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СТРАН ПЕРЕДНЕГО И СРЕДНЕГО ВОСТОКА



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SOGDIAN kw AND SLAVONIC kū

In 1956, in an article entitled "Une corrélation slavo-iranienne"¹, É. Benveniste re-examined the generally accepted comparison between the Slavonic preposition kū "to" (Russian k etc.) and the Vedic particle kām, as well as the complementary equation, originally proposed by himself in 1929², of Vedic kām with the Sogdian preposition kw "to". From a study of the syntax of these words he concluded that there exists a "direct relationship", constituting "an important isogloss", between Slav. kū and Sogd. kw: "Quelle que soit la préhistoire 'scythique' de la préposition sogdienne kw, nous avons dans les emplois attestés des ressemblances assez étroites avec sl. kū pour justifier l'hypothèse d'une relation directe, qui ne dépendrait nécessairement d'une correspondance avec la particule indo-iranienne kām". On the other hand, "le rapprochement étymologique devenu classique, entre kū et i.ir. kām, s'il est phonétiquement satisfaisant, repose sur une analogie syntaxique assez vague et lointaine".

From these and other such remarks it is clear that Benveniste would have liked to deny that Sogd. kw and Slav. kū are connected in any way with Vedic kām, but that he hesitated to do so since he had no alternative etymology to offer. He is equally cautious as to the nature of the relationship between the Sogdian and Slavonic prepositions. Neither the hypothesis of a Slavic borrowing from Iranian nor that of an inherited Irano-

¹ In Festschrift für Max Vasmer, Wiesbaden, 1956, 70-73; reprinted in Benveniste's *Études sogdiennes*. Wiesbaden, 1979, 299-302. Cf. also *Bulletin de la Société de Linguistique*, 52, 1957, xii-xiv (report of a lecture by Benveniste on the same subject and of the suggestive discussion which followed on that occasion).

² *Essai de grammaire sogdienne*. II. P., 1929, 164.

Slavonic isogloss is altogether plausible, despite several attempts to justify one or the other solution³.

The credit for finding a way out of this impasse belongs to F. Kopečný, who, in an article published in 1969⁴, resolutely abandoned the traditional equation of Slav. kŭ with Vedic kám in favour of a derivation from IE *k^wu⁵. According to Kopečný's ingenious suggestion, for which he cites parallels from some later Slavonic languages, Slav. kŭ and Sogd. kw "to" will have developed (similarly but independently) from an underlying adverb "where".

Since an abverb *kŭ "where" is not attested as such in any Slavonic language, its development into a preposition must be assigned to a remote prehistoric period. Consequently, one cannot expect to find evidence in Slavonic which would raise the status of Kopečný's etymology of kŭ "to" above that of a credible hypothesis. In Sogdian, on the other hand, the equivalent development may be comparatively recent, as the adverb kw "where" still survives alongside the preposition kw "to". In what follows I hope to show that the adverb and preposition have so much in common as to make it virtually certain that they are indeed etymologically identical.

The preposition kw is variously spelt, the most normal forms being: Ancient Letters 'k'w, Buddhist 'kw or

³ Vaillant A. in: *Revue des études slaves*. 33, 1956, 108-10; Shevelov G.Y. *A prehistory of Slavic*. Heidelberg, 1964, 615; Szemerényi O. in: *Die Sprache*, 12/2, 1966, 213, 214.

⁴ "Slavisch kŭ". - *Anzeiger für slavische Philologie*. 3, 1969, 5-12.

⁵ Cf. Hamp E.P. in: *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 16, 1954-6, 281-4, who had already proposed the reconstruction *k^wu for Slav. kŭ as well as for Old Irish co (+ "gemination") "to, till", co (+ lenition) "so that", Middle Welsh py (+ lenition) "to", pw/bwy "to its", etc. Hamp maintains this reconstruction in "You take the high mode and I'll take the low node"; *Papers from the Comparative Syntax Festival...* Chicago, 1973, 243 (but cf. note 12 on page 248). Wagner H. in: *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie*, 32, 1972, 1-5, takes a different view. For further details of the relevant Celtic forms see Thurneysen R. *A Grammar of Old Irish*. Dublin, 1946, 501-2, and D. Simon Evans. *A Grammar of Middle Welsh*. Dublin, 1964, 97. I am grateful to my brother Patrick Sims-Williams for all these references and for advice concerning the Celtic data. The possibility that the Celtic preposition may have arisen in a manner analogous to that proposed by Kopečný for Slav. kŭ appears to be worth pursuing, quite apart from the further possibility of a direct etymological connexion.

k'w⁶, Mug documents kw, Manichean kw(w), Christian qw. A similar range of spellings is attested for the adverb. The forms with initial aleph suggest a derivation from *kuwa (= Old Indian kvā, Later Avestan kva), whence *kwa > *əkwa > əkū⁷, rather than from *kū (= Vedic kū, Gathic Avestan kū), though the latter possibility cannot at present be excluded in view of the existence of several as yet unexplained instances of an original single initial consonant preceded by a prothetic aleph⁸.

Only a few typical examples can be cited here to illustrate the usage of Sogdian kw. As a preposition, kw is used both independently and in company with postpositions such as s'r (Christian s') and pr̄m (Ancient Letters pr̄mw, Christian pr̄n). The simple preposition is indeterminate in meaning, with locational as well as directional senses:

'kw swk' ty rwkδ'th 'z'yt "is born in the Sukhavati lokadhātu";

kw nymyδh "at noon";

m'yδ 'ty nyy prysδ kw mzyx 'xty'k "so that you do not come to the great judgement";

ZK pwt'y k'w 'n'nt KZNH pr'm'y "the Buddha said to Ananda";

k'w ywk' ZK pry'w'k βwt "has love for the doctrine". The addition of the postposition s'r excludes a locational sense⁹:

cn sm'nyy kw z'y s'r w'xznd "descended from heaven to earth";

sn'm θbrd'rt qw wyšnt s'r "gave baptism to them";

pcqs'z qw wyny nyž'mnty ny'm s' "was waiting for the hour of his departure".

Where kw ... s'r governs two or more co-ordinate nouns, the preposition may be repeated before each noun while the postposition is placed only after the last of the series;

⁶ According to Benveniste, the form k'w represents a combination of the preposition with the definite article 'w. This assumption receives no support from the distribution of the various spellings, which seem to be totally interchangeable; even the adverb can be spelt k'w. It is noteworthy, however, that this preposition is seldom (if ever) followed by an article, so that it may be permissible to suppose that the preposition + article has merged with the simple preposition.

⁷ Cf. 'δw [əδū] "two" < *əδwa < *duwā.

⁸ See *Gershevitch I. A Grammar of Manichean Sogdian*. Oxf., 1954, §159 ff.

⁹ Unlike Zebaki ka ... sar "on", with which Sogd. kw ... s'r has been compared by F. Rosenberg in: *Известия Российской Академии наук*, 1920, 418.

kw fryštyh 'tyh kw 'rt'wt s'r nm'c βr' "pay homage to the Apostle and to the Electi".

The combination kw ... prm, often reinforced by the adverb wytwr, means "up to, as far as, until" (in both local and temporal uses) or "during":

mrwx 'kw RBk' rxsynt'ykyrδ prm "as far as great Alexandria";

prtmw 'δβ'ty 'kw pnc'm ny'm prmw "a first (time), a second, up to a fifth time";¹⁰

wytwr qw qsy prm "until now";

wyt'wr k'w 'yw 'βt-myδ prm "during one week".

As an adverb, kw may generally be translated "where", with which sense īf survives in Yagnobi kū "where, whither". It is used both in interrogative and in relative clauses:

qw xnt tw' byyšt "where are your gods?";

'wrδ kw 'ty x' fryštyt 'skwnd "there, where the angels are".

In the Buddhist texts 'kw (k'w) occasionally appears to mean "how";

'kwZY pw nwkr "how much more ... " (= 'cwZY pw nwkr);

ZKh t'yw'kt ... k'w 'krt'nt "what has become of the children?"¹¹.

The phrase kw prm is employed as a conjunction "while, so long as":

kw prm ZNH ctth ... myn'tk'm "so long Čatta shall remain";

qw-pn by tyw nwqr prywyd *pnmcyq 'y "while you are in this former period".

The addition of a negative transforms "so long as" into "until":

kw prm L' twy'z'n "until I pay" ("so long as I do not pay")?

qw pn ny txyzt xwr "until the sun sets".

¹⁰ Ancient Letter 3, line 7, reading ny[']'m for Reichelt's wy[']'m (Reichelt H. Die soghdischen Handschriftenreste des Britischen Museums. II. Heidelberg, 1931, 22, 55).

¹¹ It is conceivable that this word is etymologically distinct from kw "where" and derives from *kam (= Avestan kəm). Note the similarity between the last example cited and Yasht 5.94: kəm iōa tē zaoθrā bavainti "what becomes of these offerings?".

Since the adverb kw "where" is not otherwise used in any temporal sense, one might suppose that the kw of the conjunction kw prm is an etymologically distinct word. Two pieces of evidence indicate that such a supposition would be unjustified.

Firstly, the interrogative equivalent of the relative kw prm is attested in a single Christian Sogdian passage, where wytwr qw pn translates Syriac 'dm' l-'mty "how long?" (literally "till when?")¹². It is therefore indisputable that this kw is a derivative of the interrogative stem k- (IE *k^{wo-}, *k^{wi-}, etc.).

Secondly, beside kw prm "so long as" there occurs the synonym kwδprm:¹³

kwδprm žw'n "so long as I live";¹⁴

'kw prm ywn'k βyδ'n'k 'skw't 'PZY z'yh βwmh rty ms
kwδprm

prwh 'zw'ntk δ'mh 'yw w'tβ'r 'skw't rty wyt'wr ywn'k
mrtxm'-

k mwn'kw 'βzy m'yδ βrty-k'm "so long as this altar

and ground exist, and also so long as there exists one creature in the world of the living, this man will undergo this evil".

Buddhist Sogdian 'kwδ', from which kwδprm is evidently formed, is found only twice; in both passages it seems most likely to mean "when"¹⁵. Nevertheless, one can hardly doubt its etymological identity with Vedic kūha, Gathic Avestan kudā "where". This derivation of kwδprm "so long as" from Old Iranian *kuda "where" invalidates any semantic argument against connecting kw prm "how long, so long as" with kw "where".

If it is thus highly probable that kw prm contains the relative-interrogative adverb kw "where", it is nothing less than certain that kw ... prm contains the preposition kw "to". On the other hand, one would pre-

¹² Hansen O. Berliner sogdische Texte. II. Wiesbaden, 1955, 858, line 23.

¹³ The meaning was recognized by W.B. Henning in: Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies. 11/4, 1946, 716.

¹⁴ P17, line 35, misread kyδprm in Benveniste's edition (Textes sogdiens. P., 1940, 147).

¹⁵ P5, line 32 (ibid., 76); L93, line 37 (Рагоза А.Н. Согдийские фрагменты центральноазиатского собрания Института востоковедения. М., 1980, 66). Cf. also Manichean kwδtyu "when" (Henning apud Boyce M. The Manichaean hymn-cycles in Parthian. L., 1954, 122, verse 7).

fer not to dissociate the two expressions kw prm and kw ... prm. Both are used in combination with the adverb wytwr. The two meanings of the conjunction ("so long as" and, with negation, "until") correspond semantically to the two meanings of the preposition plus postposition ("during" and "up to, until"). Kopečný's proposal that kw "to" is in origin the same word as kw "where" provides the ideal solution to this dilemma, releasing us from the necessity of breaking any link in the chain of usages which leads from kw "where" via kw prm "how long, so long as" and kw ... prm "during, until, up to" to kw "to".

An insight into the mechanism whereby the Sogdian adverb kw "where" may have been transformed into a preposition "to" is provided by the closely-related Khotanese language. Khotanese ku is not used as a preposition but only as an adverb and conjunction, with a wide range of meanings: "where, when, if, as, so that", etc. Occasionally, however, Khotanese ku "where" introduces an elliptical clause in which the verb "to be" is omitted:

vā usahya ku-m bisa balyša "deign to come where my
house (is), Buddha";
thatau hā jsāte ku balyša "quickly he goes where the
Buddha (is)"¹⁶.

If such sentences had ever become common in Khotanese, it would have been possible and natural for ku to have been reinterpreted as a preposition, meaning either "to" or "at, in", depending on whether the sentence contained a verb of motion or not ("come where my house (is)" = "come to my house", but "stay where my house (is)" = "stay at my house"). The process in question is thus the same as that whereby the Standard English conjunction "than" ("he is bigger than I am", "he is bigger than I") becomes a preposition governing the accusative in colloquial usage ("he is bigger than me"). Just such a process may have led to the emergence of the Sogdian preposition kw.

In conclusion, I should like to express the hope that Professor V.A.Livshits will enjoy this short study, which touches on the history of his native language as well as of those to whose understanding he has contributed with such distinction.

¹⁶ Z2.58, 62 (Emmerick R.E. The Book of Zambasta. L., 1968, 20).