

# **The Words Gōnd (testicle) and Mandīr (waiting) in the Bakhtiari Dialect**

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With the rise of the pre-Islamic Iranian dynasties, interactions with the ancient Mesopotamian civilizations, Greece, and Rome commenced with the Medes and persisted until the conclusion of the Sassanid dynasty. Consequently, these connections brought numerous loanwords into the Old Persian language. Moreover, Ancient Iran faced numerous invasions by various tribes, resulting in the destruction of written documents. The final invasion coincided with the Persian invasion, which supplanted the Arabic language and obliterated numerous written works; only a handful of texts survived, particularly those connected to religious writings. Consequently, many words were substituted with those from the prevailing language.

New Iranian dialects are the descendants of Old Iranian languages, such as Avestan and Old Persian, which inherit their mother tongue in terms of syntax and morphology. Iranian dialects are like interconnected links in a chain, each of which has inherited several features of Old Iranian languages. The dialects under discussion are direct descendants of Old Iranian languages, featuring rich roots that extend back to the Indo-Iranian and Indo-European periods. Among these is the Lorish-Bakhtiari dialect, a fascinating representative of the southwestern group. This dialect has evolved from Middle Western Iranian languages and Old Persian, skillfully preserving a wealth of grammatical, lexical, and phonetic traits inherited from its ancestral heritage. Its enduring characteristics highlight the deep cultural and historical significance of these languages.

Bakhtiari is a vital southwestern Iranian dialect with over a million speakers in the Zagros Mountains and surrounding areas. It confidently belongs to the Lorish dialect group, which encompasses Kohgiluyeh, Boyer-Ahmadi, and Lorestani. In southern Iran, two distinct dialect groups have developed features from early southern New Persian, each evolving separately. The first group consists of Lorish dialects, which include pure Lorish, Bakhtiari, Boyer-Ahmadi, and Mamasani-Kohgiluyeh. The second group comprises Persian dialects from the Persian Gulf to central and western Persia. Additionally, some sources include Lorish (along with its dialects) and Bakhtiari, among the dialects of the southern and southwestern regions.

The term "Gōnd" has held two significant meanings since the Middle Persian era: one pertains to an army, while the other relates to egg and sperm. Primarily, "Gōnd" signifies sperm, but it can also describe an unclean individual or, conversely, depict a brave and manly figure, such as a general. Interestingly, in Kurdish, "Gōnd" translates to "Gun," and in Pahlavi, it is "Gōnd," both of which convey the meaning of soldier or army, highlighting the term's rich duality.

The term "Gōnd" means "army" in Pahlavi texts. In Armenian, it refers to a part of an army or a group. The Arabic word "jund" (with the plural forms "junūd" or "ajnād") means "soldiers." In Syriac, "guddā" signifies a group, while in Mandaean, it is related to

"gundā." It is important to note that the initial "g" in the Pahlavi word "gund" represents the "g" sound, not a "v" sound. Frankl argues that the Arabic word "jund," meaning "army," is a loanword derived from Aramaic. In Old Iranian languages, the terms for sperm and egg initially had different meanings. In Pahlavi, the term evolved into Gōnd, and it is pronounced the same way in the Lurish dialect.

In the Lurish-Shushtari dialect, that shit is called Gōnd, and a rooster that has been castrated is called khisi/khasi.

mōne hešti xohēlōm koštīm gōndet na beyam

You left me alive, let me kill you with your eggs

This word in Kurdish is in the form gun.

Eger tu qewî sil î, here, awa sar pawēja gunêt xo

If you are very upset, go pour cold water on your shit.

The term "Mandir" in the Bakhtiari dialect and "Bandir" in the Kohgiluyeh and Boyer Ahmadi dialects illustrate a significant phonetic shift, with the nasal-labial phoneme 'm' changing to 'b.' This evolution suggests that while "Mandir" (possibly from Sasanian Pahlavi) was replaced by another term, its persistence in the Lurish dialect indicates it may retain a closer connection to its original roots.

As it came, this word did not appear in Middle and Old Iranian texts and has remained only in the Lurish dialect.

mō hani ze mandīrōm mar ībū bī tō mandan

I am still Mandir (waiting) for you, but can we be without you?

The term "Gōnd" warrants discussion, particularly in the context of Indo-European languages. It is noteworthy that a comparable word does not exist across all Indo-European languages. In Greek, the word γίγνομαι (gignomai), which means "to be born," derives from the Indo-European root \*ǵenh₁, meaning "to produce." From this root, we find several agent nouns, including γένος (genos), γονος (gonos), and γονή (gonē), all of which relate to the concepts of giving birth and production.

The words "testicle" and "testis" in English refer to the male gonads, which are reproductive organs responsible for producing sperm. These terms derive from the Greek word "γονή" (gonē), meaning generation, egg, sperm, genital organ, and offspring. Additionally, "gonidium" is a term used to describe one of the reproductive cells found in algae and fungi.

In the Avestan language, the term "varəšna" means "male," while in Sanskrit, "vṛṣana" refers to "testicle." In Avestan, the term "āvaya" found in "apāvaya," which is the name of a disease characterized by the absence of testicles, signifies both "egg" and "testicle." In New Persian, the word "Xāyē" is derived from this term, with the prefix "x" added.

The term "Mandir" does not appear in Indo-European languages in its current form, but we can reconstruct its Indo-European structure. In Indo-European, roots typically conclude with one or two consonants at the beginning and the end, following the pattern CeC(C)(C). According to Emile Benveniste, the fundamental structure of all Indo-European roots—verbal and nominal—follows a consonant-vowel-consonant pattern (\*CVC) or (\*CeC). In this representation, "C" stands for a consonant, while "e" or "V" represents the principal vowel. This pattern can be modified by adding consonants to the

beginning or end of consonant clusters. In most cases, a resonant phoneme (R) is placed next to the vowel, leading to the root formations \*CReC-, \*CeRC-, and \*CReRC-. Additionally, both the vowels i and u can serve as resonants following the principal vowel (e). It is important to remember that in Indo-European languages, the roots were monosyllabic, as explained further in their phonetic structure.

In word formation, a suffix is a derivational morpheme and nominal suffixes typically have the structure eC or CeC, where a consonant can appear before or after a vowel. Prefixes are referred to as "s," and in addition, there is a vowel that functions as a suffix in Indo-European languages, represented by \*h<sub>1</sub>e or (e) (as seen in Old Persian a, for example in a-bavam), which precedes the root and indicates the past tense. There was a unique interjection, \*-n, which played a crucial role within the root of the present participle. For example, in Vedic, we see \*Hiu-n-g yunj, and in Avestan, the root ric connects with the present participle iri-na-xti, meaning "to go." It's essential to distinguish this interjection from the prefix n̥ of negation, which has evolved into terms like (Amordād) and (Anāhitā) in various Iranian languages, including English. This distinction highlights the intricate development and transformation of language over time. Based on the structure from which Iranian dialects are derived, we can analyze the word "Gōnd" as a cognate with the Greek terms γενοϛ, γοβοϛ, and γονή, which come from the Indo-European root \*genh<sub>1</sub>. Following the phonetic rules of Old Iranian, this root should transform into \*zan, which is reconstructed as \*ġwente/os, eventually leading to \*zantah in Old Iranian.

Alternatively, we might reconstruct the word "Gōnd" as the Indo-European \*gh/whu/eu-n-to/es. In this case, we can link "Gōnd" to several Indo-European roots: gēu, gəu, and gū, which mean to bend, dome, or be crescent-shaped; ghou, which means to pay attention and comes from the Old Icelandic "koddi," meaning to hide; and the root gou, goue, or gu, meaning to make a sound. Considering the contextual usage of "Gōnd," this last root seems less relevant.

\* geunte/os > \*gauntah > \*gō/und > gōnd  
 PIE                    OP                    MP                    BKh

The word "Mandir" can be understood as a combination of two components. It derives from the Old Iranian root "man," which means "to stay," and traces back to the Indo-European root \*men. It's important to note that the Lurs do not use the inflected root "mān" in the conjugation of the verb "to stay"; they always use the uninflected form "man."

tī be rahēt īmanōm čī kē saxtē del kandanē

I will wait for your path, because it is difficult to break away from you

The second part of the word, "dir," means long or extended. It originates from Pahlavi Sasanian "dēr" or "dagr," and Parthian "drg." These terms trace back to the Avestan "darəya" or "darəga," and Old Persian "darga." The roots can be found in Indo-Iranian \*dṛHgha and Indo-European \*dl̥h<sub>1</sub>ngos.

\*men-dl̥h<sub>1</sub>ngos < \*man-dṛHgha > \*man-dagra > \* man-dēr > mandīr  
 PIE                    Lir                    OP                    MP                    BKh