secure either.

In this type of example, *hāvya-* / *hivya-* reinforces a noun in the genitive. Yet, *-ani* is a suffix that replaces a genitive.⁷⁵² A second aspect in which Burrow's comparison is not very precise is that *hāvya-* / *hivya-*, unlike *-ani*, shows no particular connection to personal names. When we further take into account that the use of *hāvya-* / *hivya-* to reinforce a genitive is typical of later stages of Khotanese (Del Tomba 2023b: 167f.; HK: 323), i.e. too late to be relevant for Niya Prakrit, Burrow's comparison is best rejected.

Seeing that *-ani* is mainly added to personal names of non-Indic origin and hence likely a borrowing,⁷⁵³ Konow's (1938: 155) comparison with the Khotanese adjectival suffix *-āna-* < **-āna-* (fem. *-āmgya-* < **-āna-čī-ā-*) seems more promising, especially since Khot. *-āna-* can also be attached to personal names (cf. Degener 1989: 83–87). As, according to my findings to date, Khotanese did not exert any considerable influence on the Niya Prakrit lexicon (cf. §4.2.5), it would, however, be typologically unusual that a suffix would have been adopted from this language.

This problem does not pose itself when interpreting *-ani* as a loan from Bactrian, where *-avo* /*ānə*/, the cognate of Khot. *-āna-*, likewise derives adjectives from nouns, “especially ... proper names” (BD II: 193; cf. also BPN: 11f.).

If so, the final *-i* of Niya *-ani* must still be accounted for, as one would expect Bactr. *-avo* /*ānə*/ to be borrowed as **-ana*.⁷⁵⁴ I can think of two options. One possibility is that the final *-i* came about by analogy with the two

⁷⁵² The same noun can be found either with a genitive complement or the suffix *-ani*. Note, for instance, CKD 706, where the noun *goṭha* ‘farm, household’ is twice attested with the appurtenance suffix and twice with a possessive gen.

⁷⁵³ 14,5% of Indic names versus 85,5% of non-Indic names (counted per type). The following names have been left out: (i) the poorly preserved *O?ka* (CKD 66); (ii) *Ramaka* (CKD 517), either < OIA **Rāma-ka-* or ← Bactr. **ραμοκο*, a hypocoristic to attested *ραμο* (BPN: no. 388); and (iii) *Dharmalada* (CKD 652), either comparable to *Kumāralāta* or perhaps a mixed name consisting of IA *dharma-* and its Bactrian equivalent *λαδο* ‘law’. Otherwise, I mostly followed Baums and Glass’ (2002a–) judgement. Yet, I interpret some names they consider “unclear” as Indo-Aryan ones: (i) *Jeyaka* (CKD 210) seems the same as the Sanskrit PN *Jayaka-* ‘victorious’; (ii) *Cinaṣena* (CKD 375) can be a name of the type *Bhadrāsena*, with *Cina* ‘China’ as its first part; and (iii) *Sunaṃda* (CKD 516) likely corresponds to Skt. *Sunanda-* ‘pleasing well’ (attested as a PN).

⁷⁵⁴ If the suffix were Khotanese, as per Konow, the *-i* could conceivably come from the nom.sg. in *-ā* (cf. §3.5.1 s.v. *prahonī*). For the same reasons given in §4.2.1 regarding the loanword corpus, I would be hesitant to assume that the *-i* in *-ani* could go back to an archaic nom.sg. in *-i* /*i*/ < **-ah* in Bactrian.

other appurtenance suffixes *-i* and *-ci*. Alternatively, *-ani* could come from Bactr. *-ανιγο* /*ānīgə*/ ← *-ανο* + *-ιγο* < **-iya-ka-*,⁷⁵⁵ as in *οαραζαγανιγο* ‘belonging to Warazagan’ and *σπανδαγανιγο* ‘belonging to Spandagan’ (BD II: 241; 265). The latter option requires that **-aniga* ← *-ανιγο* /*ānīgə*/ was lenited to *-ani* similar to how OIA **-ika-* became Niya *-i* via **-iga* (LKD: §75; see also §5.2.2 for Niya *-ci* ← Bactr. *-σιγο* /*tśīgə*/).

5.2.2 The suffix *-ci*

The suffix *-ci* (secondary allomorphs *-eṃci*; *-iṃci*⁷⁵⁶) is, like *-ani*, an appurtenance suffix deriving adjectives from nouns, e.g. *kilme-ci* ‘belonging to the family estate’ ← *kilme* ‘family estate’ (cf. LKD: §77). An essential difference between *-ci* and *-ani* is that *-ci* is generally not attached to personal names but to place names and other nouns indicating a location. The list of attestations below will make this clear.⁷⁵⁷

Attestations

ayanemci ← *ayana* ‘village’

DIR.SG. *ayanemci*: CKD 713 (2x); *avamci*: CKD 841 (2x); GEN.PL. *avamciyana*: CKD 841; DIR.SG. *Aṃtuayanemci* (or *Vaṃtu-*): CKD 496; DIR.PL. *Aṃtuayanemci* (or *Vaṃtu-*): CKD 296; GEN.PL. *Ayiyaamayānemciyana*: CKD 817; DIR.SG. *Catiṣadeviayanemci*: CKD 474; GEN.PL. *Trasaayanemciyana*: CKD 326; *Trasaayanemciyana*: CKD 326; GEN.PL. *Navagaavamciyana*: CKD 841; *Navagaayanimciyana*: CKD 366; DIR.SG. *Petaayanemci*: CKD 32; 46; 124; DIR.PL. *Petaayanemci*: CKD 124; *Petaayanemciye*: CKD 164; GEN.PL. *Petaayanemciyana*: CKD 839; *Petaavanemciyana*: CKD 162; *Petaayaniciyana*: CKD 110; DIR.SG. *Yaveayanemci*: CKD 532; 740; *Yaveavanemci*: CKD 474; DIR.PL. *Yaveayanemciya*: CKD 37; *Yaveavanimciye*: CKD 401; GEN.PL. *Yaveayanemciyanana* (?): CKD 37; *Yaveayani(m)ciyana*: CKD 431 = 432; *Yaviayanimciyana*: CKD 745

Opimtemci ← *Opimta*, place name

DIR.PL. *Opimtemci*: CKD 686

kilmeci ← *kilme* ‘family estate’

DIR.SG. *kilmeci*: CKD 209; 278; 279 (2x); 297; 331; 358; 437 (2x); 474 (2x); 495; 519; 581; 585 (2x); 621 (2x); 806 (3x); 884 (2x); *kilmeciya*: CKD 381; 393; 532; 806; DIR.PL. *kilmeci*: CKD 632; *kilmeci*: CKD 639; *kilmeciye*: CKD

⁷⁵⁵ Bactr. *-ιγο* /*īgə*/ can be added to other adjectival suffixes without overtly changing their meaning (BD II: 217).

⁷⁵⁶ How these allomorphs came into being will be discussed below.

⁷⁵⁷ Not included are well-attested but etymologically obscure nouns always ending in *-ci*, e.g. the official title *klasemci*.

152; 271 (2x); 279; 307; 338; 468 (2x); 817; *kilmemciye*: CKD 713; GEN.PL. *kilmeciyana*: CKD 16; 254; 338; 374; 468 (4x); 734; 819; 848; *kilmiciyana*: CKD 261; 358; *kilme[c]*.: CKD 257; GEN.PL. *Yavekilmeciyana* 'belonging to the Yave family estate': CKD 431 = 432 (Yave-)

kilyigamci ← unknown base form

GEN.PL. *kilyigamciyana*: CKD 164

kuhaneci ← *kuhani* 'capital'

DIR.SG. *kuhaneci*: CKD 571; *khuyanemci*: CKD 489

Kroraïmci ← *Kroraïmna*, place name [Lóulán]

DIR.SG. *Kroraïmci*: CKD 678; DIR.PL. *Kroraïmci*: CKD 370; *Kroraïmci*: CKD 383;

GEN.PL. *Kroraïmciyana*: CKD 277

Khemaci ← *Khema*, place name

DIR.SG. *Khemaci*: CKD 879 (2x)

Caḍodeṁci ← *Caḍota*, place name [ancient Niya]

DIR.SG. *Caḍodeṁci*: CKD 437

Calmataṁci ← *Calmatana*, place name

DIR.SG. *Calmataṁci*: CKD 305; 582; *Calmadaci*: CKD 419; DIR.PL.

Calmadanemci: CKD 686

tsakemci ← unknown base form

DIR.PL. *tsakemci*: CKD 376

Tsagaïmci ← *Tsaga*, place name

DIR.SG. *Tsagaïmci*: CKD 146; 147; *Tsagayimci*: CKD 80

Tsegeci ← *Tsega*, place name

GEN.SG. *Tsegeciyaša*: CKD 556; DIR.PL. *Tsegeci*: CKD 505

Navoteṁci ← *Navote*, place name

DIR.PL. *Navoteṁciye*: CKD 754

Ninaci ← *Nina*, place name

DIR.SG. *Ninaci*: CKD 879; *Ninaṁci*: CKD 500; 859; *Ninaṁciya*: CKD 157

paṁthaci ← *paṁtha* 'road'

DIR.SG. *paṁthaci*: CKD 637

potgeci ← *potge* 'water tank'

DIR.PL. *potgeci*: CKD 347

Buṁniṁci ← *Buṁni*, place name

DIR.SG. *Buṁniṁci*: CKD 147

Bhagaṣaci ← **Bhagaṣa*, place name

DIR.SG. *Bhagaṣaci*: CKD 131; DIR.PL. *Bhagaseṃci*: CKD 195; *Bhagaseṃciya*: CKD 788; GEN.PL. *Bhagaseṃciyana*: CKD 726

Bhotici ← *Bhoti*, place name [perhaps Tibet]

DIR.SG. *Bhotici*: CKD 84

Masiṃci ← *Masina*, place name

DIR.SG. *Masiṃci*: CKD 839; DIR.PL. *Masiṃciye*: CKD 777

miṣiyeci ← *miṣi*, a type of land

DIR.PL. *miṣiyeci*: CKD 582

motirciya ← unknown base form

DIR.SG. *motirciya*: CKD 277; 304

Yurvaṣkaṃciya ← *Yurvaṣka*, place name [Qizil]

DIR.SG. *Yurvaṣkaṃciya*: CKD 869

lautgaimci ← unknown base form

DIR.PL. *lautgaimci*: CKD 272

Sacici ← *Saca*, place name [perhaps Endere]

DIR.SG. *Sacici*: CKD 436 (3x); 573; 879; DIR.PL. *Saciṃciye*: CKD 1; 160; GEN.PL. *Saciṃciyana*: CKD 97

simici ← *sima* ‘boundary’

DIR.SG. *simici*: CKD 436

Because the suffix *-ci* specifies the place a particular person or object hails from, it is partially synonymous with the ablative case in adnominal usage and the suffix *-i* < OIA *-ika-* (on which cf. LKD: §75; §6.4.3). The notion “a man (coming) from Caḍota [ancient Niya]”, for instance, can be expressed as (i) *Caḍodeṃci manuśa* (suffix *-eṃci*; CKD 437); (ii) *Caḍodade maṃnuśa* (abl.sg. in *-ade*; CKD 575); or (iii) *maṃnuśa ... Caḍoti* (*i*-suffix; CKD 575), without there being any immediately apparent semantic difference between these three options.

According to Burrow (1935b: 672), the suffix *-ci* would be a Tocharian element in Niya Prakrit, and he proposed to connect it to the Tocharian A adjective suffix *-ñci* (TG: 21). Since the suffix *-ci* is most frequently attached to non-Indo-Aryan bases,⁷⁵⁸ I agree that it is a borrowing.

⁷⁵⁸ One exception is e.g. CKD 637 *paṃthaci masu* ‘wine for the journey’, where the *ci*-suffix is attached to *paṃtha* ‘journey’ (cf. OIA *pathin-*; Pāli *pantha-*).

Yet, Burrow's Tocharian etymology is improbable for several reasons (cf. also Banti 2000: 4f.). Most importantly, the suffix *-ñci* is marginal in Tocharian, being limited to a handful of examples: *atroñci* 'of a hero' ← *atār* 'hero', *aneñci* 'interior' ← *ane* 'inside', *k_uleñci* 'female, feminine' ← *k_uli* 'woman', and *šmeñci* 'pertaining to the summer' ← *šme** 'summer' (DTTA: 7; 10; 144; 502).⁷⁵⁹ These forms moreover demonstrate that the Tocharian suffix is, unlike the Niya suffix, not normally combined with place names and nouns of location. Another issue with Burrow's etymology is that the basic form in Niya Prakrit is *-ci*, lacking the nasal seen in TA *-ñci*. As the *ci*-suffix is furthermore most frequently attached to the words *ayana* 'village' and *kilme* 'household' (cf. the list above), the first almost certainly and the second possibly Iranian in origin (see §3.3.2 and §3.2.4 s.vv.), one may further wonder whether the suffix is likewise Iranian instead of Tocharian.

An Iranian origin of Niya Prakrit *-ci* has been proposed by Banti (2000: 4f.), who compared the Niya suffix to the Sogdian adjectival suffix *-cyk* / *-cyq* < **-čiya-ka-*, as in *'rk-cyk* 'from Argi [Qarašahr]' ← *'rk** 'Argi' or *'wccwryk* 'from Učur [perhaps Shorchuk]' ← *'wccwr** 'Učur' (DMSB²: 39).⁷⁶⁰ As the final velar in Sogd. *-cyk* / *-cyq* could have been lenited after being borrowed into Prakrit (cf. infra), Banti's comparison seems indeed promising.

However, Sogdian does not seem a very likely donor language, because Sogd. *-cyk* / *-cyq* is, despite the examples adduced by Banti, not specifically connected to place names. Instead, *-cyk* / *-cyq* is a suffix that derives adjectives out of various types of nouns or even adverbs (see GMS: §§1014–1017); compare, for example, *'ny'mcyq* 'final' ← *'ny'm* 'end' (DMSB²: 16) or *'kδrycyk* 'present' ← *kδry* 'now' (MacKenzie 1970: 44; SD: 31).⁷⁶¹

I deem it more likely that Niya *-ci* is a loan from Bactr. *-σ(ε)ιγο* (after a nasal *-ζ(ε)ιγο*) < **-čiya-ka-*, because, in contrast to its Sogdian cognate, the Bactrian suffix is, like Niya *-ci*, attached in most of its occurrences to place names and nouns of location (BD II: 263). Examples include *αστιλγανσειγο* /

⁷⁵⁹ The form *ātlāñci* 'manly' ← *ātāl* 'man' referenced by Banti (2000: 4) is not lemmatised in the recent dictionary of Tocharian A (DTTA), and I have been unable to find an attestation of it.

⁷⁶⁰ Banti also cited Persian examples, but I leave these aside, as Middle Persian is a historically unlikely donor language of a grammatical suffix in Niya Prakrit.

⁷⁶¹ A secondary argument against taking Sogdian as the donor of the suffix *-ci* is the absence of any decisive evidence in favour of Sogdian loanwords in Niya Prakrit (see §4.2.6), which makes it *a priori* unlikely that Niya Prakrit would have borrowed a grammatical suffix from Sogdian.

υαστιλανζειγο ‘inhabitant of Hastilgan’ ← *(υ)αστιλγανο; χαγοσιγο ‘inhabitant of Khag’ ← χαγο*; ωδαγοσιγο ‘inhabitant of a district’ ← ωδαγο ‘district’; ρηογανζειγο ‘inhabitant of Rewgan’ ← ρηογανο; and γαρσιγοστανο ‘land of the mountaineers’ which consists of γαρσιγο* ‘mountaineer’ ← γαρο ‘mountain’ and -στανο ‘place, land’.

The fact that *-ci* regularly forms its dir.pl. in *-e* instead of in *-a* (LKD: §60) may also find its explanation in Bactrian since the Niya Prakrit dir.pl. in *-e* could be a rendering of the corresponding dir.pl. in *-ε /e/* in Kuṣāṇa Bactrian (see §4.4.3).

Also phonologically, the derivation of *-ci* from *-σ(ε)ιγο* works fine: (i) the palatal affricate in *-ci* could be due to a pronunciation of *-σ(ε)ιγο* < **-čiya-ka-*as /tśīgə/ with palatalisation of the affricate before **ī* (on this see §2.2.4.3; §4.3.17, and cf. MBactr. *y’wyd’nžyg* ‘for ever’ < **yāwaitāna-čiya-ka-*), and (ii) a more archaic form **-ciga*, corresponding still closer to *-σ(ε)ιγο* /tśīgə/, can have been lenited to *-ci* in the same way as OIA *-ika-* has been lenited via **-iga* to Niya *-i* (see also §5.2.1 on *-ani*).⁷⁶²

As kindly pointed out by Nicholas Sims-Williams (p.c.), Niya *-ci* could alternatively be a loan from an early Bactrian suffix **-σει* / **-σι* /tśī/, attested in later times as *-σο* < **-čiya-* (cf. Sogd. *-c(y)*), e.g. χαγοσο ‘inhabitant of Khag’ next to χαγοσιγο ← χαγο* (cf. Sims-Williams *apud* Gariboldi 2017: 26f.). With this etymology, one could do without the assumption of lenition. Yet, two arguments may still speak in favour of the derivation from *-σ(ε)ιγο* / *-σιγο*. First, the latter is attested much more frequently than **-σει* / **-σι* / *-σο*,⁷⁶³ and second, there is at least one occurrence of an older form *-ciga*, i.e. *Bhaga[sam]ciga* ‘inhabitant of Bhagasa’ (CKD 788) to be compared with *Bhagaśaci* (CKD 131), *Bhagaseṃci* (CKD 195) and the gen.pl. *Bhagaseṃciyana* (CKD 726). Therefore, I still have a slight preference to derive *-ci* from the longer form *-σ(ε)ιγο* /tśīgə/.

A final note is due on the secondary by-forms *-eṃci* and *-iṃci*. They have been explained as follows by Banti (2000: 5):

“The frequent occurrence of non-etymological *ṃ* in the codas of internal syllables and analogical levelling produced from adjectives such as *pamtha-*

⁷⁶² The Bactrian by-forms *-σουο* and *-σιουο* show complete lenition of *-γ-* already in Bactrian, but this development only starts appearing in texts from about 700 AD onwards (cf. SCBD: 61), too late to be of relevance for the Niya Prakrit suffix.

⁷⁶³ The statistics may admittedly be slightly skewed because we do not have many texts in Kuṣāṇa Bactrian, and *-σ(ε)ιγο* / *-σιγο* may have gradually replaced **-σει* / **-σι* / *-σο* over time.

ci, *kilme-ci* or *Kroraiṃ-ci* new forms like *Nina-ṃci* and *kilme-ṃci* from which the new allomorphs *-eṃci* and *-iṃci* were extracted.”

While I agree with Banti’s final step, there is no need to take recourse to the notion of “non-etymological *ṃ*”. It seems more plausible that forms in *-ṃci* spread analogically from examples such as *Kroraiṃ-ci* ‘inhabitant of Kroraina’ ← *Kroraiṇa* or *Calmatam-ci* ‘inhabitant of Calmadana’ ← *Calmatana*. In these cases, the underlying forms **Kroraiṇa-ci* and **Calmatana-ci* may have undergone syncope of *-a-* between the preceding nasal and the suffix *-ci*, resulting in *-ṃci*.⁷⁶⁴ If so, it is possible to compare the Bactrian voicing of *-σ(ε)ιγο /tśīgə/* after nasals seen in, for instance, *ρηογανζιγο /rēwgandzīgə/* ‘inhabitant of Rewgan’ ← *ρηογανο /rēwganə/*, which likewise implies that the nasal of the stem and the suffix were in direct contact with one another.

5.2.3 A typological outlook

The preceding sections argued that the Niya Prakrit appurtenance suffixes *-ani* and *-ci* were respectively borrowed from Bactr. *-ανο /ānə/* or *-ανιγο /ānīgə/* and *-σ(ε)ιγο /tśīgə/*. To conclude the investigation into these suffixes, this section will briefly contextualise the main findings from a typological perspective.

Both examples discussed above belong to the category of derivational affixes;⁷⁶⁵ borrowing such affixes is characteristic of “more intense contact”, i.e. level 3 of Thomason and Kaufman’s (1988: 74ff.) borrowing scale. Affixes are typically “abstracted from borrowed words and added to native vocabulary”, which is referred to by Matras (2020²: 226) as “diffusion of morphology beyond the borrowed lexicon itself”.⁷⁶⁶

⁷⁶⁴ Alternatively, the final *-a* may have been pronounced only very weakly or not at all, for which one can compare spellings such as *aḍiṃ* ‘millet’ (CKD 140) next to *aḍi(ṃ)ni* / *aḍina* or *gamaṃ* ‘going’ (CKD 646) for *gama(ṃ)na* (see also LKD: §13).

⁷⁶⁵ *-ani* and *-ci* are examples of suffixes that change the word class of the word they are attached to, in this case, from noun to adjective. For other examples of borrowing of word-class changing derivation, cf. Matras (2020²: 227).

⁷⁶⁶ In Armenian, for instance, various affixes of Iranian origin that were initially limited to loanwords, e.g. Arm. *-akan* ← Ir. **-akāna-*, came to be combined with native vocabulary and are still productive in Modern Armenian (cf. Meyer 2023: 25). Some Latin suffixes borrowed into Ancient Greek likewise gained productivity over time (see Adams 2003: 495f. and Dickey 2023: 543–556).

The Niya suffixes *-ani* and *-ci* conform to this pattern: although most often found in loanwords, they also gradually spread to inherited vocabulary. Such diffusion to native vocabulary is a necessary condition to speak of a “morphological loan” fully adopted into the recipient language (see Matras 2020²: 226).⁷⁶⁷

5.3 Reciprocals and reflexives

If, as suggested in the preceding section, the contact between Niya Prakrit and Bactrian was indeed “more intense”, Thomason and Kaufman’s borrowing scale would predict or, at least, render it plausible that there are also traces of structural interference from Bactrian on Niya Prakrit. Such traces would moreover be expected to square well with the typological profile of the recipient language. The two case studies presented in this and the next section (§5.4) aim to confirm these predictions.

5.3.1 Introduction

The first case study concerns reciprocals and reflexives. As is done more commonly (cf. e.g. König & Gast 2008), I study these two types of pronouns together because their form and function often overlap in the languages of the world. Both are moreover liable to contact-induced change. First, markers of reflexivity and reciprocity can be borrowed in their entirety, as is, for instance, the case with Dutch *zich* ‘oneself’, borrowed from High German in medieval times (Philippa et al. 2005–9 IV: 662). A second option is that the syntactic properties of reflexives and reciprocals are structurally influenced by those of neighbouring languages, i.e. a case of pattern replication. Regarding this latter alternative, Meyer (2013; 2023: 181–196) has made a convincing case that the Armenian reflexive marker *ink’n* obtained its tripartite function as an intensifier, a discourse anaphor, and a clause-level anaphor after the model of MP *xwad* and Parth. *wxad* (cf. §5.3.4.2). Inspired by Meyer’s research, the following sections study possible Iranian influence on Niya Prakrit’s reciprocals and reflexives.

⁷⁶⁷ Matras makes a distinction between “backward diffusion”, whereby the spread of the borrowed suffix is limited to the pre-existing inherited lexicon, and “forward diffusion”, whereby the borrowed suffix acquires a high degree of productivity to be attached also to newly acquired vocabulary. The limited data for Niya Prakrit leaves it undecided whether *-ani* and *-ci* also underwent “forward diffusion”.

In other words, I shall investigate the possibility of structural influence exerted by closely related languages. As a result, we are confronted with the perennial problem of distinguishing between common inheritance and subsequent language contact (see e.g. Epps, Huehnergard & Pat-El 2013; Pat-El 2013). There is a further tension between the fact that contact-induced change between closely related languages can be more challenging to identify and that structural similarity between languages is precisely one of the factors that seem to facilitate language contact (cf. *infra*). Therefore, one needs to focus on bundles of close similarities rather than on individual and vague points of resemblance and be careful not to jump to far-reaching conclusions that are insufficiently supported by the limited evidence at hand.

When studying the reflexives *Niya sveya* / *apana* ‘oneself’ and Bactr. *χοαδο* / *χοβισαρο* (later *χοβοσσαρο*) ‘idem’ in §§5.3.3–5.3.4, it will be necessary to distinguish between “canonical reflexives” and “intensifiers” and between “inclusive” and “exclusive” intensifiers. For this reason, I will briefly define these terms below.⁷⁶⁸

In “John washes himself”, “himself” is an example of a canonical reflexive: this pronoun functions as the patient of the sentence and is co-referential with “John”, the agent and subject of the sentence.

The same pronoun can also be used as an intensifier, “a focusing particle that singles out an entity as playing a central role or as being involved in an event without the participation of others” (Haspelmath 2013: 350). Examples of “himself” in the function of an intensifier are (i) “John himself has done the dishes” and (ii) “John has done the dishes himself”. In the first example, “himself” is employed in adnominal usage, while in the second “himself” modifies the verb and is therefore called adverbial. The intended meaning is that “John” and nobody else has done the dishes. In such a case, we speak about an exclusive intensifier. Depending on the context, “John himself has done the dishes” can also be an example of an inclusive intensifier, e.g. when the intended meaning is that, as a chef, John has still helped with doing the dishes. In the latter interpretation, “himself” could be

⁷⁶⁸ The term “canonical reflexive” is taken over from Meyer (2013; 2023), and the notes on intensifiers are based on König & Siemund (2000: 43–50). De Vaan (fthc. 2024) objects against the term “intensifier” and proposes to replace it with “identifier” because the main function of such pronouns “is to single out one alternative, that is, to identify a referent in a potentially ambiguous situation”. I will stick here to the traditional and more widespread terminology, but de Vaan’s objection is well taken.

replaced with “too”, whereas “on its own” can often take the place of an exclusive intensifier.

The investigation is structured as follows. In §5.3.2, I first elaborate on Burrow’s idea that the Niya Prakrit reciprocal *eka biti* ‘one the second’ is syntactically calqued from Iranian. Next, I will be concerned with reflexive markers (§§5.3.3–5.3.7), arguing that the Niya Prakrit reflexive pronominal adj. *tanu(vaga)* ‘one’s own, property’ and Bactr. *χοβο / χοβιγο* ‘idem’ were mutually intertranslatable. This proposal will be backed up by a brief examination of the other markers of reflexivity in both languages and a discussion of the structural similarities and the phraseological parallels shared between *tanu(vaga)* and *χοβο / χοβιγο*. §5.3.8 concludes the investigation.

5.3.2 Reciprocals

There are three reciprocal pronouns in Niya Prakrit (LKD: §88): (i) *aṃṇamaṃṇa*, corresponding to Skt. *anyonya-*;⁷⁶⁹ (ii) *parospara / parospāra*, related to Skt. *paraspara-*;⁷⁷⁰ and (iii) *eka biti* < **eka- dvitīya-* ‘one the second’, an idiom not found in OIA or other MIA languages. The attested forms are listed below (other forms of Gāndhārī are also included).

Attestations of *aṃṇamaṃṇa*

DIR.SG. *aṇamaṇa*: CKM 2; *anyamaṇṇo*: CKM 156

GEN.SG. *aṇamaṇasa*: CKI 12; *aṇamaṇasa*: CKI 15; *aṃṇamaṇasa*: CKD 889

GEN.PL. *aṃṇamaṃṇana*: CKD 357; *aṃṇamaṇāna*: CKD 357; *aṇamaṇeṣu*: CKM 1 (cf.

Salomon 2008: 281f.; 318); *aṇamaṇaṇa*: CKM 1; *anyonyana*: CKM 98

Attestations of *parospara / parospāra*

DIR.SG. *paroparo*: CKM 368

INS.SG. *parosparena*: CKD 34; *parospārena*: CKD 345

ABL.SG. *parosparade*: CKD 788

GEN.SG. *parospāraṣa*: CKD 97; 593; *parospārasya*: CKD 272; 338; 468

⁷⁶⁹ The Niya form matches that in other MIA languages (e.g. Pāli *aṇṇamaṇṇa-*). According to AiG (II.1: 321f.) and Kulikov (2014: 141), the MIA forms have the acc.sg. as their first part, but the *-m-* could in theory also be a sandhi consonant, as more often in MIA (cf. e.g. Oberlies 2019² I: 188–195 on Pāli).

⁷⁷⁰ The use of cognates of Skt. *paraspara-* is rare in MIA (Kulikov 2014: 142f.), whereas *parospara / parospāra* is still used nine times in Niya Prakrit (cf. infra). The use of *parospara / parospāra* in the Niya documents may therefore be an archaic retention or, more likely, a Sanskritism.

GEN.PL. *p[ar]os̥paraṇa*:⁷⁷¹ CKD 817

Attestations of *eka biti*

DIR.SG. *eka biti*: CKD 709; *eka bhiti*: CKD 348; 732

INS.SG. *eka bitiyena*: CKD 574

GEN.SG. *eka bitiyaṣa*: CKD 187; *eka bhitiyaṣa*: CKD 425

GEN.PL. *eka bhitiyana*: CKD 577; 820; *aṃṇa bhitiyana* (apparently a blend of *aṃṇamaṃṇa* and *eka biti*): CKD 577

It appears that there are no morphosyntactic constraints on when which pronoun is used. In fact, all three occur in the same legal formula consisting of pres.3sg. *nasti* ‘is not’, the noun *danagrahana* (*dagrana*) ‘giving or taking, payment’, and the postposition *vaṃti* ‘in, at, to’; see examples (5.3)–(5.5).

(5.3) CKD 889 cover-tablet reverse 2

aju kṣana uvatae aṃṇamaṃṇaṣa vaṃti nasti danagrahana.

“From this time onward, there is no giving or taking towards each other.” (Baums 2018b: 61).

(5.4) CKD 593 under-tablet obverse 6f.

ahuno Kupṣuta Suḡuta Balaṣena Śrustingaṣa ca paros̥paraṣa vaṃti nasti dagrana.

“Now Kupṣuta, Suḡuta, Balaṣena, and Śrustinga have no claim to payment from each other.” (TKD: 127).

(5.5) CKD 425 under-tablet obverse 4f.

edeṣa śramaṃṇa Jivamitra Cugapena ṣadha eka bhitiyaṣa vaṃti nasti danagrahana.

“Of these two, the monk Jivamitra along with Cugapa, there shall be no more giving or taking one from the other.” (TKD: 87).⁷⁷²

In these examples, the reciprocal pronouns are all inflected in the gen.sg.: *aṃṇamaṃṇaṣa*; *paros̥paraṣa*; *eka bhitiyaṣa*. Yet, other forms are attested too. In CKD 577 and 820, a gen.pl. *eka bhitiyana* is, for instance, found in the same formula as quoted above without any noticeable difference in meaning or syntactic structure.

The lack of cognates of *eka biti* in other Indo-Aryan languages strongly supports Burrow’s idea (1935a: 790) that it is a calque from a Middle Iranian language, where reciprocal pronouns often go back to the combination of the

⁷⁷¹ My conjecture based on Hasuiki’s (1999: 164) reading *p[un]o s̥para na*.

⁷⁷² For variants of the same formula with *eka biti*, see CKD 577; 732; 820.

word for ‘one’ with that for ‘second’, e.g. Khot. *śśū-jāta-* (DKS: 401f.) or Parth. *ēw bid* (pl. *ēw bidān*; Brunner 1979: 81f.).⁷⁷³

Because this type of reciprocal pronoun is not restricted to one Iranian language in particular, one cannot easily determine the donor language of *eka biti*. Bactrian is at least a possibility, as there is one instance of Bactr. *ωγο* ‘one’ + *βιδδιγο* ‘second’ in the function of a reciprocal (“one ... the other”):

(5.6) X 19–21 ~ X 19’–21’

ωσο κιδασο μαχο ασο σφφαρο βραδο ασιμο σαχονο ... ανδαρζαγγο
κιραμο αλο ωγο αλο βιδδιγο ναγο ζοοαμο ... (X19–21 ~ X19’–21’).

“Now whichever of us four brothers may act otherwise than (according to) this statement ... or will not live one with the other, ...” (BD I²: 138).⁷⁷⁴

5.3.3 Niya Prakrit reflexives

As mentioned in §5.3.1, reciprocals and reflexives often overlap in form and function. Because there is proof of contact influence from Iranian, possibly Bactrian, on the Niya Prakrit reciprocals, it thus seems worth examining whether the same holds for the reflexives. After all, “if structural interference of any kind has occurred, it is highly unlikely to be isolated in the system [of a language]” (Thomason 2008: 49).

The ideal way to investigate this possibility would be (i) to study the syntactic properties of the reflexive pronouns in Niya Prakrit; (ii) to compare the syntax of corresponding formations in other MIA languages; and (iii) to see if the features not paralleled in other MIA languages are found in neighbouring Iranian languages, particularly Bactrian. The first and third

⁷⁷³ The fact that *eka biti* is an innovation hints at its being the living form. I have, however, been unable to find additional clues that *eka biti* would belong to a less formal register than the other pronouns. One indication of a register difference could be that the use of *aṃñamaṃñā* and *parospāra* / *parosṣāra* would be restricted to legal formulae. This holds for the rarely attested *aṃñamaṃñā*, but *parospāra* / *parosṣāra* also occurs in non-formulaic examples like *ede bharyapadaya parosparade vina huvamti* “This couple lived separated from one another” (CKD 788; tr. mine).

⁷⁷⁴ The preposition *αλο* ‘with’ used between *ωγο* ‘one’ and *βιδδιγο* ‘second’ is probably dependent on the verb *ζοοαμο* ‘we live’, as in X 9 ~ X 9’–10’ *οδο δογγο ζοοαμο σογγο βραδο αλο βραδο αβδδινινδο* “and we shall live just as it is the custom (for) brother (to live) with brother” (BD I²: 136). Another reciprocal marker *μαρδο ασο μαρδο*, literally ‘man from man’, i.e. ‘one from another’ is attested in the same document (cf. BD II: 231).

steps require me to first describe the syntax of the reflexive pronouns in both Niya Prakrit and Bactrian in more detail than has been done before (§§5.3.3–5.3.5). Step two confronts us with a practical problem: there is no comprehensive comparative syntax of Middle Indo-Aryan in which one can conveniently look up the syntactic properties of all reflexive pronouns in all MIA languages,⁷⁷⁵ and doing this type of research myself would be impractical within the scope of a single case study. As a result, it will be challenging to decide which similarities between the syntax of the Niya Prakrit and Bactrian reflexives are significant and which are not. Therefore, the best I can do is concentrate on how well the syntax of the Niya Prakrit and Bactrian reflexives matches and from there proceed to necessarily tentative conclusions (§§5.3.6–5.3.8).

The examination will concentrate on Niya *tanu(vaga)* ‘one’s own, property’ and Bactr. *χοβο / χοβιγο* ‘idem’. The reason for this is that the Niya pronoun is a typically northwestern form whose cognates are restricted to South Asian Gāndhārī and some NIA languages from the region (EWAia I: 621f.), and thus a possible candidate for Iranian influence.⁷⁷⁶ The Bactrian word has cognates in most Middle Iranian languages (cf. §5.3.4.1), so if certain morphological or syntactic parallels between Bactr. *χοβο / χοβιγο* and Niya *tanu(vaga)* result from language contact, it would seem most likely that Bactrian influenced Niya Prakrit and not the other way around.

A secondary point of interest is the other reflexive markers in Niya Prakrit, i.e. the intensifiers Niya *sveya* ‘oneself’ and Bactr. *χοαδο* ‘idem’, and the canonical reflexive/intensifier Niya *apana* ‘oneself’ and Bactr. *χοβισαπο* (later *χοβοσαπο*) ‘idem’. I include these forms in order to point out that the reflexive system in both languages operates with a threefold distinction (see §5.3.5). This threefold structure is primarily the result of common inheritance. However, it is still worth looking at because it has been plausibly argued that inherited similarities in the grammatical systems of two or more

⁷⁷⁵ Sen’s historical syntax of MIA only briefly mentions the reflexives in Niya Prakrit and South Asian Gāndhārī (1953: 90f.) and does not discuss the other languages. Bubeník’s historical syntax of late MIA (1998) does not treat reflexive pronouns at all.

⁷⁷⁶ Schwarzschild (1959) has argued that Ap. *taṇaya-* ‘one’s own, belonging to’ is also a cognate of Niya *tanu(vaga)*. If true, *taṇaya-* could be a northwestern dialect feature in Apabhraṃśa, like the preservation of *-Cr-* clusters which grammarians prescribe for Apabhraṃśa (cf. De Clercq 2009: 9; Ollett 2024: 87–89).

languages increase the potential for contact-induced change (see e.g. Bownern 2013; Law 2013).

5.3.3.1 *tanu(vaga)* ‘one’s own, property’

I start with a synchronic description of the morphosyntactic use of Niya *tanu(vaga)* ‘one’s own, property’. This is not a controversial topic. Yet, Burrow’s treatment of it in LKD (§86) is very succinct, and he does not note some features which in §5.3.7 I will use to argue that Niya *tanu(vaga)* and Bactr. $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$ were mutually intertranslatable, e.g. that (i) *tanu(vaga)* is co-referential with either the agent or the recipient and that (ii) it must co-refer with a noun phrase at the same clause level.

Generally speaking, *tanu(vaga)* is a possessive reflexive adj. with the meaning ‘one’s own’ that can also be substantivised to mean ‘property’. It is the most frequent reflexive marker in Niya Prakrit, and the same form was also used in Gāndhārī inscriptions. The attestations are listed below.

Attestations

DIR.SG. *tanu*: CKD 24; 26; 33; 49; 58; 59 (2x); 90; 106; 130 (2x); 135; 160; 161; 165; 190; 211; 235; 271; 278 (?); 292; 324 + 328 (2x); 326 (4x); 331; 358; 366; 387; 471; 473 (2x); 482; 492; 509; 547; 553; 568; 569; 572; 573; 574; 575; 582; 585 (3x); 624; 713 (3x); 714 (2x); 734 (2x); 769; 779; 889; *tanuvaga*: CKD 90; 235; 437; 491; 656; 677; 836; 884 (2x); *tanuvagā*: CKD 661 (2x); *tanuvāga*: CKD 324 + 328; 506 (2x); 545; 574; 709; 719; 770; 779; 898 (2x); *tanovaga*: CKD 837; 871; *taṇuvaga*: CKI 1177; *danu*: CKD 318; 358 (3x); 743; 783

DIR.SG.FEM. *tanuyi*: CKD 39; 545; 551

ABL.SG. *tanuvagade*: CKD 305 (2x); *tanuvade*: CKD 635

LOC.SG. *taṇuvae*: CKI 60; 178; *taṇuakami*: CKI 241; 564; *tanuakami*: CKI 368; *taṇukaami*: CKI 241; *tanuvakaṃmi*: CKI 153

DIR.PL. *tanuvāe*: CKD 279

GEN.PL. *taṇuakaṇa*: CKI 564

Etymologically, this pronominal adj. derives from the (Ṛg)Vedic reflexive *tanú-*. While originally meaning ‘body’ or ‘person’ (Pinault 2001), *tanú-* was gradually grammaticalised to become an intensifier and a canonical reflexive (cf. e.g. Kulikov 2007; Orqueda 2019: 145–184).

In later Vedic, *tanú-* disappears and is replaced by *ātmán-* (cf. Niya *apana* discussed below). Yet, derivatives of *tanú-* probably survived in the northwest, given Niya Pkt. *tanu(vaga)* and NIA forms such as Torwali *tanu* ‘own’ or Khowar *tān* ‘self, own’ (EWAia I: 621f.). The extensive time gap between the *Ṛgveda* and our earliest evidence for Gāndhārī renders it

difficult to chart the historical changes that took place in the creation of the reflexive possessive adj. in detail.

Coming back to Niya Prakrit, I could not detect a functional distinction between the longer form *tanuvaga* (and variants) and the shorter form *tanu*. Both can occur as a reflexive adj. or as a noun meaning ‘property’. The equivalence between the longer and the shorter form can, for instance, be observed from examples (5.7)–(5.8): in (5.7), *tanuvaga* is used in the meaning ‘property’, whereas *tanu* is used in the same function in (5.8).

(5.7) CKD 437 under-tablet obverse 7f.

taha ahuno sā kuḍi Saganāpaae etaṣa Maṣḍhigeyaṣa tanuvaga huda.

“so now that girl Saganāpaae has become the property of this Maṣḍhige.” (TKD: 90).

(5.8) CKD 575 under-tablet obverse 6

se maṃnuṣa Cmaga Kuṣayiciyaṣa tanu huda.

“That man Cmaga was the property of Kuṣayici.” (TKD: 116).

When *tanu(vaga)* is not, as in the preceding, combined with a genitive complement,⁷⁷⁷ it is co-referential with the agent of the sentence⁷⁷⁸ or the recipient of a ditransitive construction. In example (5.9), the adj. *danu* is co-referential with the dir.sg. *Viharavala*, agent of pres.3sg. *viheḍeti* ‘wastes’ and *vinajeti* ‘destroys’.

(5.9) CKD 358 obverse 5

Viharavala atra danu kilmiciyana masu maṃtsena suṭha viheḍeti vinajeti.

“... Viharavala is wasting and destroying the wine and meat of his own tenants.” (TKD: 70).

A similar example is (5.10), where the co-referent of the adj. *tanuvaga* is the agent *Mogeya Cimagāṣa ca* ‘Mogeya and Cimagā’.

⁷⁷⁷ The locative is used when *avāna* ‘village’ is the complement of *tanu(vaga)* (CKD 279; 326). Khotan Pkt. *mayi* in *mayi ... tanuvagā* (CKD 661) is best understood as a gen. and not as a loc. (see LKD: §28; §78).

⁷⁷⁸ The examples in Gāndhārī inscriptions are all of this co-referential and adjectival type. In CKI 48 and 165, a derivative of Skt. *svaka-* is used in this way, respectively *śpae* and *svakiya*. These are probably Sanskritisms. For the loc.sg. *tanuakami śpae* in CKI 368, I tentatively follow Falk’s (2003: 73 = 2013a: 66) interpretation of *śpae* as a noun referring to some territory, as it would be unexpected to have two reflexive adjectives right after another.

- (5.10) CKD 709 cover-tablet reverse 3

tanuvaga muliyena Mogeya Cimagāṣa ca nikhalitaṃti.

“Mogeya and Cimagā got him from there with a price paid out of their own property.” (TKD: 142).

(5.11) is an instance whereby *tanu* is co-referential with the recipient of pres.1sg. *denāmi* ‘I give’, i.e. the gen.sg. *Suḡutaṣa* (a PN).

- (5.11) CKD 568 under-tablet obverse 3f.

ahaṃ Kapgeya Suḡutaṣa paśu 10 tanu denāmi.

“I Kapgeya give ten sheep to Suḡuta as his property.” (TKD: 112).

In every example given so far, *tanu(vaga)* is used co-referentially with a noun phrase at the same clause level, and this pattern holds for all the attestations of *tanu(vaga)*. For co-referentiality with a noun phrase at a different clause level, a demonstrative pronoun in the genitive seems preferred, as in (5.12). In this formulaic example, the gen.sg. *edaṣa* ‘of him’ in the complement clause introduced by *yatha* ‘that’ is co-referential with the dir.sg. *vasu Līpeya* ‘the vasu Līpeya’ in the main clause.

- (5.12) CKD 144 under-tablet obverse 2

iśa vasu Līpeya viṃṇaṇeti yatha edaṣa dajha Kacana nama hoati.

“Here, the vasu Līpeya informs us that he has a slave called Kacana.” (TKD: 26).

Reduplicated *tanu(vaga)* has a distributive sense, as in (5.13), where *tanu tanu* corresponds in the translation to “each man’s ... separately”.

- (5.13) CKD 59 reverse 3

sā aṃna teṣa jaṃnaṣa tanu tanu nadha iśa anidavo.

“each man’s parcel (of corn) is to be brought here separately.” (after TKD: 13).

Besides, there is at least one case of *tanu* being added after a possessive genitive, here cited as (5.14). In this example, the first *tanu* is put in between the gen.sg. *ogu Bhimaṣenaṣa* ‘of the *ogu* Bhimaṣena’ and its syntactic head gen.pl. *kilmeciyana* ‘of the tenants’.

- (5.14) CKD 734 reverse 1f.

yo atra ogu Bhimaṣenaṣa tanu kilmeciyana bhumakṣetra Rutraya Paṃcamaṣa ca tanu darśayeti.

“As regards the field there belonging to the tenants of the *ogu* Bhimaṣena which Rutraya and Paṃcama claim as their own” (TKD: 145).

If we, for instance, compare the gen.pl. *ogu Aśogaṣa kilmeciyana* ‘of the tenants of the *ogu Aśoga*’ in CKD 254, where no *tanu* is added, it seems as if ***ogu Bhimaṣenaṣa kilmeciyana* would have been grammatically correct in (5.14) as well.

To finish this overview of the synchronic behaviour of *tanu(vaga)*, I now briefly discuss one instance where Burrow takes *tanu* in an unparalleled sense as ‘(her) person’. This example, i.e. (5.15), concerns the compensation which a certain Pugo and Lýipeya should receive for the death of a witch who belonged to them. Burrow translates *ṣadha tanu* as ‘along with her person’.

(5.15) CKD 58 reverse 2f.

yo taya arthadana giṭamti ṣadha tanu Pugo Lýipeya giṃnidavya.

“The property they took from her Pugo and Lýipe are to receive along with her person.” (TKD: 13).

In my view, Burrow’s translation does not make much sense in context, as the woman in question is actually dead (cf. also the parallel in CKD 63). Moreover, in the two other instances where *tanu* combines with the verb *giṃn-* ‘to take, receive’ (CKD 545; 574), the meaning is ‘to take as one’s own’. Therefore, the same may be intended in (5.15), even though *ṣadha* ‘together’ would then fit less easily into the syntax. Given these uncertainties, I will not base conclusions on example (5.15).⁷⁷⁹

5.3.3.2 *sveya* ‘oneself’

In this subsection, I briefly treat the morphosyntax of Niya *sveya* ‘oneself’, as I will later compare this pronoun with Bactr. *χοαδο* ‘idem’ (§5.3.4.2). *sveya*, the regular outcome of OIA *svayam* ‘oneself’, is typically found in its etymologically expected usage as an intensifier (LKD: §86).⁷⁸⁰

Attestations

ADV. *sveya*: CKD 292; 621; 842 (2x); 884; *sveyam*: CKD 22; *sve*: CKD 193; *svaya*: CKD 709

⁷⁷⁹ Sometimes, Burrow translates *tanu* as an intensifier, but this is never a necessary interpretation. In CKD 624, for instance, Burrow (TKD: 130) translates *uṭa tanu nidavo* as “the camel itself is to be brought”, but nothing speaks against the literal meaning “the camel is to be brought as his property”.

⁷⁸⁰ For the use of OIA *svayam*, see e.g. Speyer (1886: §§263–268) and Orqueda (2019: 128–144).

In most occurrences, *sveya* occurs together with *devaputra* ‘king’ (CKD 193; 709; 842; 884), although it is often difficult to decide whether *sveya* is used adnominally or adverbially. An example is *eda vivada svaya devaputra śruda* in CKD 709 under-tablet obverse 2, translatable as “his majesty heard this dispute himself” (TKD: 142). In this sentence, *svaya* seems to be an inclusive intensifier (§5.3.1), given that the other officials present at the dispute are also mentioned later in the document.

In the spelling *sveyam*, the same word occurs in *ariyaga Rutrayaṣa sveyam eva gaṃdavya* (CKD 22 obverse 2), translated by Burrow as “the guide (*ariyaga*) Rutraya must himself go [i.e. on an embassy].” (TKD: 5). Because of the addition of the particle *eva*, it seems to me that the function of *sveyam* in this sentence is more pronounced than what is captured by Burrow’s translation. Therefore, I wonder whether *sveyam eva* means here ‘on one’s own’, i.e. ‘without the help of others’, comparable in sense to *etaṣa arivagaṣa tanu storena gaṃtavo* “this guide must go on his own beast” (CKD 135 under-tablet obverse 5; TKD: 24). According to this interpretation, *sveyam eva* would be a so-called exclusive intensifier (§5.3.1).⁷⁸¹

5.3.3.3 *apana* ‘oneself’

Although not frequently attested (2 or 3 examples), the morphosyntactic usage of Niya *apana* ‘oneself’ is not notably different from that of its Sanskrit cognate *ātman-* (LKD: §86). It is, as we shall see in §5.3.4.3, also comparable to that of Bactr. *χοβισαπο* (later *χοβοσαπο*) ‘idem’.

Attestations

DIR.SG. *apane*: CKD 139; 502 (?)

GEN.SG. *apanasya*: CKD 201

The clearest example is *tuo apane acovina paśidavo* “you must yourself (*apane*) inspect the *acovinas* [border officials]” (CKD 139 obverse 5f.; TKD:

⁷⁸¹ *sveya* can also be used in compounds, e.g. *sveyaviṣeya* ‘one’s own territory’ (CKD 292; 621; 842) ~ loc.sg. *tanuvaga viṣeyami* ‘idem’ (CKD 884). Compounds with *sva-* only rarely occur in Niya Prakrit. The only clear examples are ins.sg. *svamaraṃnena* ‘with one’s own death’ (CKD 40; cf. Lüders 1940b: 43; Wüst 1966: 44), *svakama* ‘of one’s own will’ (CKD 497), and *svachamdi* / *svachamtaga* ‘idem’ (CKD 555; 639). The latter two correspond nicely to Bactr. *χοακαμο* / *χογαμο* ‘out of one’s own will’ and *χοασινδο* / *χοσινδο* ‘idem’ (on which cf. BD II: 278f.; Sheikh 2023: 69).

25).⁷⁸² Like *sveya*, *apane* functions here as an intensifier, comparable to Sanskrit examples such as *sarpas tenātmanā svālayaṃ nītaḥ* “he himself brought the serpent to his dwelling” (ex. from Speyer 1888: §264), where the ins.sg. *ātmanā* ‘himself’ is co-referential with and the same case as *tena* ‘by him’.

A so far unrecognised second example of dir.sg. *apane* may be found in CKD 502. This document concerns a claim against Apñiya, who is accused of having distributed water he had borrowed. I cite the relevant passage with (a lightly modified version of) Burrow’s translation in (5.16). Burrow takes *apane* to be ‘outlet’, assuming an etymological connection with Skt. *apanaya*- ‘leading away, taking away’.

(5.16) CKD 502 obverse 3–5

a[tra] anada pruchidavo yati Apñiyaṣa udaga yaḷitaga huati tade udagade aṃñeṣa ditaga siyati atha va apane na ditaga siyati eda prace Apñiyaṣa vaṃti nasti parihaṣa.

“... careful investigation must be made (to find out) if this water was borrowed by Apñiya and (part) of this water⁷⁸³ was given to others. (If) on the other hand an outlet (*apanaya*) was not provided, there is no claim against Apñiya.” (after TKD: 98).

I would interpret *apane* in the same way as in CKD 139 discussed above, which yields the more straightforward translation “... (If) on the other hand he has not provided (the water) himself, there is no claim against Apñiya”.

Even though Niya Pkt. *apane* is in both examples used as an intensifier, one suspects that it could also be used as a canonical reflexive, like its cognates in other MIA languages, including South Asian Gāndhārī.⁷⁸⁴

5.3.4 Bactrian reflexives

This section treats the reflexive pronouns in Bactrian in the same way as §5.3.3 did for the Niya Prakrit pronouns. I try to show two things, viz. (i) that

⁷⁸² *apanasya kritaga* in CKD 201 seems to mean ‘your own deeds’, but the reading of this imperfectly preserved document is not entirely certain.

⁷⁸³ Burrow’s translation has “(water) from this water”.

⁷⁸⁴ The South Asian Gāndhārī cognates are mainly found in reliquary inscriptions (cf. CKI 60; 69; 158; 223; 369; 373; 564 (2x)). These are usually gen. forms, e.g. gen.sg. *at[va]ṇasa* in CKI 69 *at[va]ṇasa ṇatimitrasalohidaṇa arogadakṣiṇae* “for his own reward of health and that of his relatives, friends, and kinsmen” (tr. mine).

the reflexive adj. $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$ closely resembles Niya *tanu(vaga)* in its usage and (ii) that Bactrian, like Niya Prakrit, uses a threefold system with a reflexive adj. ($\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$), an intensifier ($\chi\omicron\alpha\delta\omicron$), and a canonical reflexive also used as an intensifier ($\chi\omicron\beta\iota\sigma\alpha\omicron$; later $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron\sigma\alpha\omicron$).

5.3.4.1 $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$ ‘one’s own, property’

I will first describe the morphosyntax of the Bactrian reflexive adjectives $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\upsilon\nu\grave{\alpha}$ / and $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\upsilon\nu\grave{\iota}\gamma\grave{\alpha}$ /. Their usage has already been described by Gholami (SFBG: 111f.; 128), but her treatment does not go much beyond the entries on these adjectives in Sims-Williams’ glossary (BD II: 279). Therefore, a more extensive discussion seems useful, also because Gholami does not discuss the co-referentiality patterns shown by $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$, which in §5.3.7 will be used as arguments that they were mutually intertranslatable with Niya *tanu(vaga)*.

Like *tanu(vaga)*, Bactr. $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$ can be used both adjectivally, as in English ‘one’s own’, and as a noun meaning ‘property’. As first noted by Sims-Williams (1994), $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ etymologically derives from **hwa(i)-paθya-*,⁷⁸⁵ thus being a cognate of MP *xwē(ba)š*, Parth. *wxēbēh*, Sogd. *xypθ* / *xypt*, Khot. *hāvya-* / *hivya-*, and so forth.⁷⁸⁶ $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$, on the other hand, is an example of the pleonastic addition of the adjectival suffix *-ιγῶ* / *-īgā*/ to words that are already adjectives (BD II: 217).

There seems to be no functional distinction between $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ and $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$, but the latter is much less frequent. When $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$ is not co-referential, a preposed complement indicates the possessor, e.g. the obl.pl. $\sigma\alpha\lambda\alpha\rho\alpha\nu\omicron$ ‘leaders’ in (5.17).

(5.17) V 13’

ασο μιροσανο κινω οδο παροκινω αγγαραγο ασιδο σαλαρανο $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$.

⁷⁸⁵ There is a homonym $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$, meaning ‘good’. Sims-Williams (BD II: 279) argues that this adjective and the reflexive are etymologically identical, which is possible given the parallel of English ‘proper’, ultimately going back to Latin *proprius* ‘one’s own’. However, the alternative derivation from **h(u)w-apah-* ‘with a good work > good’ does not necessarily seem less likely to me (*pace* Sims-Williams), as derivatives of **h(u)w-apah-* are attested in most neighbouring Iranian languages, e.g. Pers. *xūb* ‘good’ or Sogd. *xwp* ‘idem’.

⁷⁸⁶ For the Middle Persian and Parthian cognates, see Brunner (1979: 73–78) and GW (§780). Cf. also TB *waipacce* ‘possession’, a loan from the “Old Steppe Iranian” outcome of **hwai-paθya-* (Bernard 2023: 73f.).

“... to the east (is) a ditch, and on the farther side of the ditch the property which belongs to the leaders.” (BD I²: 118).

As most evidence for *χοβο* / *χοβιγο* comes from post-Kušāṇa Bactrian with its reduced case system, the original case of the complement is not deducible from examples like (5.17). Personal pronouns are helpful in this respect since *χοβο* / *χοβιγο* combines with *μανο* < **mana* (dd 5) and *ταο* < **tawa* (U 13 = U 16’),⁷⁸⁷ i.e. the old genitives. These instances suggest that the original case of the complement was the genitive, whose use became generalised in Bactrian to that of an oblique.⁷⁸⁸

If there is no complement, *χοβο* and *χοβιγο* are, like *tanu(vaga)*, most often co-referential with the agent of the sentence.⁷⁸⁹ (5.18) is an example whereby the adj. *χοβο* modifies *ασπο* ‘horse(s)’ and co-refers with *ρωβιγο* ‘the men of Rob’, the agent (= subject) of subj.3pl. *χωζινδαδο* ‘will demand’.

(5.18) cm 12f.

τακαλδ[ο] ασφαγο ρωβιγο χοβο ασπο χωζινδαδο ταδο ...

“When the men of Rob demand their horses from you, then ...” (BD II: 90).

Hardly different is the occasional co-referentiality between *χοβο* / *χοβιγο* and the indirect object in impersonal constructions, as, for instance, in (5.19). Here, the adj. *χοβο* is co-referential with *το χοηο* ‘your lordship’, possibly the indirect object of an impersonal verb subj.3sg. *σινδαδο* ‘will please’ (cf. BD II: 264).⁷⁹⁰

(5.19) cg 9f.

ταδο το χοηο σινδαδο πιδο χοβο ιιζγο ταδηιο ταρο πιδοροβο.

“So, (if) it should please your lordship in your goodness, receive him there (with you).” (BD II: 80).

⁷⁸⁷ Note also *ταουηλο* in J 14 = J 11’; *τωιουηλο* in L 15 = L 12’; and *τηιο* in Tt 13.

⁷⁸⁸ Enclitic pronouns can be used too, e.g. *χοβομο μαρηγανο* ‘my own servants’ in Tt 8f.

⁷⁸⁹ An enclitic pronoun is sometimes pleonastically added to *χοβο* where the co-referentiality would already be clear were *χοβο* used on its own (e.g. Uv 3–5; Sims-Williams & de la Vaissière 2015: 43).

⁷⁹⁰ For the phraseology, cf. also I 5’ *πιδο μο χοβο σιν[δο]* “according to (our) own wish” and the adjective *χοασινδο* ‘out of one’s own wish’.

Besides, *χοβο* / *χοβιγο* can co-refer with the recipient in a ditransitive construction; in (5.20), *αβο χοβο*, literally ‘for his own’ (BD II: 279), is co-referential with *φαρο χοαδηοοανινδο* ‘to Khwadew-wanind’.

(5.20) bg 11f.

ταδανο [το] χοηο πιδονωγαρο φαρο χοαδηοοανινδο λαδηιο αβο χοβο.

“then [your] lordship again gave it to Khwadew-wanind for his own” (BD II: 64).

It appears that *χοβο* / *χοβιγο*, like *tanu(vaga)*, tends to be co-referential with a noun (phrase) or a pronoun at the same clause level.⁷⁹¹

When reduplicated, *χοβο* and *χοβιγο* have distributive sense. Note, for instance, sentence (5.21), where not only *χοβιγο* but also *δρουμινο* ‘enemy’ is repeated.

(5.21) N 30f.

στο δρουμινο δρουμινο εβκαραμο οδο χοβιγο χοβιγο ληραμο σαγονδο πιταδαμο.

“... and may we chase off all enemies and keep all our own (household) as we have guaranteed.” (BD I²: 72).

The low number of examples of *χοβο* / *χοβιγο* from Kuṣāṇa sources renders it difficult to find an instance of *χοβο* / *χοβιγο* pleonastically attached to a noun in the genitive. However, an example as the following is similar in structure and conceivably derives from an older structure whereby the noun in front of *χοβο*, i.e. *βαγο* ‘god’, originally still had case marking: *ειδο μαναιο βαγο χοβο αδογαμο* “This (is) the income belonging to/of the god Mana” (Sims-Williams 2013: 194).

⁷⁹¹ The only counterexample would be the restored *χοβο* in xp 7: *μισιδο [το χοη]ο ζανο κοαδο πορλαγγοζινο αλο χοασραο [χοβο οσι]ρδοβιδο οαρο οδο λαδο κιρδο* “moreover, [your lordship] should know that Purlang-zin, together with Khwasraw [your *usi*]rd-bid, made an oath and disposition ...” (BD II: 162). According to this reading, *χοβο* in the complement clause introduced by *κοαδο* ‘that’ should be co-referential with *το χοηο* in the main clause and not, as grammatically more logical, with the PN *πορλαγγοζινο*. Contrast L 20’f. *οτηιο παδοαχβανηιο ασο μαβαρο απαρσο τοι βαζανκο αλο ι χοβο καδγιγαγο αβο ι μασκο ναβιχτιγο αγγαργο παραλαδο ...* “And you, Bazanuk, together with the members of your household, have authority (over) it for the future, to sell the property described herein ...” (BD I²: 62), where *χοβο* is co-referential with *τοι βαζανκο* ‘you, B.’ in front of it. Therefore, I suggest to restore in xp 7 rather the oblique pronoun *ταοο* / *ταιοι* ‘you’ in possessive function (SFBG: 101f.).

Finally, there is one unusual instance of $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ in W 29' where it is used as an intensifier, corresponding to $\chi\omicron\alpha\delta\omicron$ 'oneself' in the parallel W 29. In this case, I would opt for a scribal mistake.

5.3.4.2 $\chi\omicron\alpha\delta\omicron$ 'oneself'

Bactr. $\chi\omicron\alpha\delta\omicron$ / $xwad\acute{\omicron}$ / 'oneself' < **hwatah* is only used as an intensifier (cf. BD II: 278; SFBG: 108–110), corresponding on this point with Niya Pkt. *sveya* 'idem' (§5.3.3.2).⁷⁹²

A typical example of the use of $\chi\omicron\alpha\delta\omicron$ can be seen in (5.22), one of the many variants of the Bactrian epistolary greeting formula.

(5.22) ch 3–5

οτανο οαλο βαταρανο καλδανο αζο μαρηγο μαρδο αβο το χοηο $\chi\omicron\alpha\delta\omicron$
λρογο οηνανο.

"And then I would be more happy when I myself, (your) serving man, might see your lordship healthy." (BD II: 82).

In this formula, $\chi\omicron\alpha\delta\omicron$ is arguably an inclusive intensifier, given that the author of the letter implies that it is insufficient for him to hear from others that his lordship is healthy but wants to verify this with his own eyes (cf. e.g. doc. bg).

Bactr. $\chi\omicron\alpha\delta\omicron$ also occurs in the function of an exclusive intensifier. One such case is cited in (5.23), where the implication is that Paroz (παρωζο) and nobody else will have to pay the taxes (pres.3sg. $\tau\omega\zeta\iota\delta\omicron$ 'pays').

(5.23) je 8–11

οιδρο καλδο αμαχο ι τωγιγο πιδοσησαμο τασιδο σασκο παρωζο $\omega\zeta\alpha\delta\omicron$
τωγο αστο ταδο $\chi\omicron\alpha\delta\omicron$ $\tau\omega\zeta\iota\delta\omicron$.

"Until we determine the tax arrangements, whatever tax is due on the part of Paroz he (will) pay (it) himself." (BD I²: 130).

⁷⁹² Its Middle Persian and Parthian cognates *xwad* and *wxad* are also used as a clause-level and a discourse anaphor (Meyer 2013: 405–414; 2023: 184–190). "Clause-level anaphor" refers to instances where MP *xwad* and Parth. *wxad* are used in a relative clause taking up an earlier-mentioned noun phrase that is within the domain of the relative clause. "Discourse anaphor" means that the reflexive marker works as an anaphor for the last pragmatically likely subject.

5.3.4.3 *χοβισαρο* (later *χοβοσσαρο*) ‘oneself’

The pronoun *χοβισαρο* (later *χοβοσσαρο*) is etymologically based on a univerbation of the obl.sg. *χοβι* ← *χοβο* ‘one’s own’ and *σαρο* ‘head’ < OIr. **sarah-* (cf. Psht. *xpasar*).⁷⁹³ The rarely attested *χοβισαρο* can be used as a canonical reflexive (BD II: 279f.; SFBG: 110), as in (5.24), where it is co-referential with the agent, i.e. the 3sg. clitic *-ηια* ‘by him’ (in *στηια*).

(5.24) Rab. 11–14

στηια φρομαδο αβειμοανο βαοναγο κερδι αβο κοζουλο καδφισο βαο ...
οδο αβο ι *χοβισαρο* κανηηκε βαο.

“... and he gave orders to make (images of) these kings: King Kujula Kadphises ..., and himself, King Kanishka.” (Sims-Williams 2008c: 56f.).

The exact function of *χοβοσσαρο* in bc 12–13 στο ιωγο μαρδο *χοβοσσαρο* εδρηδο “and you shall ... one man yourselves” (BD II: 56) is more challenging to evaluate because we do not know the meaning of the verb *εδρ-* (2pl. *εδρηδο*). Still, the use of a 2pl. verb suggests that ιωγο μαρδο ‘one man’ should be the direct object, in which case *χοβοσσαρο* cannot be a canonical reflexive, but should be an intensifier like *χοαδο*.⁷⁹⁴

In brief, *χοβισαρο* (*χοβοσσαρο*), like Niya *apana* (§5.3.3.3), most likely had a double use as a canonical reflexive and an intensifier.

5.3.5 Summary: the reflexive system in Niya Prakrit and Bactrian

The scheme below summarises the grammatical descriptions of §§5.3.3–5.3.4. It illustrates the threefold distinction that both Niya Prakrit and

⁷⁹³ The title *λοιχοβοσσαρο* / *αλιχοβοσσαρο* (SK₄M 8; SK₄A 11; SK₄B 12) probably also contains *χοβοσσαρο* as its second element (Sims-Williams 2008c: 65).

⁷⁹⁴ In addition, there are two nearly identical instances of *χοβο* combined with *σαρο* (F 6(’); F 15 ~ F 14’), where one can doubt between translating as ‘own head’ or ‘oneself’. Cf. e.g. F 6–7 *ταδομο ωσο ασαφαγο ζηρο πιδο χοβο σαρο οαναγο σποριγο αγγιτο* (F 6’ *πιδοροβδο*), translated by Sims-Williams in an etymological way, i.e. “... and (that) now the full price has been received on (my) own head by me from you, Zer” (BD I²: 38 with fn. †). For this translation, Sims-Williams (1999: 197) cites Sogd. *pr srw ptyrβ-* ‘to receive on the head > to receive respectfully’ (MacKenzie 1970: 41). Another possibility would be to compare Sogd. *prw γr’γw ptyrβ-* (AN 107f.) and ZMP *ō grīw padīr-* ‘to take upon oneself > to accept’ (Filippone 2017: 146; 151). Whereas the Bactrian phrase refers to a price received, the Sogdian and Middle Persian ones refer to a burden one takes on oneself. As Sogd. *γr’γw* and MP *grīw* can be used as reflexives, *χοβο* + *σαρο* could probably still be reflexive in this type of formula.

Bactrian make, and it lists the commonalities shared by the different pronouns, in particular Niya *tanu(vaga)* and Bactr. *χοβο / χοβιγο*.⁷⁹⁵

	Niya Prakrit	Bactrian
1	<i>tanu(vaga)</i> adj. ← Ved. <i>tanū-</i> 'body, person, self' – adj. 'one's own' + noun 'property' – co-referential with agent or recipient – co-referential at the same clause level – distributive sense when reduplicated – can be pleonastically added after a gen.	<i>χοβο / χοβιγο</i> < OIr. <i>*hwa(i)-paθya-</i> (+ adj. suffix <i>-ιγο</i>)
2	<i>sveya</i> < OIA <i>svayam</i> – in- or exclusive intensifier 'oneself'	<i>χοαδο</i> < OIr. <i>*hwatah</i>
3	<i>apana</i> < OIA <i>ātman-</i> – canonical reflexive + intensifier 'oneself' – only rarely used in extant text corpus	<i>χοβισαρο; χοβοσαρο</i> obl.sg. <i>χοβι</i> and <i>σαρο</i> 'head' < OIr. <i>*sarah-</i>

5.3.6 A case of contact-induced change?

The next point to consider is whether, to what extent, and in which way the commonalities listed in the preceding section result from language contact.

Poplack and Levey (2010: 398) argue that three criteria should be satisfied to make a compelling case for contact-induced change:

"A candidate for contact-induced change in a contact variety is present in the presumed source variety and either 1) absent in the pre-contact or non-contact variety, or 2) if present ..., is not conditioned in the same way as in the source, and 3) can also be shown to parallel in some non-trivial way the behavior of a counterpart feature in the source." (cf. also Thomason 2001: 91–95).

⁷⁹⁵ The examination above did not reveal any significant divergences in usage between the reflexives in Niya Prakrit and Bactrian.

Unfortunately, the Niya Prakrit and Bactrian reflexives cannot meet these criteria.⁷⁹⁶ Our knowledge of how Niya *tanu(vaga)* and the other reflexive markers developed from earlier forms in the local Vedic dialects remains incomplete, so it is hardly possible to compare Niya Prakrit with a pre-contact variety, as would be necessary to satisfy the first and second criterion of Poplack and Levey. Assessing how significant the parallels between the Niya Prakrit and Bactrian reflexives are (cf. the third criterion) would require one also to compare the syntax of reflexives in other MIA languages. Again, we face a difficulty: there is no comprehensive syntactic study of MIA reflexives on which to base such a comparison (cf. §5.3.3). The absence of such a study makes it tricky to decide whether, for instance, the co-referentiality of *tanu(vaga)* and $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$ with both agent and recipient and the fact that co-referentiality needs to be at the same clause level are characteristic features of Niya Prakrit and Bactrian or also found in closely related languages.⁷⁹⁷

In any case, the morphosyntactic parallels count as cumulative evidence at best; when taken individually, most could be explained away as due to inheritance or language-internal developments. To begin with, the reflexive pronouns in Niya Prakrit and Bactrian are all inherited, so the tripartite system occurring in either language can be a language-internal phenomenon. The distributive sense that *tanu(vaga)* and $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$ obtain when reduplicated is also not necessarily significant. After all, distributive reduplication is also known elsewhere in Indo-Aryan (cf. the *āmreḍita* compounds).⁷⁹⁸ Similarly, the pleonastic addition of a possessive adj. after a gen. also occurs in later MIA, where it may be due to increasing case syncretism.⁷⁹⁹ An Apabhraṃśa example is *aṇaṅgaḥ keraū toraṇu* ‘the arch of Kāma’ (*Paūmacariu* 14.7.8), where the possessive adjective *keraū* ‘one’s own’ is added between the preposed gen.sg. *aṇaṅgaḥ* ‘of Kāma’ and the dir.sg. *torāṇu* ‘arch’.⁸⁰⁰

⁷⁹⁶ Meyer (2023: 219f. fn. 13) observes that “corpus languages frequently cannot live up to the modern methodological standards propounded by Poplack and Levey and others.”

⁷⁹⁷ Intuitively, these two features of *tanu(vaga)* and $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$ seem the most important parallels.

⁷⁹⁸ Within Iranian, distributive reduplication is also not limited to Bactrian; cf. e.g. GW (§559) on Middle Persian and Parthian, and GMS (§1633) on Sogdian.

⁷⁹⁹ The same phenomenon is moreover also attested in Iranian languages other than Bactrian. Cf. §5.2.1 on Khot. *hāvya-* / *hivya-* ‘own’.

⁸⁰⁰ On these possessive adjectives in later Indo-Aryan, cf. Schwarzschild (1954).

In conclusion, I would not claim that the parallels shared between *tanu(vaga)* and $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$ and the other reflexive pronouns in Niya Prakrit and Bactrian are necessarily due to contact-induced change.

5.3.7 A more cautious proposal: mutual intertranslatability

Even when positing large-scale contact-induced change may go too far, the data still allow for a more cautious proposal. In my view, the Niya Prakrit and Bactrian reflexives exemplify Heine and Kuteva's (2005) concept of "mutual intertranslatability". This notion means that when the grammatical structures of two languages overlap significantly, "the task of the translator or language learner is confined to inserting the appropriate lexical and grammatical forms to move from one language of the area to another" (Heine & Kuteva 2005: 180). Applied to our case study, this would mean that the Bactrian reflexives could be translated almost mechanically into the Niya Prakrit ones (and vice versa) by bilingual speakers (cf. also Chapter 7).

I see two main arguments to support that the Niya Prakrit and Bactrian reflexives were mutually intertranslatable, i.e. the structural similarities noted above and the existence of phraseological parallels. In what follows, I will elaborate on both.

Regarding the first argument, the shared tripartite division between (i) a reflexive adj. 'one's own > property' (*tanu(vaga)* ~ $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$), (ii) an intensifier (*sveya* ~ $\chi\omicron\alpha\delta\omicron$), and (iii) a canonical reflexive pronoun, also used as an intensifier (*apana* ~ $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\sigma\alpha\rho\omicron$; $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron\sigma\alpha\rho\omicron$), makes that each pronoun has an equivalent in the other language. While mainly the result of common inheritance (cf. *supra*), this shared structure renders it easy to translate a reflexive marker in one language into its counterpart in the other.

Largely the same can be said about the morphosyntactic parallels concerning, for instance, word class and co-referentiality shared between *tanu(vaga)* and $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$ (§§5.3.3–5.3.5). Although, as noted above, one can explain the individual parallels as due to inheritance or language-internal developments, their existence would allow a speaker of Bactrian to translate $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$ into Niya Pkt. *tanu(vaga)* (and vice versa) without having to worry that the resulting translation would be syntactically ungrammatical or unidiomatic.

The second argument to back up the idea that the Bactrian and Niya Prakrit reflexives were mutually intertranslatable is the presence of phraseological parallels, whereby at least $\chi\omicron\beta\omicron$ / $\chi\omicron\beta\iota\gamma\omicron$ and *tanu(vaga)*

occupy the same syntactic slot in nearly-identical contexts. Three examples of this kind will be discussed below.

The first parallel, illustrated by examples (5.25) and (5.26), concerns a legal formula ‘to pay out of one’s own property’. Both times, the default word for ‘to pay’ is used, i.e. fut.2sg. *śodheyiṣyaṣi* in (5.25) and subj.1sg. τωζανο in (5.26). In addition, the Niya Pkt. abl.sg. *tanuvade* ‘out of one’s own (property)’ equals Bactr. ασο χοβο ‘idem’.

(5.25) CKD 635 reverse 4f.

yati eta ahuṃno anatha na kariṣyaṣi eta aṃna puna tuo tanuvade śodheyiṣyaṣi.

“If you do not do this carefully now, you will later have to pay this corn out of your own.” (after TKD: 132).⁸⁰¹

(5.26) K 13–14

καλδο πιω νατωζ(α)δο ταδαζο τητο ασο χοβο τωζα[v]ο.

“so, if Piy should not pay, then I, Tet, shall pay from (my) own (property)”. (BD I²: 56).⁸⁰²

Bactr. ασο χοβο ‘out of one’s own (property)’ is likely an inherited combination, given the existence of an exact cognate in Parth. *až wxēbē* < **hačā* ‘from’ + **hwa(i)-paθya-* ‘own’ (on which cf. Brunner 1979: 77; GW: 365). Niya Prakrit, on the other hand, can express the same idea in one word by using its abl. case in *-ade*.

Secondly, one can observe a parallel between the two languages in sentences which express that person X gives Y to person Z as his/her own. (5.27) is a Niya Prakrit example, (5.28) a Bactrian one. In both instances, the verb means ‘to give, to hand over’ (Niya pres.2sg. *picavesi*; Bactr. past.opt.3sg. λαδηιο) and governs an indirect object indicating the recipient (Niya gen.sg. *Budhamitraṣa*, a PN; Bactr. φαρο χοαδηοοανινδο, also a PN). In addition, the reflexive pronominal adj., i.e. Niya *tanu* and Bactr. (αβο) χοβο, co-refers with the recipient.

⁸⁰¹ Cf. also CKD 165 and 714, where *tanu goṭhade* ‘out of one’s own farm’ is combined with the verb √*vyoṣ* ‘to reimburse’. *tanu goṭhade* has an exact parallel in Bactr. ασο χοβο καδγο (ca 7f.). In CKD 305, two other instances of the abl.sg. *tanuvagade* in the meaning ‘out of one’s own (property)’ are attested.

⁸⁰² Additionally note ασο χοβο οδο ασο ανδαρουανο “from their own (property) and from (that of) the others” (ef 15f.). When χοβο is not co-referential with the agent of the sentence, a genitival complement is necessary, as in ασο υμανο χοβο ‘out of my property’ (dd 5).

- (5.27) CKD 553 obverse 3

ahuno eda uneyaga tanu Budhamitraṣa picavesi.

“Now (however) you are handing over this adopted child to Budhamitra as his own.” (TKD: 110).⁸⁰³

- (5.28) bg 11f.

ταδανο [το] χοηο πιδωνωγαρο φαρο χοαδηοοανινδο λαδηιο αβο χοβο.

“then [your] lordship again gave it to Khwadew-wanind for his own” (BD II: 64).

Whereas Bactrian uses the prepositions αβο and φαρο to mark the inanimate patient and the animate recipient respectively (Sims-Williams 2011b: 31f.), Nīya Prakrit by default puts the recipient in the genitive case. The overall meaning is the same, however: person X gives Y to person Z “as/for his own” (*tanu* ~ αβο χοβο), i.e. “as his/her property”.

A third and final parallel has to do with stock phrases with which one promises to take care of somebody else’s people as of one’s own. I cite two instances from Nīya Prakrit, i.e. (5.29)–(5.30), and one from Bactrian, i.e. (5.31).

- (5.29) CKD 292 obverse 5

/// na tanu saṃñā paripālitaṃ.

“... are to be looked after as if they were your own.” (TKD: 53).

- (5.30) CKD 331 under-tablet obverse 6

yath[ā] tanu dita saṃñā janidavo.

“She is to be regarded as his own daughter.” (TKD: 63).⁸⁰⁴

- (5.31) ec 8–10

οδαλο ποσανανο μαρο φορτιο ταδηνο ασκαδαρο παροβαλανο σαγονδο
ιχοβο οδαλινο ναφορτιο τασιδομο ταο ασταδο ταδινο ταρο υαμγηλο
παροβαλανο σαγονδο το χοηο χοαδο.

“And if you were to send the princes(?) hither, then I would take care of them more than my own; and if you should not send them, then (with)

⁸⁰³ For further examples, see CKD 235; 366; 471; 545; 568; 719.

⁸⁰⁴ Additional examples in CKD 161 and 585 (2x). Note also *eṣa Upaṣena tatra goṭhaṃmi yatha uneyagaputra saṃñā janidavya* “this Upaṣena is to be regarded as an adopted son in that family” (CKD 31 + 764 cover-tablet reverse 1f.; TKD: 7). Here, *tanu* is missing before *uneyagaputra* ‘adopted son’, but *yatha* ‘as’ is again added as in CKD 331.

whatever means I may have I would take care of them there just like your lordship yourself.” (BD II: 112).

Three linguistic features of the Niya Prakrit examples are mirrored in the Bactrian sentence: (i) the gerv. *paripālita*vo ‘to be looked after’ in (5.29) can be compared with subj.1sg. παροβαλανο ‘I will take care’, especially since the Bactrian verb παροβαλ- is a loan from Pkt. *paripāl-* (BD II: 252); (ii) the conjunction *yathā* meaning ‘as’ in (5.30) corresponds to σαγονδο ‘idem’; and (iii) the reflexive *tanu* in both (5.29) and (5.30) equals χοβο.⁸⁰⁵ In other words, also in this type of formula, a more or less mechanical translation of one language into the other would have been possible, thus being a further illustration that the reflexive systems in Niya Prakrit and Bactrian were mutually intertranslatable in a bilingual context.

5.3.8 Conclusion

The preceding sections were devoted to an investigation of possible contact influence on Niya Prakrit reciprocals and reflexives.

As concerns reciprocals, I elaborated on Burrow’s hypothesis that the Niya Prakrit reciprocal *eka biti* ‘one the second > one another’ was calqued on an Iranian pattern, suggesting that the direct source may have been Bactr. ωγο βιδδιγο ‘idem’ (§5.3.2).

Regarding reflexives, I hope to have shown that Niya Prakrit and Bactrian use a tripartite macro-structure with a reflexive pronominal adjective, an intensifier, and a canonical reflexive. The individual forms used in both languages are moreover also parallel in their morphosyntactic behaviour (§§5.3.3–5.3.5). How to explain these commonalities is a more intricate question. Due to the difficulty distinguishing between inherited features, language-internal developments, and contact-induced changes, one should be cautious not to jump to far-reaching conclusions (§5.3.6). Based on phraseology, it can, however, be plausibly argued that the reflexives in both languages and the pronominal adjectives *tanu(vaga)* and χοβο / χοβιγο in particular were mutually intertranslatable (§5.3.7).

These conclusions still need to be substantiated further by a more detailed discussion of the historical context of potential bilingualism

⁸⁰⁵ The combination of *tanu* with (*saṃñā*) *janidavo* ‘to be regarded’ is also reminiscent of ταδοιανο χοβο ναζανηιο “and then you would not recognise (it as) his property” (bg 9; BD II: 64), where χοβο co-occurs with the Bactrian cognate of *jan-* ‘to know, recognise’, i.e. ζαν- ‘idem’.

between Niya Prakrit and Bactrian. I will return to this issue in Chapter 7, when it will be possible to include additional data from the case study on the preterite formations treated in the next section.

5.4 Preterite formations

5.4.1 Introduction

The focus of this case study is on the preterite formations in Niya Prakrit. As in the preceding case study, syntax will play an extensive role in the argumentation, as it will be necessary to examine the alignment patterns of the preterite formations in Niya Prakrit compared to those of neighbouring Middle Iranian languages. But at the same time, the morphology of these preterite formations will—much more so than with the reflexives—be at the core of the argument too.

The formation of the preterite in Niya Prakrit has two noteworthy features. On the one hand, traces of the inflectional past tenses known from OIA have hardly left a trace in Niya Prakrit: they have been replaced by an innovative formation based on the verbal adjective in *-ta-* that lacks a counterpart in other varieties of MIA. On the other hand, the new preterite is not patient-oriented, as would be expected morphologically, but agent-oriented. Concomitantly, an innovative patient-oriented formation in *-taga* (*-tae*) < **-taka-* was created, synchronically analysable as a resultative (“perfect”). See in more detail §5.4.2, also for the terminology adopted here.

In cases such as these, where the morphosyntax of Niya Prakrit differs from that of other MIA languages, the first impetus should always be to search for an explanation involving language contact. It thus is no surprise that more than one scholar has pointed to the possibility of Iranian influence on the formation of the Niya preterite, even when not every author subscribes to the idea with equal force (Weber 1997: 30f.; Wright 1998: 236f.; von Hinüber 2001²: §97; Ollett 2022: 283f.). In a recent paper, Barchi and Peschl (2022) have taken up the question in considerable detail. In their view, the formation and morphosyntactic behaviour of the new preterite tense in Niya Prakrit are most likely attributable to substrate interference from Khotanese.

Given that Barchi and Peschl’s conclusion is potentially at odds with one of the central claims made in this book, viz. that Bactrian had a much more profound impact on Niya Prakrit than Khotanese, I will reinvestigate

potential Iranian influence on the morphosyntax of the Niya preterite, arguing that Bactrian seems a more likely source of influence for the Niya preterite formation than Khotanese for morphological and other reasons. Barchi & Peschl (2022: 417; 422) rejected this option because of the difference in morphosyntactic alignment between Bactrian and Niya Prakrit. §5.4.10 will, however, adduce cross-linguistic evidence suggesting that this syntactic difference is not a serious obstacle to positing Bactrian influence on the Niya preterite.

The investigation consists of the following steps: §5.4.2 examines the synchronic behaviour of the preterite formations in Niya Prakrit; §5.4.3 summarises the main arguments used by Barchi and Peschl to substantiate their claim of a Khotanese substrate influence on the Niya preterite tense; §§5.4.4–5.4.7 discuss the four problems which I see with Barchi & Peschl’s approach; §5.4.8 summarises my counter-arguments; §§5.4.9–5.4.10 present my alternative view on the topic; and §5.4.11 draws conclusions.

5.4.2 The morphosyntax of the Niya preterite formations

This section concerns the synchronic behaviour of the Niya preterite formations. Four topics will be discussed: (i) the synchronic morphology of the Niya preterite; (ii) the diachronic derivation of this preterite; (iii) its syntactic alignment; and (iv) the morphology and syntax of the verbal adj. in *-*taka*-.⁸⁰⁶

5.4.2.1 Synchronic morphology

In this first subsection, I introduce the synchronic morphology of the Niya preterite, which is necessary for the comparison with similar preterite formations in Khotanese and Bactrian in §§5.4.3–5.4.4 and §5.4.9.

As typical for a MIA language, Niya Prakrit has two productive present classes, one in *-a-* and one in *-e-* (< *-aya-* + analogical transfers). The finite preterites derived from the OIA aorist, imperfect, or perfect found in some other MIA languages are hardly ever used.⁸⁰⁷ They were replaced by an

⁸⁰⁶ On Niya Prakrit’s verbal morphology, see mainly LKD (§§93–116), with corrections in Schoubben (2022c). For the preterite in particular, see also Jamison (2000: 66) and Barchi & Peschl (2022: 409–411).

⁸⁰⁷ One exception is the pret.3sg. *asi* / *aśi* ‘(s)he/it was’ < OIA impf.3sg. *āsīt*. In South Asian Gāndhārī, this archaic type of preterite still occurs more often, but

innovative preterite synchronically consisting of a stem in *-t/-d* (and variants)⁸⁰⁸ and personal endings which, except for the 3sg., are essentially the same as in the present. See the (partially reconstructed) paradigms of *dena-* ‘to give’ and *kare-* ‘to do’ below with the accompanying notes.

	Presents in <i>-a</i>	Presents in <i>-e</i>	Preterite
1sg.	<i>denami</i> ‘I give’	<i>karemi</i> ‘I do’	<i>ditemi</i> ‘I gave’
2sg.	<i>denasi (denaṣi)</i> ‘you give’	<i>karesi (kareṣi)</i> ‘you do’	<i>ditesi (diteṣi)</i> ‘you gave’
3sg.	<i>denati (denadi)</i> ‘(s)he gives’	<i>kareti (karedi)</i> ‘(s)he does’	<i>dita</i> ‘(s)he gave’
1pl.	<i>denama</i> ‘we give’	<i>karema</i> ‘we do’	<i>ditama</i> ‘we gave’
2pl.	<i>denatu (denadu)</i> ‘you (should) give’	<i>karetu (karedu)</i> ‘you (should) do’	<i>ditetha / ditetu</i> ‘you gave’
3pl.	<i>denaṃti</i> ‘they give’	<i>kareṃti</i> ‘they do’	<i>ditamti</i> ‘they gave’

ad 1sg. Presents in *-e-* can have longer forms with *-eya-*, in which case they are difficult to distinguish from optatives. For the 1sg. of the preterite, there are occasional Sanskritic forms in *-osmi*, e.g. *prihitosmi* ‘I am pleased’ (LKD: §106).

ad 1pl. As argued in LKD (§109), apparent examples of 1pl. preterites in *-ema* are most likely mistakes for 1sg. *-emi*.

ad 2pl. See Schoubben (2022c) for the view that the ending *-tu* (*-du*) does not mark 2sg. but 2pl. In that article (see pp. 9–13), it is also pointed out that presents in *-tu* (*-du*) can have a deontic force and that the ending *-tha* is restricted to preterites. *-atha* in *kiṭatha* ‘you did’ (CKD 213) is most likely a mistake for *-etha*.

ad 3pl. There seems to be an orthographic rule to write *-ati* instead of *-aṃti* when the final consonant of the preterite stem is written with ⁵ *da* and not with ⁵ *ta* (LKD: §105; §109).

mainly in texts translated from “Buddhist Middle Indic”. See e.g. Salomon (2008: 153–159) on the evidence from the Gāndhārī *Anavatapta-gāthā*.

⁸⁰⁸ On the formation of the past stem, see in more detail LKD (§107).

5.4.2.2 Diachronic morphology

This subsection introduces the diachronic morphology of the Niya preterite, following Burrow (LKD: §§105f.). In §5.4.9.3, I propose to understand the mechanism behind these morphological developments as “contact-facilitated grammaticalisation”.

The Niya preterite is based on the univerbation of the OIA verbal adj. in *-ta-* with present forms of the verb ‘to be’. In the 3sg., there is no copula: forms such as *dita* ‘(s)he/it gave’ and its Khotan Prakrit cognate *dhitu* point to a neut.sg. **dittam* ‘given’ that was reanalysed as an unmarked 3sg. form.⁸⁰⁹ The 1sg., 2sg., and 1pl. can be derived from the combination of a nom.masc.sg. **dittaḥ* (for 1sg. and 2sg.) or a nom.pl. **dittāḥ* (for 1pl.) and the relevant form of the copula with regular sound changes: *abhinihita sandhi*; **-aḥ* > **-e* as in nom.sg. *se* ‘this’ < OIA *saḥ* (cf. §5.4.7); and **-sm-* > **(m)m-* as in loc.sg. *-a(m)mi* < OIA **-asmin* (LKD: §49).

1sg. *ditemi* ‘I gave’ < **ditte* ‘*m(m)i*’ < **ditte* ‘*smi*’ < OIA **dittaḥ asmi*

2sg. *ditesi* (*diteṣi*) ‘you gave’ < **ditte* ‘*si*’ < OIA **dittaḥ asi*

1pl. *ditama* ‘we gave’ < **dittā* ‘*(m)ma*’ < **dittā sma* < OIA **dittāḥ sma*

The 2pl. and 3pl. are slightly more complicated: from OIA 2pl. **dittāḥ stha*, we would expect something like Niya ***ditastha* instead of *ditetha* / *ditetu* ‘you gave’, and to arrive from 3pl. **dittāḥ santi* to Niya *ditam̐ti* ‘they gave’ requires a special treatment of the **s-* in **santi*. Burrow (LKD: §105) therefore assumed analogical influence from the presents in *-e-*, while admitting that there are no examples of pret.3pl. forms in ***-em̐ti*.

As a rule, the translation of a periphrasis of the verbal adj. in *-ta-* and a form of the copula depends in Sanskrit and most MIA languages on whether the verbal root the adjective in *-ta-* is derived from is transitive or intransitive. Examples of the latter category are always agent-oriented, e.g. Skt. *aham̐ bhūto’smi* ‘I have been’, where the nom.sg. *bhūtaḥ* agrees with the subject nom.sg. *aham* ‘I’. Examples of the former are by default patient-oriented, e.g. Skt. *datto’smi* ‘I have been given’, i.e. ‘somebody gave me (to

⁸⁰⁹ I follow Burrow (1936: 431), *pace* CDIAL (no. 6140), in reconstructing a proto-form **ditta-* with a geminate **-tt-*, because of Torwali *dit* ‘given’ < **ditta-* and other such forms in NIA languages and because the *-t-* in Khotan Pkt. *dhitu* also stands for a geminate (see §5.4.7). For the change of *-am* to *-a* in Niya Prakrit, cf. e.g. the dir.sg. ending in *-a* < acc.sg. *-am* (LKD: §53).

somebody)'.⁸¹⁰ In such transitive constructions, a potential agent must be marked with the ins. or, less frequently, the gen. case.⁸¹¹ Yet, the Niya preterite does not make such a distinction: both intransitive *hudemi* 'I was' and transitive *ditemi* 'I gave' are agent-oriented.

To account for this peculiar situation, Burrow (LKD: §105) argued that "the development [of the new preterite] must have started from the intransitive verbs". Intransitive verbs were agent-oriented in both the present and the preterite, and given that the endings of the preterite closely resembled those of the present, the agent-orientation which transitive verbs had in the present tense could, in Burrow's view, easily have spread to the preterite tense as well (cf. also Jamison 2000: 66; Barchi & Peschl 2022: 410f.). I will come back to this analogy in more detail in §5.4.10.2.

5.4.2.3 The alignment patterns of the Niya preterite

This subsection describes the syntactic alignment of the Niya preterite. In the contact linguistic examination, I will base two interdependent arguments on this alignment: (i) the agent-orientation of the Niya preterite is, *pace* Barchi & Peschl (2022), insufficient reason to posit Khotanese substrate influence (§5.4.4); and (ii) the different alignment of the Niya preterite does not exclude contact influence from Bactrian (§5.4.10).

The syntactic analysis presented below is essentially that of Jamison (2000), who investigated whether the Niya preterite is "lurching towards" ergativity (like other MIA languages) or perhaps "beyond" or "around" it (cf. p. 67).⁸¹² Based on her analysis, I understand the alignment of the Niya

⁸¹⁰ For the terms agent-orientation and patient-orientation and their application to the verbal system of Sanskrit, see Hock (1986).

⁸¹¹ A vast amount of literature exists on the synchronic status of this verbal adj. in *-ta-* in OIA and the resulting shift from nom.-acc. to split-ergative alignment in MIA and NIA. Cf. e.g. Bubeník (1998: 133–160); Butt (2001); Bynon (2005); Condoravdi & Deo (2015); Dahl (2021); Dahl & Stroński (2016); Peterson (1998; 1999); Stroński (2009); Verbeke (2013). A detailed discussion of this literature exceeds the scope of this work.

⁸¹² Although she is not very explicit on this point, the implied conclusion of her article seems to be that the Niya preterite is indeed "lurching beyond" or "around" ergativity. As Michaël Peyrot (p.c.) pointed out, one could also say that the Niya preterite is "lurching away" from ergativity. For more on Jamison's account, see also Bynon (2005: 33–35) and Barchi & Peschl (2022: 411–413).

preterite to be a mix of three systems, i.e. nom.-acc. alignment, neutral (or direct) alignment, and semantic alignment.⁸¹³

The first type of alignment shown by the Niya preterite concerns demonstrative pronouns and is not very common. Unlike nouns, adjectives, and non-demonstrative pronouns, demonstratives still distinguish between nominative and accusative, at least in the singular (LKD: §§80f.). As a result, the agent (= subject) can be marked in the nom. and the patient in the acc. With demonstratives, we can accordingly speak about “nom.-acc. alignment”.

(5.32) and (5.33) are two instances where the nom.sg. or acc.sg. of a demonstrative, be it on its own or as part of a nominal syntagm, is used for either the agent or the patient of the sentence. In (5.32), the nom.masc.sg. *eṣa* ‘he’ is the agent (= subject) of the pret.3sg. *liṣita* ‘dispatched’, while the patient is the dir.sg. *uṭa* ‘camel’.

(5.32) CKD 52 under-tablet obverse 2

eṣa iśa klasenadharmena mahi maharayaṣa uṭa liṣita.

“he dispatched a camel to me the great king according to the *klasena* arrangements.” (TKD: 12).

In (5.33), the 1pl. agent is encoded in the verb pret.1pl. *nidama* ‘we brought’, while acc.sg. *eda uṭa* ‘this camel’ acts as the patient of *nidama*.

(5.33) CKD 644 reverse 4

eda uṭa paruvārṣami iśa nidama.

“Last year we brought this camel here.” (TKD: 134).

The second and most frequent alignment system is a direct result of the merger of nom. and acc. to become the direct case. Because of this development in the case system, the agent (= subject) and patient of a preterite verb are, as with agent-oriented constructions in other tenses, usually marked in the same way. A system where the marking of the agent equals that of the patient also occurs in languages like English, where it is commonly referred to as “neutral alignment”. Yet, given that in Niya Prakrit, the agent and patient are in this type of construction both marked in the direct case, one can alternatively speak about “direct alignment”.⁸¹⁴

The following three sentences, taken from Barchi & Peschl (2022: 411f.), exemplify the use of “neutral” or “direct” alignment in Niya Prakrit. In (5.34),

⁸¹³ For these types of alignment, see Coghill (2016: 6–12), Dahl (2021: 414–419; 2022: 3–13), and Meyer (2023: 61–68).

⁸¹⁴ Meyer (2022: 280) uses the same terminology with reference to Armenian.

the dir.pl. *khakhordi stri 3* ‘three witch-women’ is the patient of pret.3pl. *nikhalitaṃti* ‘they took out’, the 3pl. agent being encoded in the verb form.

(5.34) CKD 63 under-tablet obverse 2

atra khakhordi stri 3 nikhalitaṃti.

“there they took out three witch-women.” (after TKD: 13).

In (5.35), the agent of the pret.2sg. *giḍesi* ‘you received’ is marked overtly with the dir.sg. *tu* ‘you’, and the patient is the dir.sg. *anati* ‘command’.

(5.35) CKD 63 under-tablet obverse 2f.

eda prace tu Ap[ge]yade anati giḍesi Līpeyaṣa stri patena stavidavya hoati.

“About this matter you received a command from Apgeya that recompense was to be made to Līpeya for this woman.” (TKD: 14).

In (5.36), finally, the dir.sg. *śramaṃna Yipiya* ‘the monk Yipiya’ is the agent and the dir.pl. *aśpa tre* ‘three horses’ the patient of the pret.3sg. *giḍa* ‘he received’.

(5.36) CKD 582 under-tablet obverse 3

taha ṣoṭhaṃgha Raṃṣotsaṣa paride bhumāṣa muli śramaṃna Yipiya giḍa aśpa tre.

“From the *ṣoṭhaṃgha* Raṃṣotsa the monk Yipiya received as price of the land three horses.” (TKD: 120f.).

As Niya Prakrit does not have a fixed word order, the agents and patients of sentences with a 3sg. verb should be distinguished based on context and other pragmatic factors. In most cases, this is easily done, as the agent will usually have a higher level of animacy than the patient. A monk is, for instance, more likely to receive three horses than the other way around (cf. (5.36)). But if the agent and patient possess the same degree of animacy and are marked in identical ways, confusion may arise as to which is which.

In order to avoid such confusion, the agent of a pret.3sg. form is put in the ins. case when the patient is as high on the animacy hierarchy as the agent. In other words, Niya Prakrit employs a form of differential agent marking (see Jamison 2000: 71–74).⁸¹⁵ With this third alignment system, in essence a

⁸¹⁵ For exceptions to the animacy rule, including archaic instances of agent marking with the ins. in colophons and introductions to royal proclamations, cf. Jamison (2000: 74f.; 78f.). The use of instrumental agents sometimes spread to sentences where the verb is not a preterite (LKD: §118; Jamison 2000: 76f.), e.g.

subtype of the second, argument marking is thus not only determined by syntactic criteria but also by semantic factors such as animacy. We can therefore refer to it as “semantic alignment” (for which cf. e.g. Dahl 2022: 7-10).⁸¹⁶

To illustrate how this semantic alignment system works in practice, I briefly discuss two relevant sentences below (adopted from Jamison 2000: 73). In example (5.37), both the agent and the patient of pret.3sg. *vijida* ‘wounded’ are humans. As a result, the agent, i.e. the PN *Aūgalena*, is marked in the ins.sg. but the patient, i.e. *stri* ‘woman’, in the dir.sg.

(5.37) CKD 29 under-tablet obverse 3

aṃṇa Līpeyaśa stri Kolīṣaśa bhratu Aūgalena vijida.

“Moreover, Aūgala, the brother of Kolīṣa, wounded a woman of Līpeya.” (tr. Barchi & Peschl 2022: 413).

In example (5.38), the agent of the first pret.3sg. *dita* ‘gave’ is likewise put in the ins.sg., i.e. *Priyavagena* (a PN), because the patient is once again the word for ‘woman’, dir.sg. *stri*. The agent of the second pret.3sg. *dita* ‘gave’ is, however, the dir.sg. *Suḡuta* (also a PN). In this case, the patient is the dir.sg. *tavastaga* ‘carpet’, so there is no need for an ins.sg. ***Suḡutena*. The contrast in animacy between the PN *Suḡuta* and the inanimate noun *tavastaga* namely suffices to discriminate between the agent and patient of the sentence.

(5.38) CKD 578 under-tablet obverse 4–6

*tena Suḡutaśa stri Koloae naṃma Priyavagena dita striyae pratiprahuḍa
Priyavagaśa Suḡuta dita tavastaga hasta 4 4.*

Paginena aloṭa viloṭade purva Mokṣapriyaśa vaṃti suṃvarṇaṇa nikhaleti “Pagina (ins.sg. *Paginena*) is now trying to recover a debt of gold from Mokṣapriya (lent) before the plundering of the kingdom.” (CKD 494 under-tablet obverse 2f.; TKD: 96). Occasionally, the ins. case is also used for the patient, e.g. *[ade]hi Ca[smi]nena viśajideśi asmagena caragena* “From there you sent Casmīna our agent (ins.sg. *Ca[smi]nena* ... *asmagena caragena*)” (CKD 86 reverse 3 TKD: 17). Such instances deserve further study.

⁸¹⁶ In this respect, the morphosyntax of Nīya Prakrit resembles but at the same time differs from that of NIA languages. In the latter, animacy likewise plays an extensive role in case marking and alignment patterns. In contrast to Nīya Prakrit, it is, however, the marking of the object and typically not that of the agent which is influenced by animacy (cf. Verbeke 2013: 254 *et passim*).

“Therefore Priyavaga gave a woman called Koloae to Suḡuta. As a counter-gift for the woman Suḡuta gave to Priyavaga a carpet eight hands (in length).” (after TKD: 118).

With patient-oriented formations, such as gerundives and the verbal adj. in **-taka-*, the agent is by contrast marked in the gen. case and not in the ins. (cf. LKD: §119).⁸¹⁷ In sentence (5.39), the agent of the gerv. *gaṃdavo* ‘must come’ is, for instance, the gen.sg. *Caṃpeyaśa* (a PN).

- (5.39) CKD 83 under-tablet obverse 4
dena śadha Caṃpeyaśa iśa gaṃdavo Naṃtaśrṃma śadha.
 “With him Caṃpeya must come here along with Naṃtaśrṃma.” (TKD: 16).

Occasionally, the agent of a gerundive can, however, also be put in the direct case, because the alignment shift the Niya preterite underwent also started to affect the gerundive (cf. Caillat 1990: 17–21, 1992: 115–117).

5.4.2.4 The verbal adjective in **-taka-*

When the verbal adjective in *-ta-* developed into a synthetic preterite, the functional gap which it left in the system was filled by a new formation in **-taka-*. I will now treat the morphosyntax of the latter because in §5.4.9 I argue that its morphosyntax underwent Bactrian influence at the same time that contact with Bactrian influenced the course taken by the synthetic preterite.⁸¹⁸ The main take away point is the three syntactic uses of the

⁸¹⁷ This (nearly) consistent usage in Niya Prakrit of the gen. for the agent of a patient-oriented construction is clearly an innovation, perhaps in part due to contact with Iranian languages that also mark the agent in the gen. or a case derived therefrom. In OIA and most MIA languages, the gen. is used less frequently than the ins. for the agent of a patient-oriented construction, and, according to some scholars, the occasional use of a gen. rather than an ins. may, at least in some languages, have to do with morphosyntactic and/or pragmatic factors. See e.g. Jamison (1979: 133–136) and Dahl (2016: 93–95) for Vedic and Andersen (1986) for Aśokan Prakrit (with criticisms in Bubeník 1998: 138; Bynon 2005: 32f.; Stroński 2009: 102f.; Dahl 2016: 105).

⁸¹⁸ The verbal adj. in **-taka-* will also play a role in §5.4.5, where I will point to some instances of this formation in South Asian sources when arguing that Niya Prakrit is not as isolated from South Asian Gāndhārī, as assumed in Barchi & Peschl (2022).

verbal adj. in **-taka-*, viz. as (i) a (substantivised) adjective; (ii) a resultative (“perfect”); and (iii) a component of periphrastic constructions.

The periphrases have been noted since at least Burrow (LKD: §114). Yet, he does not much discuss which auxiliaries are used and how these periphrastic constructions fit into the tense-aspect system of Niya Prakrit. Therefore, it seemed worthwhile to discuss these periphrases in slightly more detail than strictly necessary for the contact linguistic argument made in §5.4.9.⁸¹⁹

Synchronically, the verbal adj. in **-taka-* is made by adding *-aga*, *-aya*, or *-ae* (rarely *-aka*) to the past stem of a verb. Examples are *asitaga* ‘dwelled’, *ditaga* ‘given’, *gadaya* ‘gone’, *kiḍaya* ‘done’, *hudae* ‘been’, and *lihitae* ‘written’ (cf. LKD: §§110f.). In contrast to the preterite, the verbal adj. in **-taka-* makes a distinction in gender: feminines end in *-i*, e.g. *aniti* ‘taken in marriage’ or *kriti* ‘bought’ (LKD: §113).

Although not that frequently attested, the first and most basic usage of the formation in **-taka-* is as an adjective modifying a noun. An example of this kind is *mṛtaga potaga* ‘a dead animal’ (CKD 215, also *mṛta potaga*). More often, adjectives in **-taka-* are used as a noun that can take on case endings (LKD: §112). In CKD 144, *taḍitagā* ‘beaten > beating’ occurs, for instance, twice in the ins.sg., i.e. *tena taḍitagena* ‘because of this beating’ and *Sogaṇaṣa taḍidagena* ‘because of Sogaṇa’s beating’, and once in the abl.sg., i.e. *taḍitagade paṭa* ‘after the beating’.

The second function for which one can use a **-taka-* form is as the main verb of a sentence. I concur with Barchi and Peschl (2022: 431) that this “construction essentially seems to serve as an innovative analytic perfect”, although “(present) resultative” seems a still more appropriate term than “perfect”. The resultative aspect is evident for intransitive verbs, such as *mṛtaga* ‘(has) died’ in (5.40). *mṛtaga* not only indicates that Anaṣena (ins.sg. *Anaṣenena*) died at some undetermined point in the past; it also highlights the result of this past event, i.e. Anaṣena being dead now.⁸²⁰

⁸¹⁹ Nevertheless, their syntax still requires further study (as also pointed out in Jamison 2000: 71 fn. 30). Such an examination would require a comparison with similar formations involving the verbal adj. in *-ta-* in other MIA languages. For the latter, see e.g. Bubeník (1998: 104–117) and Peterson (1998: 22–25; 92–96; 178–186; 1999: 237f.; 247–249).

⁸²⁰ Burrow (LKD: §115) wrote that for intransitive verbs, “the difference is that the forms in *-taka* have a participial, those in *-ta* a verbal sense”.

(5.40) CKD 399 reverse B1f.

evaṃ ca ahuno iśa veyā pa[pa]śra[ve]na śrudemi Anaṣeṇena mṛtaga.

“And now here I have heard the bad news that Anaṣeṇa has died (is dead).” (after TKD: 81).

With transitive verbs, one could be tempted to analyse a verbal adj. in **-taka-* as a passive preterite instead. Yet, also with transitives, **-taka-*forms can concern the present result of a past event. In (5.41), for example, the *pravaṃnaga* ‘invoice’ referred to (loc.sg. *pravaṃnagaṃmi*) is the direct result of the writing process implied by *lihitaga* ‘(has been) written’.

(5.41) CKD 59 reverse 2f.

paḷī aṃṇa jaṃṇaṣa nama nama pravaṃnagaṃmi lihitaga.

“As regards the tax of corn, the names of the people (paying it) have been written individually on an invoice.” (TKD: 13).

A third option is to employ the verbal adj. in *-taka-* as a component of periphrastic constructions. To begin with, the verbal adj. in **-taka-* can be combined with a present tense copula, i.e. 3sg. *hoati* (*huati*; *uhati*) ‘is’ and 3pl. *huamti* ‘are’.⁸²¹ Although more research is required to determine more nuanced aspectual differences, it seems that this periphrasis can be functionally equivalent to the use of a **-taka-*form on its own as a present resultative.⁸²²

This equivalence can be shown by comparing example (5.42) to (5.41). Whereas *lihitaga* is not combined with a copula in example (5.41), it is in (5.42). Yet, in both cases, the context suggests an interpretation of the verb as a resultative. In (5.41), the result of the writing process is explicitly

⁸²¹ Balbir (1990) argues that *hoati* (*huati*) is a pret.3sg., etymologically consisting of the addition of the 3sg. ending *-ti* to **hua* < pret.3sg. *huda* ‘was’ (see pp. 31f.). In my view, it is more attractive to compare *hoati* (*huati*) with SA Gandh. pres.3sg. *hovadi* ‘is’ (Lenz 2003: 140; 264; 2010: 47; 174) and pres.3pl. *hovati* ‘are’ (CKI 249 *te ma[ye] Seṇavarmeṇa kiḍa hovati* “These (stūpas) have been repaired by me, Seṇavarma”). The stem *hova-* (Niya *hoa-*; *hua-*) continues *bhava-* with labialisation of the first *-a-* to *-o-* (> *-u-*) due to the following *-v-*; cf. also opt.3sg. *huve* ‘may be’ (CKD 100, 2x) < OIA *bhavet* and opt.3pl. *huveyu* ‘may be’ (MĀN XII 7) < OIA *bhaveyuh*. There is only one example of a **-taka-*form being combined with *bhavati* ‘is’, i.e. *ciṃtitaga bhavati* ‘is reckoned’ in CKD 435. I did not find an example with pres.3sg. *hoti* or *asti* ‘is’.

⁸²² Studying other MIA languages, Hoose (2020: 222f.; 2022: 44f.; 55) has suggested that the presence of a copula excludes that the verbal adj. in *-ta-* has perfective rather than anterior (resultative) aspect.

referred to by the loc.sg. *pravamṇagaṃmi* ‘on an invoice’. In (5.42), the same function is fulfilled by the loc.sg. *eda lekhami*.

(5.42) CKD 770 under-tablet obverse 3f.

*yaṃ ca Yakana[śa u]pajiva jivita Puṣga[ri](*yaṃmi)⁸²³ paryaṃta sarva
eda [lekhami] lihitaga huati.*

“Everything that lived in dependence on Yakana, as far as Puṣgari (?), all has been written in this letter.” (after Burrow 1937: 118).

Secondly, verbal adjectives in **-taka-* can also co-occur with a preterite copula, i.e. 3sg. *huta* (*huda*) or *asi* (*āsi*; *aṣi*) ‘was’ and 3pl. *hutaṃti* ‘were’. The morphological makeup of this periphrastic construction suggests it to be a past resultative (“pluperfect”), although the difference with a present resultative is often quite subtle.

Combinations of a verbal adj. in **-taka-* with a past copula chiefly occur in main clauses. Yet, in sentence (5.43), the 3pl. *palayitae hutaṃti* ‘(had) fled’ is part of a subordinate clause dependent on *viñayeti* ‘informs (that)’.⁸²⁴

(5.43) CKD 632 obverse 1–3

*ahuno i[śa Jha]gimoya viñayeti bhutartha eṣa bharya śadha Kucirajaṃmi
palayitae hutaṃti mahi maharayaṣa pritiyena iśa ayitaṃti.*

“Jhagimoya informs us that it happened that he had fled with his wife to the kingdom of Kuci. Through love of me the great king they came back here.” (after TKD: 131).

A third possibility is to combine the verbal adj. in **-taka-* with the optative of the copula, i.e. *siya-*, *bhaveya-*, or *(h)akṣa-*.⁸²⁵ The function and translation of this formation depend on whether it is used in a main or a subordinate clause. If the latter, the combination of a verbal adj. in **-taka-* with the optative of the copula typically co-occurs with a main verb with future time reference, such as gerundives or future tense forms. As the reference point of the periphrastic construction is anterior to that of the main verb, one can interpret it as some form of future (or sometimes conditional) perfect (so

⁸²³ The restoration is mine. There are no other examples of *paryaṃta* ‘as far as’, but the related adverb *acaṃta* ‘to the end of’ governs a loc. in CKD 253; 367, so I suppose the same for *paryaṃta*. For the form *Puṣga[ri](*yaṃmi)*, cf. abl.sg. *Puṣgariyāde* (CKD 660).

⁸²⁴ For another example in a subordinate clause, see *dutiyae gataga āsi* ‘was gone on an embassy’ in CKD 637.

⁸²⁵ On the use of *(h)akṣa-* as an opt. (and a fut.) of ‘to be’ in Niya Prakrit, cf. LKD (§99). For its etymology, cf. Turner (1936 = 1975: 340–356).

also Barchi & Peschl 2022: 430f.). Interestingly, this periphrastic formation is treated as an agent-oriented construction with the agent in the direct case and not in the genitive (LKD: §114).

Two examples of the future perfect are given below. In (5.44), the 2pl. *viṣarjīdae hakṣatu* ‘(will) have sent’ occurs in a conditional clause introduced by *yadi*; the main verb is the gerv. *viṣajīdavo* ‘must be sent’.

(5.44) CKD 4 under-tablet obverse 2f.

yadi uṭa na viṣarjīdae hakṣatu tade ede uṭa cavala Lýipeyaṣa hastami Calmadanaṃmi viṣajīdavo.

“If you have not sent the camels, then the camels must be quickly sent to Calmadana in the hand of Lýipeya.” (TKD: 1).

In sentence (5.45), the 3sg. *dharitaga siyati* ‘(will) have held’ shows up in a relative clause starting with *yo* ‘who’, while the main verb is the gerv. *picavidavo* ‘are to be handed over’.

(5.45) CKD 439 under-tablet obverse 4

yo draṃga na dharitaga siyati taṣa rayaka gavi picavidavo.

“The king’s cows are to be handed over to a man who has not held (any other) offices.” (TKD: 91).

When used in a main clause, the same type of periphrastic construction indicates that some action must be performed in the future, thus being comparable in sense to a gerundive. Morphologically, one could call such cases passive optatives, a formation otherwise absent from the language.⁸²⁶

A pertinent example is (5.46). The 3sg. *ditae siyati* ‘must be given’ used in this sentence can be compared in function to the gerv. *dadavo* ‘to be given’ in CKD 797 *anati dadavo ... uṭa cavala tasyati* “a command must be given ... that he will quickly give the camel” (tr. mine).

(5.46) CKD 385 obverse 5

avaṣa teṣa piḍita anati ditae siyati cavala eda iṣa preṣeyaṃti.

⁸²⁶ The absence of synthetically formed passive optatives may be due to the optative *-(e)ya-*; *-(e)yā-* and passive *-(ya-)* marker being nearly identical to each other. The situation in Niya Prakrit is not unlike that of Vedic Sanskrit, where passive optatives were likewise avoided and functionally replaced by gerundives and analytical formations consisting of the verbal adj. in *-ta-* and optative forms of the copula (Jamison 1984).

“By all means a command must expressly be given to them, that they should send them here quickly.” (after TKD: 78).

Finally, verbal adjectives in **-taka-* can also combine with the imp.3sg. *hotu* (and variants) ‘it should be’. This construction, seemingly restricted to main clauses, is yet another way to express a deontic future. See, for instance, *varidae hotu* ‘are to be prevented’ in (5.47), corresponding in sense to Skt. pass.imp.3sg. *vriyatām* ← $\sqrt{vr}$ ‘to prevent’.⁸²⁷

(5.47) CKD 272 obverse 9

ede samṛdhae jaṃna varidae hotu ma iṃ ci darāṃnagena jaṃnasya upedeṃti.

“These well-to-do people are to be prevented from persecuting the debtor people.” (TKD: 50).

5.4.3 A Khotanese substratum? The Barchi-Peschl hypothesis

This section outlines Barchi and Peschl’s arguments (2022) for Khotanese substrate influence on the Niya preterite tense. The starting point for their hypothesis is the peculiar agent-orientation of transitive verbs. Because of this agent-orientation, Barchi and Peschl find it unlikely that the Niya preterite tense is solely the result of language-internal developments, even though they otherwise accept Burrow’s account of the history of the preterite (§5.4.2.2). Another premise of theirs is that Niya Prakrit “developed in relative isolation from South Asian Gāndhārī” (cf. pp. 405; 415; 421). Therefore, they assume that the preterite underwent contact influence in the multilingual environment of the Tarim Basin, viz. from Khotanese.

Morphologically, Khotanese distinguishes between an intransitive and a transitive preterite, also called “perfect” (SGS: 220–228; Emmerick 1989: 222; HK: 310f.).⁸²⁸

The intransitive preterite is made by adding enclitic forms of the copula to the nom. of the verbal adj. in *-ta-*. This formation thus approximately parallels that of the preterite in Niya Prakrit, although Khotanese also

⁸²⁷ Cf. examples where, in similar contexts, the gerv. *varidavo* ‘to be prevented’ is used instead of *varidae hotu*, e.g. *jaṃna varidavo ma iṃ ci bhuya naṅira gachaṃti* “people are to be prevented from going hunting again” (CKD 13 under-tablet obverse 4; TKD: 3).

⁸²⁸ A few transitive verbs are inflected as if they were intransitive, and some intransitive ones as if they were transitive. See Barchi & Peschl (2022: 415f.) for some notes on these exceptions.

differentiates between masculine and feminine forms. See the (partly reconstructed) paradigm of *hām-* ‘to be(come)’ below.

The transitive preterite consists of a synchronically opaque⁸²⁹ type of verbal noun or participle agreeing in person, number, and gender⁸³⁰ with the agent and endings usually identifiable with present forms of the copula. Compare the (partly reconstructed) paradigm of *dai-* ‘to see’ given infra.⁸³¹

	Intransitive preterite	Transitive preterite
1sg.	masc. <i>hāmātāmā</i> fem. <i>hāmātamā</i> ‘I became’	masc. <i>dātaimā</i> < <i>dāte</i> + 1sg. <i>īmā</i> masc. <i>dātemā</i> < <i>dāte</i> + 1sg. <i>mā</i> (clitic) fem. <i>dātāmā</i> < <i>dātātā</i> + 1sg. <i>mā</i> (clitic) ‘I saw’
2sg.	masc. <i>hāmātī</i> (< *-tā + 2sg. -ī) fem. — ‘you became’	masc. <i>dātai</i> < <i>dāte</i> + 2sg. -ī fem. — ‘you saw’
3sg.	masc. <i>hāmātā</i> (-tā < *-tah) fem. <i>hāmāta</i> (-ta < *-tā) ‘(s)he became’	masc. <i>dāte</i> fem. <i>dātātā</i> ‘(s)he saw’
1pl.	masc. <i>hāmāta mā</i> fem. — ‘we became’	<i>dātāndā mā</i> ‘we saw’
2pl.	masc. <i>hāmāta sta</i> fem. <i>hāmāte sta</i> ‘you became’	<i>dātāndā sta</i> <i>dātānda</i> ‘you saw’
3pl.	masc. <i>hāmāta</i> (-ta < *-tā) fem. <i>hāmāte</i> (-te < *-tāh) ‘they became’	<i>dātāndā</i> ‘they saw’

Barchi and Peschl (p. 421) remark that “the participle-like formation combined with the copula” of both the intransitive and transitive preterite make it attractive to assume that the Khotanese formation provided a model

⁸²⁹ No consensus exists on the etymological origin of the transitive preterite. See Sims-Williams (1997c) and Tremblay (2005b) for the most recent theories. As rightly stressed by Barchi and Peschl, the morphological opacity of the construction testifies to a considerable antiquity of the formation in Khotanese.

⁸³⁰ There is no gender distinction in the plural.

⁸³¹ For more detailed notes on the occurrence of specific forms and their historical derivations, see Barchi & Peschl (pp. 419f. with fnn. 34–39) and the secondary literature cited there.

for the innovative preterite in Niya Prakrit. At the same time, they do not undertake a detailed comparison between the morphology of the Khotanese and the Niya preterite, merely noting that their proposal of a substrate influence “does not necessarily imply that the new preterite was directly calqued on a parallel formation in the substratum language” (p. 421). See further §5.4.4.

Barchi and Peschl’s choice for Khotanese as the most likely donor language is dictated more by syntactic considerations than morphological ones (see pp. 417–420). When encoding past tense with transitive verbs, Khotanese does not have (split-)ergative alignment, this in contrast to most other Middle Iranian languages. In other words, the alignment of intransitive and transitive verbs in the past tense is the same in Khotanese; the distinction is expressed by morphological means instead (cf. *supra*).

Two examples from the *Book of Zambasta* will clarify the alignment of the Khotanese preterite.⁸³² In (5.48), nom.sg. *balysä* ‘Buddha’ is the agent of intr.pret.3sg. *āstā* ‘he remained’.

(5.48) Z 2.2

rājagṛhā āstā gṛddhrakūtu ttu scātu ggaru vāte balysä.

“The Buddha remained at Rājagṛha at that time, on Mount Gṛddhrakūṭa.”

In (5.49), nom.sg. *balysä* ‘Buddha’ is the agent of tr.pret.3sg.masc. *naljsonde* ‘he finished’; the patient is expressed by acc.sg. *ttū hvanau* ‘this speech’.

(5.49) Z 22.334

balysä ttū hvanau naljsonde.

“The Buddha concluded this speech.”

Bactrian is, in Barchi and Peschl’s view (p. 417), a less plausible model for the agent-oriented Niya preterite because, unlike Khotanese, the Bactrian preterite shows split-ergative alignment in the past, whereby the agent of transitive verbs is expressed in the oblique case, and the patient encoded on the verb. One such example is sentence (5.50), where the 1sg. obl. pronoun -ομο⁸³³ marks the agent, and the patient is marked by dir.2sg. το ‘you’ and the ending -ηιο in the verb υρητιο, pret.2sg. of υρηζ- ‘to let go’.

⁸³² In this section, the example sentences and their translations are borrowed from Barchi and Peschl.

⁸³³ I follow Jügel (2015: 222 with fn. 542) in positing the 1sg. enclitic pronoun as -ομο (cf. MBactr. -wm) rather than as -μο.

(5.50) F 7f.

στ=ομο το ζηρο αζαδο ... υιρτηιο.

“And I have set you free, Zēr.”

Since the nom.-acc. alignment of the Khotanese transitive preterite could have been an impetus for the observed change in alignment in Niya Prakrit, Barchi and Peschl see the syntactic alignment of the Niya preterite as the result of substrate interference from Khotanese (cf. pp. 420f.). In their hypothesis, native speakers of Khotanese who had imperfectly learnt Niya Prakrit would have applied features of their own language, including the alignment patterns of their preterite, to Niya Prakrit, their target language.⁸³⁴ The adoption of this type of structural element by native speakers of Niya Prakrit would be less plausible, as this would require a rather intense level of contact preferably also visible in other domains of the language, most notably the lexicon.⁸³⁵ Opting for substrate interference has the advantage that this form of contact tends to affect syntax and phonology first.

Indeed, Barchi and Peschl (pp. 426f.) believe that Khotanese substrate influence is also visible in two phonological features shared by the *Khotan Dharmapada* and the Niya documents: the voicing of unvoiced consonants after nasals and the loss of originally voiced consonants in the same phonetic environment (see §2.1.5 and §4.3.29). These phonological processes, ascribed by them to Central Asian Gāndhārī as opposed to South Asian Gāndhārī, would be parallel to Khotanese examples such as *pande* ‘path’ < **pantāh* and *haṃber-* ‘to fill’ < **ham-pāraya-* (voicing of unvoiced consonants) or *hana-* ‘blind’ < *(*H*)*anda-* and *škīm-* ‘to create’ < **skambaya-* (loss of originally voiced consonants; cf. also Emmerick 1989: 215).

Finally, Barchi and Peschl look for further confirmation of their sociolinguistic scenario in recent scholarship on the spread of MIA literacy to the Tarim Basin and the dialectal relationship of Niya Prakrit to other forms of (Central Asian) Gāndhārī (cf. pp. 422ff.). Subscribing to Høisæter’s (2017; cf. also 2020: 124–131) proposal that MIA spread into the Tarim Basin through long-term interregional exchange networks, Barchi and Peschl take

⁸³⁴ Cf. the distinction made between “adoption” and “imposition” in §3.1.1. Barchi and Peschl use “substrate interference” more or less as a synonym of “imposition”, and they employ “borrowing” in the sense of “adoption”.

⁸³⁵ Barchi and Peschl do not explicitly address the small number of identifiable loanwords from Khotanese (for which cf. §4.2.5).

Khotan to be the centre of diffusion of MIA literacy to other parts of the Tarim Basin.⁸³⁶ In their view, the linguistic implication of this historical scenario would be that Niya Prakrit is “an offshoot of a variant that had previously been used in Khotan” (p. 423) like the variety of Prakrit employed in document CKD 661.

In my view, there are some problems with Barchi and Peschl’s argument of a Khotanese substrate influence, principally (i) their focus on the alignment patterns, due to which they partially neglect the morphological aspects of the formation (§5.4.4); (ii) their assertion that Niya Prakrit developed in isolation from South Asian Gāndhārī (§5.4.5); (iii) the phonological arguments which they use as further support for their substrate scenario (§5.4.6); and (iv) their notion of Niya Prakrit being a descendant of Khotan Prakrit (§5.4.7).

5.4.4 Morphological and syntactic mismatches with Khotanese

The gist of Barchi and Peschl’s argument is that native speakers of Khotanese would have transferred the consistent nom.-acc. alignment of their native preterite to the corresponding formation in Niya Prakrit. In other words, the syntax of the Khotanese preterite would have been the pivotal or “marked” feature that Khotanese speakers replicated when learning Niya Prakrit.

One is still left wondering about the morphology of the Niya preterite. Barchi and Peschl recapitulate and largely accept Burrow’s account of the history of the formation (2022: 409ff.) and they note that the participle-like formation combined with enclitic forms of the copula in both Niya Prakrit and Khotanese could have facilitated the syntactic influence (2022: 421). They do, however, not specifically discuss to what extent language contact additionally influenced the morphological makeup of the Niya preterite and how any such influence would relate to their argument about the syntactic alignment.

To my mind, the differences between the Khotanese and Niya preterite are too many to make morphological influence plausible: (i) Khotanese makes a morphological distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs, while every verb is conjugated in the same way in Niya Prakrit; (ii) both types of preterite in Khotanese distinguish between masculine and feminine forms,

⁸³⁶ They do not argue in detail why they opted for Høisæter’s account and only note that it is “most sophisticated from a historical and sociolinguistic perspective” (Barchi & Peschl 2022: 423).

but there is no gender distinction in Niya Prakrit; (iii) the construction of especially the intransitive preterite is synchronically still analysable in Khotanese as a combination of the verbal adj. in *-ta-* with the copula,⁸³⁷ whereas the level of univerbation in Niya Prakrit is much higher, and the endings of the preterite and the present are, except for the 3sg., practically the same; and (iv) outside of passages influenced by Sanskrit, the verbal adj. in *-ta-* has been replaced in Niya Prakrit by a new formation in **-taka* when used as an adjective or as a patient-oriented resultative; in Khotanese, no such change has occurred, which, in contrast to some contemporary Middle Iranian languages, does not have a grammaticalised verbal adj. in **-taka-*.

Even if Khotanese may not be the best source, the differences in morphology between the Niya preterite and comparable formations in other MIA languages make the assumption of foreign influence on the morphology of the Niya preterite still sufficiently likely. Considering this point, I will argue in favour of a Bactrian model in §5.4.9.

Which repercussions do these morphological considerations have on the probability of a Khotanese influence on the alignment of the Niya preterite? Barchi and Peschl could still be right that the superficial morphological similarity between the Niya Prakrit and Khotanese preterite was sufficient for a syntactic transfer. The morphological differences do not speak in favour of their scenario, however.⁸³⁸ One should further take into account that the hypothesised syntactic influence should come from the transitive paradigm, which resembles the Niya preterite morphologically even less than the intransitive paradigm. In Khotanese, there is no distinction in alignment between the transitive and intransitive preterite. Yet, there is no need to assume any syntactic influence from the intransitive paradigm, as it is the transitive and not the intransitive verbs whose alignment changed in Niya Prakrit.

There is finally a syntactic issue with Barchi and Peschl's proposal. Khotanese morphologically distinguishes between a nominative and an accusative case, and the alignment of its preterite is thus strictly nom.-acc. Niya Prakrit, by contrast, makes a morphological distinction between nom. and acc. only in the case of demonstrative pronouns: these cases have merged otherwise. As a result of this morphological change, the alignment of

⁸³⁷ Note in particular the 2pl. auxiliary *sta* 'you are', which can hardly be mistaken for an ending.

⁸³⁸ In general, "clear-cut cases of borrowing [of alignment patterns] seem to be comparably rare" (Dahl 2022: 13).

the Niya preterite is, as argued in more detail in §5.4.2.3, a mix between nom.-acc. alignment for demonstratives, direct (or neutral) alignment for nouns and non-demonstrative pronouns, and semantic alignment dependent on the level of animacy of the agent and patient. Consequently, even the alignment of the preterite, Barchi and Peschl's main argument for their substrate scenario, is not a one-to-one match between Niya Prakrit and Khotanese.⁸³⁹

5.4.5 The Niya-type preterite and South Asian Gāndhārī

Barchi and Peschl's thesis that it was Khotanese which influenced the Niya preterite partly follows from their view that "Niya Prakrit developed ... in relative isolation from North-Western Prakrit as written and spoken in Gandhāra proper" (2022: 405). In other words, contact with Tarim Basin languages would have caused most linguistic peculiarities of Niya Prakrit as opposed to South Asian Gāndhārī, including the formation and alignment of the preterite. This section investigates the validity of this premise.

One of the conclusions of Chapter 4 concerns the near complete absence of lexical borrowings adopted by Niya Prakrit after its spread to the Tarim Basin: Khotanese loanwords are very scarce; there are no borrowings securely ascribable to Sogdian; and the Bactrian words in Niya Prakrit can have been borrowed outside the Tarim Basin.⁸⁴⁰ Therefore, the least costly hypothesis would be to attribute foreign-looking grammatical features such as the preterite to the same source(s) as the lexical borrowings, viz. to Bactrian and other Iranian languages spoken in Gandhāra.⁸⁴¹

A potential drawback to this view is the lack of examples of the Niya-type preterite in South Asian Gāndhārī. This absence may not be too significant, however. Barchi and Peschl (2022: 428) connect the lack of such preterites

⁸³⁹ In theory, one could argue that the ancestor of Niya Prakrit developed nom.-acc. alignment due to contact with Khotanese and that a later merger of nom. and acc. caused a further change to the direct + semantic alignment seen in the attested stage of the language. Such a scenario is, however, made unlikely by the fact that nom. and acc. had already merged in most varieties of South Asian Gāndhārī that we know of (cf. also Barchi & Peschl 2022: 408 with fn. 7). The Khotan Prakrit of CKD 661 still distinguishes between these two cases, but presumably due to influence from Khotanese (see also §5.4.7).

⁸⁴⁰ See further Chapter 6, where I argue that there is likewise hardly any compelling evidence for language contact between Niya Prakrit and Tocharian.

⁸⁴¹ This conclusion was anticipated by Wright (1998: 237), who also compared the Niya situation to Dardic active preterites historically derived from passive participles.

from the *Khotan Dharmapada* with the fact that this text was translated quite literally or even “transposed” from a *Vorlage* in another MIA language lacking such preterites (cf. Brough 1962: 113). I concur with them on this point, but one can make the same argument about Buddhist sutras or poetic texts that have been translated from earlier versions in “Buddhist Middle Indic” into South Asian Gāndhārī (cf. e.g. Salomon 2000: 48–52; 2002: 122–124; Allon 2001: 38f.). Niya-type preterites are likewise absent from Gāndhārī inscriptions, but “their value as specimens of the colloquial language is limited by their stereotyped character, which often consists of little more than a patchwork of standardized ritual phrases” (Salomon 1999a: 139).

The only text genres where one could reasonably expect Niya-type preterites to occur are administrative documents and literary or doctrinal texts directly composed in Gāndhārī, e.g. *avadānas*. These genres are, however, not that well represented in the currently available corpus, making it possible that the non-occurrence of Niya-type preterites in South Asian Gāndhārī is another illustration of the oft-repeated adage that absence of evidence does not necessarily equal evidence of absence.⁸⁴²

There is further reason to believe that the lack of attestations of Niya-type preterites in South Asian Gāndhārī could be due to chance. These preterites are, as pointed out in §5.4.2.4, closely related to an innovative type of resultative made from an extended verbal adj. in **-taka-*. As there are occasional instances of these verbal adjectives in South Asian sources, it stands to reason that also the Niya-type preterites were not an exclusive feature of Central Asian Gāndhārī.

Not every instance of an adjective in **-taka-* in South Asian Gāndhārī is grammaticalised to the same degree as in Niya Prakrit. In sentence (5.51) cited below, *grahidiga* and the non-extended variant *grahida* ‘taken’ occur, for instance, right next to each other and in the same grammatical function: both verbal adjectives are used in a patient-oriented construction whereby the agent is marked by the ins.sg. *keno śamaneno* ‘by a certain monk’ and ins.pl. *corehi* ‘by thieves’ (cf. also Lenz 2010: 65).

(5.51) Av^{L1} verso 143f.

kam[a] keno śamaneno [du]ve thaviga grahi[di]ga corehi grahida.

⁸⁴² The *avadānas* do contain some verbal adjectives in *-ta* made from transitive verb which have an active meaning (see Lenz 2010: 80f.), but no synthetic preterite has surfaced so far.

“Out of desire, two purses were taken by a certain monk. By thieves they were taken.” (Lenz 2010: 63).

There are, however, clear indications of an incipient grammaticalisation process of these verbal adjectives in **-taka-* already in South Asian Gāndhārī.

One of the most frequent verbal adjectives in **-taka-* in Niya Prakrit is *lihitaga* (and variants) ‘written’ < **likhitaka-*. A South Asian Gāndhārī cognate of this form, i.e. *likhidago* (and variants), occurs, without any noticeable difference in meaning from its Niya cognate, in several interlinear notations added to *avadāna* and *pūrvayoga* texts of the British Library collection (Salomon 1999a: 71–76; Lenz 2003: 105–110; 148–150).

In Bajaur fragments 4 and 6, verbal adjectives in *-dae* < **-taka-*—i.e. *aṣivaṣidae* ‘endured, accepted’, *uekṣidae* ‘looked at with an even mind’, *paricatae* ‘given up, let gone’, *karavidae* ‘caused to be made’, *vitrae* ‘acquired’, and *saṃthidae* ‘composed’—can moreover be combined with opt.3sg. *hakṣadi* / *siadi* ‘it may be’ to form the same type of periphrastic constructions as discussed for Niya Prakrit in §5.4.2.4. I cite the relevant passages below in (5.52) and (5.53).⁸⁴³

(5.52) BC 4 recto 20

edeṇa dukhaṇaṇaṇisamarthaṇaṇeṇa sarve dukha uadiṇae aṣivaṣidae hakṣadi uekṣidae hakṣadi <.> sarve suhe paricatae aṣivasidae hakṣadi.*

“By this knowledge of [what is] painful and this knowledge of [what is] useless, every suffering [that will be] taken up should be accepted [and] looked at with an even mind. Every happiness [that will be] given up should be accepted.” (after Schlosser 2022: 125).

(5.53) BC 6 verso 4f.

*tatra ca purve bahu taṇua saṇa karavida(*e) + + + ? ? vitrae ca siadi <*.> tatra ca purve suhe vitrasua ṇa karavidae siadi <*.> saṃthida ca pura vi saṃthidae siadi.*

“And thereby the notion, which was plentiful before, (*should be) reduced ... and [...] should be acquired (?). And thereby happiness due to acquired possessions (?), which was [known as] happiness before,

⁸⁴³ Unlike Schlosser (see also 2022: 174; 256f.), I translate the combination of the verbal adj. in **-taka-* + *hakṣadi* / *siadi* in a main clause as a deontic future and not as a future perfect, which is the function of these periphrastic constructions in subordinate clauses, as pointed out in §5.4.2.4.

should not be caused. And also [what was] scattered (?) before should be made composed.” (after Schlosser 2022: 151).⁸⁴⁴

These examples allow us to conclude that grammatical phenomena hitherto only known from Niya Prakrit may also have existed in South Asian Gāndhārī, even when they do not (so far) occur in actual texts (cf. also §5.4.6).⁸⁴⁵ Thus, there is a distinct possibility that examples of the Niya-type preterite will at some point also be found in South Asian Gāndhārī.

5.4.6 On the phonological arguments for a Khotanese substrate

As briefly mentioned in §5.4.3, Barchi and Peschl (2022: 426f.) adduce, besides their main argument about the preterite, two phonological arguments which would lend further support to their claim of a Khotanese substrate influence on Niya Prakrit. They point out that in the position after nasals both Khotanese and Central Asian Gāndhārī voice originally unvoiced consonants and lose originally voiced ones. Continuing the discussion on these Gāndhārī sound changes in §2.1.5 and §4.3.29, I will now try to determine whether these changes indeed result from a Khotanese substrate.

This section mainly concerns the question whether the relevant sound developments are necessarily an exclusive feature of Central Asian Gāndhārī, a necessary condition for Barchi and Peschl’s argument. At a more general level, one can also question the inherent value of these two sound changes as potential evidence for a Khotanese substrate in Niya Prakrit. Especially the voicing of unvoiced consonants after nasals is typologically so common, and, as Barchi and Peschl (2022: 427) admit, also found in Middle Iranian

⁸⁴⁴ There may be another instance of such a periphrastic future in Av^{L1} verso 182f. *yadi sadharma atarahide hakṣa[di] ? aha pracageboṣ(*i) praūni[śa]*. Lenz (2010: 82–84) translates this sentence as “If the true law has disappeared, I would have attained individual enlightenment”, interpreting *atarahide hakṣadi* and fut.1sg. *praūniśa* as conditionals. One can also interpret *atarahide hakṣadi* as the same type of periphrastic future perfect as discussed above. The translation would then be “(Even) if the true law will have disappeared, I will (still) attain individual enlightenment”.

⁸⁴⁵ The fragments edited by Schlosser contain more examples of linguistic features previously only attested in Niya Prakrit, including lexical items like *ithu* (Niya *imthu*) ‘thus’, *picara* ‘(mark of) honour’, and *yahi* ‘if’. These commonalities between the Bajaur fragments and the Niya documents could be due to both having been “written directly in Gāndhārī and not translated from a Buddhist Middle Indic source text” (Schlosser 2022: 99).

languages other than Khotanese⁸⁴⁶ that one can already legitimately doubt its probative value for the postulation of a Khotanese substrate on internal grounds.

Barchi and Peschl's principal reason to attribute the sound changes under review to a Khotanese substrate is because these are largely restricted to Gāndhārī materials from the Tarim Basin, in particular the *Khotan Dharmapada* and the Niya documents. Gāndhārī loanwords into Khotanese also tend to show these phonetic tendencies. Postnasal voicing is observable in loanwords such as *arahanda-* 'Arhat' (-nt- > -nd-) or *vaysambata-* 'ordination, *upasampadā*' (-mp- > -mb-).⁸⁴⁷ Instances of voiced consonants being assimilated to a preceding nasal include *Samñia-* 'the *deva* Sañjaya' (Bailey 1942: 912), *Mañūsria-* 'the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī' (Habata 2007: lxiv with ref.), and the verb *van-* 'to honour', if I am correct (*apud* Dragoni 2023b: 127 fn. 251) that this is a borrowing from Gandh. **van-* < Skt. *vand-* 'to pay homage'. This evidence from Gāndhārī loanwords into Khotanese would still be consistent with Barchi and Peschl's view that the relevant sound changes are restricted to Central Asian Gāndhārī, as it is historically and geographically conceivable that such loanwords were adopted from a variety of Gāndhārī spoken in the Tarim Basin.

Salomon (1999a: 129f.) has, however, expressed doubts as to whether the phonological developments under scrutiny were an exclusively Central Asian feature. Indeed, there is sufficient evidence, albeit often indirect, to support Salomon's suggestion that they could also be due to dialectal or orthographic variation within South Asian Gāndhārī.

First, Salomon points to the example of *sabratu* (earlier read as *sabradu*) 'arrived' < OIA *saṃprāpta-* in graffiti from Hunza and the Alam bridge as an example for voicing after a nasal in South Asian Gāndhārī.⁸⁴⁸

In addition, he mentions that there is variation in the treatment of consonants after nasals within the *Khotan Dharmapada* itself. The relevant

⁸⁴⁶ Bactrian examples are *νακανδο* 'dug' < **ni-kanta-* (*-nt- > -vδ- /nd/) and *αμβαρο* 'store' < **ham-pārV-* (*-mp- > -μβ- /mb/).

⁸⁴⁷ See e.g. LKD (§46) and Brough (1962: 100).

⁸⁴⁸ The form *sabratu* is attested in CKI 274; 291 (2x); 413; 417; 430; 432; 433. Cf. also the variants *sabatu* in CKI 272; 273; 302; 308; 310; 313; 316; 418; 484; 495 and *sabato* in CKI 317; 493. Konow (KI: civ) cited additional instances of stops being voiced after nasals in South Asian Gāndhārī inscriptions. Yet, his examples are based on by now obsolete readings and/or interpretations of the relevant texts.

changes are consistently observed in the central portion of this text, but in the colophon and two supplementary verses added in a different hand OIA *-nd-* becomes Gandh. *-d-* and not ***n-* as in other parts of the *Khotan Dharmapada*.⁸⁴⁹

Finally, Salomon refers to Bloch (1912), who pointed out that the same sound changes occurred in various Indo-Aryan languages currently spoken in Pakistan and the NW parts of India, which suggests that there were also dialects of Gāndhārī spoken in these regions that had undergone these sound developments.

One hitherto unnoticed piece of evidence yields further support for Salomon's conclusion. This evidence takes the form of two Gāndhārī loanwords into Bactrian found in the Buddhist text za (BD II: 174f.).⁸⁵⁰

The first word is *μανοσιπο*, to be compared with the aforementioned Khotanese form *Mañuśria-* (BD II: 230). *μανοσιπο* is evidently borrowed from a Gāndhārī outcome of Skt. *Mañjuśrī-*, where *-j-* had been assimilated to the preceding palatal nasal *-ñ-*, as one would otherwise have expected ***μανζοσιπο* or the like.

The second word is *κοβανο**, a type of supernatural being, attested through its obl.pl. *κοβανανο*. Sims-Williams (BD II: 224) writes that this Bactrian word is a loanword from BSkt. *kumbhāṇḍa-*. Yet, if a direct borrowing from Buddhist Sanskrit, one wonders why the Bactrian form is *κοβανο* and not something like ***κομβανδο*. In my view, *κοβανο* is more likely borrowed from Gāndhārī. A Gāndhārī cognate of *kumbhāṇḍa-* is attested as *kuvhaḍa** (dir.sg. *kuvhaḍe*) in CKI 249, and I would argue that Bactr. *κοβανο* comes from a dialect form **kuvhaṇa*. In *kuvhaḍa*, OIA *-ṇḍ-* has resulted in Gandh. *-ḍ-*, while **kuvhaṇa* → *κοβανο* would show a development from OIA *-ṇḍ-* to Gandh. **-ṇ-*. In other words, **kuvhaṇa* would be another example of the loss of an originally voiced consonant after a nasal.⁸⁵¹

⁸⁴⁹ The examples are the PN *Budhaṇadi* < OIA *Buddhanandin-* and the abs. *vaditva* 'having praised' < OIA *vanditvā* (Brough 1962: 177; 281).

⁸⁵⁰ In general, many Buddhist terms and names in this document are Gāndhārī rather than Sanskrit. The name of a bodhisattva *σιγγοβικρητιδο* is, for instance, plausibly interpreted by Sims-Williams (BD II: 263) as *Simha-vikrīḍita-* 'play of the lion', but the phonetic appearance of the Bactrian form suggests that it was borrowed from a Gāndhārī form **Siṃg(h)avikreḍida* or the like with substitution of Gandh. *-ḍ-* /*r*/ with Bactr. *-p-* /*r*/ . Gandh. *siṃg(h)a* < Skt. *siṃha* occurs in CKD 511 (Gāndhārī Hybrid Sanskrit) and CKM 105.

⁸⁵¹ Also noteworthy is Bactr. *κινδαρο* 'a mythical being, *kinnara*', where Bactr. *-vḍ-* /*nd*/ corresponds to IA *-nn-* (cf. also TB nom.fem.sg. *kindarñā* 'of the

As said above, the Gāndhārī loanwords in Khotanese could well be derived from a variety spoken in the Tarim Basin. With Gāndhārī loanwords into Bactrian, it is for geographical and historical reasons much less likely that they were borrowed from a specifically Central Asian type of Gāndhārī rather than from one of the dialects of Gāndhārī spoken in South Asia at the border with Bactria.

Based on data from the modern languages of the region, Bloch (1912: 335f.) concluded that the sound changes under discussion were a feature of western Punjab, the mountainous regions of the NW, and perhaps also some areas to the north of them. Although necessarily speculative, Bloch's localisation of the relevant sound changes makes sense in my opinion, as Bactrian could easily have borrowed words from dialects of Gāndhārī spoken in these areas, and the same dialects could have been the precursors of the Central Asian type of Gāndhārī reflected in the *Khotan Dharmapada* and the Niya documents.

To conclude, the voicing of unvoiced consonants after nasals and the loss of originally voiced consonants in the same environment are not necessarily restricted to Central Asian Gāndhārī, and hence unlikely due to a Khotanese substrate. In other words, the alignment of the Niya preterite would thus far be the only linguistic argument to support the rather far-reaching historical consequences which a Khotanese substrate would entail. It therefore seems fair to judge Barchi and Peschl's proposal as a rather costly hypothesis. The ensuing section hopes to strengthen that conclusion further.

5.4.7 Is Niya Prakrit a descendant of Khotan Prakrit?

Barchi and Peschl (2022: 426; 429) remark that their hypothesis of Khotanese substrate interference on the preterite implies Niya Prakrit to be “a derivative” of Khotan Prakrit. In support of this linguistic scenario, they refer to Høisæter's (2017; cf. also 2020: 124–131) idea that long-term interregional exchange networks between the Kuṣāṇa empire and the western parts of the Tarim Basin around Kashgar and Khotan would have been the driving force behind the cultural influences of Gandhāra and Bactria on the Tarim oases.⁸⁵² In this section, I try to show that the linguistic features

kinnaras' in THT 2996 + 2999). Perhaps, κινδαρο is based on a hypercorrect Gāndhārī form **kiṃdara* or the like where *-nn-* was “reversed” to an etymologically unjustified **-ṃd-* /*nd-*.

⁸⁵² Høisæter's view differs from the “domination theory” which posits a direct Kuṣāṇa rule over (parts of) the Tarim Basin (e.g. Brough 1965 = 1996: 276–308;

of Khotan Prakrit render it improbable that it is the direct ancestor of Niya Prakrit.

If we understand Barchi and Peschl's remark very literally and take the language of CKD 661 as a proxy for Khotan Prakrit,⁸⁵³ Niya Prakrit cannot descend from it, given that the language of CKD 661 is characterised by innovative features that do not occur in Niya Prakrit. Most importantly, Khotan Prakrit has undergone vowel raising of *-e-* to *-i-* and *-o-* to *-u-*, of which there is barely a trace in Niya Prakrit (Burrow 1934: 515; 1936: 430). In addition, the language of CKD 661 shows a development of word-final *-am* to *-u* (also *-o*), e.g. *avhiñanu* 'recognition mark' < *abhijñānam* (l.3), whereas *-am* became Niya Pkt. *-a*, as, for instance, seen in the dir.sg. which goes back to the OIA acc.sg. in *-am* (LKD: §53). Neither feature allows for Niya Prakrit being a descendant of the Khotan Prakrit as found in CKD 661.

According to Burrow (1936: 430–434), the linguistic differences between Niya Prakrit and CKD 661 are principally due to (i) the Khotan variant being more archaic than the Niya one and (ii) both dialects having undergone a different type of substrate interference within the Tarim Basin. A Khotanese substrate would, amongst other things, account for the vowel raising and the nom.sg. and acc.sg. endings in *-ā* (*-ä*) and *-u* (*-o*) in Khotan Prakrit. A Tocharian substrate would, in Burrow's opinion, help explain the phonological and morphological idiosyncrasies of Niya Prakrit, e.g. confusions between voiced and unvoiced stops. Both dialects would nevertheless still originate from the same source.

Pulleyblank 1968: 254f.; Hitch 1988a; 2009) and from the competing "migration theory" according to which people would have migrated from Bactria and Gandhāra to the Tarim oases when the Kuṣāṇa empire declined (e.g. Lin 1996: 188–190; Hansen 2004; 2012: 25–55; Bertrand 2012: 3–5; Baumer 2014: 52f.; 157). The main problem with the domination theory is that there is insufficient evidence in Chinese historical sources for a direct Kuṣāṇa control over the Tarim Basin, making its exact dating quite tricky. Also for the migration theory, conclusive evidence from Chinese literary sources seems lacking. Numismatics and archaeology moreover suggest that the influence is to be dated to the heydays of the Kuṣāṇa empire during the reigns of Kaniṣka and Huviṣka in the 2nd century AD and not to the later period of decline.

⁸⁵³ As long as we do not have more evidence for Khotan Prakrit than CKD 661 (and the poorly understood CKD 843), taking the language of CKD 661 to be representative is the only methodologically justified option. In what follows, only the relevant linguistic features of CKD 661 will be commented upon. For a more detailed overview, see Appendix 3 (p. 525).

If one now combines Burrow's account⁸⁵⁴ with Barchi and Peschl's proposal that Niya descends from Khotan Prakrit, one ends up with a scenario whereby the last common ancestor of the two dialects is to be located in a Khotanese-speaking area. This common ancestor would already have undergone the alignment shift in the preterite due to Khotanese substrate interference. Yet, vowel raising, the nom.sg. and acc.sg. endings in *-ā* (*-ä*) and *-u*, and other linguistic features of CKD 661 attributable to a Khotanese substrate would have to be dated after the split of Niya Prakrit from the common ancestor of the two dialects. Otherwise, one would run into the same type of problems when assuming that Niya Prakrit is a direct descendant of the type of Khotan Prakrit found in CKD 661.

While theoretically possible, I see some difficulties with this chronology. It, for instance, dates the alignment shift in the preterite before the more obvious morphological influence of Khotanese on the nom. and acc. in Khotan Prakrit. In addition, it implies that the Niya-type preterite existed in a common ancestor of Niya and Khotan Prakrit.

However, none of the five verbal adjectives in *-ta-* in CKD 661 (see the passage in (5.54)) can be taken as conclusive proof that this type of preterite was as developed in Khotan as in Niya Prakrit, because we are left in the dark as to "whether the application of the personal endings to the past participle had taken place in the Khotan dialect as it has in Niya", for "no example happens to occur" (Burrow 1936: 433). Moreover, most verbal adjectives in *-ta-* in CKD 661 are construed with an agent in the ins. or gen., thus agreeing with the syntax of OIA and most MIA languages.

(5.54) CKD 661 obverse 4–7

*tasya uṭasya kidā Vagiti Vadhagā niravaśiṣo mulyo maṣā dhitu
Khvarnarsasya grahidu śudhi uvagadu aji uvadayi so uṭā Vagiti
Vadhagasya tanuvagā saṃvritā yathagama garaniyā sarva kica karaniyā
... maya dhalavagu Bahudhivā likhidu Khvarnarsasya ajiṣanayi.*

"On behalf of that camel Vagiti Vadhaga paid (*dhitu*) the whole price in *māṣa*. Khvarnarse received (*grahidu*) it [the price] and (thus) obtained (*uvagadu*) his payment. From now on this camel has become (*saṃvritā*) the property of Vagiti Vadhaga, to do as he likes with it, to do everything

⁸⁵⁴ Except that I do not accept the existence of a Tocharian substrate in Niya Prakrit (see Chapter 6), Burrow's account seems consistent with the available evidence. See, however, below for a still different interpretation of the data.

he likes. ... By me Bahudhiva this document (?) was written (*likhidu*) at the request of Khvarnarse.” (after TKD: 137).⁸⁵⁵

As often with derivatives of $\sqrt{\text{likh}}$ ‘to write’ in Gāndhārī (cf. the examples in Baums 2022), the agent of *likhidu* ‘written’ is in the ins.sg., i.e. *maya*, with which the nom.sg. *Bahudhivā* stands in apposition in some form of group inflection. The agent of *grahidu* ‘received’ and potentially also *uvagadu* ‘reached, obtained’ stands in the gen.sg., i.e. *Khvarnarsasya*, the case most commonly used for patient-oriented sentences in Niya Prakrit (cf. §5.4.2.3). Only *dhitu* ‘given’ is constructed with an agent in the nom.sg., i.e. the Sogdian PN *Vagiti Vadhagā*, and it seems best not to draw far-reaching conclusions from one stray example of this kind.

Furthermore, transitive and intransitive verbs are, in contrast to Niya Prakrit, morphologically differentiated in CKD 661. The transitive verbs, i.e. *dhitu* ‘given’, *grahidu* ‘received’, *uvagadu* ‘reached, obtained’, and *likhidu* ‘written’, all end in *-u* < neuter *-am* (Burrow 1936: 432; cf. also the Old Persian *manā kṛtam* construction). The one example of an intransitive verb, i.e. *saṃvritā* ‘been’, agrees in gender, number, and case with its subject nom.sg. *so utā* ‘this camel’.⁸⁵⁶

I find it difficult to decide whether this distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs in Khotan Prakrit is an archaism, or if we should compare it to the existence of two types of preterite in Khotanese, one for transitives and one for intransitives. Yet, irrespective of this, one can conclude that there are too many doubts about the preterite in Khotan Prakrit to confidently

⁸⁵⁵ I have adapted Burrow’s translation of *śudhi uvagadu*. He renders this phrase as “the matter has been settled”, but there is no need for a passive interpretation. Burrow writes elsewhere (LKD: 126 s.v.) that Niya *śudha*, the equivalent of Khotan *śudhi*, has a more specific meaning, i.e. “cleared off, clearing off (of payments, debts, obligations)”. Therefore, I take the gen.sg. *Khvarnarsasya* to be the agent of both *uvagadu* ‘reached, obtained’ and *grahidu* ‘taken’. *śudhi* ‘payment’ would then be the object of *uvagadu*, whose morphology suggests it to be transitive (cf. below on the difference with *saṃvritā* ‘been’). This analysis admittedly does not work for all examples of Niya *śudha* + derivatives of OIA *upagata-*, but note the parallel *asti śramamṇa Dharmaladha nama se vikrida bhuma eka milimi tivira Līpatgaṣa vaṃti giḍa muli masu khi 10 aḡiṣḍha 3 śudha uvagada* (CKD 652 under-tablet obverse 2–5), which I would translate (after TKD: 135) as “there is a monk called Dharmaladha. He sold land (with a capacity) of one *milima* to the scribe Līpatga. He received as price ten *khi* of wine and three *aḡiṣḍha*. He obtained his payment”.

⁸⁵⁶ The same is true about the (transitive) gerv. *garaniyā* / *karanīyā*.

reconstruct the existence of a Niya-type preterite for a potential common ancestor of Niya and Khotan Prakrit.

As an alternative to his proposal that Niya and Khotan Prakrit shared an ancestor, Burrow (1936: 433) briefly considered the possibility that the divergent linguistic features of Khotan and Niya Prakrit resulted from “original dialect differences in their Indian sources”. He thought this to be an unnecessary assumption, however. While not enough to prove Burrow wrong, some linguistic features make one still wonder whether the two variants really derive from a common source.

Burrow (1936: 432) regretted that CKD 661 does not contain conclusive evidence for the development of OIA *-aḥ*, a crucial criterion in classifying dialects of MIA (and Gāndhārī in particular; cf. also Barchi & Peschl 2022: 424f.). The Niya abl.sg. in *-ade* (*-āde*) < **-ātaḥ* and the nom.sg. of the demonstrative pronoun *se* < *saḥ* ‘this’ leave little doubt that Niya Prakrit is a so-called *e*-dialect. As discussed above, the Khotan Prakrit nom.sg. ends in *-ā/-ā* (some *e*-sound), which is, however, likely due to influence from the Khotanese nom.sg. in *-ā*, and hence unusable for establishing the outcome of OIA *-aḥ* in Khotan Prakrit (Burrow 1936: 433f.). There are also no examples of an abl.sg. in CKD 661.⁸⁵⁷ Yet, there are at least two occurrences of the nom.sg. of the demonstrative pronoun, which, in contrast to Niya Prakrit, is not *se* but *so* < OIA *saḥ*.⁸⁵⁸ Thus, we have some evidence, however flimsy, that *-aḥ* may have developed to *-o* in the Khotan Prakrit used in CKD 661 and not to *-e* as in Niya Prakrit.

The final *-o* in the demonstrative pronoun is not the only linguistic feature of CKD 661 that could point to Khotan and Niya Prakrit being derived from different dialects of South Asian Gāndhārī. Elsewhere (Schoubben in prep.), I will argue that the synthetic locative case in Niya Prakrit can, notwithstanding a few exceptions, only be used with inanimate nouns. For animates, the scribes of the Niya documents used a locative postposition *vaṃti* ‘in, at, to’ < OIA loc.sg. *upānte* ‘in the proximity of’. In Khotan Prakrit, the postposition *sagaji* is used instead (cf. already Noble 1931: 453). As *sagaji* is derived from the OIA loc.sg. *sakāṣe* ‘in the proximity of’, it would have

⁸⁵⁷ As noted by Burrow, an adverbial form like *puradu* ‘in front of’ < *purataḥ* (CKD 661, line 7) is of little significance in establishing the outcome of *-aḥ* because such adverbs can end in *-o* even in *e*-dialects. Contrast, however, *purade* < *purataḥ* in Bajaur fragment 15, line 12 (CKM 278).

⁸⁵⁸ There is also one instance of *so* as an acc.sg. I agree with Konow (1936: 236 fn. 1) that this *so* is most likely a mistake for ***to* < OIA *tam*.

undergone the same type of grammaticalisation process as Niya *vaṃti*, but the animate locative case would be formed differently in the two dialects under discussion.⁸⁵⁹

There are also minor differences in vocabulary between the two variants of Central Asian Gāndhārī. Note, for instance, doublets such as Khotan Pkt. *kidā* ‘on account of’ < loc.sg. *kṛte* vs. Niya ins.sg. *kritena* / *kridena* ‘idem’ or Khotan Pkt. *puradu* ‘in front of’ < *purataḥ* vs. Niya *puraṭha* ‘idem’ < *purastāt*.⁸⁶⁰

Are morphosyntactic and lexical differences of this kind all due “to recent developments in their Central Asian environment”, which is how Burrow (1936: 434) proposes to explain all divergences between Niya and Khotan Prakrit?⁸⁶¹ This question cannot be conclusively answered with the data at hand. Yet, it is at least worth keeping in mind that Niya and Khotan Prakrit could derive from separate sources that had undergone contact influence in different places at different times so that there would be no need for Niya being a descendant of Khotan Prakrit.

If correct, one would still need to work out in more detail a historical scenario of when, why, and from where more than one dialect of Gāndhārī would have been introduced to the Tarim Basin. I cannot do so here for reasons of time and space, but the following point seems worth making. According to Peyrot (2018b: 276f.), “we might conceive of the legendary foundation of Khotan in the time of Aśoka as referring to the arrival of Indians in the southern Tarim Basin, possibly speakers of Gāndhārī.” This proposal is mentioned by Barchi and Peschl (2022: 422), but they reject it in favour of Høisæter’s account. In my view, Peyrot’s idea is not necessarily excluded by Høisæter’s exchange networks during Kuṣāṇa times; if there were two (or more) dialects of Gāndhārī introduced to the Tarim Basin, they could have come at different periods in time.

⁸⁵⁹ Another noteworthy morphological distinction between Niya and Khotan Prakrit is that the latter has gen./dat.sg. *mayi* ‘I’ < OIA *mahya(m)* and not *mahi* as in Niya. One can, however, argue that the common ancestor of both had **mahi*, which could have developed in Khotan Prakrit to *mayi* due to loss of intervocalic *-h-* (cf. LKD: §28). The *-y-* in *mayi* would then be a hiatus filler.

⁸⁶⁰ For more lexical differences between CKD 661 and the Niya documents, see Appendix 3 (p. 525).

⁸⁶¹ The palaeography of CKD 661, described by Noble (1931: 445) as “very stiff and archaic”, needs to be re-examined from this perspective as well, now that we have much more data on the historical development of the Kharoṣṭhī script.

In case Gāndhārī and the Kharoṣṭhī script were first introduced to Khotan in Aśokan times, one could moreover draw a parallel with the spread of (Sinhala) Prakrit and the Brāhmī script to Sri Lanka. According to Buddhist legends, Aśoka and his family would not only have brought Buddhism to Khotan but also to Sri Lanka, and inscriptions in Sinhala Prakrit dating back to the 3rd century BC can be seen as proof that MIA literacy was already introduced to the island by Buddhist missionaries of the Mauryan empire (cf. e.g. Geiger & Jayatilaka 1935; Salomon 1998b: 79f.; 150f.). Accordingly, the same may be true of Khotan.

In brief, the exact relationship between Niya and Khotan Prakrit is a complex topic, and the data are insufficient to come up with definitive answers. It is, however, clear enough that Niya Prakrit is not easily interpreted as a descendant of Khotan Prakrit. Due to linguistic innovations of CKD 661, Niya Prakrit cannot descend from the type of Khotan Prakrit as attested in this document. Possibly, Niya and Khotan Prakrit derive instead from a common source (so Burrow). Yet, if so, Barchi and Peschl's substrate theory needs this ancestor language to have already undergone substrate interference in Khotan to account for the alignment of the preterite. For their scenario to work, this influence on the preterite would have to be dated before vowel raising and other contact-induced changes visible in CKD 661 but not in Niya Prakrit. While not entirely impossible, this chronology seems hard to accept. In my view, Khotan and Niya Prakrit may also descend from different dialects of South Asian Gāndhārī, although this hypothesis needs further testing.⁸⁶² With this scenario, the assumption of a Khotanese substrate in Niya Prakrit would be superfluous.

5.4.8 Summary: counterarguments against Khotanese influence

Based on §§5.4.4–5.4.7, four counterarguments can be formulated against Barchi and Peschl's idea of a Khotanese substrate influence on the formation and alignment of the Niya preterite.

Counterargument 1 (§5.4.4): there are morphological discrepancies between the Khotanese and Niya preterite and even their alignment systems, Barchi and Peschl's key argument, are no one-to-one match.

⁸⁶² One could, for instance, investigate whether the Gāndhārī loanwords in Khotanese continue some linguistic features which are typical of Khotan Prakrit, but not of Niya Prakrit.

Counterargument 2 (§5.4.5): linguistic differences between Niya Prakrit and South Asian Gāndhārī, including the formation and alignment of the preterite, may have more to do with text types than with geography. In other words, one of Barchi and Peschl's main reasons to opt for Khotanese influence on the Niya preterite is based on an argument from silence.

Counterargument 3 (§5.4.6): the phonological arguments adduced by Barchi and Peschl to support their claim of a Khotanese substrate are not compelling, and the alignment of the Niya preterite cannot bear the burden of proving a Khotanese substrate on its own.

Counterargument 4 (§5.4.7): Barchi and Peschl take their sociolinguistic scenario, itself based on Høisæter's idea of long-term interregional exchange networks during Kuṣāṇa times, to imply that Niya Prakrit would be a descendant of Khotan Prakrit. When, however, taking the linguistic differences between Niya Prakrit and the Khotan Prakrit of CKD 661 into account, it is difficult to see in which way Niya Prakrit could descend from the Khotan variant without having to resort to ad hoc assumptions.

5.4.9 Arguments in favour of a Bactrian source

In light of these four issues with Barchi and Peschl's proposal, it seems worth examining whether Bactrian rather than Khotanese influenced the Niya preterite. In this section, I argue that this alternative hypothesis is indeed supported by morphological arguments. How to account for the syntactic alignment of the Niya preterite vis-à-vis its Bactrian counterpart forms the topic of the next section (§5.4.10).

5.4.9.1 Two general arguments

I start with two general arguments why Bactrian seems a more plausible source of influence than Khotanese.

The first argument is an application of Ockham's razor. In the preceding parts of this book, we have seen that there is not only a substantial amount of Bactrian loanwords in Niya Prakrit, but there is also evidence that two derivational suffixes were borrowed from Bactrian into Niya Prakrit (§5.2). Therefore, it would be a less costly hypothesis to ascribe the morphosyntax of the Niya preterite to this already known form of contact rather than having to postulate a Khotanese substrate for which there is not much decisive evidence otherwise.

Second, assuming Bactrian influence on the preterite bypasses two of Barchi and Peschl's questionable premises. On the one hand, the Niya-type preterite need in this alternative scenario not be the result of a development occurring solely in the Tarim Basin, as Bactrian influence can have been exerted before the spread of Niya Prakrit to its new habitat. As the ancestor of Niya Prakrit was, as I argue in §§7.3–7.4, conceivably used as a chancellery language of the Kuṣāṇa empire, a possible reason why Niya-type preterites have not yet been found in South Asian Gāndhārī may be that language contact with Bactrian was more intense or at least more visible in administrative documents than in other text genres. On the other hand, we would be freed from the assumption of Niya Prakrit being a descendant of Khotan Prakrit because, as argued in §5.4.7, these two dialects may derive from different South Asian sources not necessarily influenced by Bactrian to the same degree.

5.4.9.2 Morphological similarities with the Bactrian preterite

The key reason to suspect Bactrian and not Khotanese influence concerns the many morphological similarities shared by the Bactrian and Niya preterite. The paradigm of the latter has been presented in §5.4.2.1. For the Bactrian paradigm, see below.⁸⁶³

	Copula	Intransitives	Transitives
1sg.	-ημο (-ιμο) 'I am'	αγαδ(δ)ημο (-ιμο) 'I came'	λαδ(δ)ημο (-ιμο) 'X gave (to) me'
2sg.	-ηιο 'you are'	αγαδ(δ)ηιο 'you came'	λαδ(δ)ηιο 'X gave (to) you'
3sg.	-ιστο; αστο '(s)he is'	αγαδο '(s)he came'	λαδο 'X gave (to) him/her'
	νιστο '(s)he is not'	νιστο αγαδο '(s)he did not come'	νιστο λαδο 'X did not give (to) him/her'
1pl.	-αμο 'we are'	αγαδαμο 'we came'	λαδαμο 'X gave (to) us'
	ναμο 'we are not'	ναμο αγαδο 'we did not come'	ναμο λαδο 'X did not give (to) us'

⁸⁶³ The paradigm is an idealisation; not every form given occurs in actual texts.

2pl.	-ηδο 'you are'	αγαδ(δ)ηδο 'you came'	λαδ(δ)ηδο 'X gave (to) you'
3pl.	-ινδο; αστινδο 'they are'	αγαδ(δ)ινδο 'they came'	λαδ(δ)ινδο 'X gave (to) them'
	νινδο 'they are not'	νινδο αγαδο 'they did not come'	νινδο λαδο 'X did not give (to) them'

ad 1sg. In Kuṣāṇa sources, there are some archaic forms in -ημι / -ημε, viz. σταδημι / σταδημε 'I was' (NPlate 1; 3) and ωσταδημι 'X established me' (NPlate 2); cf. Sims-Williams (2015: 259f.).

ad 3sg. There is one example of an archaic negated pret.3sg. with νιστι < **nai(d)* *asti*, i.e. νιστι χοτο 'it was not needed (?)' in SK₄B 5f. (the parallel versions SK₄A 4 and SK₄M 3 have νιστο χοτο).

ad 1pl. The only occurrence of a negated pret.1pl. is ναμο βιαδο 'we were not able' (P 13').

ad 3pl. In Kuṣāṇa Bactrian, there are occasional examples of archaic pret.3pl. in -ινδι, like αγδινδι 'they followed (?)' (DilT₅ 11) or φροχορτινδι 'X brought them away' (SK₄B 8). There is also one instance of a negated pret.3pl. with νινδι < **nai(d)* *hanti*, i.e. νινδι ρατο 'X did not call them' (DilT₅ 11).

Like Niya Prakrit but unlike Khotanese, Bactrian makes, when forming preterites, no morphological distinction between transitives and intransitives or between masculine and feminine gender. The endings of the Bactrian preterite are except for the 3sg.—as in Niya Prakrit, an unmarked form—synchronically still analysable as enclitic forms of 'to be'. Yet, these endings are, very much in the same way as in Niya Prakrit, clearly unverbated with the preterite stem and practically identical with the present endings 1sg. -ημο (and variants), 2sg. -ηιο, 1pl. -αμο, 2pl. -ηδο, and 3pl. -ινδο.

In addition, the Bactrian and Niya Prakrit endings resemble each other phonetically. In the 1sg., Niya *-emi* is identical to early Kuṣāṇa Bactrian -ημι / *ēmi*/ (later -ημο / *ēmā*/) and in the 1pl., Niya *-ama* matches Bactrian -αμο / *āmā*/. While not an exact fit, one also cannot deny a certain resemblance between the 2pl. -ηδο / *ēdā*/ and Niya *-etha* / *-etu* and the Kuṣāṇa 3pl. -ινδι / *indi*/ (later -ινδο / *indā*/) and Niya *-amti*. Another noteworthy feature is that, when the ending in Bactrian starts with -η- / *ē*/, the Niya ending starts with -e- as well; in the 1pl., the Bactrian ending begins with -α- / *ā*/ and Niya has likewise -a-.

The only noticeable difference in morphology between the Bactrian and Niya preterite is the way they are negated. In Niya Prakrit, one only has to put *na* ‘not’ in front of the relevant verb form. In Bactrian, there is a specific construction whereby 3sg. *νιστο* ‘(s)he is not’, 1pl. *ναμο* ‘we are not’, and 3pl. *νινδο* ‘they are not’ are placed in front of the 3sg. form of the preterite (cf. BD II: 47). The fact that this construction does not occur in Niya Prakrit is no forceful counterargument against the assumption of Bactrian influence on the morphology of the Niya preterite, as at least the Bactrian 2sg. *ναυιρτηιο* ‘X did not let you go’ (F 16) structurally agrees with how preterites are negated in Niya Prakrit.⁸⁶⁴

5.4.9.3 “Contact-facilitated grammaticalisation” and the Niya preterite

At a diachronic level, I propose to interpret the morphological similarities between the Bactrian and Niya Prakrit preterite as an instance of “contact-facilitated grammaticalisation”.⁸⁶⁵ Following Burrow (LKD: §§105f.), §5.4.2.2 argued that, when taking the Niya outcome of OIA *-sm-*, *-ah*, and *-am* into consideration, all singular forms and the 1pl. of the preterite can be derived straightforwardly from the combination of the OIA nom.sg. or pl. of the verbal adj. in *-ta-* plus the verb ‘to be’ used as a copula. This historical process can be seen as an instance of grammaticalisation, whereby (i) the verb ‘to be’ lost its lexical semantics (desemanticisation ~ semantic bleaching); (ii) the auxiliary got reinterpreted as a verbal ending (deategorialisation); and (iii) certain phonological developments facilitated the univerbation of the verbal adj. in *-ta-* with the copula (erosion ~ phonetic reduction).⁸⁶⁶

⁸⁶⁴ Also the Niya cognate of Bactr. *νιστο*, i.e. *nasti* ‘(s)he is not’, can at times be used to negate another verb form (cf. Balbir 1990: 25f.). While vaguely similar to the Bactrian construction, I doubt that there is a historical connection between the two, because (i) not only *nasti*, but also Niya *asti* ‘(s)he is’ can be added in front of another verb form; (ii) this use of *nasti* is not restricted to the preterite; and (iii) *nasti* only combines with other forms of ‘to be’, whereas *νιστο* (and *ναμο*; *νινδο*) can be put in front of any verb.

⁸⁶⁵ The inspiration for this term comes from Heine and Kuteva’s (2003; 2005: 79–122) concept of “contact-induced grammaticalisation”, which is a type of grammaticalisation that is “due to the influence of one language on another” (2003: 533 = 2005: 80). I use “contact-facilitated” here because contact with Bactrian need not have initiated, but only furthered the grammaticalisation process that led from a periphrastic construction consisting of the verbal adj. in *-ta-* and a copula to the synthetic preterite found in Niya Prakrit.

⁸⁶⁶ For these grammaticalisation mechanisms, see e.g. Kuteva et al. (2019²: 3).

To account for the form of the 2pl. and 3pl. of the Niya preterite, Burrow (LKD: §105) hypothesised analogical influence from the presents with a stem in *-e-*. This type of analogy would indeed explain why the 2pl. ends in *-etha* (and *-etu*) and not in ***-astha* as expected from OIA *-āḥ stha*. Yet, it is not entirely clear, as Burrow admits, why the 3pl. still ends in *-aṃti* (rather than ***-eṃti*) if there has been analogical influence from the *e*-class presents.

The assumption of Bactrian influence on the grammaticalisation of the Niya preterite allows for an alternative scenario involving three steps.

First, regular sound changes can have initiated the grammaticalisation of the periphrastic past tense in (the ancestor of) Niya Prakrit, resulting in forms such as 1sg. **ditte 'mi* < **ditte 'smi* < **dittāḥ asmi*.

Subsequently, bilingual speakers may, due to the similarities between the two formations, have identified the morphology of Niya forms, such as 1sg. **ditte 'mi*, with Bactrian preterites such as 1sg. **λαδημι* (later *-ημο*).⁸⁶⁷ These speakers were moreover likely aware that the Bactrian preterite is also based on the combination of the verbal adj. in *-ta-* with forms of the verb 'to be' (cf. supra). This could have given an extra impulse for the grammaticalisation of the originally periphrastic past tense in Niya Prakrit into a synthetic preterite.

In a third phase, the morphology of the Niya preterite can have been influenced by that of its Bactrian counterpart. An analogy with *e*-class presents is one way to account for the 2pl. in *-etha* (and *-etu*), but the Bactrian 2pl. in *-ηδο* /*ēdā*/ could also have been a contributing factor. Contact with Bactrian could likewise help explain the formation of the 3pl. The analysis of a Bactrian 3pl. form such as **λαδινδι* as **λαδ-* plus enclitic copula *-ινδι* 'they are' could have facilitated the univerbation of **dittāḥ santi* over something like **dittā anti* to the attested *ditaṃti*. This explanation admittedly needs an abnormal loss of the initial *s-* of *santi* to have occurred, but this type of irregular phonological development is not untypical of clitics such as *santi* and grammaticalisation processes in general.

5.4.9.4 A Bactrian source for the verbal adjective in **-taka-*

Contact with Bactrian can also help to account for the form and function of the Niya verbal adjective in **-taka-*. At a language-internal level, this verbal adj. can be explained as an allomorph of the verbal adj. in *-ta-* that eventually

⁸⁶⁷ For more discussion on potential bilingualism between Bactrian and (the ancestor of) Niya Prakrit, see Chapter 7.

became specialised as a patient-oriented adj. and a component of compound tenses (see Jamison 2009: 317f.; cf. also Balbir 1990: 31).

However, the absence of a grammaticalised verbal adj. in **-taka-* in other MIA languages suggests that the Niya formation is once again the result of language contact, and there is indeed a likely model for it in Bactrian. Formally, the Niya verbal adj. in **-taka-* can be compared to the Bactrian verbal adj. (“ppp”) in *-δογο / -τογο* (and variants; fem. in *-ισο*) < **-taka-* with cognates in other Middle Iranian languages.⁸⁶⁸ Also functionally, the Niya and Bactrian verbal adjectives in **-taka-* resemble each other closely, as I will try to show below.⁸⁶⁹

First, these verbal adjectives can in Bactrian, as in Niya Prakrit, be used either attributively or as a noun: for the former option, compare, for example, *-μο κηδδικο δδηβδαρμο* ‘the *deyadharmā* made (κηδδικο) by me’ (TiS 4f.) and for the latter, *φρητογο* ‘messenger’ < **fra-išta-ka-* ‘sent’ (cf. MP *frēstag*, Parth. *frēstag*).

Second, both languages use these verbal adjectives to make compound tenses. In Bactrian, the perf.3pl. is, for instance, made by adding the enclitic 3pl. *-ινδο* ‘they are’ to the verbal adj. in **-taka-*, e.g. *ναβιχτιγινδο* ‘they are written’ (archaic form *νιβιχτιγινδο*). There is also one occurrence of a plpf.3pl. *κηδδικο ασταδινδο* ‘they had been made’ (M 4f.) consisting of the verbal adj. *κηδδικο* ‘made’ and the pret.3pl. *ασταδινδο* ‘they were’.⁸⁷⁰

Third, the verbal adj. in **-taka-* can, without the addition of a copula, be used as a perf.3sg. This can be best exemplified by *ναβιχτογο* (and variants) ‘written’.⁸⁷¹ In (5.55), *ναβιχτογο* ‘written’ is the main verb of a subordinate clause introduced by the conjunction *σαγωνδο* ‘as’ and functionally largely equivalent to the passive 3sg. *ναβισιδο* ‘it is written’⁸⁷² more frequently

⁸⁶⁸ See e.g. GW (§354; §506) for the Middle Persian and Parthian cognates of Bactr. *-δογο / -τογο*.

⁸⁶⁹ For the morphosyntactic usage of the Niya verbal adj. in **-taka-*, cf. §5.4.2.4. For Bactrian, see also Jügel (2015: 91f.; 2020: 288–290).

⁸⁷⁰ On *κηδδικο ασταδινδο*, cf. also Jügel (2020: 289), who interprets it as a past stative.

⁸⁷¹ Regarding this last point, my analysis of Bactrian verbal morphology differs slightly from that of Sims-Williams, as he writes that the perf.3pl. is “the only form attested” (BD II: 46).

⁸⁷² Etymologically, “it is not clear whether it [*ναβισιδο*] represents a middle form (**ni-pinsatai*) or is derived from a distinct passive pres. stem (e.g. **ni-pisya-*)” (BD II: 236). For the argument made here, it is sufficient that *ναβισιδο* can be synchronically analysed as a passive.

found in this type of context; see example (5.56) and note that αβο μασκο ‘herein’ is used in both sentences.

(5.55) C 19f. ~ C 21’f.

στο φιβαοσο μο λαβνοβωστογο χοζο οδο οαοαραδο σαγωνδο αβο
μασκο ναβιχτογο.

“And may (this) document, this deed of gift be (considered) good and
valid as (it is) written herein.” (BD I²: 34).

(5.56) N 26ff. ~ N 18’ff.

στο ιθασο παρσο τογδο ταοανο πιτανοβωστιγο μολραγο χοζο οαοαρο
αβοδηιο σαγονδαβο μασκο ναβισιδο ασωσαβο ιασηδανο ζοριγο.

“And so, after the fine has been paid, may (this) guarantee-contract
(this) sealed document, be (considered) good and valid as (it) is written
herein, from now to eternity.” (BD I²: 70).

In my opinion, the functional equivalence between ναβιχτογο and an inflected form such as ναβισιδο counts as an argument that the former can also be an unmarked perf.3sg. and not only a “ppp” as it is labelled in Sims-Williams’ glossary (BD II: 237).⁸⁷³

The following examples provide still more evidence for this conclusion. In (5.57), νιβιχτιγο ‘written’ is the main verb of a relative clause introduced by the inanimate relative pronoun σιδι ‘which’, itself dependent on the singular antecedent εμο κηρι ‘this work’.

(5.57) NPlate 3f.

ταδι εμο κηρι μανο οαρο κηρδ[ο] ... σιδι αβο μαζδηγγο νιβιχτιγο.

“Then I performed there this work [...] which (has been) written in the
records(?)” (Sims-Williams 2015: 257).

The animate relative pronoun κιδι ‘who’ has a plural antecedent obl.pl. βαγανο ‘gods’ in (5.58) and dir.pl. βαγε ‘idem’ in (5.59), and here the verb νιβιχτιγενδι ‘they are written’ is used in the relative clause. As νιβιχτιγενδι is a perf.3pl., one can thus easily interpret νιβιχτιγο in the same type of context as a perf.3sg. (or perhaps more precisely a resultative).

⁸⁷³ Niya *lihitaga* ‘written’ (~ Bactr. ναβιχτογο) can also interchange with passive 3sg. *lihyati* ‘it is written’ (~ Bactr. ναβισιδο) in the same type of context, as can be seen from a comparison between CKD 701 reverse 1 *potge ra[kṣam]na jamna lihitaga* “the people guarding the *potge* were written down.” (TKD: 141) and CKD 224 reverse 1 *S(*u)namta Bimna uvatae jamna lihyati* “Beginning with Sunamta and Bimna the people are written down.” (TKD: 42).

(5.58) Rab. 11

εἰμοανο βαγανο κιδι μασκα νιβιχτιγενδι.

“... of these gods who are inscribed hereupon ...” (Sims-Williams 2008c: 56).

(5.59) Rab. 17

εἰμιδβα βαγε κιδι μαρο νιβιχτιγενδι.

“May these gods who are inscribed here ...” (Sims-Williams 2008c: 57).

This use of the unmarked form in **-taka-* as a perf.3sg. (resultative) is another parallel with Niya forms such as *lihitaga* ‘written’ and therefore one more indication that Bactrian did not only influence the morphology of the Niya preterite, but also that of the closely related verbal adj. in **-taka-*.

5.4.10 The alignment of the Bactrian and Niya preterite compared

Barchi and Peschl’s main argument not to opt for Bactrian influence on the Niya preterite was the difference in alignment between the two languages (cf. §5.4.3): the Bactrian preterite is patient-oriented and characterised by ergative patterns, whereas the Niya preterite “lurched” away from ergativity and is agent-oriented. Drawing on cross-linguistic evidence, this section tries to show that this difference in alignment is not too strong an obstacle to the assumption of a Bactrian influence on its formation.

In a recent article, Meyer (2019) contrasted three instances of pattern replication of an ergative structure in the past tense from an Iranian into a non-Iranian language, viz. (i) the *qtyl l-* construction in Achaemenid Official Aramaic and its Old Persian origin (2019: 581–586); (ii) the structural influence exerted by the Parthian preterite on the Armenian periphrastic perfect with the verbal adjective in *-eal* (2019: 586–594); and (iii) the transfer of past tense constructions with postverbal clitics from Kurdish into North-Eastern Neo-Aramaic (2019: 595–599).⁸⁷⁴ These cases have in common that the ergative structure is not copied without change: the three recipient languages all “lurch” away from ergativity.

According to Meyer (2019: 572; 577; 599–601; cf. also 2023: 233), there are essentially three factors at work here: (i) the frequency of the borrowed element (centrality); (ii) a decline in the intensity of contact with the donor

⁸⁷⁴ For Aramaic *qtyl l-*, see also Gzella (2004: 184–194), Ciancaglini (2008: 30–37), and Coghill (2016: 162ff.). On the Armenian periphrastic perfect, see additionally Meyer (2021; 2022; 2023: 80–104; 126–169). For alignment in Neo-Aramaic, cf. e.g. Coghill (2016: 55ff.) and Noorlander (2021).

language (constancy); and (iii) language-internal pressure from more dominant patterns (consistency).

To my mind, the last factor is often the most crucial one. In Armenian, for instance, the change from ergative over tripartite⁸⁷⁵ to nom.-acc. alignment coincides with the decrease in contact with Iranian languages after the fall of the Sasanian empire in the 7th century. Nonetheless, the alignment shift is probably in the main due to pressure from the nom.-acc. patterns found in other tenses and the fact that nom. and acc. are morphologically not distinguished in many paradigms. Phrased differently, “replicated patterns are adapted to fit the grammatical categories and material available in the replica language” (Meyer 2019: 570 fn. 2).

Inspired by this cross-linguistic evidence, this section argues that morphological and syntactic differences between Bactrian and Niya Prakrit were responsible for the alignment shift of the Niya preterite. The investigation will start with a discussion of the alignment of the Bactrian preterite and its relationship to developments in the case system and the adoption of differential object marking (DOM). Subsequently, I will compare the alignment patterns of the Niya preterite with those of its Bactrian counterpart to determine where exactly the differences lie and to see which factors may have motivated the alignment shift in Niya Prakrit. The focus will be on three elements: (i) developments in the Bactrian case system; (ii) the absence of pronominal clitics in Niya Prakrit; and (iii) an analogical influence of the Niya present tense on the alignment of the preterite.⁸⁷⁶ At the end of this section, I will additionally draw a parallel with the Persian preterite and attempt to reconstruct the history of the Niya preterite.

⁸⁷⁵ Tripartite alignment means that the subject, agent, and patient of a sentence are all marked differently. See (5.67) for a Bactrian example of such a structure.

⁸⁷⁶ There are surely more factors to consider, e.g. tense/aspect oppositions between the new preterite and the resultative in **-taka-*, so my investigation lays no claim to exhaustivity. Another topic worthy of future research is how the drift towards agent-orientation of the Niya preterite relates to sporadic examples of such a change in other Indo-Aryan languages. In a note added to his copy of LKD, Burrow e.g. compared the agent-oriented Sanskrit form *vijñātāsmi* ‘I recognised’ in a line from the *Ubhayasārikā*: *cireṇa vijñātāsmi bhavantam. abhivādayāmi*. “It took long before I recognised you, sir. (Now) I salute you with reverence.” (tr. mine; cf. the syntactic notes in Dezső & Vasudeva 2009: 436). See further Ollett (2022) on the use of *mhi* ‘I am’ < OIA *asmi* in the meaning ‘by me’ in the Mahārāṣṭrī *Līlāvāī* (he compares Niya Prakrit on pp. 283f.).

5.4.10.1 Bactrian cases, DOM, and the alignment of the preterite

What follows is a synchronic description of the alignment patterns of the Bactrian preterite, with a focus on Kuṣāṇa Bactrian, the stage of the language most pertinent to the comparison with Niya Prakrit. Also included are brief notes on the case system and differential object marking (DOM) because they help to explain how the alignment works.

It will be argued that the alignment of the Bactrian preterite is not strictly ergative but a mix of different patterns. On this point, I basically follow Gholami (2009), but her analysis can be simplified.⁸⁷⁷ Where she posits ten types in total, i.e. an ergative + neutral type with seven subtypes and a tripartite + nominative type with three subtypes (see p. 139), I will divide the data into three categories: (i) ergative alignment; (ii) direct alignment; and (iii) semantic alignment (manifesting itself as a nom.-acc. or a tripartite pattern). Structuring the data in this way makes it also more easy to see in which contexts the alignment of the Bactrian and Niya Prakrit preterite correspond and where they diverge. In turn, this will point to possible language-internal reasons why there are these syntactic divergences between the two types of preterite.

Due to the gradual loss of final vowels, the Bactrian case system was simplified over time. In Kuṣāṇa Bactrian, there was still a distinction between a dir.sg. in -o and an obl.sg. in -ε (sometimes -ι) and between a dir.pl. in -ε and an obl.pl. in -αvo. In later Bactrian, the system consisted of an unmarked singular in -o and a plural in -αvo, without further case distinctions.⁸⁷⁸

⁸⁷⁷ On the alignment of the Bactrian preterite, see further BD II (46f.) and the relevant parts of Jügel (2015; see also his data pp. 579–594). Barchi and Peschl (2022: 417 fn. 33) mention Gholami's (2009) study, but they do not openly consider the possibility that the existence of non-ergative patterns in Bactrian could be significant for the alignment of the Niya preterite.

⁸⁷⁸ On the Bactrian case system (including pronouns and clitics), see also BD II (40f.); SFBG (73–76; 99–105); Jügel (2015: 167f.; 182–185; 219–222); and Michetti (fthc.). There are occasional remnants of feminines in -α, e.g. λιζα 'fortress' or λογδα 'daughter', but gender distinction is lost early on. Some words, mainly kinship terms, preserve traces of archaic types of inflection, e.g. obl.sg. πιπο 'father' < gen.sg. *πιθρα next to dir.sg. πιδα (later πιδο) < nom.sg. *πιτā (Sims-Williams 2015: 259). In addition, there are traces of a nom.sg. in -ι /i/ < *-ah (Michetti fthc.: §5) and an abl.-ins.sg. in -α /ǎ/ in Kuṣāṇa Bactrian. The latter can be used after prepositions or as the agent of a transitive preterite (Sims-Williams 2015: 258; Halfmann et al. 2024: 27f.; Kreidl 2024; Michetti fthc.: §5).

1sg. and 2sg. personal pronouns continued to differentiate between a dir. and an obl. form, i.e. $\alpha\zeta\omicron$ vs. $\mu\alpha\nu\omicron$ and $\tau\omicron\omicron$ (and variants) vs. $\tau\alpha\omicron\omicron$ (and variants). In the plural, no differentiation is made between dir. and obl. The 1pl. form is $\alpha\mu\alpha\chi\omicron$ ($\mu\alpha\chi\omicron$), the 2pl. $\tau\omega\mu\alpha\chi\omicron$ (and variants).

In addition to these orthotonic pronouns, Bactrian had a range of pronominal clitics used in the functions of an oblique: 1sg. $-\omicron\mu\omicron$ (MBactr. $-wm$); 2sg. $-\delta\eta\iota\omicron$ (archaic $-\delta\omicron$); 3sg. $-\eta\iota\omicron$ (also $-\eta\iota\alpha$, $-\eta\omicron$, $-\iota\eta\iota\omicron$, $-\iota\omicron$; MBactr. $-\gamma\hbar$, $-\gamma\gamma\hbar$, $-\gamma\gamma\hbar$, $-\gamma$); 1pl. $-\mu\eta\nu\omicron$; 2pl. $-\delta\eta\nu\omicron$; and 3pl. $-\eta\nu\omicron$ (also $-\iota\eta\nu\omicron$).

Bactrian treats intransitive and transitive preterites differently. For intransitive preterites, the agent (= subject) of the sentence agrees with the verb. In (5.60), for example, the 1sg. agent is marked both by the dir.sg. $\alpha\zeta\omicron$ ‘I’ and the 1sg. verb ending $-\eta\mu\iota$ in intr.pret.1sg. $\sigma\tau\alpha\delta\eta\mu\iota$ ‘I was’.

(5.60) NPlate 1

$\tau\alpha\delta\eta\omicron \alpha\zeta\omicron \mu\omicron \nu\omicron\kappa\omicron\nu\zeta\iota\kappa\omicron \iota \pi\iota\omicron\omicron\omicron \mu\alpha\rho\eta\gamma\omicron \sigma\tau\alpha\delta\eta\mu\iota \alpha\mu\beta\omicron\upsilon\kappa\alpha\omicron.$

“I, Nukunzik, his father’s servant, was then *amboukao*.” (Sims-Williams 2015: 257).

In the case of transitive preterites, the verb does not agree with the agent but with the patient of the sentence. In many instances, an enclitic pronoun takes up the role of the agent. In (5.61), the 1sg. ending $-\eta\mu\iota$ in the tr.pret.1sg. $\omega\sigma\tau\alpha\delta\eta\mu\iota$ ‘X established me’ marks the patient and not the agent of the sentence—as it did with the intransitive verb $\sigma\tau\alpha\delta\eta\mu\iota$ ‘I was’ in (5.60). The agent is instead marked by the 3sg. pronominal clitic $-\eta\omicron$ ‘(by) him’, hence the translation with ‘he established me’.

(5.61) NPlate 2

$\tau\alpha\delta\eta\omicron \alpha\lambda\omicron \iota \pi\iota\omicron\omicron\iota\beta\tau\epsilon\iota\gamma\alpha\nu\omicron \omicron\delta\omicron \alpha\lambda\omicron \iota \nu\iota\alpha\gamma\omicron\beta\tau\eta\gamma\alpha\nu\omicron \mu\alpha\rho\eta\gamma\alpha\nu\omicron \alpha\mu\sigma\alpha\sigma\omicron\gamma\omicron \omega\sigma\tau\alpha\delta\eta\mu\iota \alpha\lambda\omicron \iota \varphi\alpha\rho\delta\alpha\mu\gamma\alpha\nu\omicron.$

“he [Kanishka] established me [Nukunzik] (as) equal(?) with (his) father’s and with (his) grandfather’s servants, with the foremost (people).” (Sims-Williams 2015: 257).

In (5.62), the verbs $\pi\omicron\omicron\omicron\gamma\alpha\tau\omicron$ ‘surveyed (?)’, $\kappa\alpha\nu\delta\omicron$ ‘dug’, $\omicron\zeta\omicron\omicron\alpha\sigma\tau\omicron$ ‘brought out’, and $\omicron\iota\lambda\iota\rho\delta\omicron$ ‘fitted’ agree with the patients $\mu\alpha \lambda\iota\zeta\omicron$ ‘the citadel’, $\epsilon\iota\omicron \sigma\alpha\delta\omicron$ ‘this well’, and $\alpha\beta\omicron$ ‘water’, all of them being dir.sg. The 3sg. clitic $-\eta\iota\omicron$ ‘by him’ functions once again as the agent of the sentence.

(5.62) SK₄M 11–13

$\tau\alpha\delta\eta\iota\omicron \mu\alpha \lambda\iota\zeta\omicron \pi\omicron\omicron\omicron\gamma\alpha\tau\omicron \tau\alpha\delta\eta\iota\omicron \epsilon\iota\omicron \sigma\alpha\delta\omicron \kappa\alpha\nu\delta\omicron \omicron\tau\eta\iota\omicron \alpha\beta\omicron \omicron\zeta\omicron\omicron\alpha\sigma\tau\omicron \omicron\tau\eta\iota\omicron \pi\iota\delta\omicron \alpha\sigma\alpha\gamma\epsilon \iota\theta\omicron \omicron\iota\lambda\iota\rho\delta\omicron.$

“then he [Nukunzuk] surveyed(?) the citadel, he dug this well, and he brought out the water, and he fitted it with stones.” (Sims-Williams 2012b: 79).

When nouns and certain demonstrative pronouns fulfil the role of the agent, they are, at least in early Kuṣāṇa Bactrian, put in the oblique case. For orthotonic 1sg. and 2sg. personal pronouns, this pattern holds throughout the attested history of Bactrian.

In example (5.63), the dir.sg. ειο βαγολαγγο ‘this sanctuary’ is the patient of the sentence and thus in agreement with the verb, the tr.pret.3sg. κηδο ‘made’. The obl.sg. βαφαρε καραλαργγε ‘Shafar the lord of the marches’ takes up the function of the agent.

(5.63) Rab. 15

ταδι βαφαρε καραλαργγε κηδο ειο βαγολαγγο.

“Shafar the lord of the marches made this sanctuary.” (Sims-Williams 2008c: 57).

The preceding examples are prototypically ergative: the patient equals the subject of the sentence and is put in the direct case, while the agent is an oblique form of a (pro)noun or an enclitic functioning as an oblique.

Yet, the situation is different with 1pl. and 2pl. pronouns, as these do not distinguish between direct and oblique forms (cf. *supra*). In (5.64), neither the agent of tr.pret.3sg. λαδο ‘gave’, i.e. μαχο ‘we’, nor the patient (= subject), i.e. βοβο οαρζιαο ‘the farming of the estate’, are overtly marked for case.

(5.64) U 6f.

ταδο μαχο ωσο λαδο αβοφαγο βηκο βοβο οαρζιαο.

“So now we gave the farming of the estate to you, Bek.” (after Gholami 2009: 136).

In other words, the agent, patient, and subject are not morphologically distinguished, and we are dealing with an instance of neutral alignment (so also Gholami 2009: 139).⁸⁷⁹

The loss of case marking in nominal morphology created a second environment where neutral alignment was possible. One such case is (5.65),

⁸⁷⁹ “Wenn die Aktanten gar nicht oder nur durch unveränderliche Wörter ausgedrückt werden, ist die ergativische formal nicht von der aktivischen Konstruktion zu unterscheiden.” (GW: 396). Cf. also Nyberg (1974: 282f.).

where το χοηο ‘this lordship’, the agent of tr.pret.3sg. φοβταδο ‘sent’, and ι γασικο ‘the concubine’, the patient, are not differentiated morphologically.

(5.65) cf 7

ταδομο νιγατο κοοαδο ι γασικο το χοηο αβο ρωβο φοβταδο.

“I have heard that your lordship sent the concubine to Rob.” (BD II: 78).

In examples of this type, the context is our primary guide in distinguishing between agents and patients.

Often, contextual information is indeed sufficient to do so, but the lack of a fixed word order⁸⁸⁰ could still create ambiguities in discriminating subjects from objects or agents from patients. Such ambiguities were avoided by using DOM, which means that speakers of Bactrian put the preposition αβο ‘in, to, etc.’ < **abi* in front of direct objects that were both animate and definite (cf. Gholami 2009: 137; Sims-Williams 2011b; Jügel 2015: 332f.).⁸⁸¹

(5.66) and (5.67) exemplify the consequences which the use of DOM had on the alignment patterns of the Bactrian preterite. The unmarked form ι χοηο ‘the lord’ is the agent of sentence (5.67). At the same time, it is interpretable as the subject of tr.pret.3sg. φοβταδο ‘sent’, because the patient ιαμροσπαλο βορνικανο (a PN) is overtly marked as the direct object of the sentence by the addition of the DOM marker αβο.

(5.66) ca 3–5

μισιδο ι χοηο αβο ιαμροσπαλο βορνικανο ταρο αβιδο καρανο φοβταδο.

“Moreover, the lord has sent Yamsh-spal Burnikan thither to you.” (BD II: 68).

(5.67) shows a similar, although still distinct, pattern. In this example, the 1sg. oblique pronoun -ομο functions as the agent, the preposition αβο marks the patient ρωβιγο ‘men of Rob’ as the direct object of the sentence, and the 3pl. subject encoded in the verbal ending -ινδο (tr.pret.3pl. βαστινδο ‘X bound them’) does not agree with either the agent or the patient.

(5.67) cm 9f.

ταδομο πιδο ταμαχο σαχ[οανο] [αβο ρ]ωβιγο ... βαστινδο.

“Because of your sta[tement], I bound the men of Rob.” (BD II: 90).

⁸⁸⁰ For Bactrian word order, see SFBG (201–215).

⁸⁸¹ Most examples of DOM come from later Bactrian, but there are indications that DOM was already in use in Kuṣāṇa Bactrian (Sims-Williams 2011b: 36).

I concur with Gholami (2009: 137) that (5.66) would be an example of nom.-acc. alignment and (5.67) one of tripartite alignment. As the presence or absence of DOM is, however, determined by semantic factors such as animacy, one could also classify such sentences under the heading of semantic alignment (cf. §5.4.2.3 for similar patterns in Niya).

From the above, one can conclude that the alignment of the Bactrian preterite is not consistently ergative.⁸⁸² As in many other Middle and New Iranian languages (cf. e.g. Haig 2008: 117), the alignment of the Bactrian preterite is rather a mixed system.

First, there is ergative alignment, whereby the agent is marked in the direct case and the patient (= subject) in the oblique. This pattern holds for pronominal clitics, for 1sg. and 2sg. orthotonic pronouns, and, until the case distinction between direct and oblique was lost, also for nouns.

Second, direct alignment could occur. In this case, there is no morphological distinction between the agent, patient, and subject of a sentence. This structure is possible with 1pl. and 2pl. orthotonic pronouns and nouns no longer distinguishing between a direct and oblique case form.

A third possibility is semantic alignment, which can manifest itself in two ways: either the patient became, due to DOM, explicitly marked as the direct object, and the agent could be reinterpreted as the subject, i.e. a nom.-acc. type of structure, or the agent, patient, and subject of the sentence were, because of DOM, all treated differently, resulting in a tripartite pattern.

5.4.10.2 The loss of ergative patterns in Niya Prakrit

With the revised analysis of the morphosyntactic alignment of the Bactrian preterite above, the question arises how its adaption to fit the typological structure of the recipient language, i.e. Niya Prakrit, could have caused the loss of ergative patterns in the latter.

To facilitate the discussion of this point, the three alignment patterns of the Niya preterite detailed in §5.4.2.3 are given again below:

⁸⁸² Alleged cases of agent-oriented preterites in the Bactrian documents jh and O (BD II: 47) have been explained differently by Jügel (2015: 808–810), so they cannot be used as further evidence for this conclusion. The same is true about some Kuṣāṇa Bactrian forms in -δανι/-δανε (βαοδανι ‘kingship’ in Rab. 2; βαοδανε in DN₁ 6; χοαδοδανι ‘lordship’ in NPlate 1) which have been argued to be obl.sg. used as the patient of agent-oriented preterite verb forms (cf. Sims-Williams & Cribb 1996: 89f.) but probably belong to a special declension with dir.sg. in -ι/-ε (see Michetti fthc.: §5).

- (i) neutral or “direct” alignment
 - default pattern
 - agent and patient both marked in the dir. case
- (ii) nom.-acc. alignment
 - for demonstrative pronouns
 - agent in the nom. and patient in the acc. case
- (iii) semantic alignment
 - agent and patient are both animate
 - differential agent marking in the ins. case

Accounting for the alignment of the Niya preterite vis-à-vis its Bactrian counterpart in essence boils down to addressing the following two questions. First, is there a direct connection between the prominence of neutral/direct alignment in Niya Prakrit and the existence of such a pattern in Bactrian? In other words, did the dir. and obl. case in Bactrian fall together early enough to have impacted the way in which the Bactrian type of preterite and its alignment were taken over in Niya Prakrit? And second, could we identify language-internal reasons why the ergative patterns of the Bactrian preterite had to be given up to comply with the typological profile of Niya Prakrit? In what follows, I will take up these two topics in turn.⁸⁸³

Above, it was pointed out that once nouns and certain pronouns did no longer distinguish between the dir. and obl. case, the alignment of the Bactrian preterite was in certain sentence types no longer ergative but neutral. For the Niya preterite, neutral (or “direct”) alignment is the default pattern. Therefore, one could hypothesise that, when replicating the Bactrian type of preterite, speakers of Niya Prakrit generalised the neutral alignment patterns because these fitted better into the typological structure of their language than the ergative ones (cf. *infra*).

The viability of this hypothesis crucially depends on how old neutral alignment with transitive preterites is in Bactrian. Chronological questions as these obviously cannot be answered very precisely. Yet, there is at least circumstantial evidence suggesting that neutral alignment patterns did exist

⁸⁸³ Niya Prakrit’s nom.-acc. and semantic alignment do not require further discussion. The first type of alignment merely results from the fact that demonstratives, unlike nouns and most pronouns, still distinguish between nom. and acc. case and is hence not too relevant for the comparison with Bactrian. The second type avoids ambiguities when the agent and patient of a sentence are both animate and thus shares its *raison d’être* with Bactrian’s DOM and the alignment patterns caused by it.

early enough in Bactrian, so that they may have played a role in the historical development of the Niya preterite.

To start with, there are no longer any traces of case distinctions in the Bactrian administrative documents. The earliest texts in this corpus date back to the first half of the 4th century AD (SCBD: 82f.), consequently providing us with a firm terminus ante quem for the reduction of the Bactrian case system.

In addition, Sims-Williams (1989b: 234f.) observed that the interchange between dir. and obl. case forms started for the first time on coins from the reign of Huviška. By the time of Huviška's successors, only uninflected forms in -o were still used. If we take these data at face value, the loss of case distinctions could therefore have happened already in the second half of the 2nd century AD, perhaps even slightly earlier, given that written manifestations of linguistic change usually lag behind their first occurrence in speech.

The earliest known example in Bactrian of a non-overtly marked nominal agent of a transitive preterite also dates back to the reign of Huviška: it occurs in the colophon of version B of the Surkh Kotal inscription (Tremblay 2003: 128 fn. 23), here cited as (5.68). The different versions of the Surkh Kotal inscription still distinguish dir. from obl. case forms, as also shown by the obl.sg. κοζαρκι 'of Kuzgashk' and νοκονζικι καταλραγγι 'of Nukunzuk the lord of the marches' in (5.68). Yet, the agent of the pret.3sg. κιδι 'made', i.e. the PN βορζομορο, is morphologically not distinguished from the patient of the sentence, i.e. μο σαδο 'this well'. The nouns in apposition with βορζομορο, i.e. π[ο]υρο 'son', υασιλγανζ[ε]ιγο 'inhabitant of Hastilgan', and μαρηγι 'servant', are, except the last one, likewise not marked in the expected obl. case.

(5.68) SK₄B 24–27

οτ[ο]μο σαδο βορζομορο κιδι ι κοζαρκι π[ο]υρο υασιλγανζ[ε]ιγο
νοκονζικι καταλραγγι μαρηγι πιδο χοαδηο φρομανο.

"And Burzmihir the son of Kuzgashk, the inhabitant of Hastilgan, the servant of Nukunzuk, the lord of the marches, made this well according to the lord's command." (tr. mine, cf. Sims-Williams' 2012b: 79 translation of SK₄M 20–25).

The above fragment is accordingly one other indication that already in Kuṣāṇa times neutral alignment patterns were possible for the Bactrian preterite.⁸⁸⁴

If the chronology suggested above is correct, prototypically ergative structures were, at the time Bactrian influenced the Niya preterite, essentially limited to sentences in which the agent was either an orthotonic 1sg. or 2sg. pronoun or a pronominal clitic. Of these, structures with a 1sg. or 2sg. pronoun most likely did not significantly influence the development of the Niya preterite.

First, the use of such orthotonic pronouns as the agent of a preterite tense verb was probably not so frequent in Bactrian. Jügel (2015: 583) records only six examples of a 2sg. pronoun used in this function in the Bactrian corpus. For 1sg. pronouns, he lists 49 instances. Yet, this number is slightly skewed because it includes formulaic examples of the type $\mu\alpha\nu\omicron \nu\alpha\beta\iota\chi\tau\omicron$ ‘I have written’ or $\mu\alpha\nu\omicron \alpha\gamma\gamma\iota\tau\omicron$ / $\pi\iota\delta\omicron\rho\omicron\beta\delta\omicron$ ‘I have received’.

Second, these Bactrian pronouns were most commonly combined with a 3sg. verb form. Consequently, they are formally comparable to the pan-Indo-Aryan construction with a personal pronoun in the ins. (or gen.) and the verbal adj. in *-ta-*. The aforementioned $\mu\alpha\nu\omicron \nu\alpha\beta\iota\chi\tau\omicron$ < OIr. **manā nipixštam*, for instance, matches, except for the case of the pronoun, with Niya *maya lihita* (and variants) < OIA *mayā likhitam* ‘I have written’. Being still preserved in high-register portions of the Niya documents, e.g. in royal proclamations and colophons (Jamison 2000: 74), formations of this kind may have been ousted from the language relatively late. Put differently, if phrases such as *maya lihita* were still in everyday use at the time of the Bactrian influence on the Niya preterite and seen as translation equivalents of $\mu\alpha\nu\omicron \nu\alpha\beta\iota\chi\tau\omicron$, there would have been no substantial difference in alignment between Bactrian and (the ancestor of) Niya Prakrit in the case of 1sg. and 2sg. pronouns.⁸⁸⁵

⁸⁸⁴ An attentive reader may object that this scenario potentially contradicts the suggestion made in §4.2.1 that some of the Bactrian loanwords in Niya Prakrit may have been adopted when final vowels had yet to be lost entirely in Bactrian. As structural borrowing typically requires more intense contact over a prolonged period, it is not unlikely that the structural influence on the preterite postdates the adoption of (some of) the Bactrian loanwords, so there need not be a contradiction.

⁸⁸⁵ The replacement of *maya lihita* and similar forms by synthetic, agent-oriented 1sg. and 2sg. preterites could be a later inner-Prakrit development. For the mechanism behind such replacements, see below.

Pronominal clitics present us with a different story. Jügel (2015: 584) counted 136 examples of clitics used as the agent of a preterite tense verb, so they are, in contrast to orthotonic pronouns, quite frequently used in this function.⁸⁸⁶ Moreover, “clitics were ... on their way to becoming ... agreement forms for cross-referencing person features” (Haig 2008: 106), and “in ergative Iranian languages without case inflection”, such as later Bactrian, “they are the only way to maintain the ergative pattern” (Scheucher 2019: 15). Without the clitics, ergative structures would have become indistinguishable from neutral alignment patterns in which the agent, patient, and subject of a sentence are morphologically marked in the same way (cf. *supra*).

This crucial role of clitics in retaining the ergative alignment of the Bactrian preterite gives us an idea of why the Niya preterite “lurched” away from ergativity: pronominal clitics do not exist in Niya Prakrit.⁸⁸⁷ For *ditemi* ‘I gave’ to keep the same type of alignment as its supposed model **λαδημι* (later *λαδδημι*) ‘X gave (to) me’, speakers of Niya Prakrit had to find a functional equivalent for the Bactrian clitics, e.g. in the form of orthotonic pronouns. Else, they needed to find a different solution to accommodate the Bactrian-type preterite into the typological makeup of their language.

One way of fitting the new preterite into Niya Prakrit’s typological structure was by aligning its alignment with that of the present tense, which in my view is what actually happened. As said in §5.4.2.2, Burrow (LKD: §105) already suggested that the agent-orientation of the Niya preterite was due to an analogical influence from the present tense, whose endings were, except for the 3sg., basically the same as those of the preterite.⁸⁸⁸

⁸⁸⁶ Cf. also Haig (2008: 95), whose observations on Middle Persian and Parthian generally also hold for Bactrian: “Throughout Middle Iranian, the use of pronominal clitics is by far the most frequently employed strategy for expressing an A-past [the agent of a past tense verb]”. For other functions of the pronominal clitics in Bactrian, see Jügel (2015: 222ff.; 588–590).

⁸⁸⁷ There was a general, although not entirely consistent, tendency in the history of Indo-Aryan to lose the enclitic pronouns inherited from OIA. In Apabhramśa, for instance, these clitics had also all but disappeared from the language (cf. e.g. Scheller 1967: 41f.).

⁸⁸⁸ Burrow’s analogy is also typologically plausible, as there is a cross-linguistic “tendency to generalize a particular type of case and/or agreement pattern to all verbal predicative constructions in a language” (Dahl 2021: 422; cf. also Haig 2008: 193). The preterite was moreover morphologically less opaque in Bactrian than in Niya Prakrit. In Bactrian, the endings of the preterite were still

In Burrow's language-internal approach, the diachronic origin of the Niya preterite leads one to expect ergative alignment for transitive verbs, while systemic pressure from the present and the intransitive preterite caused the non-fulfilment of these expectations. In the contact linguistic approach advocated here, the alignment of the Bactrian preterite is a further reason to expect ergatively aligned transitive verbs, whereas the presence of neutral alignment patterns with certain (pro)nouns in Bactrian and the absence of pronominal clitics in Niya Prakrit are additional motives why ergative alignment did not survive in the end. The mechanism behind the alignment shift is the same in both approaches: an extension of the alignment of the presents and intransitive preterites to the transitive preterites.⁸⁸⁹

5.4.10.3 A comparison with the Persian preterite

The *Paradebeispiel* of a language which analogically extended the alignment of its present tense to the preterite is Persian.

As in Bactrian, the Middle Persian preterite was formed by adding enclitic forms of the verb 'to be' to the descendant of the Old Iranian verbal adj. in *-ta-*, i.e. 1sg. *kard ham* 'X did (to) me'; 2sg. *kard hē* 'X did (to) you'; 3sg. *kard* 'X did (to) him/her'; 1pl. *kard hēm* 'X did (to) us'; 2pl. *kard hēd* 'X did (to) you'; and 3pl. *kard hēnd* 'X did (to) them'. Transitive verbs were characterised by ergative alignment (cf. the translations), in which pronominal clitics played a pivotal role, e.g. 1sg. *=m kard* 'I did'; 2sg. *=t kard* 'you did'; 3sg. *=š kard* '(s)he did'; 1pl. *=mān kard* 'we did'; 2pl. *=tān kard* 'you did'; and 3pl. *=šān kard* 'they did'.

By the time of New Persian, the loss of *h-* and the univerbation of the enclitic forms of the copula with the verbal adj. had resulted in a synthetic preterite, i.e. 1sg. *kard-am* 'I did'; 2sg. *kard-ī* 'you did'; 3sg. *kard* '(s)he did'; 1pl. *kard-īm* 'we did'; 2pl. *kard-īd* 'you did'; and 3pl. *kard-and* 'they did'. As the translations make clear, the New Persian preterite is, unlike its Middle Persian predecessor, no longer ergative for transitive verbs like *kardan* 'to do'. Instead, transitive preterites adopted the same type of alignment as

synchronically analysable as enclitic forms of the verb 'to be' (cf. §5.4.9.2), whereas such clitics did not exist in Niya Prakrit, making it easy to reanalyse *-emi*, *-esi* (*-eši*), etc. as being the same endings as in the present tense.

⁸⁸⁹ For more notes on this type of analogical extension, cf. Harris & Campbell (1995: 251) and Coghill (2016: 28f.). As briefly noted in §5.4.2.3, the neutral alignment of the Niya present was, at the time of our evidence, also spreading towards other originally patient-oriented constructions, especially gerundives.

intransitive preterites and present tense forms such as 1sg. *kun-am* 'I do'; 2sg. *kun-ī* 'you do'; 3sg. *kun-ad* '(s)he does'; 1pl. *kun-īm* 'we do'; 2pl. *kun-īd* 'you do'; and 3pl. *kun-and* 'they do'.

This Persian development provides an instructive parallel for the loss of ergativity in the Niya preterite tense, as the same sort of factors seem to have operated in both cases.⁸⁹⁰

First, the loss of case endings and the adoption of DOM in Persian enabled the reanalysis of originally ergative patterns as neutral or nom.-acc. alignment (cf. what happened in Bactrian). As neutral and nom.-acc. alignment were also the default patterns for present tense verbs and intransitive preterites, the morphosyntactic structures of present and past were harmonised. In other words, the ergative pattern of past transitive verbs went out of use (cf. e.g. Noda 1999; Jügel 2015: 462).

Secondly, as in Niya Prakrit, the univerbation of the copula with the verbal adj. in *-ta-* probably played a role in the loss of ergativity in Persian (cf. e.g. GW: §841; Maggi & Orsatti 2018: 36f.). Due to this univerbation, the endings of present and past were, except for the 3sg. (cf. Niya!), more or less identical to each other, thereby facilitating a transfer of the alignment patterns of the present tense to the past tense.

Third, pronominal clitics changed their scope in the history of the Persian language. In contrast to Niya Prakrit, these clitics continued to exist in Persian. They, however, ceased to be used as the agent of a sentence (cf. Bubeník 1994: 113), and here lies the parallel with Niya Prakrit: due to this syntactic change, Persian clitics lost their function as the maintainers of ergative alignment, comparable to how the absence of clitics in Niya Prakrit may have played a role in the ousting of ergative alignment.

5.4.10.4 The history of the Niya preterite

Building on the preceding discussion, I would like to close this section with a reconstruction of what I think are the broad outlines of the history of the Niya preterite.

At an early stage in its development, (the ancestor of) Niya Prakrit inherited a periphrastic construction consisting of the verbal adj. in *-ta-* and inflected forms of the verb 'to be'. For transitive verbs, this construction was

⁸⁹⁰ Burrow (LKD: 50) already briefly compared New Persian when discussing the Niya preterite. For some notes on the loss of ergativity in Persian and Parthian, see now also Meyer (2023: 121f.).

patient-oriented with an agent in the ins. or gen. case. Due to phonological developments and in tandem with the loss of more archaic types of preterites, the forms of the copula started to merge with the verbal adj. to form a new type of synthetic preterite.

Subsequently, intensified bilingualism with Bactrian⁸⁹¹ may have led to the identification of the Niya preterite with its morphologically similar counterpart in Bactrian, in turn further facilitating the grammaticalisation of the originally analytic construction into a synthetically formed tense. Concomitantly, an innovative verbal adj. in **-taka-* took over the resultative function from the verbal adj. in *-ta-*. Here too, bilingualism with Bactrian seems to have played a role, as it is unlikely to be a coincidence that this verbal adj. in **-taka-* overlaps in both form and function with the Bactrian verbal adj. in *-δογο / -τογο* (and variants; fem. in *-ισο*) < **-taka-*.

Because of their diachronic origin and the alignment patterns in Bactrian, one would expect transitive preterites to align ergatively in Niya Prakrit. Yet, this expectation is not fulfilled, and, at some point in its development, the Niya preterite must have “lurched” away from ergativity. Several factors could have motivated this change. First of all, it is possible that when bilingualism with Bactrian influenced the course taken by the Niya preterite, ergative patterns were already becoming less prominent in Bactrian due to developments in its case system. Probably, a still more determining factor was that Bactrian ergativity was largely dependent on clitics, a class of pronouns missing from the grammatical arsenal of Niya Prakrit.

Faced with this typological discrepancy between Niya Prakrit and Bactrian and out of a desire to harmonise syntactic patterns across various tenses, transitive preterites became agent-oriented in Niya Prakrit. The process behind this change was probably an analogy with the syntactic alignment of the morphologically comparable present and the morphologically identical intransitive preterite. The last remnants of patient-oriented constructions with transitive verbs were to be combinations of a pret.3sg. and a pronoun in the ins. case, e.g. *maya lihida* ‘I have written’ ~ Bactr. *μανο ναβιχτο* ‘idem’.

5.4.11 Conclusion

In the preceding sections, the synchronic and diachronic analysis of the Niya preterite formations formed the principal topic of investigation. The

⁸⁹¹ See Chapter 7 for further discussion on Bactrian-Niya Prakrit bilingualism.

examination started in §5.4.2 with a language-internal approach that focussed on the morphology and syntax of the agent-oriented preterite tense and the patient-oriented verbal adj. in **-taka-*. §§5.4.3–5.4.10 were devoted to a contact linguistic approach to the preterite formations because it had been suspected before that the morphosyntactic differences between these formations and comparable ones in other MIA languages are to be attributed to foreign influence.

According to Barchi and Peschl (2022), the agent-orientation of the Niya preterite would be due to a substrate interference from Khotanese, where preterites are likewise agent-oriented and characterised by nom.-acc. alignment (§5.4.3). In my view, their hypothesis needs to be rejected for the reasons detailed in §§5.4.4–5.4.7 and summarised in §5.4.8. Morphological mismatches between the preterite formations in Niya Prakrit and Khotanese make a syntactic influence from the latter rather unlikely (§5.4.4). It also remains to be proved that Niya Prakrit acquired most of its distinctive linguistic features due to language contact in the Tarim Basin (§5.4.5). Barchi and Peschl's rather far-reaching hypothesis of a Khotanese substrate in Niya Prakrit is moreover not supported by additional linguistic arguments (§5.4.6) and chronologically not easily reconciled with the Khotan Prakrit evidence from CKD 661 (§5.4.7).

When approaching the Niya preterite from a morphological point of view and taking the verbal adj. in **-taka-* into consideration too, Bactrian presents itself as a more likely source of influence than Khotanese (§5.4.9). Yet, it would probably be a mistake to attribute the defining features of the Niya preterite formations to language contact alone. More likely, the morphological makeup of these formations results from a mix of language-internal developments and contact-induced change, in other words, from “contact-facilitated grammaticalisation”.

Language-internal developments were probably also the driving motor behind the alignment shift that the Niya preterite underwent (§5.4.10). Drawing on cross-linguistic evidence, I have argued that the agent-orientation of the Niya preterite is due to developments in the nominal morphology of (Kuṣāṇa) Bactrian, the absence of enclitic personal pronouns in Niya Prakrit, and generalisation of the alignment pattern of the agent-oriented presents to the preterites.