

NORTHERN KHMER /kamay/

Christian BAUER,
Mahidol University

No one has yet succeeded in determining the exact position of Northern Khmer within Khmer dialects, if indeed there is such a dialect, and to date the split when this branch separated from other dialect-clusters.⁵ While the discussion so far has focused on phonology and the lexicon, syntactic data have not been considered.

Khmer varieties in the southern part of the Isan have (i) a form of prohibitive and (ii) a negative form for 'so as [not] to' which is a direct descendent of Middle Khmer; it has not survived in Standard Khmer². Furthermore, intermediate phonological shifts, following a pattern well attested in Mon, suggest that some Khmer dialects, including the Northern, must have possessed, at one stage, glottalized medial nasals, if derived from earlier medio-clusters having an implosive as their second member, such as */-ʔn-, -ʔm-/ < */-nd-, -mɓ-/.

The form in question is /kamay/, or its variants /kəmey/ or /kəmeɣ/, meaning 'do not'. It is also used to introduce a negated clause-complement, as glossed above.

An alternative form for the 'prohibitive' is attested in NKhm. /kɔm/ which can be related to EMKhm. kum, and to Standard /kom/. It occurs also in cliticized forms such as /kom-tae/ 'unless' and /kom-ʔaoy/ 'so as not to'. The MKhm. form /kɔm/ may be a reflex of MKhm. */kum/, reconstructed in analogy to Standard Khmer /nuŋ/ for the 'hypothetical [modality]' which corresponds to NKhm. /nɔŋ/.

I shall argue that /kamay/ is a cliticized Middle Khmer form which can be segmented into MKhm. kum for the negative verb-clitic - and, incidentally, has survived in the form /kmi:ən/ '[not] to exist, [not] to be present' - and pī, possibly a clause-clitic.

To start with the latter claim first, namely that Khmer may have possessed glottalized medial nasals, we have to turn to Mon where the following instances can be noted³:

OM	EMM	SM		affix
(1) lumbū(h)	lam'uh	/bɔh/	'cool, pleasant'	[-m-]
(2) tumbah	tam'ah	/həmah/	'to appear'	[-m-]
(3) dindum	dan'im	/hənəm/	'to encounter'	*[-N-] ⁴
(4) sumbup	samip	/hmɛp/	'joined palms'	*[-m-]
(5) pun'ār	p'ā	---	'conduct'	[-p-], [-N-]
(5a) p'ār	:/pʔa/	---	'to practice CAUS'	[-p-]
(5b) 'ār	'ā	/ʔa/	'to go'	[base]

Shorto interprets the EMM reflexes of OM /-mb-/ ~ /-nd-/ as glottalized nasals /-ṁ-/ ~ /-ṅ-/ respectively, both on the grounds of orthography m' and n' as well as registral distribution in later reflexes (first, or head, register, that is, modal voice). Medio-cluster reduction of nasals in EMM follows the pattern

OM	EMM
-nd-	-ʔn-
-nd-	-l-
-nt-	-t-
-mb-	-ʔm-
-mb-	-m-
-mp-	-p-

In the list given above EMM forms given in (3) and (4) indicate that we find a transitional stage; the OM form (5) might be interpreted as having a glottalized medial nasal /-ʔn-/ but for morphophonemic reasons this is untenable as the derivation from (5a) and ultimately (5b) shows. This excursus is necessary to explain the process of reduction that has affected Northern Khmer.

De Bernon has pointed out that one of the personal pronouns in NKhm.

- (6) /ma:t/ ~ /kma:t/ 'first person, singular [male]'
 (7) /ɲom/ 'first person, singular [female]'

namely (6), is a contraction of Standard /kɲom/ and /ba:t/ to /-m-/. Having determined that such a process is attested at all, we can trace the development of NKhm. /kamay/. The fully stressed vowel, the diphthong /ay/, is a more innovative form of what the Thomases transcribe as /ɛy/, or its variant /ey/, which is close to Henderson-Jacob's /vy/ for Central Khmer, corresponding to orthographic ī in certain environments.⁵

The vowel of the first syllable which receives secondary stress, /a/, is the result of strengthening of a former weak (unstressed) syllable [kəmay], which corresponds to an earlier strong form */kum/ or */kum/ as suggested by its orthography kum.

Contemporaneous forms spelt kaṃ, attested since Old Khmer, may either indicate weak forms or dialect forms.

Since Pre-Angkor Old Khmer such forms are attested in combination with pi (in MKhm. also spelt with a long vowel ī or as a diphthong iy) or ti; in turn, pi &c. is also attested in other negated contexts such as vvaṃ tap pi 'ought not to', or affirmative contexts such as tappi, glossed by Jenner as "to be fitting or proper to (do)", in analogy to forms like tapra "to be due, proper", analyzed as consisting of the verb tap and the clitics (my term) pi and ra respectively (where ra, coincidentally, is likely to have a Mon connection). Jenner recognizes two contexts in PA Old Khmer in which pi occurs, pre-nominal ("to, towards, into, in") and pre-verbal ("[...] as if, for the purpose of")⁶.

This analysis of pi &c. is also supported by its use in affirmative contexts, attested since EMKhm., such as tempi, Standard Khmer /daəm-bvɨ/ 'in order to, so as to'.

The contraction of /-mb-/ < */-mp-/ to */-ʔm-/ and /-m-/ is actually a case of cliticization well attested in junctural orthographies where the consonant-initial is spelt as a subscript to the preceding final (without exception in IMA whenever the host is kuṃ &c. or tem); in some cases, the final /-m/ is reduplicated, both in contexts with /a/ and /u/ vowels, which may either be interpreted as a shortening of that vowel or as a junctural feature. The reduplication of the final /-m/ cannot be separated from the use of reduplication of the initial /β-/ which also occurs in IMA; we have forms such as kaṃppi ~ kumppi and kaṃmppi ~ kummppi (but never followed by an orthographically long vowel ī or the orthographic diphthong iy). This raises the question whether orthographic -ṃm- has the same phonological status as orthographic -pp- (say, shortening in one case, juncture/cliticization in the other)⁷.

What is interesting, however, is the fact that by EMKhm. medial glottalized nasals, if occurring at all in the spoken language, were not encoded orthographically, unlike MM.

Another unsolved problem is the orthographic variation of ī and iy (the latter still prevalent in Khmer MSS used in Thailand in iy# contexts).

NOTES

1. For a discussion on the sociolinguistic status of Northern Khmer (NKhm.) see David Thomas's lecture presented to the 21st Sino-Tibetan Conference, held in 1988, at Lund which is referred to in his conference report published in this issue of MKS; further references will be found there. Other abbreviations used here are EMKhm. for 'Epigraphic Middle Khmer', MKhm. for 'Middle Khmer', IMA for 'Inscriptions Modernes d'Angkor', PA for Pre-Angkor Khmer; OM, MM, LM and SM refer to Old, Middle, Literary and Spoken Mon respectively.

2. By Standard Khmer I refer to Received Pronunciation of Phnom Penh Khmer; see also P.N. Jenner, Observations on the Surin dialect of Khmer, in: Nguyen Dang Liem, ed., South East Asian Linguistic Studies, Canberra, ANU, Pacific Linguistics C-31. 1974, 61-73, I disagree with Saveros Pou - provided my reading is correct - that "[...] kaṃmpī ... tal mtoṅ [sc. corresponds to an] expression en khmer moderne "ne pas ... jusqu'à une fois" (BEFEO 59 (1972), p. 223, note 4.) The form kaṃmpī or any other of the variants listed below has not survived in Standard Khmer; it is not mentioned in the Khmer-Khmer dictionary of the Buddhist Institute nor in Headley's Cambodian-English Dictionary, Washington, DC, Catholic University of America Press, 1977, which is based on current usage. By contrast, Guesdon in his Dictionnaire cambodgien-français, Paris, Plon, 1930 lists kumpī. Given the number of archaisms occurring in Guesdon I suspect that much of the material may have been drawn from manuscripts.

3. This is a selection only; more cases of preglottalized nasals are attested in EMM. For an outline of OM and MM consonantism, based on internal reconstruction, see Bauer 1982.1-35, 72-90, passim.

4. See Shorto 1971; he does not recognize a nasal infix for the 'frequentative' in this case; the SM reflex, although phonologically correct, may actually have a different etymon for which Shorto provides a Khmer cognate.

5. Restricted to 'first register', that is, following stops (< *voiceless), implosives, and spirants.

6. Saveros Pou (Lewitz) interprets EMKhm. peh and pi &c. to correspond to OKhm. pi: "[...] peh forme transitoire du vx. khm. pi qui indique une succession d'actions en rapport de simple coordination ou de conséquence: "et, après, pour, en vue de", Le h final est un pur artifice orthographique servant parfois de virāma [...]. Ce qui importe davantage de retenir c'est le dédoublement de vx. khm. pi en : - pi "et, ensuite, pour..." - peh qui projette une action à valeur hypothétique dans le futur et qui doit donner notre moderne poe [baə] "si, plus tard,

au cas où, lorsque 'éventuellement'." (in BEFEO 59 (1972), p. 110, note 3, and previously in BEFEO 57 (1970), p. 102.

7. Systematic comparisons of spellings in IMA reveal that that we find variation of the following kind in the same epigraph: (i) kumpī ~ kumpi, (ii) kāmpī ~ kūmpiy ~ kāmpiy, (iv) kāmpī ~ kāmpiy, and (v) kāmpī ~ kūmpī; the latter is the only instance where we find variation in the same inscription between a strong vowel u and a weak vowel a (IMA 16).

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