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„Albano-Iranica II: Avestan <sup>+</sup>*āfšē*“  
von Jost Gippert (2015).  
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Éric Pirart (Hrsg.),  
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Jost Gippert, Frankfurt 2016

Jost GIPPERT

One of the many crucial problems concerning the prehistory of the Iranian languages that Xavier Tremblay undertook to investigate is the development of Proto-Indo-Iranian (PIIr) *\*ću* (< Proto-Indo-European [PIE] *\*k̑u*). Extending a hypothesis first put forward by Karl Hoffmann (1958: 3), he argued that not only this cluster but also PIIr *\*sp<sup>h</sup>* led to a sequence of two spirants, *\*sf*,<sup>2</sup> first, outcomes like *sp*, *s* or *fs*, *fš*, *f* (and even, in peculiar cases, *x<sup>v</sup>*, *ç*, etc.) being later (dialectal) developments.<sup>3</sup> According to Tremblay, “an earlier stage of *\*sf* or even *\*ću* can be evidenced” for the Iranian successor of PIE *\*k̑u* in “(Proto-)Ossetic”, but also in at least one Avestan word, viz. the “dat.sg. *afše* ‘who owns sheep’” which he traces back, accepting a proposal by Gert Klingenschmitt (1968: 109), to a form “*\*āfšfai* < *\*(H)oH<sub>1</sub>opk̑u-éi*” (Tremblay 2008b: 11).<sup>4</sup>

The Avestan word is indeed crucial for the question whether or not a spirant *f* was the first outcome of PIE *\*u* in the given cluster in (Proto-)Iranian. If, as Klingenschmitt proposed, the Avestan word under concern represents the dative case of a compound “*\*āfšu* < *\*ā-pšu* ‘Viehbesitzer’”, lit. a *bahuvrīhi* “having sheep (close) by”,<sup>5</sup> its Avestan form presupposes the dissimilative loss of the continuation of the stem vowel, *u*, which would have been non-syllabic (*u*) in the position before

<sup>1</sup> A preceding part of this article appeared in Gippert (2007a).

<sup>2</sup> Hoffmann’s notation, “šφ”, implies two noteworthy differences, viz. “φ bilabiales *f*” and the palatal spirant, *š*; this, of course, refers only to the continuation of PIIr *\*ću* (“Arisch *śu*”; 1958: 3).

<sup>3</sup> Tremblay (2008a: 571-2): « Seulement la combinaison *\*sf* était si délicate qu’elle fut maintes fois altérée par la métathèse (*\*sf* > *\*fš*) ou par simplification (*\*sf* > *\*f* ou *\*s*) avant qu’*f* ne fût renforcée en *p* après *s*. ... Étant donnée la diversité des évolutions, il est probable que l’obstruction des spirantes après sifflante – quand la séquence avait subsisté – se produisit parallèlement en chaque langue iranienne, révélant encore une fois qu’une innovation iranienne commune n’est pas nécessairement proto-iranienne. »

<sup>4</sup> Klingenschmitt’s own notation (ib.) is “*\*āfšfai* < *\*ā-pšu-ai*”.

<sup>5</sup> Klingenschmitt (ib.); for the type of compound implied, the author refers to “av. *apuθra-*, Phl. *’pwc* (āβus) ‘schwanger, trāchtig’ < *\*ā-puθra-* ‘mit Kindern versehen’”, i.e., “having children (close) by”.

the dative ending. It goes without saying that the dissimilation implied is much easier to assume if it concerned two *f*-sounds (the first one resulting from regular spirantization of the stop *p* before obstruent).

However, the Avestan word as restored by Klingenschmitt is anything but certain. In its two attestations in Vd. 13.10 and 11, Geldner's text exhibits a form *afšē* in accordance with the spelling found in one manuscript, L4, in the latter verse; other variant readings Geldner adduces are *afše* (13.10, L4 and K14), *aβšē* (13.10, Jp1 and Mf2), *aβšē* (13.11, Jp1 and Mf2), *āfšē* (13.10 and 11, L1.2, Br1 and K10), and *āfšē* (13.10 and 11, Pt2; 13.11, K1a).<sup>6</sup> Westergaard's edition has *afše* with K1 in 13.10 and *afšē* with L4 in 13.11; further variants listed by Westergaard are *aβše* (13.10, K9, vs. *aβšē* in 13.11), *afsē* (13.10, K10), and *afšē* (13.11, K10).<sup>7</sup> Obviously relying upon Geldner's preference, Bartholomae takes *afšē* to be the accusative plural form of an otherwise unattested masculine stem *afša-* meaning "Schaden, Verlust", with reference to the Gathic neutre *afšman-* "Schaden, Nachteil" (only appearing in Y. 46.17), and with a hesitating reconstruction as *\*a<sup>x</sup>tp-so-* to be connected with Lat. *damnum*.<sup>8</sup> The resulting interpretation of the two – substantially identical – verses, here reproduced after Geldner,<sup>9</sup> runs as follows:<sup>10</sup>

10. *yō. sūne.<sup>1</sup> pištrəm. jaiṇti. yim.  
pasuš.hauruue.*

*us. vā. hē. gaošəm.<sup>2</sup> 9βərəsaiti.*

*apa. vā. hē. paidīiam. kərəntaiti.<sup>3</sup>*

*yasə. taṭ.<sup>4</sup> paiti. auuā. gaē9ā. tāiiuš.<sup>5</sup>  
vā. vəhrkō. vā. apaiti.busti.<sup>6</sup> haca.  
gaē9ābiiō. para.baraiti. dasa.<sup>7</sup>*

*aḍāt. paiti. afšē.<sup>8</sup> cikaiiat:*

*cikaiiat. sūnahe.<sup>9</sup> raēšō.<sup>10</sup> baodō.  
varštahe. ci9aiia.<sup>11</sup>*

"Wenn einer einem Schäferhund eine  
Quetschwunde (Pištra) schlägt

oder ihm ein Ohr ausreißt

oder ihm einen Fuß abschneidet,

wenn dann – was jenes Anwesen  
anlangt – ein Dieb oder Wolf  
unvermerkt aus dem Anwesen  
Vermögensstücke fortschleppt,

(so) soll er dann für den Schaden  
aufkommen;

die Schädigung des Hunds soll er  
abbüßen mit der Strafe für  
vorsätzliche (Körperverletzung).

<sup>6</sup> Geldner (1895: 89-90).

<sup>7</sup> Westergaard (1854, 434-5).

<sup>8</sup> Bartholomae (1904: 103-4); the etymological proposal is not discussed in Klingenschmitt (ib.), who simply states as to "*afša-* pl. 'Schaden, Verlust'" that its "etymologische Verbindungen unklar sind".

<sup>9</sup> Cf. the electronic edition by S. Gippert-Fritz, <http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/texte/etcs/iran/airan/avesta/avest.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> Wolff (1910: 397).

11. <i>yō.<sup>1</sup> sūne.<sup>2</sup> pištrəm. jaiṇti. yim. viš.hauruue.<sup>3</sup></i>	Wenn einer einem Hofhund eine Quetschwunde schlägt
<i>us. vā. hē.<sup>4</sup> gaošəm.<sup>5</sup> ʒβərəsaiti.</i>	oder ihm ein Ohr ausreißt
<i>apa. vā. hē. paidiiqm. kərəntaiti.</i>	oder ihm einen Fuß abschneidet,
<i>yasə. taṭ. paiti. auuā.<sup>6</sup> vīsō.<sup>6</sup> tāiiuš.<sup>7</sup></i>	wenn dann – was jenen Hof anlangt
<i>vā. vəhrkō. vā. apaiti.busti. haca. vīžibiio. para.baraiti. dasa.</i>	– ein Dieb oder Wolf unvermerkt aus dem Hof Vermögensstücke fortschleppt,
<i>aḍāt. paiti. afšē.<sup>8</sup> cikaiiat:</i>	(so) soll er dann für den Schaden aufkommen;
<i>cikaiiat. sūnahe. raēšō.<sup>9</sup> baodō.</i>	die Schädigung des Hunds soll er abbüßen mit der Strafe für
<i>varštahe. ciḍaiia.</i>	vorsätzliche (Körperverletzung).”

As a matter of fact, the case for Bartholomae’s *afša*- ‘Schaden’ is rather weak. This is true, first of all, of its connection with the presumed cognate and quasi-synonym *afšman*-, for which several other interpretations have been proposed, among them the identification with *afšman*- ‘verse’,<sup>11</sup> clearly suggested by the Pahlavi translation of Y. 46 using *paymān*<sup>12</sup> for *afšman*- as elsewhere for *afšman*-. For *afšē* etc. in Vd. 13.10 and 11, the Pahlavi translation offers a spelling *pšy*; Bartholomae regarded this as the mere transcription of the Avestan word,<sup>13</sup> whereas for Klingenschmitt it provided the clue to its understanding: given that a similar spelling occurs in the MPers. rendering of several Av. compounds containing *-fšu*- ‘Vieh’ as their second member, probably also in the MPers. translation of Av. *fšu*- in the Farhang-ī ōīm where it is written *pyš*, he proposed convincingly to regard this as a word meaning ‘Schafhirt’. This, then, would also fit with Av. *afšē* in the Vidēvdād verse, yielding a translation like ‘dann soll er dem Viehbesitzer Buße leisten’ (1964: 107-9).<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Thus Humbach (1959, 134) and Kellens-Pirart (1988, 163). Humbach (1991: 173) has “duty” instead.

<sup>12</sup> Noted as *patman* in Bartholomae (1904: 104).

<sup>13</sup> Bartholomae (1904: 103) notes “Pü.: *fših* (Transskr.)”, based upon a reading *fšy*h as in the text printed in Jamasp (1907: 462-3). Klingenschmitt (1968: 109) adduces further variant readings of the word.

<sup>14</sup> The two Vidēvdād verses contain one more crux, viz. the word *dasa* occurring between *para.baraiti* and *aḍāt. paiti*. Bartholomae (1904: 701) took this to be the acc.pl. of an otherwise unattested neutre stem *dasa*- meaning ‘Gegenstand der fahrenden Habe, Vermögensstück’, rejecting the more natural identification with *dasa* ‘ten’ as proposed by Geiger (1882: 346). Bartholomae was certainly true that the assumption of the numeral is in no way supported by the Pahlavi translation but this does not speak in favour of his

There is a minor shortcoming in Klingenschmitt's proposal, in that the alleged meaning matches only the content of Vd. 13.10 but not that of 13.11 as this latter verse is not about a shepherd's dog but about a 'Hofhund', with no 'Viehbesitzer' being implied off-hand. This problem might be overcome by assuming a transfer of the sentence in question from one verse to the other, which seems acceptable given the striking parallelism. However, some more evidence would be desirable to support the interpretation of the Avestan word. Such evidence may possibly be gained from the "Nebenüberlieferung" of a language that borrowed a lot of Iranian lexical items, viz. the language of the Caucasian Albanians.

The decipherment of the Albanian palimpsests of St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai<sup>15</sup> has yielded about a thousand lexical items of the East Caucasian language of the Middle Ages which represented the ancestor of present-day Udi. Among these lexical items, some 35 have been revealed so far to be of Iranian origin, including both items that are shared by neighbouring languages (Armenian and Georgian, e.g. *talavar* 'tabernacle' ~ Arm. *taṭawar*, Georg. *ṭalavar-i*) and items that are peculiar to Caucasian Albanian (e.g. Alb. *marḡaven* 'prophet', lit. 'bird-seer', vs. Arm. *margarē* 'id.' < \**marḡa-vēn-* vs. *-ḡē-*; Alb. *durud* 'beam, wood' matching Pth. *dārūβδ-ag* 'crucified', or Alb. *bamgen* 'blessed' representing an unattested Middle Iranian \**bāmḡēn*).<sup>16</sup> One of these items might be a word denoting a 'shepherd', which is attested two times in the palimpsests, in the form *asef*- strongly reminding of Avestan *āfš-* as appearing in Vd. 13.

Unfortunately, the attestations of *asef* are not secured beyond doubt in the palimpsests.<sup>17</sup> They both occur on fol. 70r of Sin.georg. N13, in a peculiar environment within the "Lectionary" part of the palimpsests,<sup>18</sup> viz. in a list of psalm verses that is inserted between a lection from the Acts of Apostles (13.17-42), a lection from the Old Testament (Is. 35.3-

own interpretation either as it remains "unklar". As it stands, the position of *dasa* after the finite verb of the protasis-like relative clause would remain strange if it represented an object of that verb; syntactically, it would fit much easier as a numerical argument of the apodosis ('(so) soll er *zehn(fach)* für den Schaden büßen').

<sup>15</sup> Cf. the edition of the palimpsests in Gippert, Schulze et al. (2009).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Gippert (2005), Gippert (2007a), Gippert, Schulze et al. (2009) and Gippert (2011).

<sup>17</sup> This is all the more true of a probable third attestation of the word, in Jn. 10.2, where only the initial *a* has remained before a lacuna (Sin.georg. N13, 74vb l. 5, see Fig. 2; cf. Gippert, Schulze et al. (2009), V-60-61 and III-12).

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Gippert, Schulze et al. (2009: I-25, VI-1-3 and VII-1-5 for details as to the Albanian lectionary.

8, the only OT lection in the palimpsests), and the first of a series of lections from St. Paul's Epistles (I Cor. 12.26-14.2).<sup>19</sup> As the manuscript leaf in question is badly damaged and the psalm verses are written in minor-sized letters, only parts of the list can be determined even though most of its items are introduced by the number of the respective psalm and a short title. The psalm yielding the word *asef* is the fourth in the list, following Ps. 25.8 [26.8],<sup>20</sup> 35.10 [36.10], 6.3, and preceding 18.5 [19.5] (after four further undetermined items). The text reads (as far as it can be made out):<sup>21</sup>

$\tilde{z} \tilde{g}^{22}$  asef bezi hil'-al hi {miqana-za} |x-aha-hē :

If restored correctly (most of the end of the first line is unreadable),<sup>23</sup> this can be identified with the first verse of Ps. 22 [23], which runs “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want” in the wording of the King James Bible; a more literal translation of the Albanian text would be “The Lord is my shepherd, I have not been wanting anything.” This reading presupposes that in accordance with Luther’s and other modern versions, the construction with *asef* ‘shepherd’ is nominal, thus opposing itself to the Greek, Armenian, Georgian, Syriac, and Latin (Vulgate) texts that have a verb for ‘tending sheep’ instead (Κύριος ποιμαίνει με / *T(ē)r hovowesc’ē zis* / *upalman mmçq̇sos me* / *māryā ner’eynī* / *Dominus reget me*).<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, the noun *asef* seems to be warranted by its co-occurrence in the title of the Psalm preceding the verse, which can be restored in the form *salmos asefow{n ēȯya}*, i.e., “Psalm of the good shepherd” (with *asefown* representing a possible genitive formation of *asef*), and a verb for ‘tending sheep’ is not attested in Caucasian Albanian. There is at least one more point of evidence for the given proposal:

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Gippert, Schulze et al. (2009: VII-2) as to details.

<sup>20</sup> Note that in the Albanian lectionary, the numbers of psalms follow the Greek tradition throughout, not the Hebrew (here indicated in brackets).

<sup>21</sup> Sin.georg. N13, 70rb, ll. 19–20; cf. Gippert, Schulze et al. (2009: VII-25) for the restitution of the text and (III-46) for an “editio minor” version.

<sup>22</sup> The abbreviation stands for the nomen sacrum *ζωωγ* ‘Lord’ which was always abbreviated in the Albanian manuscript tradition just like Arm. *u(ē)r* or Georgian *o(wpal)i* were; cf. Gippert, Schulze et al. (2009: IV-23) s.v.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. the image provided as Fig. 1 below.

<sup>24</sup> The nominal construction may reflect the participial form *ro ʾi* of the Hebrew Bible, which may be interpreted as nominal, too. However, a direct influence of the Hebrew Bible on the Albanian text (without the transfer of Syriac) is hard to assume. – Note the Armenian, Georgian and Latin future forms as contrasting with the Greek present indicative and the Syriac imperfect; in the Greek tradition, the codices Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus have the matching future form (ποιμάνει).

in the Armenian lectionary of the Jerusalem rite, Ps. 22,1 is prescribed for the feast of Epiphany, and in the Georgian lectionaries, for Christmas Eve. These prescriptions coincide with those of Is. 35.3–8 (or 10) in the two traditions, which is the lection text preceding the list of psalm verses in the Albanian palimpsest. Whether there is any connection between the Old Testament lection and the psalms indicated, remains uncertain though.

Be that as it may – we are left with *asef* as a Caucasian Albanian word meaning ‘shepherd’. Within the East Caucasian stock, this word finds no possible cognate, nor does it have a successor in modern Udi. It is therefore legitimate to try to identify it with the Iranian word we have been discussing above. Of course it would not be advisable to directly connect it to the (Young) Avestan dative form restored as *āfše*; instead we would have to assume a dialectal variant, most probably of the Northwest Iranian type, which might be responsible for the divergent sibilant. Starting from a stem like *\*āfs*, secondarily developed from the oblique cases of the word, the Albanian word would then have undergone a metathesis of the two sibilants and an anaptyxis of a vowel between them – and indeed, anaptyxes and metatheses of this type are observable in other loan words (not only of Iranian provenance), too: cf., e.g., Alb. *hariḱ* ‘tribute, tax, necessity’ vs. Arm. *hark*, Georg. *xarḱ-i* ‘id.’;<sup>25</sup> Alb. *madil* ‘grace, mercy’ vs. Georg. *madl-i* ‘id.’, Alb. *ašarḱeṭ* ‘pupil’ vs. Arm. *ašakert* ‘id.’, and, possibly, Alb. *dag(i)n* ‘penny’ vs. Arm. *dang*, Georg. *dang-i* ‘id.’. It is true that the anaptyctic vowel in these cases is *i*, not *e*, throughout; this, however, cannot be decisive for lack of broader evidence. The necessity to assume anaptyxis remains if we derive *asef* from a pre-form *\*āsf*, with no metathesis but with the dissimilative loss of the first, not the second *f* (of *\*āfsf* < *\*ā-fśf* < *\*ā-pću*-). In any case, Albanian *asef* can be taken to support G. Klingenschmitt’s analysis of Avestan *āfše* and K. Hoffmann’s and X. Tremblay’s assumption of PIr. *\*ću* developing into a sequence of two voiceless sibilants in Proto-Iranian.

<sup>25</sup> Note that a Georgian stem *harḱ*- is also attested, in the Khanmeti version of the Legend of Ss. Cyprianus and Justina in the palimpsest Cod.Vind.georg. 2 (90va, 5 and 98va, 11); cf. Gippert (2007b: 6-20 and 6-28).

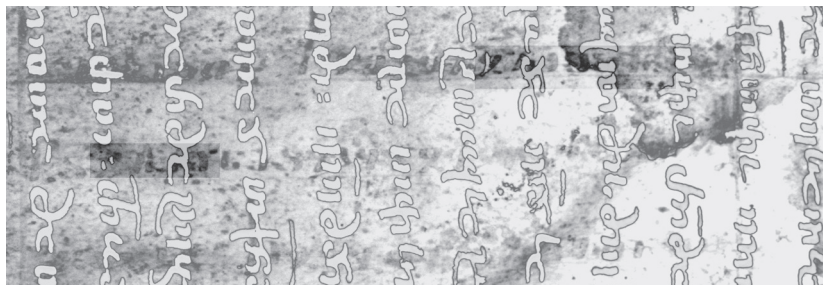


Fig. 1: Sin.georg. N13, 70rb ll. 19–21 (with forms of *asef* highlighted)



Fig. 2: Sin.georg. N13, 74vb ll. 1–6 (with beginning of *\*asef* highlighted)

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