

About the demonstrative system in Tocharian B

Given the fact that most Tocharian texts go back to Sanskrit originals, the interpretation of demonstrative pronouns has always been influenced by analogies to the demonstrative system of Sanskrit. Viz., in Krause & Thomas (1960: 165) we can read the following statement:

“... entsprechen sich B *seṃ*, A *saṃ*... skt. “eṣaḥ”, “dieser (hier)” mit starker Deixis!“. Similarly Adams (1988: 163) defines the function of B *seṃ*, A *saṃ* as „this one close by“. This description closely follows the main tradition of Sanskrit scholarship. Stumpf in his monograph (1971) rejected this analysis for TA *saṃ* which he showed to be a “oppositional”, i.e. a distal pronoun equivalent to TB *sam̐*, but he attributed to TB [*seṃ*] the same “connective” (i.e., speaker-oriented) function as for [*se*]. Winter (1975, 1976) instead proposed medial function for TB *seṃ*, followed by Peyrot (2008: 123). Pinault (2008) follows Stumpf and defines the function of TB *se* and *seṃ* likewise as „deixis proche et connective“. In a more recent special paper (Pinault 2009), he explicitly rejected Winter’s and Peyrot’s view and argues for a merely endophoric (recognitional and discourse-deictic) function of *seṃ*.

Now recent research has argued for a reinterpretation of the Vedic and Sanskrit demonstrative system, where the pronoun *etad* does not have an “emphatically” proximal function but rather has a wider scope than *idam*, combining exophoric medial/intermediate or hearer deixis (cf. Knobl 2007; 2009: 143 n. 10; Kümmel forthc.) with endophoric discourse-deixis and recognitional functions, similar to the system attested in much of Eastern Iranian. In the light of these data in neighbour languages and typological considerations it seems worthwhile to again reexamine the use of TB *seṃ* in the context of the Tocharian demonstrative system(s). Such a reevaluation is the aim of my paper.

References

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