

In Search of Kentum Indo-Europeans in the Himalayas

In 1988 and 1989 Claus Peter Zoller reported the astonishing discovery of what appeared to be the remnants of an ancient Kentum Indo-European tongue in the Western Himalayas in a modern language known as Baṅgāṇī. Zoller's Baṅgāṇī findings not only had far-reaching implications for our understanding of the prehistoric migrations of ancient Indo-Europeans, they also appeared to violate much of what is received knowledge in historical linguistics. In 1994 we conducted fieldwork in order to verify these remarkable findings. The results of our investigation are presented here. On the basis of these results, it is our contention that no Kentum Indo-European remnants exist in the Baṅgāṇī language. We also discuss the implications of our findings for the historical linguistic and methodological issues raised by Zoller's work.

We have normalized Zoller's phonetic transcriptions with our own in the following way. We indicate the velar nasal (*ŋ*) and the retroflex sounds (*ḍ, ḷ, ṇ, ṛ, ṛ̥*) in accordance with Indological tradition rather than with the newer International Phonetic Association symbols. Likewise, we indicate the so-called long vowels with a macron (*ā, ī, ū*). Baṅgāṇī low tone is indicated by a grave accent. In Baṅgāṇī, as in Hindī, the sibilants *ś* and *ṣ* have merged to yield a single modern phoneme, which we transcribe as *ṣ́*, which has remained distinct from *s*. We represent the unvoiced palatal consonants in the conventional manner (*c, ch*), but we represent the voiced palatal as (*z*) because of its fricative character. The palatal occlusives have become affricates in Baṅgāṇī, but the voiced palatal tends strongly towards a fricative realization. The phonetic realization of Baṅgāṇī /*c*/ varies [ts ~ tʃ], as does that of Baṅgāṇī /*z*/ [z ~ dz] (seldom [dz] e. g. in place names). For the former Zoller's notation is 'ts' or 'tS', and he notes that latter phoneme variously as 'z', 'dz' or 'dʒ'. Our transcriptions assume a tentative phonological analysis, outlined in Van Driem & Sharmā (forthcoming). Baṅgāṇī toponyms are transliterated as they would be written in Hindī, with some additional phonological details on local pronunciation provided in square brackets. Written Hindī and Nepālī are translit-

erated in conventional Indological notation except that mute *hrasva* 'a' is left untransliterated. Reconstructed Indo-European forms and their glosses are cited as given by Zoller, whereby the acute accent marking consonants of the palatalo-velar series has replaced his older notation with a superscript 'rounded circumflex' diacritic. The Indo-European forms cited by Zoller are evidently taken from Pokorny (1959) and in some cases no longer represent the state of the art.

1. *Baṅgāṇ*

Baṅgāṇī is an Indo-Aryan language spoken by an estimated 12,000 people in the area known as Baṅgāṇ and belonging to the group of languages traditionally known as 'Western Pahārī'. Baṅgāṇ is located in Uttarkāśī district in Uttarākhaṇḍ, the alpine portion of the Indian state of Uttar Pradeś aspiring for separate statehood within the Indian Union. Baṅgāṇ roughly comprises the area between the Tons and the Pābar rivers at opposite extremes of which lie the towns of Morī and Tyūnī [tiūṇi]. The nearest revenue office is located in Purolā.

There is some dialect diversity within Baṅgāṇ itself, according to informants, but all forms of Baṅgāṇī are reported to be completely mutually intelligible. Harpāl Siṃha, who has been to Kiroḷī many times, claims that the dialect spoken in Kiroḷī, the village of Zoller's principal informant Gabar Siṃha, is the same as the dialect spoken in his own village of Jāgṭā, where most of our informants come from. Although Baṅgāṇ lies within the area traditionally known as Gaṛhvāl, the language is not of the Gaṛhvālī or 'Central Pahārī' type, but shows greater affinity with the Indo-Aryan dialects spoken in neighbouring parts of Himācal Pradeś, such as Mahāsui. The distinct Western Pahārī language spoken south of the Tons River, in Jaunsār and Bāvar, appears to be the language most closely related to Baṅgāṇī. One of us, Sharmā, is a native speaker of Kāṅgrī, a Western Pahārī language of Himācal Pradeś with a three-way pitch accent distinction, e.g. *koṛā* 'whip', *kóṛā* 'leper', *kòṛā* 'horse'; *lārī* 'bride', *lārī* 'kitchen garden', *lārī* 'handle of plough'. Both of us speak Hindī. Sharmā speaks Pañjābī, Marāṭhī and Baṅgālī, and Van Driem speaks Nepālī.

Baṅgāṇ consists mainly of three paṭṭīs Māsmūr, Piṅgaḷpaṭṭī and Kothīgāṛh [-gār]¹ and comprises about 35 villages and hamlets. The Baṅgāṇī villages of Māsmūr Paṭṭī include Sarās, Uḍāṭhā, Petṛi, Bāmsu, Thalī and Deuti. The villages of Piṅgaḷpaṭṭī include Ṭhaḍiyār, Baṅkhuvār, Kukreṛā, Begal, Kiroḷī, Mañjoṇī, Bhuṭāṇu [bù-], Dāmṭhī, Kalīc, Ārakoṭ, Mākolī, Ḍagulī and Thunārā. The Baṅgāṇī villages of the populous Kothīgāṛh Paṭṭī include Kervāṇuke [kerwāṇuke], Ducāṇuke [-ke], Jāgṭā [-te], Ciūke [-ke], Māūde [-de], Baḷaut, Joṭuvāḍī, Mājgāī, Talle [talle] Gokule and Bornālī. There are also Baṅgāṇī villages in a fourth paṭṭī by the name of Gaṛugāṛh [-gār], which straddles the Tons River near Morī. These include Biṅgsārī, Bāgi, Motār, Kharsārī and Ḍobāl Gāv, all located north of the Tons River. The rest of Gaṛugāṛh Paṭṭī, which is located south of the Tons, is non-Baṅgāṇī speaking area.

Our main informant was the 52-year-old Rośan Siṃha Cauhān, better known simply as Rośan Bhāī. Rośan Bhāī is from the village Jāgṭā in Kothīgāṛh. He also owns land at Morī-Vālṭī on the Tons River near Morī proper. Rośan Bhāī has a large extended family with relatives throughout Baṅgāṇ. His wife, sons and many of his relatives, including daughters-in-law with their children, live with him at his residences in Jāgṭā and Morī-Vālṭī. From the 16th to the 20th of December, 1994, we stayed with Rośan Bhāī at Morī-Vālṭī, where the 78th eastern meridian intersects the 31st parallel. During our stay, we also visited the nearby Baṅgāṇī village of Motār, to which we were escorted by Rośan Bhāī's son, Harpāl Siṃha. We worked not only with Rośan Bhāī but also with some of his family members and visiting relatives, such as his wife's paternal uncle Ānanda Siṃha, Rośan's younger brother Jay Siṃha, and several relatives from Bhuṭāṇu related to Rośan through his father's maternal uncles. We also worked with lads and elderly men of the neighbouring Baṅgāṇī village of Motār, as well as with sexagenarian Baṅgāṇī men from Talle Gokule and other parts of Baṅgāṇ who stopped by in Rośan Bhāī's house at Morī-Vālṭī. Rośan Bhāī would

¹ The suffix appears to be related to *-gār* (m.) 'pit, ditch, hollow' in toponyms like that of nearby *Devgar*, which is related to Hindi *gaḍhā* ~ *gaḍdhā* (m.) 'pit, ditch, hollow', *gāḍ* (m.) 'ditch, pit, e.g. for grain storage' and *gāḍā* (m.) 'cavity, pit, cavern, recess'. Relationship to *gaḍh* (m.) 'fort, stronghold' or to *gaḍ* (m.) 'enclosure, compound; hillock, mound; hindrace' would seem less likely.

also consult his wife to assist in identifying some of the Baṅgāṇī forms and meanings.

2. An astonishing discovery

Zoller (1988: 175) writes that the 'Grammatik und Wortschatz des B[angani] repräsentieren somit zum weitaus überwiegenden Teil eine moderne indoarische Sprache, genauer, einen Vertreter des Western Pahari'. Yet Zoller also claims that Baṅgāṇī preserves two types of non-Pahāṇī elements, which he calls a Kentum layer (Kentumschicht) and a Sanskritic layer (sanskritische Schicht). He refers to the main Pahāṇī component of the language as the Prakrit layer (prakritische Schicht). Zoller first reported these findings in an oral presentation entitled 'On the vestiges of an old Kentum language in Garhwal (Indian Himalayas)' made at the VIIth World Sanskrit Conference at Leiden University in 1987. Subsequently, two articles written in German were published in 1988 and 1989. These contain all the Baṅgāṇī data which Zoller has made public to date. Finally, in 1993 a curious three-page report written in English was published in Pune, which claims that Zoller's findings have been 'confirmed' by a panel of Indian linguists.

The preservation of an ancient Kentum Indo-European tongue in the Western Himalayas would have serious implications for our understanding of the prehistoric migrations of Indo-European peoples. The Kentum Indo-European language area closest to Baṅgāṇ is that of the extinct Tocharian languages Turfanian (Tocharian A) and Kuchean (Tocharian B), spoken as late as the 8th century in what today is Chinese Turkestan, by Buddhist peoples who wrote in an Indic script. The most likely archaeological correlate for the Proto-Tocharians is represented by the Afanasievo culture, a Pit Grave offshoot in southern Siberia dating from the beginning of the third millennium BC. (Parpola 1994: 145; Mallory 1989: 62-63).² The

² It would bring the location of the Proto-Tocharians significantly closer to the Indian subcontinent if they were associated archaeologically with the southeastern fringe of the Andronovo culture, which in the main is of course taken to represent the ancient Indo-Iranians. Although Mallory describes the Afanasievo culture as representing a neater archaeological correlate for the Tocharians, he also believes

finding of Kentum Indo-European traces in the Indian subcontinent far away from both Tocharian and the main Kentum Indo-European linguistic area in the West would represent a remarkable discovery. The eminent Indo-European scholar Beekes (1990) appreciates the full import of these findings when he tentatively mentions 'Proto-Bangani' as a possible branch of Indo-European in his excellent introduction to Indo-European linguistics.

As for the 'Sanskritic layer', it is well known that the lexicons of all Indo-Aryan languages, in fact, consist of several layers. Words have traditionally been classified in a not completely satisfactory way as either *tadbhava* (inherited words), *tatsama* (loans from Sanskrit) or *semi-tatsama* (old or hybridized loans from Sanskrit). What makes the Sanskritic layer in Baṅgāṇī special is Zoller's (1988: 178) claim that it consists of '300 bis 400 Wörtern ..., von denen mit großer Sicherheit gesagt werden kann, daß sie weder Tatsamas noch Semi-Tatsamas darstellen'. In other words, these Sanskritic words allegedly represent original Sanskrit, somehow miraculously preserved in the seclusion of the Western Himalayas and virtually untainted by the vicissitudes of phonological change.

3. Misgivings, mystification and methodology

The reasons for which we felt compelled to make the journey to Baṅgāṇ to check Zoller's findings were threefold. The first reason was that the extraordinary significance of the discovery demanded that it be corroborated by independent investigations. The second reason was the sheer oddity of the reported historical linguistic phenomenon and of Zoller's implicit hypothesis to explain it. Zoller's obfuscatory explanations strongly aroused our suspicions and constituted the third reason for our journey to Baṅgāṇ.

We are both descriptive linguists with years of fieldwork experience, primarily in Tibeto-Burman language communities of the Himalayas, and it struck us as odd that Indo-European scholars expressed no serious doubt in print regarding these highly interesting

it to be 'entirely possible that the ancestors of the Tocharians lurked behind some of those Andronovo variants that appear in the southeastern area of its distribution' (1989: 62), i.e. in modern Tajikistan and Kirgizstan.

but singularly peculiar findings. The first reason for our investigations requires no explanation, and in the following we shall elucidate the second and third reason for investigating the Baṅgāṇī data, in the course of which we shall more than once have occasion to quote Zoller *in extenso*.

Our initial reaction to the phenomenon described in Baṅgāṇī was that it appeared to be at variance with our understanding of historical linguistic processes. In fact, Zoller makes the following claims:

Die geringe Kohärenz des B[angani] wird wieder bei der Betrachtung seines Lautsystems sichtbar. Wenn nun die lautlichen Besonderheiten des B[angani] mit Bezug auf das Sanskrit vorgeführt werden, so zeigt es sich als notwendig, zwischen allgemein gültigen Lautveränderungen und solchen, die nur für bestimmte Teilbereiche des B[angani] Gültigkeit haben, zu unterscheiden. Diese Tatsache erweist den Begriff "Lautgesetz" als anachronistisch, und sie verdeutlicht, daß es im B[angani] keine einheitlichen Lautentwicklungen gegeben hat.

...

Bekanntlich wurde und wird dieser Begriff, mit dem zumeist historische Lautregeln gemeint sind, als physikalischen Gesetzen ähnlich seiend aufgefaßt. Dies ist unzulässig. Die mit Naturgesetzen verbundenen Begriffe "Notwendigkeit/Voraussagbarkeit" und "Reversibilität" sind auf historische phonologische Prozesse nicht übertragbar. Die Datenbelege im Bangani sind somit zwar ungewöhnlich, aber nicht unmöglich; die vorgestellten Archaismen erfüllen alle für das Bangani gültigen Silbenstrukturbedingungen, und sie fügen sich in den sozialen und kulturellen Kontext der Region.

(Zoller 1988: 177, 198)

The fact that in terms of their phonological structure the purported archaisms do not violate modern Baṅgāṇī syllable structure, which indeed they could not do, and the contention that the purported archaisms fit into the social and cultural context of the region provide no clarification for the supposed immunity of this portion of the lexicon from the historical sound laws which helped shape the Baṅgāṇī language. Recently, Zoller (1993: 113) stated: 'It is interesting, however, that the normal development of loss of aspiration into a tone did not happen in the group of those Baṅgāṇī words under discussion here [i.e. the so-called 'Kentum words']. This may be taken as an additional argument in favour of an Indo-European, non-Indo-Aryan origin of these words'. The second statement is a *non sequitur* unless we interpret it in light of Zoller's implicit hypothesis, to which we shall now turn and which does not appear to require positing the immunity of any portion of the Baṅgāṇī lexicon from historical sound laws, of which Zoller is so critical. Zoller

(1988: 199) cautions us: 'Zu den Bangani-Archaismen sei noch angemerkt, daß durch die dazugestellten Sanskrit-Wörter und indogermanischen Wörter natürlich nicht der Schluß eines ganz direkten Ableitungsverhältnisses gezogen werden darf. Ebenso wenig empfiehlt es sich, zum jetzigen Zeitpunkt schon detaillierte Hypothesen zur Bangani-Sprachgeschichte zu entwerfen'. Nonetheless Zoller does put forth a hypothesis about the origin of the archaisms he claims to observe in Baṅgāṇī.

Some items in Zoller's data such as *ḍakru* 'Träne', *ku:ɾɔ* 'Held, ein Mutiger', *gɔmbɔ* ~ *gumbɔ* 'Backenzahn' and *gimɔ* 'Winter' show starting similarity to Greek, e.g. *δάκρυ* 'tear', *κύριος* 'powerful, having authority', *γομφίος* 'molar' and *γόμφος* 'bolt', *χειμών* 'winter', and dissimilarity to Tocharian, the only truly Asian Kentum languages, e.g. Turfanian *ākār* 'tear', pl. *ākrun̄t* 'tears', *kam* 'tooth', Kuchean *akrūna* 'tears', *keme* 'tooth'. This resemblance would be compatible with the hypothesis that the Kentum elements in Baṅgāṇī were a legacy of the *Yavanas* or Greeks, having entered the language sometime after Alexander of Macedon crossed the Indus in 326 BC. and before the extinction of the last Greco-Bactrian kingdoms in northwest India and Afghanistan, late offshoots of the Seleucid Empire, in the second half of the 1st century BC. But Zoller (1989: 204) explicitly rejects what he calls the "Alexanderhypothese" as being "ohne Grundlage" for the following two reasons: 'Erstens ist der Umfang der Daten aus der Kentumschicht im Vergleich zur sankritischen Schicht relativ gering, und zweitens weisen alle Indizien auf ein hohes Alter auch der Kentumschicht.' In fact, if Zoller's data and etymologies were to be true, we ourselves should also have rejected the "Alexanderhypothese" because a large number of the Kentum items in Zoller's material look decidedly un-Greek. Yet it remains obscure why the marginal nature of the Kentum layer in modern Baṅgāṇī should to Zoller's mind constitute an indication of antiquity, and it is also unclear which indices of antiquity Zoller has in mind.

The provenance of the Kentum words, according to Zoller, is more grandiose. The Kentum archaisms purportedly represent 'die Überreste einer alten indogermanischen Sprache ..., die vermutlich weder zum Indoiranischen noch zu einer anderen Satem-Sprache gehörte'. What then is the exact historical relationship between what Zoller calls the Prakrit layer, the Sanskrit layer and the Kentum

layer? The idea that Sanskrit *tr* and *dr* have gone to /c/ and /z/ in Baṅgāṇī, whereas ‘die übrigen Verbindungen von Verschlußlaut und *r* sind in der prakritischen Schicht behalten, während in den älteren Schichten ALLE Verbindungen von Verschlußlaut und *r* als solche erhalten sind’ leads Zoller (1988: 178, 198) to hypothesize ‘daß die Prakritismen irgendwann ins Bangani entlehnt wurden, die Region also nicht an den Lautverschiebungen vom Alt- zum Mittelindischen teilhatte’. This then is Zoller’s explanation for the discrepancy between the effects of historical sound laws in the three layers of Baṅgāṇī. He makes explicit mention of seven historical phonological differences, and he hints at the existence of more such differences when he lists the six ‘wichtigsten für die einzelnen sprachlichen Schichten gültigen Lautveränderungen’ (Zoller 1988: 178–179) and mentions the tonogenetic loss of aspiration in voiced aspirates affecting words of the Prakrit layer but not Kentum words (Zoller 1993: 113).

In other words, the inherited component of the language is the Kentum Indo-European language which the progenitors of the Baṅgāṇī originally must have spoken and of which today only ‘marginal’ traces remain. The Sanskrit layer constitutes what chronologically is the first borrowed component of the language. The fact that sound laws did not affect either the inherited Kentum component of the language or the Sanskrit, early borrowed component is because the ancient speakers of this language apparently adopted the ‘quantitativ dominante’ Prakrit layer in relatively recent historical times. Zoller (1988: 177) describes this process as follows: ‘Da überdies die drei obengenannten sprachlichen Schichten in keinem Ableitungsverhältnis zueinander zu stehen scheinen, werden zukünftige Erörterungen Begriffe wie “Entlehnung” und “Überlagerung” in den Mittelpunkt stellen müssen und deren historische Wirksamkeit betonen’. Zoller’s hypothesis in a nutshell, therefore, is that ancient Kentum Indo-Europeans entered the Indian Subcontinent ultimately to settle in the Western Himalayas, adopted a vast amount of Sanskrit loans after the advent of the Indo-Aryans, and subsequently continued to speak their ancient Kentum language largely unchanged until the time that they integrally borrowed both the lexicon and the grammar of a Western Pahārī language at some date posterior to that of the Old and Middle Indian sound laws.

The traces of the original Kentum Indo-European language spoken by the progenitors of the modern Baṅgāṇī and almost wholly obliterated by massive ‘Entlehnung’ und ‘Überlagerung’ ostensibly consist of ‘mehrere Dutzend als “sicher” einzustufende sogenannte Kentum-Wörter’ (Zoller 1988: 185). In point of fact, Zoller presents fifteen Kentum words and a smaller number of other ‘archaic words’ like ‘loktō’, allegedly ‘milk’, said to represent the traces of the original Kentum language. In the next section we present the results of our investigation of these Kentum words in Baṅgāṇī.

Beforehand, we shall demonstrate why we found Zoller’s explanations to be obfuscatory, as this constitutes the third reason for our journey to Baṅgāṇī. Zoller gives what he believes to be the linguistic and extra-linguistic factors which account for the Baṅgāṇī archaisms.

Die gewiß ungewöhnliche Tatsache der Existenz solcher Archaismen in einer modernen indoarischen Sprache findet Erklärung im günstigen Zusammenwirken einer Reihe von sprachlichen und außersprachlichen Umständen. Wegen der besonderen Bedeutung dieser Archaismen sei auf diese Umstände kurz hingewiesen.

Die mündlichen Literaturen sowie verschiedene andere Hinweise machen es – trotz unserer fast völligen Unkenntnis der Geschichte Bangans – wahrscheinlich, daß aufgrund bestimmter, aber nur noch bruchstückhaft rekonstruierbarer historischer Gegebenheiten Bangan, wenn überhaupt, höchstens nominal von größeren Königreichen des Himalaya abhängig war und damit bis in die jüngste Vergangenheit einer Buddhisierung oder Hinduisierung entging.

Die Banganis waren und sind sehr fremdenfeindlich (wobei schon die unmittelbaren Nachbarn in Himachal Pradesh und Garhwal als Fremde angesehen werden) und davon überzeugt, ihre kulturellen Überlieferungen vor den Augen der Fremden verbergen zu müssen.

Viele ihrer mündlichen Überlieferungen sind stark familienbezogen (selbst bei den professionellen Barden), ihre Tradierung somit vielsträngig. Der Großteil ihrer nicht-profanen Überlieferungen wird zu feststehenden Zeiten durch einen Gott mittels “besessenen” Mediums artikuliert; deren Tradierung ist somit auf Erhaltung des Alten konzentriert. Vielsträngigkeit und Konservativismus spiegeln sich auch in der diachronen Perspektive: unter ihr erscheinen die Überlieferungen der Banganis vielschichtig und altertümlich.

Für die verschiedenen auch auf soziologischer Ebene – gemeint sind hier die Kastenstrukturen und Familiengenealogien – beobachtbaren Idiosynkrasien sei hier nur ein Beispiel angeführt: die zwischen Kaschmir und Nepal im Himalaya überall zu findenden zwei alten Grundbesitzerklassen – nämlich die Rana- und Thakur-Kshatriyas – fehlen in Bangan.

Die vielschichtige mythologische und soziologische Tradition widerspiegelt sich in den grundsätzlichen “Wesenszügen” des B[angani]. Diachron läßt es sich in mehrere deutlich voneinander unterscheidbare Schichten gliedern, wovon auf der Wortebene die sanskritische und die Kentum-Schicht die ältesten sind.

Synchron läßt sich B[angani] nach verschiedenen Kriterien – z. B. Kontext und Sozialstruktur – gliedern, und es ließe sich auch hier eine auffällig geringe Kohärenz des B[angani] nachweisen.

Die oben angeführten Punkte bilden den Hauptteil hinreichender Gründe dafür, daß im B[angani] diese besonderen Archaismen nachgewiesen werden können. (Zoller 1988: 173–175)

These explanations did not strike us as particularly elucidating, and in a footnote to this section Zoller himself mitigates, saying ‘Damit ist gemeint, daß diese Faktoren nicht auf kausale Weise formativ auf das Bangani gewirkt haben, sondern daß sie einen optimalen Hintergrund abgaben, vor dem Bangani seinen archaischen Charakter fast bis in die Gegenwart bewahren konnte’.

Above Zoller describes the Baṅgāṇī as ‘sehr fremdenfeindlich’, and he was also careful to drive this point home at the VIIth World Sanskrit Conference in Leiden in 1987 because the extreme xenophobia and utter inaccessibility of the Baṅgāṇī is one of the most lasting impressions which Zoller left on quite a number of the scholars who attended his talk. We found the Baṅgāṇī to be hospitable, friendly, sociable and forthcoming. Of course, we cannot exclude the possibility that they might have radically changed their ways within the course of a few years. In this passage, Zoller also claims that the Baṅgāṇī are convinced of the necessity of concealing their cultural traditions from outsiders, that Baṅgāṇī oral traditions, even in the case of professional bards, are strongly family-oriented, describes the transmission of Baṅgāṇī oral traditions as ‘vielsträngig’, and maintains that most Baṅgāṇī non-secular oral traditions are only ever uttered by deities through possessed Baṅgāṇī mediums. With the exception of the latter, which sounds no more credible than glossolalia, these claims are not implausible as such and could very well be true. These claims create the impression that the Kentum layer in Baṅgāṇī is a highly esoteric phenomenon not readily accessible to the scholar in the field, but they fail to provide any explanation for the retention of archaisms of the type Zoller claims to have observed. In fact, they distinctly give the impression of mystification, and this impression is enhanced in Zoller’s second installment, where he elaborates on the esoteric nature of the archaisms:

Demgegenüber aber möchte ich um so mehr betonen, daß ... Bangan kein Fremdkörper in einer ansonsten homogenen Lebenswelt ist, sondern sich fast nahtlos in

seine Umgebung einfügt – mit einem sprachlich-kulturellen ‘Kern’ allerdings, der nicht nur außergewöhnlich, sondern überdies schwer zugänglich ist.

...

Neben vermutlich vielen geschichtlichen Zufälligkeiten und neben mehreren signifikanten linguistischen Eigenschaften des B[angani], die das Überleben dieser Archaismen zwar nicht erklären, aber plausibel machen können, gibt es noch einen weiteren wichtigen Aspekt in der Kultur der Banganis, der ganz gewiß förderlich für das Überleben dieser Wörter gewirkt hat: In Bangan, aber auch teilweise in den umliegenden Regionen (z. B. in Baur oder in Deogar), ist für die Bevölkerung die Opposition “innen” vs. “außen” ganz zentral. Auf soziologischer Ebene heißt “innen”: “wir Familienangehörigen oder wir Banganis sind unter uns”, auf religiöser Ebene heißt dies: “in diesem Moment und an diesem Ort manifestiert sich Reinheit/Heiligkeit, die jetzt alles durchdringt und lenkt”.

Es entstünde ein eigener Artikel, wollte ich dazu ausführlich Beispiele geben und interpretieren. Dieser Aspekt ist aber wichtig, will man die eigentümliche Architektur des B[angani] besser verstehen. Wenn Banganis unter sich in einer Situation des “Innen” sind und miteinander reden, tun sie dies auf irgendwie andere Weise als wenn ein Außenstehender mit dabei ist, und sei es, daß er bloß von der gegenüberliegenden Talseite her stammt. In diesem “Innen” benutzen sie keine Geheimsprache, auch keine Sprache innerhalb der Sprache, sie erleben sich aber in einer besonderen Befindlichkeit, in der sie sich wohl als “dem Unsichtbaren (ἰοδωρός) gegenüber offener” definieren würden. Das diese Befindlichkeit bezeichnende Wort ist [arśō] “rein, heilig; glänzend; geheim” und über eine Person in diesem Zustand sagt man [arśe di roo por i seu] Wort-für-Wort-Übersetzung: “Heiligkeit-in-ist geworden-fall-er” = “Er ist jetzt im Zustand der Heiligkeit” (über sich selbst darf man dies nie sagen).

Entscheidend nun ist, daß die Banganis einen Großteil ihrer mündlichen Überlieferungen, aber auch bestimmte Arten von Humor als gewissermaßen in diesem “Unsichtbaren gespeichert bzw. aufbewahrt” sehen. Diese sind auch die wichtigsten Quellen für die Archaismen. Im Zustand dieses “Innen” lassen die Banganis, so sagen sie, sozusagen sich sprechen.

Ganz schwierig scheint es mir nun, Außenstehenden deutlich zu machen, daß sich diese Atmosphäre von “Innen”, von [arśō] nicht nur etwa bei bestimmten Jahresfesten mit viel Weihrauch entfalten kann, sondern auch bei einer Rast im Wald, wo einmal einer von uns von einem gerade in der Nähe arbeitenden (kastenlosen) Koji mit den Worten ‘begrüßt’ wurde ...

(Zoller 1989: 159–160, 202)

This description of Baṅgāṇī behaviour depicts the Baṅgāṇī as being basically not any different from other people, but the Kentum substrate words purportedly preserved in the language are now enshrouded in a veil of mystique known as ‘arśō’. The utterly xenophobic Baṅgāṇī, who even view their immediate neighbours in Himācal Pradeś und Garhvāl as strangers, who speak secretively in the presence of outsiders, and who are convinced of the necessity of

concealing their cultural traditions from the eyes of strangers, have lifted this veil of 'arśo' for Zoller's benefit alone.

Another curious feature of Baṅgānī archaisms is that once they have been gleaned from behind this veil of mystique, they remain elusive and hard to pin down: 'Etliche der von meinem Mitarbeiter [i.e. Gabar Siṃha Cauhān] stammenden archaischen Wörter wurden von mir in Bangan mit anderen Sprechern überprüft. Dabei erwies sich der anfängliche Versuch des Abfragens von Wortlisten als Fehlschlag. In der Folge wurden zwei Überprüfungsverfahren praktiziert: a) Planmäßiges Schaffen von Gesprächssituationen, in denen die Archaismen eingebracht werden konnten. b) Beobachtung von Gesprächen zwischen Banganis' (Zoller 1988: 198), and 'Es ist oft gar nicht so schwierig, einen Bangani zu fragen, ob er ein bestimmtes altes Wort kennt, vor allem auch dann nicht, wenn man eine entsprechende Stelle aus der mündlichen Literatur zitieren kann. Schwierig wird es dann, wenn man ihn bittet zu sagen, was das Wort 'bedeutet'. Ein wichtiger Faktor ist dabei das ... "Innen". Bei unzähligen Gelegenheiten mußte ich das erleben, was ich "Sprachstreß" nennen möchte. Dieser Sprachstreß kann auf verschiedene Weise zum Ausdruck kommen ... Eine Reihe von Wörtern wurden in den beiden Berichten [i.e. Zoller 1988, 1989] nicht vorgestellt, weil sie zwar m.E. archaisch sind, von den Banganis aber meist so interpretiert werden, daß die alte Bedeutung kaum oder überhaupt nicht mehr belegbar ist' (Zoller 1989: 203).

Zoller (1988: 199) takes it upon himself to prescribe a methodology to field linguists interested in this phenomenon: 'Bei einer zukünftigen Überprüfung der hier vorgestellten Daten durch Dritte müssen diese Bedingungen erfüllt werden. Weitere Minimalvoraussetzungen sind: Hindikennnisse sowie genügend Zeit und Einfühlungsvermögen'. In his second installment, Zoller elaborates on the fieldwork methodology he prescribes specifically for Baṅgān.

In Anmerkung 14 des 1. Berichtes (S. 198f.) wird knapp der "linguistische Versuchsaufbau" skizziert, der unabdingbare Voraussetzung für ein erfolgreiches Überprüfen der vorgestellten Daten durch Dritte ist. Dazu noch folgende Ergänzungen:

Meine Mitarbeiter und ich haben im Laufe der Zeit ein ganzes Repertoire an Vorgehensweisen zur Überprüfung der Daten entwickelt, das natürlich ganz unserem spezifischen Stil angepaßt ist. Wie aber Dritte vorgehen wollen, hängt von deren Zielsetzungen und Voraussetzungen ab. Immer aber gilt: vergeht nicht wenig Zeit, bis man die ausgeprägten Strukturierungen Bangans erkennt: für manche

Dörfer etwa empfiehlt sich Feldforschung weniger, da sie nicht von alten Bangani-Familien gegründet wurden. Oder: die Befragung älterer Personen, "die viel wissen", kann öfters enttäuschend sein, während dann plötzlich andere Personen, wo man es nicht erwartet hätte, erstaunlich viel erzählen können, ohne daß besondere Kunstgriffe angewendet werden müßten. Oder: manche Familien sind 'modernistisch' in dem Sinn, daß sie, um ein Beispiel zu nennen, innerhalb weniger Jahre vom alten B[angani]-Wort [ba:ba] "Vaterbruder" über [ca:ca] zu [aŋkəl] gelangt sind. Andere Familien hingegen zeigen sich, aus welchen Gründen auch immer, konservativ und hängen getreulich ihren alten Sitten an.

Die erste Grundvoraussetzung jedoch bleibt immer, daß man mit den Banganis in einer ihren sozialen Traditionen angepaßten Weise umgeht. Auf keinen Fall darf man versuchen, gewissermaßen an ihnen vorbei in der Region Forschung betreiben zu wollen.

Natürlich kann ich kein Patentrezept geben, wie man sich am besten an die sozialen Traditionen der Banganis anpaßt, dafür aber ein paar kleine Beispiele ... Es gab dann noch verschiedene andere Erlebnisse, die ich nicht beschreiben will, durch die ich aber bei den Banganis Anerkennung fand, die ich für den Fortgang der Arbeit gut brauchen konnte.

Durch solche Erfahrungen wird man kein Bangani; dies wäre auch weder in meinem Interesse noch in dem der Banganis. Nur: erst NACH solchen Ereignissen kam ich zu dem Platz auf dem Zaun, von dem aus man tiefer nach Bangan hinein blicken kann.

Um in Bangan als Linguist erfolgreich zu sein, genügt also nicht die Beherrschung des gelernten 'Handwerks'; genauso notwendig sind verschiedene sogenannte nichtwissenschaftliche Qualitäten. Und zuletzt: wissenschaftlicher Erfolg in Bangan wäre auch gefährdet, wenn man als größere Gruppe auftritt.

Mir scheinen diese Bemerkungen nicht nur praktisch notwendig, sondern auch gerechtfertigt in dem Sinn, daß auch anderen wissenschaftlichen Disziplinen der Erfolg eines Versuchs vollständig vom richtigen Aufbau aller notwendigen Einrichtungen, Geräte usw. abhängt.

(Zoller 1989: 200-201)

The fieldwork methodology which Zoller proposes impresses us as further mystification, for in order to be a successful linguist in Baṅgān one must possess a magic touch. In this passage Zoller appears carefully reticent about just how he managed to become initiated in such a way as to be able to penetrate behind the veil of 'arśo'.

It is opportune at this point that we stress the methodological inadequacy of collecting a corpus of texts without also completing a rigorous analysis of the phonology and grammar of the language. Although the direct elicitation of simple forms should be complemented by a corpus of analysed natural text, the collection and translation of a text corpus is not enough. The elicitation of basic paradigms constitutes an essential component of the description of

scription of the meaning of *ākṇə* in the above saying, although Rośan Bhāi knew the saying and in fact spontaneously recited the second line of the saying upon hearing the first line narrated to him. He and the other Baṅgāṇī informants use the expression *rəṇḍi-rə* *ākṇə* as an abusive term directed at farm animals (not at humans), in the meaning 'good-for-nothing animal'. The Baṅgāṇī term *rəṇḍi* means 'husbandless woman' and not 'Eheweib'. This derogatory Baṅgāṇī term may denote a widow but also a whore, and in this respect differs from the Nepālī term *raṇḍī*, which means 'whore' and nothing else. A potter's ox would be an example of such an animal because potters do not till land, and a potter would only keep an ox as a beast of burden.

Zoller's translation for *ākṇə* as 'essen, fressen' is rejected by Baṅgāṇī informants, and his speculations about a husbandless woman connoting a witch who might eat her own children were considered ludicrous by informants. Indeed, Zoller's explication struck us as bizarre even before we set out for Baṅgāṇ: '... ein stark idiomatisches Sprichwort: mit dem 'Essen' ist der übelgeratene Sohn der Frau gemeint, von dem man nie weiß, wo er steckt. Das er als 'Essen' bezeichnet wird, ist gleichzeitig eine Anspielung auf die Frau, die hier als Hexe verstanden wird, denn Hexen fressen ihre eigenen Kinder' (Zoller 1989: 186). We received an inkling as to what might be the source of Zoller's speculation about the meaning of *ākṇə* when Rośan Bhāi said that the expression *rəṇḍi-rə* *ākṇə* could, for example, be directed at a cow or buffalo which had been found surreptitiously eating from fodder which had been stored for later use. However, Rośan Bhāi stressed that the meaning of the expression contained no implicit reference to the consumption of fodder or food but simply meant 'good-for-nothing animal' and could be used, for example, to upbraid a cow which will not calve.

2. The following couplet is from a hunting song familiar to Rośan Bhāi, who sang the whole song for us. Zoller identifies the word *kəpəũ* in this song with Indo-European **kāpho-* or **kōpho-* 'hoof'. Informants believed the word *kəpəũ* to be the name of a species of animal for which, however, they knew no Hindī equivalent. In view of the deforestation which has scarred the Himalayan region, it would not be surprising if the word denoted a local species which has become rare or gone extinct. None of the informants had ever seen this animal.

deu guḍāru-khe, bāṇile bozā
god Guḍāru-for we'll. make prasād

pāre kəkutīū-ke kəpəũ-re khozā
across Kəkutīū.Forest-ACC animal.species-GEN tracks

translation

We shall make prasād for the god Guḍāru,
Across Kəkutīū Forest [lie] the tracks of a Kəpəũ

In the given syntactic context, the form *kəpəũ* must be oblique, and the final segment /ū/ looks like a Baṅgāṇī oblique plural ending (see Van Driem and Sharmā, forthcoming). Informants reported that they were unfamiliar with a word *kəpə*, however, in the meaning 'hoof' or 'hooves', saying instead that the feet or legs (H. *pair*) of horses and cattle are referred to as *khuttā*, and that those of goats and sheep are called *gumṇe*.

3. In the following line from an *āruḷ* song, well known to Rośan Bhāi, who sang the song for us, Zoller identifies *kə:tia* with Indo-European **kmtom* [recte **kmtóm*] 'hundred'. The word, in fact, is *kiti* 'how many, how much', related to Nepālī *kati* 'how many, how much'. Rośan Bhāi suspected that the form *kə:tia* might correspond to the word for 'how many' in another dialect than that of Baṅgāṇ, e.g. the related but distinct dialect of Bāvar or Jaunsār; cf. Hindī *kitne*.

kiti māṇuch ḍe, kiti gòre
how.many men will.there.be how.many horses

translation

How many men will there be, how many horses?

4. In the following Baṅgāṇī proverb, Zoller identifies the word *kəre*, which he inaccurately records as *ku:re* and glosses as 'Held, ein Mutiger, stark, hart', with Indo-European **kū-ro-s* 'geschwollen, stark; Held'. The Baṅgāṇī word *kəre* means 'handsome, well-built'. In fact, Rośan Bhāi initially failed to recognize the pronunciation *ku:re*, saying that this was not a Baṅgāṇī word and offering the form *āche* 'good' (masculine plural of *āchə* 'good') instead; cf. Hindī *acchā*.

beṭā ki bākro duiā cāi kəre iū-khi kā lāge ber
son or billy.goat both should.be handsome them-for what apply time/delay

translation

Whether son or billy-goat, both ought to be handsome.

What does time mean for them? (What delay will they incur?)

The highly questionable etymology which Zoller assumes for this word appears to have affected his interpretation of the Baṅgāṇī proverb itself. Zoller misinterprets the meaning of the proverb, saying 'für den Helden und für den Ziegenbock hat die Zeit einen besonderen Wert, denn für beide kommt der Tod plötzlich'. The actual meaning of the proverb is straightforward and sensible: A handsome and well-built son will suffer no delay in finding a bride. A handsome and well-built goat will incur no delay in going to slaughter or in finding a buyer.

5. The fifth set of Kentum words are instances of what Zoller believes to be the Baṅgāṇī reflexes of Indo-European **ǵen-* 'erzeugen' and **ǵenə-ter-* 'Erzeuger, Vater'. The first instance is found in the following Baṅgāṇī saying.

bāṅḍi-rɛ ɡɔr ɡɔnɳɛ-ri ʈɔr
infertile.woman-GEN house augurings-for wait

translation

Waiting for the augurings [of a paṅḍit] in the house of a childless woman.

This Baṅgāṇī saying refers to an effort performed in vain or to an exercise in futility. If one hopes for a son but the woman is infertile, what use will it be to call a paṅḍit to the house to perform augury? The Baṅgāṇī verb *ɡɔnɳɔ* means 'to calculate' and is cognate with Nepālī *gannu* 'count' and Hindī *ginnā* 'count' and, in this context, has the implicit meaning of performing astrological calculations. Zoller glosses the form *ɡɔnɳɛ* as 'gebären, erzeugen', but this was rejected by our Baṅgāṇī informants as incorrect.

The next alleged Baṅgāṇī reflex of the Indo-European roots in question involves the word *ɔgnɔ̄* 'before, previously', which is cognate with Kāṅgrī *agē* 'before', Hindī *āge* 'before' and Nepālī *agāḍī* 'before'. In this example, the Baṅgāṇī word occurs with the emphatic marker *i* (cf. H. *hi*) and means 'already', just like the cognate Kāṅgrī combination *agēi* 'already'. Zoller (1988: 187) gives the form *ɔgnɔ̄i*, which he glosses as 'ungeboren, fehlgeboren'. He describes

the situation in which the following Baṅgāṇī sentence was uttered as 'wenn bei der Geburt von Zwillingen das zweite Kind erst etliche Stunden nach dem ersten auf die Welt kommt, dann ist der Gebrauch des folgenden Satzes typisch'.

ek ɔ̄ ni tetɔi. ek-rɔ ɔ̄ ɔgnɔ̄-i.
one became PART at.that.time one-GEN became previously-EMPH
seu ɔ̄ dūzɛ-pɛ.
he[invisible] became other-one

translation

One [came] at that time. The other's had already come. He came the other [day].

It is our contention and that of our informants that this is not a proverb or saying, but a Baṅgāṇī utterance which must have been used once in a given situation. The fact that Zoller heard this utterance in the specific situation of a twin childbirth explains why he was inclined to think that the Baṅgāṇī form *ɔgnɔ̄i* 'already' had something to do with birth.

The next instance involves the noun *ɡɔrdɔn* 'back of the neck' occurring in a portion of a Baṅgāṇī prayer. Zoller records the word as *ɡɔ:te:r*, which he glosses as 'Erzeuger, Erschaffer' and which he posits to be a reflex of Indo-European **ǵenə-ter-* 'Erzeuger, Vater'.

bɔlɔ-pālɔ, lāɔ-kālɔ, zeɔ bi ɔ̄ɛ
good-nice, lame-black however also may.be[pl.]

nɔrdei àmɛ, ɡɔrdɔn tɛ-tɛri, dewɔ.
people we back.of.the.neck your-yours, deity

translation

Whether good and nice or lame and black, however [we] may be, we people. [Our] heads are yours, Oh deity.

(literally: 'the backs of [our] necks', as in an animal for slaughter or sacrifice)

Because of his wilful translation of a word which he had misheard, Zoller's own translation of the entire Baṅgāṇī utterance, not surprisingly, makes little sense: 'die Guten mit den Ihrigen, die Einfältigen, die Sanftmütigen; was für [Menschen] es immer auch gibt, wir [sind] Kreaturen; [o] Erschaffer, deine, o Gott'. Zoller's transla-

tion furthermore leaves no explanation for the feminine form *te-teri* ‘your-yours’, which in fact agrees with the feminine substantive *gərdən* ‘back of the neck’.

6. The next series of ‘Kentum words’ involves alleged Baṅgāṇī reflexes of Indo-European **ǵheu-* ‘gießen’ and **ǵheu-mṇ-* ‘Opferguß’. The first instance concerns the Baṅgāṇī word *gəṇiṣ* ‘paṇḍit, augurer’, which Zoller erroneously transcribed as an infinitival form *gəṇiṣ*, allegedly ‘opfern’. The utterance which Zoller recorded was used in the following situation: ‘Haus und Hof haben durch Dämonen Schaden genommen. Der Gott hat dann zwar Hilfe versprochen, doch ist diese nicht eingetreten ...’, and Zoller adds the interpretation that ‘... und weiterhin sterben Mensch und Tier als “Opfer” für die Dämonen’.

eśo no kor-iε, dewo.
like.this not do-IMP deity

bauri-koi obre-zaṣ bi, gəṇiṣ niro bi de-ṇo
first.floor-from ground.floor-until also augurer decision too give-INF

translation

Don’t act in this way, Oh deity!

From the first floor (where the family lives) down to the ground floor (where livestock is kept underneath the house), may the augurer also give some solace! (literally translated into Hindī as *faislā denā*, i. e. *nirṇay denā* ‘make a decision, pass a verdict’, but informants also offered the interpretation *lābh denā* ‘give benefit’)

This utterance was recognized by our informants as part of a plea to the deity to alleviate calamities of some sort. The use of the Baṅgāṇī infinitive in an optative sense is like that of Kāṅgrī, Hindī or Nepālī. Here the speaker evidently expressed the hope that the paṇḍit would provide some just solution to alleviate the calamities caused by supernatural forces where previous attempts at appeasement of these forces had failed. Zoller appears to have accurately described the situation in which the utterance occurred, but he incorrectly interpreted both a key word and the syntax of the sentence, wrongly putting a comma after *gəṇiṣ* (read: *gəṇiṣ* ‘paṇḍit, augurer’), whereas it should be placed before this word.

The next instance involves the Baṅgāṇī word *gəmpuṇo* ‘suffer a loss, tolerate, put up with, forbear’ (H. *sahan karnā*), which Zoller

interprets as *gəṃṇi* ‘opfern’. The corrected Baṅgāṇī utterance is as follows.

zimi bi pəri gəmpuṇi chewer bi bəgāi
land also must put.up.with wife/woman also chase.away

translation

[One] has had to suffer not only the loss of one’s land, but [one’s] wife has also been chased away.

Here Zoller again accurately reports that ‘dies[es] Sprichwort wird dann gebraucht, wenn jemand von zwei Unglücken gleichzeitig heimgesucht wird’, but his transcription is faulty, and his translation appears to be inspired by his vain search for Kentum reflexes in modern Baṅgāṇī: ‘[er] mußte zuerst sein land opfern (d. h. weggeben), dann haben [sie ihm] auch noch sein Weib verjagt’.

7. The following saying, familiar to our informants, contains the word *gəṃo* ‘grief, woe, tolerance, forborne pain’, which is cognate to Hindī *gam*, which has the same meaning.

gəme-ri dā, cheweri-ro bekh.
woe-GEN pain woman/wife-GEN caprices

translation

The pain of woe forborne, a woman’s caprices.

Zoller misheard the Baṅgāṇī form *gəme* ‘anxiety’ as *gəṃbe*, which he interprets as ‘[gəṃbo], [gumbə]_m Backenzahn’, which appears to him to be a reflex of Indo-European **ǵombho-s* ‘Zahn’. Zoller misinterprets the meaning of the saying as a comparison of a wife’s nagging (Baṅgāṇī *bekh* correctly translates into Hindī as *nakhare* ‘coquetry, airs, caprices’) with an aching molar: ‘der Schmerz im Backenzahn [ist genauso unangenehm wie] die schmeichlerischen Worte des Eheweibs’. In point of fact, the modern Baṅgāṇī word for ‘molar’ is *dār*, and the word for ‘tooth’ is *dānd*. Note that the Baṅgāṇī word for ‘pain’, *dā*, appears to be related to Hindī *dāh* and Nepālī *dāh*, which both mean ‘jealousy’, a painful emotion to be sure.

8. The following is our corrected version of an utterance recorded by Zoller.

tiṇi suṅgrei ześi nā| dekhi muke, seu
he/ERG swine/ERG just.as rifle saw me/ACC he/that[invisible]

teṣoi gorziṇo pāchu kuniāri pāre.
in.that.very.way freeze.in.one's.tracks in.front rock.perimeter.of.a.field yonder

translation

As soon as the swine saw me with [my] rifle, he [not visible at the moment of speaking] froze in his tracks over there by the rock perimeter of the field.

The significance of this statement to a Baṅgāṇī listener is greater than it is for an outsider because, according to Baṅgāṇī lore, a wild boar should be shot either when it is in retreat or when it does not suspect the hunter's presence. When a wild boar notices the hunter and freezes in its tracks, a shot from gun or bow which might otherwise have been lethal will, it is believed, only prompt a vigorous onslaught by the creature, endangering life and limb. An etymological curiosity is the Baṅgāṇī word *pāchu* 'in front, over there' which is cognate with Nepālī *pachi* 'after', *pachādi* 'behind' and Hindī *pīche* but has undergone a semantic shift. Zoller wrongly transcribes *gorziṇo* 'freeze in one's track, assume a threatening stance (of animals)' as *gorziṇo*, allegedly 'vor Schreck die Haare, Borsten etc. aufgerichtet haben', for which he posits an etymological relationship with Indo-European **ghers-* 'starren'. We suspect that Zoller might be equally content to posit a relationship between *gorziṇo* 'freeze in one's track, assume a threatening stance' and this Indo-European root. To our minds, however, it might stretch the imagination far less even to speculate on an etymological relationship with Hindī *garjnā* 'to roar, bellow, thunder'. Certainly it would be prudent to study the lexicons of related Indo-Aryan languages in Himācal and Gaḍhvāl before positing a Kentum reflex from Indo-European somehow strangely preserved in a modern Indo-Aryan tongue like Baṅgāṇī.

9. There are three instances of Baṅgāṇī words which Zoller proposes reflect Indo-European **gen-* 'erkennen, kennen'. The first such word occurs in the following saying.

āpṛe beru-ro, āpṛi goṇti.
one's.own cares-GEN one's own accounting

translation

One's own cares, one's own accounting (i.e. one will have to cope with one's own worries and cares on one's own). [The masculine

form of the genitive suffix does not agree with feminine *goṇti* 'accounting', which indicates that the saying is an asyndeton.]

For Baṅgāṇī *goṇti* Zoller has transcribed *gō:ti*, which he glosses as '[gō:ti]_{m,f} ein Kenner; Wissen'. Zoller's interpretation of the Baṅgāṇī saying is not far off the mark, but his perception of the crucial Baṅgāṇī word is certainly wrong. Baṅgāṇī *goṇti* 'accounting, concern, calculations, anxiety' (H. *parvāh*) is derived from the Baṅgāṇī verb *goṇṇo* 'to count, to calculate' and is cognate with Hindī *giniṭi*, which our Baṅgāṇī informants insist is the Hindī equivalent. Our informants also pointed out that *goṇti* should not be confused with Baṅgāṇī *gomti* 'forbearance' (H. *sahan karnā*), which is evidently related to Baṅgāṇī *gompuṇi* 'suffer a loss, tolerate, put up with, forbear' and *gomṇo* 'grief, woe, anxiety, tolerance' (items 6 and 7 above). Baṅgāṇī *goṇti* also occurs in another utterance recorded by Zoller, the corrected form of which is as follows.

meri dā-ri goṇti kosiū no thi, gōṛi-poru
my pains-GEN accounting anyone's not was home-family

translation

As for [the members of] the household, the accounting of my pains was no one else's [concern].

Zoller's interpretation of this sentence is basically correct ('das Wissen um meinen Schmerz [hat] niemand in dieser Familie'), but again he has erroneously identified Baṅgāṇī *goṇti* 'accounting, concern, calculations' as 'Wissen'.

The following instance involves an etymologically related Baṅgāṇī word *gāṇ*, which means 'fame, reputation' in the sense of 'to count for something', likewise a derivative of the Baṅgāṇī verb *goṇṇo* 'to count, to calculate'.

teri gāṇ cāi sāre duniā-di
your reputation should.be whole world-in

translation

Your fame should be [spread] throughout the whole world.

Here Zoller records *gō:to* with the meaning 'Ruhm, "Name"; berühmt'. However, the reading [gō:to] is rejected by our informants.

Zoller also gives the transcription *g̃:ti* in the following utterance, where the correct word is Baṅgāṇī *g̃ṇi* ‘close-knit, thick or dense, compact, close, numerous’, unrelated to the other forms which Zoller recorded as *g̃:ti* ~ *g̃:ti*. The Baṅgāṇī adjective *g̃ṇo* (f. *g̃ṇi*) is cognate with Kāṅgrī *kāṇā* (f. *kāṇi*) and Hindī *ghanā* (f. *ghanī*), both of which have the same meaning. These adjectives may be said of dense crowds or groups of people, clumps of vegetation, forests or groves, dense undergrowth and the like, and the Baṅgāṇī adjective has the distinct connotation ‘close-knit’.

āmāri thi g̃ṇi khundāl.
ours was close-knit Khund.clan

translation

Ours was a close-knit Khund clan.

Zoller has ‘wir waren eine berühmte Khund-Sippe’.

10. The following utterance was recorded by Zoller in a situation ‘wenn jemand eine Einladung zum Essen ausgeschlagen hat’. The Baṅgāṇī utterance is presented here in our corrected notation, but Zoller’s phonetic transcription of the Baṅgāṇī *gusti* is also correct.

eri ni āp̃ri gusti. ero ziu kelā bole
his PART own preference his heart why will.speak

āmāri koliāri-biāḷi-khi.
our morning.meal-evening.meal-for

translation

He has his own preference. Why will his heart speak for our morning and evening meal?

For Baṅgāṇī *gusti* Zoller gives the meaning ‘Geschmack (auch übertragen), genießen; Verlangen: Absicht’, which is partially correct. Baṅgāṇī *gusti* was translated into Hindī by our informants as *marzī* ‘wish, desire, preference’ and as *rīs*. In Kāṅgrī *rīs* has the meaning ‘indulging, giving into temptation’, and in Baṅgāṇī ‘Hindī’ the word *rīs* seems to have the same meaning. The Baṅgāṇī word for ‘taste’ is *swād*. Baṅgāṇī *gusti* does not mean ‘taste’. Of course, whether Baṅgāṇī *gusti* ‘preference, indulging, desire’ is a reflex of Indo-European **geus-* ‘kosten, genießen, schmecken’ and of the corresponding substantive **gus-ti-s*, as Zoller maintains, is a matter

best left to the judgement of Indo-European historical linguists who are critical enough to recognize that German *Kopf* ‘head’ and *haben* ‘have’ and Latin *caput* ‘head’ and *habere* ‘have’ are unrelated even though both languages have genuinely been established to represent Kentum Indo-European.

11. Zoller cites the following couplet from a Baṅgāṇī song. We have recorded this couplet as sung by Rośan Bhāi. It is just one of the many Baṅgāṇī songs Rośan knows by heart.

minṇ āṇ pośe-rṇ, bāi. neṇiā-neṇe
month has.come Pauṣa-GEN brother nearby-nearby

bān khāoli, moru, teri bākri bēṇ.
plant.species will.eat[f.] plant.species your[f.] goat sheep

translation

The month of Pauṣa has come, brother. Soon, soon,
Your goats and sheep will eat of the Bān plant and Moru plant.

Zoller has *gimṇ*, which he glosses as ‘Winter’ and relates to Indo-European **ghimo-* ‘winter’, instead of *minṇ* ‘month’. This renders the meaning of the couplet nonsensical, i. e. ‘the winter of Pauṣa has come’ (‘der Winter des [Monats] Pauṣa ist gekommen’), as opposed to the perfectly obvious reading ‘the month of Pauṣa has come’. No informants were able to identify *gimṇ* as a Baṅgāṇī word. Rośan Bhāi, who knows the song well, insists on *minṇ* ‘month’ and rejects *gimṇ*. The Baṅgāṇī word for ‘winter’ is *iūd*; cf. Nepālī *hiūdo* ‘winter’. Rośan Bhāi discussed the form *gimṇ* with Zoller’s interpreter and principal Baṅgāṇī informant Gabar Siṃha Cauhān in our presence. We have provided an account of this highly relevant exchange in Section 5.

12. The following song of lament of the *chorā* genre was sung to us by Rośan Bhāi. The Baṅgāṇī word *dukhṛu* ‘tale of woe’ in the first line is related to Baṅgāṇī *dukh* ‘woe’ and cognate with Kāṅgrī *dukhṛā* ‘tale of woe’. Zoller records this word erroneously as *dokru*, to which he ascribes the meaning ‘tear’ (‘Träne’). He relates this non-existent form, which looks stunningly similar to Greek, to Indo-European **dakru-* ‘Träne’.

mere dukhṛu ki, e māilūṛie
my tale.of.woe that oh mother[vocative]

no lāgi zōrāi gīṇ,
 no apply Yamarāja/GEN pity
 bāro-bōrilo, e, eśo giṇo, e bōgwān.
 master-well.built.youth oh in.this.way has.taken.away, oh god
 ześo kosiū-koi ā bāi, riṇ.
 as.if someone-from alas brother loan

translation

Oh Mother, my tale of woe is that
 [Even] the Grim Reaper had no pity.
 Oh God, He has taken away my husband in the blossoming of his
 manhood,
 As if [exacting repayment] of a loan from someone, oh brother.

13. The next alleged Kentum word is *porko* ‘question’, which Zoller relates to Indo-European **perk-* ‘fragen, bitten’. The Baṅgāṇī word *porko* is in fact an adjectival form meaning ‘last year’s’, derived from Baṅgāṇī *pār* ‘last year’. Baṅgāṇī *porko* is related to Kāṅgrī *parkā* ‘last year’s’ (vs. Kāṅgrī *parū* ‘last year’) and Nepālī *pohor-ko* ‘last year’s’. The couplet of the *āruḷ* song in question is presented here in corrected form:

khūnde soiāṇe tiṇi porko pāo re
 Khund elder/sage that/ERG last.year’s won/got PART
 śāṭi-di pāśi-di pūchṇe lāo re
 Śāṭi-in Pāśi-in ask begin PART

translation

That Khund elder won last year’s [competition].
 They have begun to ask questions, on the Śāṭi side and on the Pāśi side.

Zoller correctly reports that there are annual disputes characterized by ‘provozierende Fragen’ in which the wise elders of Baṅgāṇ, which lies on the Pāśi side or right bank of the Tons River, compete with the wise elders of Bāvar and Jaunsār, which are located on the Śāṭi side or left bank of the Tons. Zoller’s translation of *tiṇi porko pāo* as ‘er gab eine Frage auf’ is incorrect. The Baṅgāṇī past tense from *pāo* means ‘got’ or ‘won’, and our Baṅgāṇī informants insist that there is no Baṅgāṇī word, ceremonial or otherwise, with the

form *porko* in the meaning ‘question’. Note that the Baṅgāṇī particle *re* resembles the Nepālī clause-final hearsay evidential *re*, which marks sentences the contents of which constitute reported speech and which therefore is peppered throughout narrative texts. It seems likely that Baṅgāṇī *re* serves a similar function.

14. The next Kentum word is ‘bargō’, purportedly ‘(hoher), steiler Berg’, which Zoller (1994: 112) more recently gives as ‘barga’, allegedly a survival of Indo-European **bherghos* ‘mountain’. The word occurs in the following utterance, which our informants corrected in the following way.

sāro goṛie-naoṇi māṇḍo, bēre-ro bōrgo bi no milo.
 all goṛie-naoṇi searched, sheep-GEN tail also not found

translation

[I] have sought all over Goṛie-Naoṇi, but did not even find the tail of that sheep. (Alternatively: ... *bēru-ro bōrgo bi no mile* ‘... not even find the tails of the sheep [obl. pl.]’).

In Baṅgāṇ, as elsewhere throughout the Himalayas, every meadow, jungle and even small terraced field has a locally known proper name. We have personally visited the gently sloping area known as Goṛie-Naoṇi. Zoller records the sentence with the incorrect word order *sāro goṛie-naoṇi-ro bōrgo māṇḍo pār bēre na mili*, which he translates ‘bin den ganzen steilen Berg [namens] Gorie-Naoni abgelaufen, hab’ aber die Schafe nicht gefunden’. The Baṅgāṇī word *bōrgo* means ‘tail’, especially of a goat or sheep. The Baṅgāṇī word for ‘mountain’ is *dòkō*. Our informants insist that there is no such Baṅgāṇī word as *bōrgo* ~ *bargō* in the meaning ‘mountain’ or ‘steep slope’. When hard pressed by us, our informants obligingly said that it might be possible to conceive of a mountain slope as a nearly vertical line which could be interpreted as being reminiscent of a hanging tail, and that the usage – if the utterance had indeed been correctly recorded, which they very much doubted – would have to have been metaphorical. The attitude of our informants to this word is reflected in Section 5 below.

15. The next ‘Kentum word’ is from the following utterance.

iū suiū gāiū-ke koi nuṇṭo lāigoi.
 these having.calved cows-ACC some block.of.salt proffered

translation

[they] gave these cows who had calved a block of salt [to lick].

Instead of the form *lāigoi* in the above utterance, Zoller gives the form *loiḡāṇī*, which he describes as a causative form of the verb '[loiḡ(ε)-] lecken (nur Tiere)', which he alleges is a reflex of Indo-European **leiḡh-* 'lecken'. Our informants report that no such form as *loiḡāṇī* exists. The form *lāigoi*, on the other hand, is a regular form of *lāṇṇ* 'put, adorn, proffer, apply' which translates into Hindī as *lagā diyā*, roughly 'proffer' or, in the given context, most aptly translated as 'give to lick'. The verb is used in widely different contexts in this meaning, e.g. *tōi muke mālā lāigoi* 'you adorned me with a garland'. The form is distinct from the Baṅgāṇī verb 'to lick', *cāṇṇ*, and its causative counterpart, *cōṇṇ* 'cause or give to lick'.

5. An instructive encounter

The preceding section sums up our findings regarding the fifteen 'Kentum words' adduced by Zoller. Before we go on to discuss the so-called Sanskrit layer and other archaisms in Baṅgāṇī (Section 6), it is highly relevant to our investigation to describe a brief but informative encounter with Gabar Siṃha Cauhān. Gabar Siṃha is Zoller's Baṅgāṇī native-speaker interpreter and main Baṅgāṇī informant to whom Zoller (1988: 196) directly attributes the discovery of archaisms in Baṅgāṇī: 'Ich fühle tiefen Dank gegenüber meinem Bangani-Mitarbeiter, Herrn Gabbar Singh Chauhan [i.e. Gabar Siṃha Cauhān], ohne den das alte Bangan nicht hätte entdeckt werden können'. Gabar Siṃha is from the village Kiroḷī in Piṅgalpaṭṭī.

Our encounter with Gabar Siṃha took place on the morning of 18 December 1994. As background information, it should be noted that the word *borgṇ*, discussed above, in the meaning 'mountain' had very quickly become the subject of ridicule and banter amongst the Baṅgāṇī at Morī-Vālṭī. People found it amusing to call a 'mountain' a *borgṇ* and to talk of walking up a *borgṇ*, and so forth. On the morning of 18 December 1994, Rośan Bhāī's son Harpāl Siṃha by fortunate chance happened to run into Gabar Siṃha, whom he

knew we were anxious to meet and whom he therefore kindly escorted to Rośan Bhāī's house at Morī-Vālṭī to meet us. On the way, Harpāl Siṃha had already discussed the word *borgṇ* with Gabar Siṃha. When Gabar Siṃha made his entry, we were in the house working together with Rośan Bhāī. Most interesting were both the information which Gabar Siṃha volunteered *before* we began to ask him questions as well as his exchanges with Rośan Bhāī.

Gabar Siṃha entered the room apologizing about the word *borgṇ*. Next, he volunteered information on two words, neither of which we had yet even gotten around to mentioning to our informants. These were Zoller's *laktṇ* 'milk' (1988: 194, 1989: 198) and *mōntṇ* 'hand' (1988: 194). Regarding *laktṇ* Gabar Siṃha said that the form had been incorrectly recorded by Zoller and that there was no such form. He then immediately contradicted himself, saying that if the form *laktṇ* existed, it would now only be recognized by very few old men. The correct form, he went on to say, was not *laktṇ*, but *litṇ-kislṇ*, for which he gave the meaning 'milk and ghee' ('*dudh-ghī*'). After his departure, our informants explained that *litṇ-kislṇ* meant 'oil, grease, ghee' in the specific sense of Hindī *tarī*, i.e. oil or ghee floating on some liquid dish, such as *dāl* or a vegetable curry, and distinct from the Baṅgāṇī word *bṇ* 'fat, grease'. Our informants stressed that the word *litṇ-kislṇ* never referred to milk, nor does it refer specifically to ghee.

The second piece of information which Gabar Siṃha volunteered concerned Zoller's *mōntṇ* 'hand'. The form *mōntṇ*, he said, does not exist as a separate word in Baṅgāṇī in the meaning 'hand', which implied that Zoller's (1988: 194, ex. 6) example containing *mōntṇ* 'Hand' was incorrect. The form occurs only as a part of the verb *mōntōḍiāṇṇ* 'to slap', which Gabar Siṃha stressed definitely existed in Baṅgāṇī. At this point, we had still hardly said a thing to Gabar Siṃha ourselves and certainly had not begun to ask him questions yet. It will therefore not surprise the reader that both of us had the impression that Gabar Siṃha's manner was apologetic.

Accordingly, when we did begin to ask questions, we were careful to do so in a gentle manner. We first asked about the word *loiḡāṇī* (Kentum item 15). Gabar Siṃha stated flatly that there existed a rare verb in Baṅgāṇī, *loiḡāṇṇ*, which meant 'to give to lick to an animal'. At once Rośan Bhāī countered emphatically that no such word existed in Baṅgāṇī.

We then asked Gabar Siṃha about *bərgə* ourselves, and he responded that *bərgə* meant 'tail' and could metaphorically denote any vertical thing like a tail.

When we asked about the word *gimə*, Gabar Siṃha without a moment's hesitation began to explain that this was a rare Baṅgāṇī word which meant 'winter'. Rośan Bhāī intervened, stating that there was no such word in the Baṅgāṇī language, emphasizing that *gimə* was not Baṅgāṇī at all and that the word was wrong. Then Gabar Siṃha carefully asked Rośan Bhāī whether the word *gimə* did not then mean 'winter'. Rośan Bhāī said that this was decidedly not the case and that the word in the song was *minə* 'month'.

Then we asked about *pərkə* (item 13), and Gabar Siṃha immediately responded that it meant 'question'. When we said that Rośan Bhāī had told us that it meant 'last year's', Gabar Siṃha said that there was a difference in pronunciation between *pərkə* 'question' and *pə:rkə* 'last year's'. Rośan Bhāī said that such a distinction was entirely fictitious, and that *pərkə* meant 'last year's', that the word still meant the same thing no matter how much you drew out the pronunciation, and that there was no word such as *pərkə* in the meaning 'question' in the Baṅgāṇī language.

During this brief session, it was plainly obvious that Rośan Bhāī was astonished and incredulous at some of the things Gabar Siṃha said. When we then asked Gabar Siṃha about the items *kəpə* 'hoof', *kə:tiə* 'hundred' and *dəkru* 'tear' (items 2, 3 and 12), he said nothing definite about them. At this point, Gabar Siṃha told us that Rośan Bhāī was the best possible informant we could have for learning the Baṅgāṇī language and also the most reliable source. We later learnt that our elderly informant Rośan Bhāī had also served as one of Zoller's principal informants and had even travelled together with him with Baṅgāṇ on at least one occasion. As Gabar Siṃha left, he said that he would be highly interested in our research findings and cordially invited us to visit him at the New Delhi office of the South Asia Institute of the University of Heidelberg, where he had taken employment some years after he had become Zoller's interpreter. This invitation echoed the kind offer with which Zoller (1993: 114) concludes his recent note about his 'small colloquium' on Baṅgāṇī: '... more linguists should take up research on this language. The branch office of the South Asia Institute in New

Delhi would certainly be glad if it could offer assistance to linguists interested in this task.'

6. The Sanskrit layer and other archaisms

Our attempts at verification of the 'Kentum words' in Baṅgāṇī revealed the unreliability of Zoller's material and analysis. We found that this was likewise the case with the 'Sanskrit words', which Zoller alleges are neither *tatsama* nor *semi-tatsama*. Zoller (1988: 192–5) also lists separately archaic words which are 'teilweise im Sanskrit belegt' but which have 'keinen Bezug zur Kentum-Satem-Unterscheidung'. After thoroughly going through Zoller's Kentum list with the results described in Sections 4 and 5, we felt disinclined to conduct an exhaustive verification of the 'Sanskrit' and other 'archaic' words. Our probing nevertheless proved to be highly illuminating. We checked eight out of Zoller's twenty-two 'Sanskrit' items and seven out of Zoller's eleven other 'archaic' words.

To begin with, the existence in Baṅgāṇī of a word 'məntə' meaning 'hand' is denied by Zoller's principal informant Gabar Siṃha, as described in Section 5. Zoller (1988: 194, ex. 6) relates this item in his corpus of transcriptions to Indo-European '*m̥ntós- Hand' [*recte* *m̥ntós].

An example of a 'Sanskrit word' in Baṅgāṇī, according to Zoller (1988: 192, ex. 2), is '[kərs(i)-] sich reiben, kratzen, schaben' from Indo-European '*kars-' 'kratzen, striegeln, krämpeln'. The example Zoller gives, in our corrected form, is as follows.

rikhei khorkui-khorkuiə lekʃe luā.
bear/ERG scrape – a-scraping hide shed

translation

The bear shed his hide [i.e. winter coat], a-scraping and a-scraping.

Instead of the form *khorkui-khorkuiə* 'a-scraping and a-scraping', Zoller has *kərsui-kərsuiə*, which was immediately recognized as a transcription error by informants, who cried in chorus that the form was wrong and were for some reason struck by the hilarity of the mistake. Informants offered the alternative *konāi-konāiə* 'scratch a-

scratching' but specifically rejected *kōrsui-kōrsui* as incorrect. For *lekśe* 'hide' informants offered the possible alternative *lotrō* 'skin' to collocate with the verb *luanō* 'moult, shed one's winter coat'. Although the bear must have scraped his hide against some surface, probably a tree, informants suggested that Zoller's translation ('der Bär kratzte und kratzte sich [und] riß [dadurch] die Rinde [des Baumes] ab') was improbable because the Baṅgāṇī word for 'bark of a tree' is *śeptā*.

Zoller (1988: 179, 199) records what he believes to be the preterite form of the Baṅgāṇī verb 'eat', which has 'die freien Morphemalternationen [a:ɔɔ]/[ɔɔɔ]' and is said to represent 'ein grammatisches Überlebsel' of Sanskrit *ad ~ āda* 'eat'. Our Baṅgāṇī informants could not understand the utterance Zoller records containing this form. Rośan Bhāi said that the form was in error and that the utterance was unrecognizable because it contained this erroneous form. The form *ɔditō*, purportedly 'Vielfresser, Dämon; vielfressend', which Zoller relates to Sanskrit '*aditi*_m Verschlinger' likewise made no sense to our informants, and neither did it make sense in the otherwise recognizable fragment of an utterance of which Zoller recorded it as being part.

Another error in transcription to receive a Sanskrit etymology is *goṣṭā* 'acquaintance', which Zoller (1988: 193) gives as '[gɔsti]', glosses as 'Gast, Ehrengast, Fremder' and relates to Indo-European **ghosti-s* 'Fremder, Gast'. The corrected stanza from the *chorā* song is given below. Note that Zoller's erroneous form upsets the rhyme scheme of the song.

cōre	poruko	goṣṭā,	
verandah	seated	acquaintance	
eu	zāṇie	boṭiā-kō	bāi.
	he	appears	brother's.wife-GEN
			brother
oṭhuṛu-	māti-le	kōkiroṭā,	
lips-upon-at	splits.in.the.lips.from.	chapping	
iṇi	koliārōi	nō	khāi.
he/ERG	breakfast	not	ate

translation

The acquaintance seated on the verandah,
He looks just like the brother of our brother's wife.

His lips all chapped,
He has eaten no breakfast.

Errors in translation also receive Sanskrit etymologies. Zoller glosses Baṅgāṇī *bōrsō* 'year' as 'Mehl' and relates it to Indo-European **bhares-* 'Gerste'. The corrected 'Sprichwort' in which the form occurs is as follows.

ogle-rō	bōrsō	coṭāiro	lāo,
next-GEN	year	having.licked	has.been.taken
zeti	piśō	teti	khāo.
as.much.as	has.been.ground	that.much	has.been.eaten

translation

Next year[s] has been all licked up,
As much has been eaten as has been ground.

Zoller's translation is 'Mehl aus (blaublühendem) Ogla(-Getreide), Gries aus Hirse, mahle (von denen nur) soviel, wie du ißt' whereby he records the form *ogle* 'next' as [o:glɛ], for which form he evidently later elicited the gloss 'Ogla(-Getreide)'. In fact, the Oglo plant has green leaves and red stems and bears white flowers and black seeds. The Baṅgāṇī phrase for 'oglo flour' is *ogle-rō pidyān*.

At one point Rośan Bhāi expressed the opinion that the material we were checking was apparently largely faulty. For example, informants refused to accept as correct Baṅgāṇī the utterances which Zoller (1988: 193-4) recorded for the alleged Baṅgāṇī verb '[ma:g(i)-] (tun) können, mögen, "stehen auf"', supposedly a reflex of Sanskrit *magha* or Kentum Indo-European **magh-* 'können, vermögen, helfen'. The informants suggested that some of the utterances might possibly represent the related but distinct dialect of Jaunsār, Devgār and Bāvar ('Jaunsār, Devgār, Bāvar kī bhāṣā'), but at any rate did not represent their own Baṅgāṇī language, e.g. the utterance ostensibly containing the form '[lɔkto]_m Milch' (< Indo-European **glak-* 'Milch', Zoller 1988: 194, ex. 8), the utterance containing [sa:g-] 'suchen, (be-)fragen (meist religiöse Sphäre)' (< Indo-European **sag-* 'witternd nachspüren' [*recte* **sāg-*], Zoller 1988: 195, ex. 10). Some utterances were recognized as either representing the Jaunsār dialect or deformed corpus specimens (literally 'raped' forms, i.e. 'Jaunsār kī bhāṣā bhī ho yā balatkār huā bhī

ho'), e.g. the utterance ostensibly containing the form '[pəbɔstə]_m Welt, Weltall' (< 'pavasta_n (RV, AV) Decke, Hülle; Dual: Himmel und Erde', Zoller 1988: 181–2, ex. 10). Our Baṅgāṇī informants believed *pəbɔstə* to be the name of some deity.

Our Baṅgāṇī informants identified the utterance containing the form *nikte* as Jaunsār dialect ('Jaunsār kī bhāṣā') but said that it was close enough to Baṅgāṇī that they could confidently identify the words.

māli āśigo. nikte kərio guṣioṅ cūli.
shaman has.come well doing clean fireplace

translation

The shaman has come. Clean the fireplace well.

Baṅgāṇī *cūli* 'fireplace, hearth' is evidently cognate with Nepālī *cūhlo*, *cūlo* 'fireplace, hearth'. Our informants report that *nikte* means 'well' (H. 'acchī tarah se') and that the gloss 'gesäubert, gereinigt' is incorrect. Zoller (1988: 181, ex. 9) identifies the word in this meaning with '*nikta* (RV, ŚB) gewaschen, gereinigt'.

In one example, Zoller has, according to our informants, even wrongly identified the Baṅgāṇī form of a person's proper name Darśan as an adjective 'dərśṇu' with the purported meaning of 'mutig, dreist' and etymologically related to Sanskrit *dhṛṣṇú-* 'kühn, mutig, stark'.

bābe-bāśi pūch bi, Dərśṇu-rə zormi.
father-like son too Darśan-GEN has.become

translation

Like father like son. So too has Darśan's [son] become.

A graver error is that Zoller (1988: 180, ex. 3) identifies the regular Baṅgāṇī pronominal form *isrə* 'his' (m. sg. visible) incorrectly as an adjective 'iśrə' with the purported meaning 'frisch und kräftig und reichlich entstehend, blühend (Blumen), reif (Getreide)'. This word, for which Zoller posits an etymological relationship with Sanskrit *iśirá-* 'erfrischend, frisch, gedeihend etc.', occurs in the following sentence fragment.

isrə dinwālo māgè-ri diāṅ ...
his milch.cow Māgh-GEN married.female.relative

translation

His milch cow ... the married female relatives of the month Māgh ...

To understand this specimen, which is but a sentence fragment, one must keep in mind that in South Asia generally – the Lhokpu of southwestern Bhutan are just one exception –, married sisters and daughters of the household (in Baṅgāṇī collectively referred to by the term *diāṅ*, cf. Kāṅgrī *tiāṅ*) through marriage become members of the households of their respective husbands. In Baṅgāṇī the *diāṅ* return to their paternal household in the Hindu month of Māgh, at which time they are presented with gifts and regaled by the kindred menfolk which they have left behind. Baṅgāṇī *dinwālo* is cognate with Hindī *dinevālā* and specifically denotes a milch cow. Zoller translates this sentence fragment as: 'die frisch und reichlich entstehenden (Milch-)Produkte des Tages (und) die verheiratete Schwester, (die) im (Monat) *mārgaśīrsa* (ins Elternhaus zurückkommt, diese beiden sind erfreulich)'. Note that Zoller even gives the wrong Hindu month in this translation.

In two cases, an alleged Baṅgāṇī 'Sanskrit' word has been correctly or almost correctly recorded and glossed, e.g. the form *birəpsī* 'überreich, übertoll' (Zoller 1988: 183, ex. 14), for which our informants give the Hindī translation *zyādā* 'too much, too many', and the verb *gīśṇə* [Zoller has *gərśeṅə*] 'schrubben, reiben' (Zoller 1988: 180: ex. 5), for which our informants provide the Hindī translations *lipnā* 'daub, smear', *pūchna* 'wipe, rub' as well as *ragarṇā* 'rub, scrub, grate'. However, even if the Sanskrit etymologies which Zoller posits (viz. *virapś-* 'strotzen, überfließen' and *ghṛṣ-* 'reiben, polieren') are correct, it remains unclear why such a form could not be a *tatsama* or a *semi-tatsama*, for *tatsamas* and *semi-tatsamas* are known to be used to express the most everyday concepts in Nepālī and other Indo-Aryan languages, both those with and without literary traditions. If we assume Zoller's 'Etymologisierungen' to be correct, the Sanskrit etymology *ghṛṣ-* 'reiben, polieren', posited for Baṅgāṇī *gīśṇə*, would likewise have to be posited for Hindī *ghisnā* 'scrub, rub', with which it is evidently cognate.

On the other hand, in cases where the gloss is inaccurate, this does not necessarily invalidate the Sanskrit etymology which Zoller proposes. For example, the word *duśṅsa* 'bad old woman, can-

tankerous elderly woman', inaccurately glossed as 'übel oder böse redend' (Zoller 1988: 181, ex. 8), is just one of several incorrect glosses in the lyrics of a *chorā* song

mere bāgu-di, e Māsu Dewo
 my fate-in oh Mahāsu Deva
 tu dee piṭhāi lāi
 you gave ṭikā put
 no cāi duśonsa-giriṇ
 not want bad.old.woman-woman
 no dee pochotrō bāi
 not give younger brother

translation

In my fate, Oh Mahāsu Deva!
 You anointed me with ṭikā powder.
 I don't want a cantankerous old woman.
 You didn't give me a younger brother.

Both of the nouns which combine to form the compound *duśonsa-giriṇ* exist as free morphs in Baṅgāṇī. The latter form *giriṇ* denotes any woman in general towards which the speaker feels no special relationship, in contrast, for example, to Baṅgāṇī *cheweṛ*, which means both 'woman' and 'wife', and *bāli*, a specific Baṅgāṇī term of reference for one's own wife. All this need not preclude the possibility of an etymological relationship between Baṅgāṇī *duśonsa* 'bad old woman, cantankerous elderly woman' and Sanskrit *duḥśamsa* 'übelwollend, drohend, schmähend'.

The major portion of Zoller's 'Sanskrit' and other 'archaic' words, however, like all of the 'Kentum words', are evidently based on errors in transcription, gloss or analysis. The occurrence of Sanskrit words in Baṅgāṇī is in itself not surprising in view of the fact that Indo-Aryan languages of the Himalayas are replete with *tatsamas* and *semi-tatsamas* even more so than Indo-Aryan languages are in general. The more peculiar 'Sanskrit' words, e.g. *a:do* ~ *ɔdo* 'hat gegessen' and *ɔditō* 'Vielfresser, Dämon; vielfressend', are certainly mistakes in interpretation and transcription. In conclusion, we disbelieve the existence in Baṅgāṇī of '300 bis 400 Wörtern ..., von denen mit großer Sicherheit gesagt werden kann, daß sie weder Tatsamas noch Semi-Tatsamas darstellen' (Zoller 1988: 178).

7. *Conclusions and considerations*

All field linguists make mistakes in their field notes. Good field linguists go back to recheck the material again and again to weed out errors of all types. When checking Zoller's corpus specimens in Baṅgāṇ, particularly his 'Kentum words' gave both of us, as field linguists, the all too familiar impression of misunderstood and unchecked corpus specimens. If Zoller's approach to the Baṅgāṇī language were to have been more analytical and if his knowledge of Indo-European reconstructions were to have been less elaborate, he might not have fallen prey to so much *hineininterpretieren*, for we cannot but conclude that Zoller etymologized a Kentum Indo-European or Sanskrit root into any Baṅgāṇī item which he had either inaccurately transcribed or improperly understood.

On March 31st, 1993, Zoller organized a 'small colloquium' at the New Delhi office of the South Asia Institute of the University of Heidelberg in order 'to offer an opportunity to Indian linguists to meet and discuss issues with native speakers from Baṅgāṇ'. Zoller (1993) mentions the names of six Baṅgāṇīs, first of which is his principal informant Gabar Siṃha. The four linguists attending were Candru J. Dāsvānī, Dhaneś Jain, Sureś Kumār and Prem Siṃha. Dāsvānī is a linguist specialised in modern English, currently in charge of non-formal education at the National Council for Educational Research and Training at New Delhi. Jain is an American-trained Indian sociolinguist who currently manages a publishing house. Kumār is professor of applied linguistics at the Kendriya Hindī Sansthān at Āgrā, whose many publications focus on Hindī, Hindī stylistics, Indian bilingualism and other topics related to Hindī. Prem Siṃha is professor of linguistics at Delhi University and the only person to attend Zoller's colloquium who has worked in the field of historical linguistics. It is fair to point out that none of these scholars read German, in which Zoller's Baṅgāṇī findings were reported, or have any fieldwork experience working with informants of living languages. Zoller (1993: 112-3) reports their findings as follows:

Right from the beginning the experimental character of the meeting was underlined. Several of the informants had come to Delhi for the first time, and the colloquium took place in a location and surroundings somewhat alien to them. Moreover, it was not predictable how they would react to the very direct 'examin-

ing' of word lists. Still, the majority of words which they were asked were positively confirmed by them. The conversation among the linguists and between linguists and native speakers concentrated mainly on the following topics: a) the (usually restricted) use of archaic words, b) the relative (traditional) isolations of the Baṅgāṅīs, c) possible connections with Indo-European languages outside India.

The following Baṅgāṅī words with possible Indo-European background were asked and subsequently confirmed: *aino* 'one; the one (god)' < Proto-Indo-European (PIE) *oinos* 'one'; *gusti* 'taste' < PIE *gustis* 'taste'; *boro* 'flour' < PIE *bhāres* 'barley'; *barga* 'mountain' < PIE *bherǵhos* 'mountain'; *mən(ɔ)* 'hand' < PIE *m̥ntos* 'hand'; *mego* 'big' < PIE *meg(h)* 'big'; *sun* 'sun' < PIE *sun-* 'sun'. Often, the use of most of the words listed above is restricted in one or the other way. This is understandable when one considers that there are probably not more than a few dozen 'candidates' for an Indo-European, non-Indo-Aryan etymology. All of these words have their normal Pahāṅī synonyms. Some of them (*gusti*, *barga*, *mego*) seem not to have undergone the historical phonological changes of satemisation (that means, they cannot be derived from Old Indo-Aryan *juṣti-*, *brh-*, *mahān* as they have preserved an earlier PIE form), while others have no parallels in the Indo-Aryan languages.

It is important to point out that none of the archaic Baṅgāṅī words violates the historical phonological rules of the area, with one exception: there are some words with a single stop or medial sound, e.g. *mego* 'big'. The preservation of such a sound (or trace of it) would be highly unusual in South Asia. At this moment it is difficult to say whether such words may provide some information about the historical time when they could have reached the area of Baṅgāṅ. Perhaps one has to see them together with those Sanskritic words in Baṅgāṅī, which are definitely not recent borrowings, but whose origin is still obscure. During the colloquium there was no opportunity to discuss them in more detail ...

... some of the linguists suggested that the most probable connection would be Tocharian, ...

On the basis of our findings in Baṅgāṅ, it is a source of puzzlement to us what purpose could have been served by this 'small colloquium' offering 'an opportunity to Indian linguists', none of whom were either Indo-Europeanists or descriptivists, 'to meet and discuss issues with native speakers from Baṅgāṅ'.³

³ Suresh Kumār, who attended the colloquium, writes to one of the authors: 'As I remember, it was a session for rechecking the field work results. He [i.e. Zoller] already had a list of words and their meanings. It was a speedy reappraisal of conclusions arrived at earlier. Zoller alone was in command. The informants made rather subdued responses, did not show perceptible disagreements, and the linguists gathered there were, in my assessment, secondary participants ... The session lasted about two hours, and checking pronunciation, meanings, apart from the identity of the items themselves, was the focus, as I remember' (letter of 18 February 1995).

Zoller's purported discovery either presumes the impossible or entails a highly interesting substrate residue. It is an impossible or, at least, a hitherto unreported linguistic phenomenon that an identifiable portion of the lexicon remain immune for millennia from the historical sound changes which shape the language. In Section 3, we saw that although Zoller denounces the idea that sound laws represent 'allgemein gültige Lautveränderungen', his hypothesis does not in fact require any such criticism of the 'Ausnahmslosigkeit der Lautgesetze'. He hypothesizes that an ancient Kentum language was spoken for millenia virtually unchanged by a secluded population group which only in very recent times, purportedly through 'Überlagerung', adopted a Western Pahāṅī language so entirely that their original language survives only as esoteric traces. This hypothesis is not impossible *a priori*, although we have disproved it on the basis of the data, for it is conceivable that the set of words which Zoller identified as 'Kentum words' could represent the residue of a substrate language. The Gaulish substrate in French represents just such a curious set of words (Lambert 1994), although these words have of course undergone the same historical developments in phonology as other French words.

If the mystification and reconditeness in Zoller's writings, illustrated above in Section 3, were not enough to arouse suspicion, Zoller ends his second installment with the following observations and remarks:

Erst kürzlich ist mir aufgefallen, daß bei Witzen und Späßen, ironischen Wendungen u. ä. die Banganis auffallend oft archaische Wörter gebrauchen – und zwar auch dann, wenn keine [arśo]-Atmosphäre da ist. Das Wort klingt dann auch nicht mehr "rein", sondern bloß noch altmodisch. So mag man vor einem lüsternen 'Biedermann' bissig äußern: [lɔkte ri: la:le lei le aia:ŋ] Wort-für-Wort-Übersetzung: "Milch PP_{gen}-sabbernde Speichel-he-sie-kommen!" = "He, dem läuft die Milchspucke (aus dem Mund)", mit [lɔktɔ]_m 'Milch', zu IG *glak-* "Milch".

Das Ironische des Ausdrucks wird durch [lɔktɔ] intensiviert, das in dieser Situation für die Banganis altmodischer klingt als [du:d] "Milch". Dem beflissenen Leser dürfte Ähnliches aus deutscher Poetry wohlbekannt sein.

Diese Entwicklung deutet an, was irgendwann einmal das letzte Lebenszeichen der alten Schichten des B[angani] sein könnte: ein Witz, vielleicht.

Certainly, the phenomenon of archaisms in jokes amongst gypsies is a well-known phenomenon, but in view of the serious and far-reaching implications of Zoller's purported discovery, these closing lines struck us from our first reading of them as a peculiar way to con-

clude a scholarly piece of writing on a topic of this nature. In this article, we have presented the facts as we know them. In view of our findings and in view of the manner in which Zoller presented his, the question which remains for the reader to resolve in his own mind is whether Zoller has fallen prey to the wishful etymologizing of transcriptional errors or whether he has deliberately perpetrated a hoax upon the academic community. In other words, was the joke on Zoller, or was the joke on us? That is the *prkṛ* 'Frage'.

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