J. HARMATTA

PROTO-IRANIANS AND PROTO-INDIANS
IN CENTRAL ASIA IN THE 2nd MILLENNIUM B.C.
(LINGUISTIC EVIDENCE)

The great importance of the migrations of Indo-Iranian tribes in the Ancient Near East and Central Asia was recognised by historical research long ago. Because of the lack of written sources and direct linguistic evidence for these wide-ranging movements, however, linguistic and historical reconstruction often arrived at diametrically opposite results. Thus, it was assumed that the spread of Indo-Iranian peoples from the steppes of Eastern Europe occurred in two great waves: the first one was connected with the rise of animal husbandry, especially of horse-breeding and the invention of the two- or fourwheeled cart, while the second was marked by the appearance, of the equestrian nomads. Both waves of Indo-Iranian tribes, the first one at the beginning of the 2nd millennium B.C., the second one at the beginning of the 1st millennium B.C., affected the enormous territory stretching from the Danube basin and the Balkan Peninsula up to Mesopotamia, Iran and India, on the one hand, and through Central Asia up to China, on the other hand [12; cf. 4, p. 97 ff.].

According to another theory published some years ago, the reduction in Indo-Iranian of the IE five-vowel system to a three-vowel system, consisting of *a i u*, must be ascribed to an overwhelming external pressure coming obviously from a substratum. This phonemic development of Indo-Iranian was due, according to this theory, to the Semitic environment with which the Indo-Iranian tribes came into contact in Mesopotamia in the first half of the 2nd millennium B.C. This assumption, however, compelled its author to venture a further conjecture according to which all Indo-Iranians, even the later Indians, lived for a time in, or on the fringes of, Mesopotamia, and it was only after the completion of the reduction of the five-vowel system that they migrated to India. The same route of migration was also assumed for the Proto-Iranians [11, p. 17 f f.].

It follows from this theory that all Indo-Iranian tribes – the Proto-Indians in the first half of the 2nd millennium B.C., the Proto-Iranians at the beginning of the 1st millennium B.C. – migrated through the Caucasus at first to Mesopo-

tamia, and it is only from there that they spread to Eastern Iran and India, and perhaps to Central Asia. It follows from this idea that Iranian peoples appeared in Central Asia in a relatively late epoch (perhaps circa 700 B.C.) and they migrated to this territory from the south, while the Indians never entered the steppes of Central Asia.

Yet it is clear that neither of these theories can be adopted in this form. As regards the first theory, even if the invention of the cart and horse-riding was a revolutionary innovation in communication and warfare, we cannot neglect the economic and social development of the Indo-Iranian tribes as well as the geographical and climatic factors. In the case of-the second theory, the theses of which were again presented in a recently published paper [10, p. 378 ff.], we have to stress first of all that it is not necessary to ascribe the reduction of the five-vowel system to the influence of a Semitic substratum. After the palatalisation of *k' g' g'h*, the vowel *e* lost its function from the viewpoint of phonemic opposition (e.g. *$\acute{k}$er-*: *kar- >*$\acute{c}$er-* : *kar*-) and became a mere allophone of [a] (cf. [*$\acute{c}$er*] : [*kar*] >[*$\acute{c}$ar*] : [*kar*], but [*$\acute{c}$ar*]=[*$\acute{c}$er*]). Consequently, the reduction of the five-vowel system in Indo-Iranian can be explained as an outcome of the palatalisation of *k' g' g'h*. Moreover, the Proto-Indian groups, settled in Mesopotamia, stood in linguistic Contact in the first line with the Hurrians and not with the Semites. And to realise the improbability of this theory to its full extent, it is enough to refer to the relation between the highly developed settled Semites and their nomadic relatives living to the south. Surely, the former exerted an influence on the latter in many respects, even in the vocabulary, but no essential innovation, comparable to the reduction of the five-vowel system in Indo-Iranian, could spread from Babylonia among the nomadic tribes of the Arabian Desert.

Instead of such general schemes, based on a very fragmentary and scanty evidence, I propose to reconstruct the migrations of Indo-Iranian tribes on a much broader basis with the help of their linguistic contacts with many peoples living in their neighbourhood.

Indo-Iranian tribes separated from the Balts and Slavs at the time when agriculture began to develop in Europe, i.e. approximately in the first half of the 5th millennium B.C. [cf. 2, p. 319 ff]. They remained, however, in close contact with the Finno-Ugrians, who adopted a large number of loan words from Indo-Iranian or Proto-Iranian, Old Iranian and Middle Iranian in the course of a very long period, lasting up to the invasion by the Huns of Eastern Europe at the end of the 4th century A.D. [cf. 3]. A considerable part of these loan words – 53 borrowings – represent Indo-Iranian and Proto-Iranian, whose epoch lasted from the middle of the 5th millennium B.C. tip to the 1st millennium B.C. The split of Indo-Iranian into different dialects or languages, viz.

Proto-Iranian and Proto-Indo-Kāfīrī, began already by the time of the first palatalisation, i.e. in a rather early period. Between the development *ś>s* and *s>h*, characteristic for Iranian, and the separation of Indo-Iranian from Baltic and Slavic, seven stages of phonemic development can be distinguished, and this relative chronological system can be elaborated still finer with the help of the Proto-Iranian loan words occurring in Finno-Ugric languages. Thus, in the final analysis eleven periods of phonemic development can be established within the prehistory of Proto-Iranian (and also of Proto-Indian to a certain degree), comprising three and a half millennia.

These eleven periods can be characterised by the following phonemic features and loan words[1].

First period

(a) change in the phonemic system
$n̥$ $m̥$ > a (n) a (m)
o > a
k'e k'a > ke ka, k^we > k^wa
g'e g'a > ge ga, g^we > g^wa
g'he g'ha > ghe gha, g^whe > g^wha
l > r (*l* was preserved in the South-East, in one part of the language area)

(b) loan word
F**U** *aja-* 'to drive, to hunt' < PIr *ag′ -a-*

Second period

(a) change in the phonemic system
k' g' g'h > ć j́ j́h

(b) loan words
FU *orpas, *orwas* 'orphan' < PIr *arbhas*
FU * *pakas* 'god' < PIr *bhagas*
FU *tarwas* 'sickle' < PIr *dharvas*
FU *martas* 'dead' < PIr *m̥rtas*
FU *porćas, *porśas* 'piglet' < PIr *parćas*
FU *taiwas* 'heaven' < PIr *daivas* 'heavenly being'
FU *werkas* 'wolf' < PIr *vr̥kas*

Third period

(a) change in the phonemic system
-as -is -us > [*-aḥ -iḥ -uḥ*] (in absolute word ending)

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(b) loan words
FU *oćtara* 'whip' < PIr *aćtrā*
FU *ońća* 'part' < PIr *anćaḥ*
FU *ońćura* 'tusk'< PIr *anćuraḥ*
EU *ćaka* 'goat' < PIr *ćāgaḥ, *ćāgā*
FU *kać-* 'to look' < PIr *kać-*
FU *mańća* (< *manuća*) 'man' < PIr *manújaḥ*

Fourth period

(a) change in the phonemic system
ć j́ j́h > ś ź źh (in Proto-Indian *ś j́ j́h*)
(b) loan word
FU *arwa* '*present given or received by the guest' < PIr *arg^whaḥ*

Fifth period

(a) changes in the phonemic system
k^we g^we g^whe > k'e g'e g'he
k' g' g'h > ć j́ j́h
(b) loan words
FU *täjine* 'cow' < PIr *dhe^xinuḥ*
FU *täδe* 'milk' < PIr *dedhi*
FU *peδ'-* 'to milk' < PIr *pe^xy-*
FU *sasar* 'younger sister' < PIr *svasār*

Sixth period

(a) changes in the phonemic system
p t k+ X > ph th kh
-ār -an > ā, -ēr, -en > ē
(b) loan words
FU *śum-* 'strap' < PIr *syumē*
FU *erśe* 'male, man' < PIr *r̥śyaḥ*
FU *warsa* 'foal, colt' < PIr *vr̥saḥ*
FU *säptä* 'seven' < PIr *septa*
FU *teśe* 'ten' < Pír *deśa*
FU *śata* 'hundred' < PIr *śata* Pl. N.
FU *sew-* 'to eat' < PIr *ksew-*
FU *reśme* 'strap, cord' < PIr *reśmiḥ*

FU *sone 'tendon' < PIr *snēvē
FU *kota 'house' < PIr kataḥ

Seventh period

(a)   changes in the phonemic system
      rs ks > [rš kš]
(b)   loan words
      FU *mekše 'honey bee' < PIr *mekšī
      FU *mete 'honey' < PIr *medhu
      FU *kar- 'to dig, to plough' < PIr *kar-
      FU *jewä 'corn'< PIr yevaḥ

Eighth period

(a)   changes in the phonemic system
      e > a, əi > ai, ə > i
      j́ + t > śt, j́h + t > źdh
      -is + dh > -iźdh, -us + dh > -uźdh
(b)   loan words
      FU *asura 'lord' < PIr *asuraḥ
      FU *ropa, *ropaśa 'fox' < PIr *raupaḥ, *raupāśaḥ
      FU *sara 'flood' < PIr *saraḥ
      FU *säre 'vein' < PIr *sariḥ
      FU *sura 'beer, wine' < PIr *surā
      FU * sejte 'bridge' < PIr *saituḥ
      FU *śasra 'thousand' < PIr *źhasra Pl. N.
      FU * śeŋke 'wooden wedge' < PIr *śankuḥ
      FU *śorwa 'horn' < PIr *śruvā
      FU *śuka 'barb of corn' < PIr *śūkaḥ
      FU *wos- 'to buy' < PIr *vas-
      FU *waśara 'axe' < PIr *vaźraḥ
      FU *woraśa 'wild boar' < PIr *uarāźhaḥ

Ninth period

(a)   change in the phonemic system
      -is > -uś, -us > -uś
(b)   loan words
      FU *saś-, *soś- 'to become dry' < PIr *sauś-
      FU *šäre 'brooklet, rill' < PIr *kšaraḥ

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Tenth period

(a)   changes in the phonemic system
      śt źd źdh > [št žd ždh] (before 1600 B.C.)
      -iś > [-iš], -uś > [-uš]
      tst dzd dzdh > st zd zdh

(b)   loan words
      FU **wiša* 'anger, hatred, hate' < PIr * *viš*, * *višam*
      FU **ora* 'awl' < PIr **ārā*
      FU * *punta* 'soil, earth' < PIr * *bhundhaḥ*

Eleventh period

(a)   changes in the phonemic system
      bh dh gh >[b d g] = [b- d- g-] + [-β- -δ- -γ-]
      ph th kh > fθ x
      źh j́h > ź j́

(b)   loan words
      FU **oŋke* 'hook' < PIr **ankaḥ*
      FU **śere* 'clan, custom' < PIr **śarδaḥ*

With the help of the Indo-Aryan lexical elements pointed out in Human, an absolute date, too, for certain phenomena of this phonemic development can be established. Thus, we can state that the 17th-16th centuries B.C. fall in between the limits of the tenth period of Proto-Iranian linguistic chronology. It seems on the basis of this chronological evidence that about 300 years as an average space of time can be attributed to each period. Surely, this schematic chronological system does not correspond to reality because the rhythm of linguistic change must not be necessarily constant. Thus, beside the uniform rhythm of linguistic change we can also reckon with an accelerated or delayed and even with an alternating rhythm of phonemic development. In any case, however, the average chronological scheme attributing about 300 years to each period may serve as a starting point and it may be corrected with the help of additional, e.g. archeological, evidence in the course of later researches.

Now, we can proceed to examine the spread and migrations of Proto-Iranians and Proto-Indians with the help of their linguistic contacts with the neighbouring peoples within these time limits. The contact and even ethnic amalgamation of Proto-Iranians with Finno-Ugric tribes continued in the wooded steppes of Eastern Europe during the whole period [cf. 3]. The connections with the Proto-Balts and Proto-Slavs might have been rather weak be-

cause they did not leave any tangible linguistic traces recognised so far[2]. Linguistic evidence is also missing for the contacts between Proto-Iranians and Daco-Mysians. On the basis of abundant archeological finds, however, one could successfully reconstruct the relations between the two populations in the Late Neolithic and Copper Ages.

If we pass towards the South-East, we can find very interesting linguistic data for the spread and migrations of Proto-Iranians and perhaps Proto-Indians to the steppes stretching north of the Caucasus, as well as for their contacts with the North-Western and South-Eastern groups of Caucasian tribes.

The earliest trace of these contacts may be represented by Udi *ek'* 'horse',[3] which could only be borrowed from Indo-Iranian *ek̂wa-* before the first palatalisation, i.e. in the 1st period of Proto-Iranian phonemic development (perhaps about 4000 B.C.) according to the chronological scheme established above.

Beside this word, however, other names for 'horse' of probably Proto-Iranian origin also occur in North-Western Caucasian languages: Circassian *śə*, Kabardian *šə* 'horse', Abkhaz *a-ćə* 'the horse'.

On the other hand, South-Eastern Caucasian languages offer the following linguistic data: Lak *č'u*, Khinalug *pšə* (< *b-šə*), Chechen *gau̯r,* Ingush *gou̯r* 'horse', Khinalug *spa* 'ass colt'.

Obviously, here we have to do with three different terms:

(1) *śə*, *šə*, *ćə*, *č'u* may go back to Proto-Iranian or Proto-Indian *ećva-*, *eśva-* (>*aśva-*), because the initial vowel might have been understood as a demonstrative element in North-Western Caucasian languages (cf. Abkhaz *a-ćə* 'the horse'). If the form *ećva-* was the prototype, it may represent the third period of Proto-Iranian phonemic development, i.e. it could be adopted in the second half (or perhaps towards the end) of the 4th millennium B.C.

(2) The term *gau̯r*, *gou̯r* is again apparently connected with Persian *gōr* 'wild ass', which probably goes back to a. Proto-Iranian or Old Iranian prototype *gaura-.*

(3) Finally, Khinalug *spa* is, of course, an adoption of Old Northern Iranian *aspa-.*

From among the numerous Iranian loan words of North-Western and South-Eastern Caucasian languages, some may be of Proto-Iranian or Proto-Indian origin. Thus, Kürin γab 'handful' is probably an archaic borrowing from Proto-Iranian or Proto-Indian *gabha-* (cf. OInd *gabhasti-*), while Batsian *ḥač'* 'to see' may go back to Proto-Indian or Proto-Iranian *kać-* 'to see', reflecting the third period of Proto-Iranian and Proto-Indian phonemic development, i.e. approximately the end of the 4th millennium B.C. Chechen · and Ingush *mār*

'husband' may be also an ancient (Proto-Iranian or Proto-Indian) borrowing of the famous term *marya-.

In spite of the paucity of this linguistic evidence, these ancient Proto-Iranian or Proto-Indian loan words to be found in Caucasian languages offer a valuable testimony of the advance of Proto-Iranian or Proto-Indian tribes towards the Caucasus at a very early date.

If we pass over to Siberia, looking for the spread towards the North-East of Proto-Iranians and Proto-Indians, we have to state that no clear linguistic traces of their direct contact with the Samoyeds can be recognised. The reason for this phenomenon may be that a belt of tribes speaking Ket, Kott, Arin, Assan and other relative languages separated the Indo-Iranians from them. Unfortunately, apart from the Kets, the overwhelming majority of these tribes together with their languages completely disappeared. Nevertheless, we still find some traces of their ancient linguistic contacts with Proto-Iranians. Thus, Kott *artʼa* 'true, veritable' may go back to Proto-Iranian *r̥ta-, Kott *câk* 'force', *ćaga* 'strong' may reflect Proto-Iranian *ćak- (cf. OInd *śaknoti*), and Kott *ćak-* 'to pass down' could be an adoption of Proto-Iranian *ćak- 'to pass' (cf. OIr *sak-*). All these forms could represent the third stage of Proto-Iranian phonemic development, i.e. a rather early period. Perhaps Ket *kuos* 'cow' reflects an even earlier period if it goes back to Proto-Iranian *gʷāus*.

These loan words probably speak in favour of a very ancient linguistic contact between Proto-Iranian or Proto-Indian and the Ketic languages. Some of these loan words also penetrated into the Turkic languages (cf. Turkic *čaq* 'force', *čaq* 'time'), which very likely adopted some Proto-Iranian term also independently from the Ketic languages. One of such borrowings may be *yaγ-*, *yaγa-* 'to sacrifice', which may reflect Proto-Iranian *yagʹ- before the first palatalisation (cf. OInd *yaj-*, OIr *yaz*). If these loan words had not been mediated by some unknown, no longer existing language to the Turkic ones, one could think of a very early advance of Proto-Iranians to Central Asia.

In the South-Western corner of the Indo-Iranian linguistic area, the Proto-Indians advanced to Mesopotamia towards the end of the 3rd millennium B.C. and formed more or less important dynasties and the class of *maryannu* there. Thus, the question arises whether this movement or parallel movements touched the territory of later Iran at the same time. We are faced with a difficult and complicated problem which includes both the question of the immigration to India of Proto-Indians and that of the movements of Proto-Dravi-dians. It is impossible to discuss these problems in detail on this occasion. In any case, it seems possible to presume that the Proto-Dravidians advanced through Iran to India, perhaps partly parallel with the immigration of the Proto-Indians.

It would therefore be important to examine the question of early linguistic contacts between Proto-Indians and Proto-Dravidians. Unfortunately, the poverty of Dravidian consonantal system, and particularly of consonant clusters, does not permit us to establish the most ancient contacts between Proto-Indian and Proto-Dravidian with surety. Thus, we can only guess that Dravidian words like *cāy-* 'to incline, to lie down', *cari-* 'to roll', *cantam* 'beauty, pleasure, happiness', *cati-* 'to destroy, to kill' could go back to Proto-lndian *ćay-* (Skr *śete*), *ćar-*, *ćāntam* (Skr *śānta-*, *śānti-*) and *ćāt-* (Skr *śātayati*), because Proto-Dravidian possessed only one initial affricate to render Indian initial *c-*, *s-*, *ś-*. In any case, the quoted words can be postulated for Proto-Dravidian, but it is open to doubt whether Proto-Dravidian means the same chronological level and period as the term Proto-lndian. The rather early date of Proto-lndian and Proto-Dravidian contacts is also borne out by the fact that one of the Dardic languages, viz., Tirahī, borrowed the word *kuzˀra* 'horse' from Dravidian (cf. Tamil *kutirai*) [cf. 8]. If it were sure that Proto-Dravidian borrowed the quoted terms from the reconstructed Proto-lndian forms, then the beginnings of the contacts between the two languages could go back up to the 4th millennium B. C But such an assumption cannot be taken for granted at present.

Historical and linguistic research often presumed that the Dravidians came from Northern territories lying around Lake Aral, where they had intensive linguistic contacts with Finno-Ugrian tribes. It was even assumed that Dravidian and Finno-Ugrian were genetically related languages. Linguists tried to assure a linguistic basis for this theory, but even the latest effort to point out a great number of common elements in Finno-Ugrian and Dravidian vocabulary did not arrive at any conclusive result. In any case, however, if the golden land *Ḫarali* (later *Arali*, *Arallu*) of the Sumerian hymn on the trade with Tilmun,[4] situated beyond Tukriš in the far North-East, can be sought in Iran and, perhaps, even in Ancient Khorazmia indeed, then this name may be of Dravidian origin (cf. Tamil *aṟal* 'to burn, to shine', *aṟali* 'fire', *aṟalōn̠* 'Agni, sun') and its meaning could be the same as that of Khorazmia, reflecting Old Iranian *Xvāra-zmi-* 'land of the Sun'. If the localisation of *Ḫarali* and this interpretation of its name prove to be correct, then this toponym may give a hint for the ancient home of the Proto-Dravidians.

In this context the question also arises how the position of the area of Proto-Iranian, Proto-Kāfīrī and Proto-Indian can be reconstructed before the immigration of the Proto-Indian tribes to India. From the viewpoint of the Indo-Iranian linguistic area, the linguistic features of Kāfīrī [viz., Aryan *ẓh*, *ǰh,* Kāfīrī *z (dz)*, *ž (ǰ)* but Old Indian *h*, Aryan *ć*, Kāfīrī *ts* but Old Indian *ś*] can only be explained by the assumption that Kāfīrī had a fringe position, on

the one hand, and it had a closer contact with Proto-Iranian, on the other hand. These two statements can only be harmonised with one another if the original position of Proto-Iranian and Proto-Indian was not along a North-South axis, but was, at least partly, parallel in this direction and Kāfīrī took the northern fringe of Proto-Indian. Thus, the migration of the Proto-Indian and Proto-Kāfīrī tribes could be reconstructed from the geographical viewpoint approximately along the same route which was proposed for the migration of the Proto-Indians by R. Ghirshman recently.

Finally, we still have to give some hints about the migration of the Proto-Iranians towards Eastern Asia. We can point out a series of archaic loan words borrowed from Proto-Iranian both in Chinese and Korean. The Archaic Chinese forms *k'ân 'to cut', *g'wân 'martial', *dẕ'i̯wan 'to create', *swən 'grandson', *˙âk 'bad, evil, wrong'[5] reflect rather exactly Proto-Iranian prototypes like *khan- 'to dig', *g^whan- 'to kill', *ĵan- 'to create', *sunu- 'son', *agha- 'evil, bad'. Similarly, Korean pad 'field', yok-ta 'to bind', sul 'wine', sen 'old-grey'[6] may be borrowed from Proto-Iranian forms like *pada- 'place', *yug- 'to bind', *surā 'alcoholic drink', *sena- 'old'. This evidence may attest the early advance of Proto-Iranians to the borders or even into the territory of China and Korea.

In the final analysis, on the basis of this linguistic evidence the migrations of the Proto-Iranians and Proto-Indians on the territory of Central Asia prove to have been a very complicated and wide-ranging movement in the 3rd-2nd millennia B. C The linguistic data speak for the early beginning of this movement but on the basis of the small number of the earliest Proto-Iranian loan Words in the neighbouring languages we could visualise a slow infiltration in small groups rather than a mass migration, which may be perhaps the case at the end of the whole process. Beside the bulk advancing to Mesopotamia, to Iran and to India along different routes, other smaller Proto-Iranian groups passed towards the Altai Mountains and reached China and Korea long before the famous invasion to China of the Hsien-yun or Hsien-yü (Archaic Chinese *kâm-mi̯ər) [cf. 1, p. 318, n. 1] at the beginning of the 8th century B. C

NOTES

[1] Cf. for the following [3, p. 170 ff.]. For the phonetic, phonemic and seman tic correspondences of the borrowings and their Proto-Iranian prototypes, cf [3, p. 173 ff.].

[2] The validity of this statement is, of course, restricted to the Proto-Iranian Age.

[3] The Udi word was regarded by A. Nehring [9, pp. 107-108] as the source of IE *ekwos [sic].

[4] Cf. for Ḫarali [7, p. 5 ff.].

[5] For the Archaic Chinese forms, cf. [6].

[6] The quoted Korean words were used as evidence for the linguistic affinity between Korean and Indo-European before; cf. [5, p. 162 ff.] with earlier literature.

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РЕЗЮМЕ

При исследовании миграций древних индоиранцев исторические и лингвистические реконструкции порой приводят к диаметрально противоположным выводам. В статье предпринимается попытка реконструкции миграций индоиранских племен на основе привлечения широкого круга данных об их языковых контактах со многими народами, жившими в соседстве с ними.

В фонетическом развитии протоиранского (равно как и протоиндийского) можно выделить II последовательных периода, охватывающих в общей сложности три с половиной тысячелетия. Анализируя лингвистические контакты протоиранцев и протоиндийцев с соседними народами на протяжении этого времени и определяя, к какому из периодов относятся те или иные следы этих контактов, можно реконструировать области расселения и пути продвижения индоиранских племен.

От балтов и славян индоиранцы отделились примерно в первой половине V тыс. до н. э. Данные об их связях с населением Кавказа свидетельствуют о том, что начало этих контактов относится к концу IV тыс. до н. э. В то же время некоторые данные позволяют говорить о весьма древних языковых контактах протоиранцев или протоиндийцев с кетоязычными народами. Продвижение протоиндийцев в Месопотамию относится к концу III тыс. до н. э. Контакты между протоиндийскими и протодравидийскими языками по ряду оснований можно возвести к IV тыс. до н. э., однако этот вывод требует дополнительной проверки. Некоторые архаичные заимствования из протоиранского в китайский и корейский позволяют говорить о раннем проникновении протоиранцев на границы Китая и Кореи.