

Studies In Tocharian Vocabulary, I: Four Verbs

Four Tocharian verbs, B *pi-* [A *pis-*] "sing," B *pin-* [A *piw-*] "blow (as of the wind)," AB *si-* "drain," and B *stāll-* "contract, shrivel" are investigated with the end of establishing their meanings or establishing their meanings more securely than heretofore has been the case. Once meaning and form have been determined, etymological suggestions are made.

It is axiomatic among historical linguists that sound etymologies must underlie any other kind of comparative work. But sound etymologies must themselves rest on sound descriptive work, since authentication of form and meaning must precede the search for external or historical connections. In dead languages such as Tocharian A or B this authentication itself becomes a real problem since there is no native speaker's knowledge to appeal to—only the fragmentary texts whose witness may be neither clear nor decisive. The following notes aim at illuminating the form and meaning of certain poorly attested verbs in Tocharian A and B from the contexts in which they appear. Only then, on the basis of established meaning and form, are certain etymological suggestions made.

TOCHARIAN B *pi-* [A *pis-*] "SING"

In his *Westtocharische Grammatik* (1952, 261) Krause glosses the single occurrence there of Tocharian B *pi-* somewhat hesitantly as "singen." In the *Tocharisches Elementarbuch*, Bd. II (1964), however, he and Thomas suggests "etwa 'blasen'" and equate the Tocharian B word with Tocharian A *pis-* hitherto of unknown meaning. The change of opinion seen here results from Couvreur's review (1954) of Krause's earlier work where additional forms are adduced, largely from unpublished manuscripts housed in Paris.

Let us look first at the attestations from Tocharian B:

B 589a6 (in the first line of a poem, incomplete at the end)
kalneṃ ploryaṃ tne pīyaṃ lwāsa |||
 "the *ploryas* [some kind of musical instrument]
 resound here (and) the animals sing"¹

In this instance (the one citation from the *Westtocharische Grammatik*) a meaning "sing" makes much better sense than "blow" and the same is true for the following:

PK 15 Da7 *mek pyoyeṃ*
 "they should sing a melody (?)" (if from Sanskrit *megha-*)

The meaning of PK 15 Db2 is indeterminate:

PK 15 Db2 *lo lmau tākoy mā keś wāyoy pāyalñe*

¹ Both verbs could easily be taken as subjunctives (with future meaning) to give a translation, "... will resound ... will sing."

"he should sit down (and) not pay attention to the singing/blowing"

On the other hand, "blow" appears much more likely in the final passage:

B 214b4 (again in a poetic context)

spāntaiytsñeṣṣai wrākai pāyāsta klenauntsai:

poysññeṣṣa lac weṣeñña po saisse:

"thou didst blow the resounding pearl (-shell) of faith: the Buddha's voice went out in all the world:"

An alternative translation of the first of these two lines, "thou didst sing (to) the resounding pearl," is dubious both syntactically (because of the lack of the dative case marker) and semantically.

However, we can reconcile these two meanings if we take the second instance as a causative, i.e., "cause to sing" and therefore "blow (as of a musical instrument)." Such a supposition is strengthened by the recognition that the preterite seen in B 214b4 is a member of the usually causative Class II. The relationship between the present non-causative *piyā-* and the causative preterite stem *pāyā-* is identical to that we find in *śuwā-* "eat" and *śawā-* "fed."

The one instance of Tocharian A *pis-* also appears to be a derived causative.

A 301b3 *rapeyāntu piśāṣlaṃ koṣṭlaṃ*

"musical instruments are to be blown and struck"

The probable causative present to Tocharian B's preterite *pāyā-* would be **piyāsk-* which would correspond to a Tocharian A present stem **pi-s-*. It is perhaps this putative present stem which, further extended, provides the basis for the actual Tocharian A form.

Etymologically, Kraus's (1952) suggestion of a connection of Tocharian B *pi-* (and hence, under this analysis, of Tocharian A *pis-* also) with Old Church Slavonic *pěti* "sing" (1st sg. *pojō*) seems sound, whether or not the latter is to be further connected with Greek *paian* "paeon."

TOCHARIAN B *pin-* [A *piw-*] "BLOW (AS OF THE WIND)"

Though Sieg, Siegling, and Schulze (1931) give no meaning for the verbal root they extracted as *pi-/pe-*, attested only twice in a single text, it seems obvious that it must mean "blow."

- A 124b2 *wār wipāṣ-ām want piwāṣ-ām*
 "the water wets it, the wind blows it"
 A 124b5 *wāryo wantyo wipo pāpeyu*
 "wet by water, blown by wind"

Corresponding to Tocharian A's *piw-* is the Tocharian B hapax legomenon *pin-*, already glossed by Krause (1952) as "blow." It appears in a medical text and evidently refers to a method of administering medicine by way of the nose.

- B Y 42a4 *melemne pināṣle pone kartse*
 "[the medical mixture] is to be blown in the nose;
 it is good for all [diseases]"

It is evident that in both Tocharian languages "blow (as of the wind)" is formally distinct from "blow (a musical instrument)." Whether the two verbs are etymologically related is another question. Semantically attractive for *pin-* [A *piw-*] is an equation with Latin *spīrāre* "to breathe, blow" and its Germanic cognates. (This connection was suggested by van Windekens (1976) for *pi-* [*pis-*] whose basic meaning he took to be "blow.") Such an etymology, however, leaves the ultimate relationship of Tocharian *pi-* [*pis-*] "sing" and *pin-* [*piw-*] "blow" open.²

TOCHARIAN AB *si-* "DRAIN"

In his re-edition of certain Udānastotras in the Bibliothèque Nationale, W. Thomas (1966) reconstructs the following two lines of Tocharian B verse:³

- B S 8a3 *ṣeme ṣelōksa kūce yātsenmasa karstaisi*
wsāsta āstām yetse tsāṅksi kektseñmem ṣsāra
ṣissi mrestiwē mā kūlā-c warkṣāl

The infinitive *ṣissi* is reconstructed from the very end of the preserved portion of S 8a3 where we have *ṣis-i* and the very beginning of the preserved part of B 104a1 where we have *-ssi*. Thomas cites a similar though not identical passage in Tocharian A.

- A 311b6 *yats tsāṅkassi ws-āstār ṣsārām ṣi--*
āy (w)ākāssi aṣām rwāsi

² It is possible, but no more than that, that B *pisāl* [A *psāl*] "chaff" is somehow related to one or the other of these two roots. Another verb which is hesitantly glossed as "etwa 'blasen'" is the hapax legomenon B *pāsaṃ*. Though the context is fragmentary, the meaning cannot be "blow." It occurs in a pratimokṣa text (B 328b4) that is apparently a commentary on a rule concerning the acceptance of householders' invitations on the part of monks. The fragmentary context reads "if the householder *pāsaṃ* in (his) ear . . ." A meaning of "whisper" or the like makes a more intelligible passage than "blow."

³ The last part of the line, missing in S 8a3, is supplied from B 104a1. Our word comes right at the "join" of the two separate manuscripts.

Though both the A and B passages have other additions they share a certain core:

- A) *yats tsāṅkassi ṣsārām ṣi(ssi)*
 B) *yetse tsāṅksi ṣsāra ṣissi*

In both passages we seem to be dealing with an extended metaphor based on the butchering of an animal. Though Thomas does not suggest a meaning for AB *si-*, the context strongly suggests "drain (tr.)" or the like. The B passage might then be translated:

"while for each single *śloka* thou hast given thy heads [*sic*]
 to be cut off, thy skin to be flayed, thy blood and marrow
 to be drained from thy body, (but) thy energy does not
 diminish"

The A passage would read:

" . . . thy gold-pure skin to be flayed, thy blood to be
 drained, thy bone [*sic*] to be broken, thy eyes to be
 plucked out"

If the reconstruction is correct (i.e., an infinitive in Both A and B of the shape *ṣissi*), it could either represent a root *sis(k)-* or *ṣis(k)-* or, more likely, a derived causative *ṣiyās(k)-*. What makes this latter alternative more plausible is the existence in Tocharian B of an apparent preterite participle *ṣiyausai* in B 324b1. This particular text is badly preserved but the context is clearly medicinal in content. The immediate context is:

- B 324b1 *saṃtka ot. snānaṣālne parra yalle ste.*
ṣiyausai
paltāṣle cau ṣe ṣ sār kutār

It is all too fragmentary to translate but it is clear that liquids are involved (e.g., *snānaṣāl* "bathing-room/bath-house," *paltāṣle* "trickling," and *kutār* "will be poured [out]") and a meaning of "having drained" for *ṣiyausai* would fit right in. In form *ṣiyau* would be the expected preterite participle to the *Grundverb* corresponding to the causative *ṣiyāsk-* (the causative preterite participle would be **ṣeṣiyu*). Taken together the evidence suggests a Tocharian root *si-*.

It is possible that this root is further attested in Tocharian B as a noun in a broken and unfortunately somewhat obscure line of the Weber-McCartney manuscript. In this line there is an otherwise unknown word which both Filliozat (1948) and Sieg (1954) read as *piye* but which, given the possible graphic confusion between the akṣaras <pi> and <ṣi>, might equally well be read as *ṣiye*.

- B W 42a6 . . . *ne taṣalya kaṅ[te] kaunisa [su] aise ṣiyene*
*litale*⁴
 " . . . is to be placed on . . . for a hundred days;
 the surplus is to be poured in the drain"

⁴ With the exception of *ṣiyene* (for *piyene*), the text given here reflects Sieg's correction of Filliozat's readings.

Certainly a meaning "drain" would make good sense here though the context is sufficiently fragmentary that complete assurance must elude us. The formal relationship between *ṣiye* and *si-* would be similar to that obtaining between *ṣiko* "footstep" and *sik-* "to set foot."

Etymologically AB *si-* must be connected with Pokorny's **sei-/soi-* "tröpfeln, rinnen, feucht" which, outside of Tocharian, appears only in nominal derivatives with *-l-* or *-m-* but which forms the basis for the extended roots **seik-* and **seip-*.

TOCHARIAN B *stāl-* "CONTRACT, SHRIVEL"

The present-stem gerund (i.e. the *Gerund* I) *ṣtallaṣālle* (to a stem which is phonemically /*ṣtālāsk-*/) is attested three times in the Weber-McCartney manuscript (cf. Filliozat, 1948, and Sieg, 1954). None of the lexical authorities, more particularly Filliozat or Krause (1952), venture a meaning for this word. However, a close examination of the most usable context of the three in which the word occurs does allow us to speak of its meaning with some assurance.

At W 7a6 the gerund appears with *sārwāna* "face" as its direct object. The face is to be *ṣtālāsk-*'d by a goat's milk lotion in which have been dissolved some fifteen ingredients. Of these, seven (probably eight) are known medicinally as astringents, two are cooling elements, two are the nearly universal flavorings anise and sesame, while three are unknown (i.e., plants whose identification is unsure). It is clear that we have an astringent lotion and the phrase *sārwāna ṣtallaṣālle* means "the face is to be astringed."

Formally *ṣtālāsk-* is betrayed to be a derived causative verb by its initial *ṣ-* (cf. *spārṣ-*, *spārṣti-*, *suk-*). The derivation must be late and analogical rather than inherited as an inherited causative would be **ṣcālāsk-*. This line of reasoning leads us to assume a basic verb (i.e., the *Grundverb*) of the shape **stāl-*. The actually cited *ṣtālāsk-* appears to be a calque of some sort on Sanskrit *saṃkocayati* which in medical literature means "draw up, compress, astringe" and which is the causative/transitive derivative of *saṃkucati* "shrink, shrivel (of flowers) (intr.)."

It seems reasonable to suppose that the Tocharian speakers who created the medical neologism *ṣtālāsk-* followed the precedent of their Sanskrit originals and created a derived causative meaning "astringe" from that Tocharian verb root whose own meaning was closest to the Sanskrit *saṃkucati* "shrink, shrivel [of flowers] (intr.)."

It turns out that the asterisk before the putative *stāl-* above is not necessary since such a root is actually attested though that fact is obscured by a fairly general rule of haplology in Tocharian B. The form in question, *ställe*, occurs as a hapax legomenon in a love poem, B 496. The immediate context is given below (B 496, 2-3):

- ciṣṣe laraumñe ciṣṣe ārtāñye pelke kalṭarr solāmpa ṣṣe.*
mā t(e) ställe sol wārñai
 "Thy love and thy affection stand as breath (to me)
 together with life."

This is not to *ställe* (all my) life long.
Ställe is usually taken as a first gerund to an otherwise unattested root **stā-* which is hesitantly glossed as "change." However, with verb roots ending in *-l-* the derived gerunds and abstracts (in *-lle* and *-llāññe* respectively) may show haplology, e.g., *aulñe* (cf. *auloṣ*), or *mälle* "oppressed (adj.)" but *mällälñe* "oppression." There is, therefore, no phonological impediment to deriving *ställe* from **stāllalle*. Semantically there is no difficulty either since 496,3 can be translated "this [my love for thee] is not to shrivel my whole life long"—a much more vivid image than "this is not to change . . ."

From an etymological point of view it is clear that the Tocharian verb *stālā-* must represent an earlier **stālnā-*. This would be a once productive denominative formation from a noun **stelne* (PIE **stolnos*). Such a Proto-Indo-European formation is seen in the Germanic **stallaz* (Germ., Eng. *stall*) with a different meaning. Such a Proto-Indo-European noun is, in turn, readily seen as a deverbative formation to the same verbal root (PIE **stelne/o-*) seen in Albanian *shtie* "reel in, draw up" or Greek *stēllō*, one of whose meanings is "make compact, draw in" or, in medical texts, "make costive, astringe."

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Pacing the Void: T'ang Approaches to the Stars. By EDWARD H. SCHAFER. Pp. xi + 352. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS. 1977. \$26.75.

Professor Schafer's researches into the sensuous aspects of the literature and society of the T'ang Dynasty (618-907) have already favored us with his *Golden Peaches of Samarkand* (1963), *Vermilion Bird* (1967), and *Divine Woman* (1973). This newest book, handsomely printed, takes us on a more ethereal journey into the lore and imagery of the firmament.

To appreciate this book we must be very clear as to what it is about. Schafer is one of the few scholars of Chinese literature who put serious effort into the correct identification of the objects of nature and technology. *Pacing the Void* is a mine of carefully researched information about Chinese astronomy and astrology, but it is "mostly about images" (p. 1) related to T'ang star-lore. It is not a treatise in the history of science or pseudo-science, nor is it a study in anthropology, folklore, or literary criticism (although it has much to say about these subjects). It is also not a simple compendium of "moon images in T'ang poetry." Schafer deals with verifiable evidence but presents this evidence with an aura of mystery, fantasy, humor, and delight, in order to bring out "the genuine aspects of the imaginings and visions of the men of T'ang" and to emphasize "the magic of star-gazing, with an accent on sensuous details" (p. 3). He does not seek for archetypal myths but concentrates on the effect the skys had on the T'ang writers' imaginations, visions, and sensibilities.

Schafer reminds us that in ancient China astronomy was inseparable from astrology and religion (especially Taoism). The Chinese made much progress in mathematical and observational astronomy, but there was little effort to derive a coherent model of the universe. There were several, somewhat vague, theories of cosmology, but they were openly discussable without the kind of religious or philosophical conflict experienced in Europe. Poets also readily wrote about the myths and images of the sky without conflict with the scientific community. During the T'ang period, the already well-developed indigenous astronomy and astrology of China was influenced and enriched by the translation of several Indian treatises on these subjects.

Chinese astrology can be divided into two branches, portent astrology, which was largely confined to the imperial court, and horoscope astrology, which was widely practiced. Portent astrology developed out of indigenous Chinese practice and is concerned with non-regular phenomena in the sky, i.e., comets, meteors, novae, aurorae. From theories of cele-

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tial and terrestrial correspondence, such heavenly appearances were interpreted as omens directed toward either the imperial household or various parts of the empire. Horoscope astrology also developed in China but was enriched by knowledge of Central Asian astrology in the latter part of the T'ang era. This branch of astrology prognosticated fate from regular patterns of the heavenly bodies, i.e., the passages of the moon and planets among the "fixed" stars and constellations. It was also presumed that there were correspondences between astrologic phenomena and the lives of individuals.

While Schafer tells us much about astrology, he also tries to give scientific explanations for various types of omens and to clarify some of the often confusing technical terms for celestial phenomena. But he is mostly concerned with elucidating star imagery in poetry as he recounts the lore of the heavenly bodies along with numerous examples of relevant lines of verse. He tells us about the lore of the sun and its three-legged crow, the moon and its hare, toad, cinnamon tree, and woman, the five visible planets and their passages thru the constellations. He tells us of star gods and their cults, and the devotions of shamans and Taoist adepts that enabled them to embark on mystical flights thru and beyond the stars via ritual, trance, or dreams.

Schafer devotes attention to poetry on the theme of *yu hsien*, a "relaxed journey to or in the transcendental realm" (p. 242), which takes us into extra-mundane worlds, e.g., mystic palaces in the sky or deep within mountain grottos alive with vivid mineral imagery. He recounts the lore of the Milky Way and the "sky rafts" on which poets and visionaries took imaginary voyages among the stars. His keen appreciation of the nuances of Chinese words and his meticulous use of English brings a vividness to these otherworldly excursions that few translators of Chinese verse can rival.

The final chapter seems to be a hodgepodge of leftover images. Instead of this, it would have been more useful if Schafer had elaborated further on what he calls "image reflection," the concatenation of images to express the manifold aspects of a poem's topic—a practice that often enhances the texture of a poem but also makes translation particularly difficult. Throughout the book, his frequent use of personal names for the T'ang emperors instead of their titles is often confusing. It is also sometimes not clear whether the name of a star or constellation is Chinese or European. There are only a few serious typographical errors: p. 79, last line, "southeast" should be "southwest"; p. 288, note 66 missing; p. 296, note 142, "Hou, 1972" missing from the bibliography.

The volume contains voluminous notes substantiating the author's research, a bibliography, a glossary of Chinese characters, and an index. This book is an excellent window into