

The Vedic Particle *cid*: a revised interpretation

The enclitic particle *cid* is frequent in the Rigveda, occurring 691 times. The meanings traditionally assigned to it are disparate and at first sight contradictory: 1. emphatic, as in *ā dṛḥám cid árujo gávyam ūrvám* (3.32.16) 'You broke through even the solid cow stall'; 2. generalizing, as in *kṛtám cid énaḥ prá mumugdhy asmát* (1.24.9) 'Release from us whatever sin (has been) committed' (so Grassmann, Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda s.v. *cid*, Delbrück, Altindische Syntax 478, (Wackernagel-)Debrunner, Altindische Grammatik III 559, Macdonell, Vedic Grammar for Students 230-231, Renou, Grammaire de la langue védique sect. 437, Mayrhofer, Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen I, 543, with slight variation). Since these scholars list the emphatic (or counter to expectation) meaning first, it appears that they consider this meaning to be primary, although they do not account for the development of the generalizing (or indefinite) meaning. Gonda, on the other hand, emphasizes the pronominal origin of *cid*, asserting that its original meaning was indefinite ("Notes on the Indo-European **kʷi-* and **kʷo-* Pronouns", 1955: 281-285). An investigation of every occurrence of this particle in the Rigveda, together with due consideration of its etymology, and of the uses of its cognates in other Indo-European languages, leads to a revised interpretation of its function and its meaning, since it appears to be a discourse marker signalling presupposed factivity. The emphatic and generalizing meanings are thus context-specific reinterpretations of the discourse marker.