Retention of Medial Consonants in The Grammar of Ardhamāgadhī by Hermann Jacobi

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The outline of the Jaina Prakrit (= Ardhamāgadhī) given by Hermann Jacobi[1] has special message of guide-line for Prakrit Scholars and particularly for the future editors of Śwetāmbara Jain canonical works. When we compare the texts of two editions of the Ācārāṅga, Part I, one by H. Jacobi and the other by W. Schubring[2] there is a great difference between the phonological aspects of the language. In the later edition the phonology of language is strictly regulated by the rules of Mahārāṣtrī Prakrit, whereas in the former edition there are several usages retaining medial consonants like Pāli. There is a clear indication of this fact in the grammar of the Jaina Prakrit given by Jacobi.[3]

Below we are reproducing the usages of Ardhamāgadhī quoted by Jacobi explaining its grammatical rules. They support the opinion of Muni Shri Puṇyavijayjī[4] along with Prof. Ludwig Alsdorf that the medial consonants of the Amg. usages were not changed phonologically to that much extent (as in Mahārāṣtrī Prakrit) as they are found in modern editions. Ardhamāgadhī is considered to be nearer[5] and more akin[6] to Pāli. According to its time of prevalence and the place of origin it should resemble the dialect of Ashokan inscriptions of East India. Both Pāli and Ashokan dialects are the oldest MIA dialects and in them the elision of the element of occlusion is perhaps very very rare. In this context the rule of usually always elision of medial consonants framed by Prakrit gram-

marians for Mahārāṣṭrī Prakrit but applied in the case of modern editions of Amg. texts[7] does not seem to be proper and justified and therefore the usages of Amg. quoted by Jacobi in his grammar[8] are worth serious consideration for linguistically re-editing Amg. texts.

Usages quoted by Jacobi in his grammar (distinct from the usual Mahārāṣṭrī usages found in his text of Ācārāṅga) :

क् = क् ः एकारस, पडिकूल, सहसाकारे

ग् = ग् ः भगवता, भगवति, भगिणी

ज् = ज् ः अभिज्ञाणति, पजाहिति

For medial -त्- see further

द् = द् ः अप्पमादो, एगदा, दायादा, पडिसंवेदयति, वदंति, वदासि, वेदेति, समादाणं

थ् = ध्[9] ः तधा (तथा)

ध् = ध् ः मधूणि

न् = न्[10] ः निउण, नियत्ति

ञ् = ञ् ः नात[11]

न्य् = ञ् ः अन्न, कन्ना[11]

Neuter forms in Nom. and Acc. plurals
फलाणि, सप्पीणि, मधूणि[12]

Medial - त् - in various positions and contexts
असीति, ततीय, बितिय (numerals)
पिता, माता, पितरं, मातरं, पितरो, मातरो (nouns)
भगवता (Inst. Sg.)
धम्मातो, कन्नातो, देवीतो (Abl. Sg.)
भगवति (Loc. Sg.)
एतं, एतेहि, ततो (Pronouns)
करेति, करोति, खामेति, गच्छति, गिण्हति, देति, सुणेति, सेवते
(Present Tense, III Sg.)

काहिति, दाहिति, पज्जाहिति (Future, III Sg.)

कज्जति, कत्थति, कीरति, घेप्पति, छिज्जति, तप्पति, दिस्सति, बुज्झिज्जति, वुच्चति, हम्मति (Passive, III Sg.)

जीवितुं (Infinitive)

संभूतं, हतोवहते (Past Passive)

अतियच्च (Absolutive)

कारावेति, खमावेति, दावेति, ठावेति (Casual, III Sg.)

परितप्पमाण (Present Participle)

अतिवाएज्जा (Optative)

तृ = दृ ⁹: पाद (पात ← पत्त ← पात्र)

The above usages that are quoted from the grammar of Jacobi sufficiently prove that the Amg. Prakrit was distinct not only in morphology but in its phonological composition also from Śaurasenī and Mahārāṣṭrī and it resembled Pāli in certain respects and was an archaic language. But no Prākrit grammarian (including Hemacandra) and even modern scholars (authors of Prākrit grammar) have treated Amg. separately with the distinct phonological nature of its vocables and usages.

R. Pischel has utilized the text of Ācārāṅga edited by H. Jacobi along with his grammar of Jaina Prākrit but he[13] has in his grammar not at all specified that the archaic Amg. retained sometimes or optionally the medial consonants (see Para No. 17, 18 and 19) and further he has not included in his grammar the usages mentioned above from Jacobi's grammar while explaining the rules of Prākrit grammar and that of Amg. In his grammar one will be surprised to find that he has quoted under Amg. the converted Mahārāṣṭrī forms of the Amg. usages mentioned by Jacobi. This calls for emendation of his grammar as far as the Amg. language is concerned because generally there is no phonological difference between the vocables of Ardhamāgadhī and Mahārāṣṭrī in his grammar.

Foot-notes:

1. Āyāraṃga-Sutta, Part I, Preface, pp. viii-xiv, London, 1882.

2. Ācārāṅga-Sūtra, Erster Śruta-skandha, Leipzig,1910.

3. Ibid No.1.

4. See Kalpasūtra, (Preface pp. 3-7), Sārābhāi Manilāl Nawāb, Ahmedebad, 1952; Prof. Ludwig Alsdorf also agreed with the former and admitted that there was imperative need to reconsider the whole problem seriously.

5. Ibid No. 1. p. viii.

6. Pischel's Comparative Grammar of Prakrits, Para 18.

7. See Ibid foot-note No. 4 and the editions of Amg. Canonical Texts by Prof. W. Schubring, etc.

8. In the text of Ācārāṅga edited by Jacobi, there are numerous usages retaining medial consonants and they are just like Pāli language. Pischel (para No. 18) rejects the idea of inclusion of Amg. under Mahārāṣṭrī and would like to connect it with Māgadhī Inscriptions. He further says, it is likely that at the time of compilation of the canon at the councils of Mathurā and Valabhī, the original dialect got a western colouring. At Valabhī particularly the influence of Mahārāṣṭrī might have been quite considerable. But such an influence could not have been significant because even by it the basic character of Amg. was not touched.

9. Medial त् = द् and थ् = ध् in some usages is not due to the influence of Śaurasenī as scholars believe, but this kind of voicing the unvoiced medial consonants seems to have begun before Christian era and later on this trait became the main feature of Śaurasenī.

10. Initial dental nasal न् - is retained by Indian editors of Amg. texts, but in some cases it is cerebralised into ण्- which is definitely a wrong practice as far as Amg. is concerned.

11. ज्ञ and न्य are changed to ञ in Ashokan inscriptions of the East, and therefore the same rule for Amg. and their change into ण्ण in it is to be regarded as a wrong practice.

12. The -ṇi (णि) suffix of neuter Nom. and Acc. plural is archaic which is replaced by -im (-इं) in the later Prakrits. As far as the archaic nature of Amg. is concerned -ni (नि) should be used in place of -ṇi (णि) in the light of Pāli and Ashokan inscriptions.

13. Comparative Grammar of the Prakrit Languages.

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