Семь писем Ф. Б. Я. Кёйпера Т. Я. Елизаренковой
Seven letters from F. B. J. Kuiper to T. Ya. Elizarenkova

Публикация Л. И. Куликова

Публикуемые в этом томе письма выдающегося голландского индолога и индоевропеиста Франциска Бернарда Якоба Кёйпера (1907—2003) к Татьяне Яковлевне Елизаренковой были написаны в период с 1983 по 1993 год. Именно в это время начал выходить полный русский перевод Ригведы (первый том — в 1989 г.), а Татьяна Яковлевна смогла — впервые после нескольких «невыездных» десятилетий — совершить две поездки (в 1988 и 1990 гг.) в Западную Европу, в Голландию. Т.Я. прожила около месяца в Лейдене (в гостях у А. Лубоцкого, одного из крупнейших индоевропеистов нашего времени), где она, впервые за много лет (см. письмо от 8 марта 1989 г.), смогла встретиться с Ф. Б. Я. Кёйпером.

Письма снабжены краткими комментариями (в основном библиографического характера) и публикуются с сохранением, насколько это возможно, исходного формата. Все письма отпечатаны на машинке; рукописные фрагменты (отдельные слова, вписанные от руки, подписи и несколько постраничных сносок, сделанных самим Кёйпером) выделены курсивом.

Л. К.

* * * *

Febr. 10, 1983

Dear Mrs Elizarenkova,

Thank you very much for sending me a copy of your Vedic grammar. It is a very original and thought-provoking work, which will certainly win its own place by the side of Renou's and the older grammars. I have so far only read parts of it but I found your approach very stimulating. My compliments and congratulations!

There is one point of detail which struck me in passing. You follow Renou's practice, who in his Vedic grammar, p. 187, refers to the 'genre inanimé'. The contrast between Renou and Wackernagel-Debrunner vol. III (who do not even mention gender as one of the characteristics of noun inflection!) is perhaps less essential than it might seem.

I doubt if Renou was quite aware of the implications of the distinction animé versus inanimé, which he had adopted from Meillet. The latter has given a justification of this distinction in 'La catégorie du genre et les conceptions indo-européennes' (Linguistique historique et linguistique générale, first edition [1921], pp. 211—229). Meillet’s article is, as far as I can see (see p. 217) mainly based on
Josselin de Jong’s dissertation De waardeeringsonderscheiding van “levend” en “levenloos” in het Indogermaansch vergeleken met hetzelfde verschijnsel in enkele Algonkin-talen (1913). I am not sure about the origin and development of this notion in PIE linguistics but it would be interesting to compare the earlier and later editions of Meillet’s Introduction in this respect.

It is of course quite possible that in PIE the system of nominal classification was connected with animistic ideas but assuming this is one thing, trying to demonstrate that this was still the case in historical times (e.g. in Homeric Greek), as Meillet did, another. The distinction animé : inanimé is based upon a theory about Proto-Indo-European which, plausible as it may be, does not seem to lend itself to a verification. The basic question (which Renou, quite understandably, ignores) is: was there anything on the notional level that corresponded in the Vedic period to the formal distinction neuter vs masculine / feminine (and also, we may ask, between masculine and feminine separately). If this cannot be proved, would it not be better to ignore the notions animé and inanimé when dealing with an Indo-European language attested in historical times? In any case you have clearly stated some of the implications which Renou took for granted.

On p. 195 you follow, more or less, Grassmann (and Renou) in translating VII.86.2. antár váruṇe ‘near Varuṇa’. Grassmann proposed for this passage and for antár asmin in “in seiner Gemeinschaft”. I think that antár means everywhere ‘within’ (see Varuṇa and Vidūṣaka, p. 16).

I hope your book will get the recognition and appreciation it so much deserves. I wish you much success.

With warm regards

Yours sincerely

F. B. J. Kuiper

Примечания


* What Renou, Gramm.Scr. §208 says is certainly incorrect!
Семь писем Ф. Б. Я. Кёйпера Т. Я. Елизаренковой


4 В вышедшем позднее втором томе перевода Ригведы (Ригведа. Мандалы V—VIII. М., 1995, с. 257) Т.Я. именно так и переводит это выражение: «Когда же я окажусь внутри Варуны?»


* * * *

March 27, 1986

Dear Mrs Elizarenkova,

Yesterday I have received five copies of the Russian publication Trudy po vedjaskoj mifologii.1 It was a great surprise as I had completely forgotten that the book might still turn up. But the greatest surprise was the Introduction in which you give on some 20 pages a survey of almost all I have done in the past fifty years.

I would like to thank you for the immense work you have done in reading all these articles and giving such an excellent account of them. It must have been a tremendous work, beside your own work which is your daily task.

It was a very curious sensation for me reading it, a bit like reading one’s own obituary. Not that I felt sad but it once more brought home to me the fact that I have reached a point at which most of what one has planned to do now belongs to the past and the prospect is now a task of a different kind, ‘beyond the grave’. When one is a slow worker, as I am, the few things published are a small part of what one at one time hoped to do. One task, on which I started 45 years ago, and which I thought I might complete within a year, after the publication of Varuṇa and Vidūṣaka, has now kept me busy in daily work for the past five or six years.
It is the publication of a Krishnaite drama, the unique manuscript of which is in the Leiden University Library. The proof-reading has now proceeded so far that I can be sure that it will appear, whatever might happen to me in the meantime.

I was particularly interested in what you added as a personal remark to your exposé of ‘Mythology and Conception’. The difficult position in which I found myself when writing that article was that I knew from personal experience that prenatal consciousness does exist and that we carry with us the reminiscence of our own conception (starting from the moment preceding it) but that I could not use it as a scholarly argument whereas psychologists at that time still maintained that human consciousness develops after the birth and that prenatal consciousness is a *contradictio in terminis*. The irony of history is that some ten years later developmental psychologists who held university posts had no difficulty in believing that people in a hypnotic state can remember their previous lives... I felt at that time I had to be careful in what I said (Eliade wrote to me that he was not so far convinced...) but this does not express what I actually thought — although it was clearly taking the first steps on virgin soil. Nowadays there are a lot of papers on rituals of the regressus in uterum and R. Stein at Paris is preparing a book on that subject. (I myself gave a paper on it at a congress of psychiaters in Belgium in 1980, in which I was much freer in what I could say).

It was a surprise to me to see that my work has had some response in the Soviet Union. I always had the impression that, although I am cited from time to time, my work was somehow too little orthodox to be acceptable — especially in Germany. Not that I resented that fact: maybe I am too much a lonely wolf. Anyway, your final lines on p. 25 warn me that my subjective impression is wrong.

Excuse this egocentric letter but the content of your Introduction led to this personal outburst. I hope your own work is steadily going on. With my best wishes for your work and my cordial greetings to your husband and yourself, I am yours sincerely

F. B. J. Kuiper

*Примечания*

3 Противоречие в терминах, внутреннее противоречие.
4 Или *regressus ad uterum* — возвращение к материнской утробе.
Dear friends,

Many thanks for your telegram. I was deeply moved when I received it in the afternoon. For the past fifteen years or so we had avoided celebrating our birthdays (my wife’s is one day before mine) by staying at our old farmhouse in the Dordogne, but this time I felt I owed it to my children (three sons and a daughter, all married) and my grand-children to be in Holland and celebrate the day with them.

Early in the morning of that day I received the first copies of my latest and last book, a text-critical edition of a late Sanskrit text, which has occupied me for the last seven years. It is easily the most time-consuming kind of work that we can do, but it is suited to old age. It involves living for years in solitude with a single text, continually reading and re-reading it. I felt it was most appropriate that it should arrive on my birthday: a task fulfilled and a period closed. Although it is of no interest to you both, I shall send you a copy of it.

Jan de Jong wrote me that he will be visiting Russia after the Sanskrit conference in Leiden, in the last week of August. He will no doubt see you.

I hope you are both doing well. In October I met Ogibenin and his charming French wife, when we had our last meal with Witzel, who was to depart the next morning for the USA, where he got the chair at Harvard. We talked about you both. He is lucky because he need not bother about University life, as it is nowadays. He can entirely concentrate on his research. I promised him that we should come to see them in their Paris house on our way to the Dordogne but, although I haven’t yet any problem with driving a car, we decided on second thought to avoid the traffic of Paris.

With best wishes and warm regards

Yours F. B. J. Kuiper

July 20, 1987

* * * *

Dear friends,

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July 20, 1987

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July 20, 1987

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July 20, 1987

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Yours F. B. J. Kuiper

July 20, 1987

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* См. прим. 2 к предыдущему письму.

2 Речь идет о переезде индолога Михаэля Витцеля, который с 1981 по 1986 год был профессором санскрита и санскритской филологии в Лейдене, в Гарвардский университет, где он по сей день является профессором санскрита.
March 11, 1988

Mrs T. Ja. Elizarenkova
ul. Sameda Vurguna d. 5, kv. 40
Moscow
USSR 125315

Dear Colleague and friend,

Many thanks for kindly sending me a copy of your Vedîjskij Jazyk \(^1\) and for your letter. I had already compared certain passages in it with your excellent Handbook and I saw that you have had, of course, to skip points of minor interest for the general reader, such as the voc. dual deva. As far as I can judge of it without having used it for a longer period, it seems to me an excellent and reliable introduction into the Vedic language. I can only guess how much time must have gone into writing it, even though you had the material already at hand.

It was a pity we could not meet at the Congress in August, but I know what prevented you from coming.\(^2\) I am now busy completing some text-critical notes on which I have been working some 30 years ago and which I would like to have published, just to save others the time and labour of doing the same thing anew. But I can feel daily my strength is diminishing (which is only natural). It is not my idea to go on writing articles till the end of my life. After all, our ‘raison d’être’ is not measured by the number of articles and books we have written in the short span of our lives. I do hope, however, that I will live to see the first part of your RV. translation.

With warm regards to you and your husband,

Yours sincerely

F. B. J. Kuiper

P.S. Your article is the best survey of Contests in RV.\(^3\) I know. I read it with much profit.


\(^2\) Имеется в виду VII Всемирный конгресс санскритологов (VIIth World Sanskrit Conference), проходивший с 23 по 29 августа 1987 г. в Лейдене, на который Т.Я. приехать, разумеется, не могла: в то время она еще была «невыездной».

March 8, 1989

Dear Colleague,

Just at the time that I began wondering whether you felt offended by my comments (which, anyway, were only meant to furnish those references and ideas from the other side of Iron Curtain that could not yet be accessible to you) — just at that moment Sacha Lubotsky arrived with the samovar! I do not know how to thank you. It is such a precious gift, particularly as it is coming from you. We have not yet used it. I must first study the booklet with indications. I thought I remembered all about samovars but now, after 55 years (it was in the summer of 1934 that I saw for the last time a samovar in action), being confronted with it, I am aware of some gaps in my knowledge. If necessary, we can ring up Sacha or his wife.

I hope you managed to get the books without troubles through the customs. I would particularly like to draw your attention to Oldenberg’s *Vedaforschung*. In some respects the book is, of course, somewhat outdated. The *Vedische Studien* by Pischel and Geldner need no longer be combated. The most important part, however, is his defense of his own position, also and particularly in regard of Sāyaṇa. It was taken over and repeated by Paul Thieme in the Preface to his *Untersuchungen zur Wortkunde und Auslegung des Rigveda* (1949), which I still consider one of Thieme’s most accomplished works (his later etymologies were less lucky). Please, let me know which books you absolutely need for your work. The number of monographs on single words, particles, etc. is steadily growing, and I think, it is simply impossible to take all that into consideration when translating the Rigveda but as far as other works are concerned I could try to do what can be done. Even though the contacts may become easier, it will be some time before you have caught up with what has happened here, and we vice versa. Still, it is amazing how much you (and I mean also the other Russian colleagues) have managed to stay informed.

There is, finally, one favour I would like to ask you. Could you induce Mrs Alixanova to let me know the exact title etc. of the Sbornik in which her article on ‘The genre nātikā’ has appeared? I felt that the three articles which she gave me through your intermediary were so important because of their critical historical approach that they should not be overlooked by Western colleagues. I have, therefore, given brief abstracts of all three, in spite of the fact that I have no references for the nātikā-article. As a rule, such off-prints are not listed in the ‘Publication Received’ of the Indo-Iranian Journal. I still hope to receive the exact references in time, before the Publ. Rec. are sent to the printer. (I hope my letter to her did not get irretrievably lost).
It was such a pleasure to see you again after so many years. With my best wishes for your and your husband’s work
and with our warm greetings.
Yours sincerely
F. B. J. Kuiper

Post-script, March 9.
I had already closed the envelope when in the early morning a letter of Mrs Alixanova arrived, with express delivery. But this express letter had been written on Febr. 22. World-wide the postal services seem to slow down. In the United States the situation seems to be particularly bad, but also for a post-card, which I sent from France to England it took a month to arrive at its destination. This was no doubt exceptional but two letters which I recently got from a friend in England had been dispatched as ‘very urgent’, although there was nothing urgent in them. Anyway, I now have the exact references I needed!

K.

Примечания

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May 5, 1990

Dear Mrs Elizarenkova,

It was a great surprise to receive the first of the three volumes of your RV-translation. I had not realized that the work had proceeded so far. First of all, let me congratulate you on this first step in completing the immense task which you have undertaken. By now your translation must already have proceeded much farther and I feel certain you will be given the time to bring this work to an end. It reminds me of Pope’s preface to his translation of the Tiruvācakam, which he finished on his 80th birthday. He there writes: “Some years ago, when this publication was hardly projected, one evening, after prayers, the writer was walking with the late Master of Balliol College in the quadrangle. The conversation turned upon Tamil legends,
poetry and philosophy. At length, during a pause in the conversation, the Master said in a quick way peculiar to him, ‘You must print it.’ To this the natural answer was, ‘Master! I have no patent of immortality, and the work would take very long.’ I can see him now, as he turned round, — while the moonlight fell upon his white hair and kindly face, — and laid his hand upon my shoulder, saying, ‘To have a great work in progress is the way to live long. You will live till you finish it.’”

I am not a Benjamin Jowett,¹ “one of the kindest, and best, and most forbearing of friends”, but I wish you the strength to finish this work.

We follow from day to day and concern what is happening in Russia, which now experiences one of the most serious crises in its history. Much of what has happened already is probably irreversible but the change is so drastic that it is bound to cause immense problems. I for one will not live to see that Russia has become in all respects a normal part of Europe but that time will doubtless come. For the present moment I hope you have not too many material problems. If there is anything I could do for you, please let me now.

With our very best wishes¹⁷ to you both

Yours sincerely

F. B. J. Kuiper

Примечания

² The Tiruvāçagam, or ‘sacred utterances’ of the Tamil poet, saint, and sage Māṇikkacār. The Tamil text of the fifty-one poems with English transl., introd., and notes to which is prefixed a summary of the life and legends of the sage, with appendices illustrating the great South-Indian system of philosophy and religion called the Çaiva Siddhāntam with Tamil lexicon and concordance by G.U. Pope. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900, p. xiv.
³ Бенджамин Джоуитт (1817 — 1893) — выдающийся английский ученый, специалист в области классической филологии и теологии, глава Бейлиол-Колледжа Оксфордского университета с 1870 г. вплоть до своей кончины.

* * * * *

December 14, 1993

Dear Mrs Elizarenkova,

It is some time already since Saša Lubotsky brought me your book on Yazik i Stil.¹ It is, as far as I can see, the first complete study on this subject, after Renou

¹¹And many thanks!

Dear Mrs Elizarenkova,

It is some time already since Saša Lubotsky brought me your book on Yazik i Stil.¹ It is, as far as I can see, the first complete study on this subject, after Renou
brief characterizations of the various types of style. I congratulate you on completing this work, which inaugurates an entirely new approach. The English version, which is to appear in Chicago, will assure the spread of your findings in this part of the world.

At the time I received your book I needed all my energy for completing a contribution (on the Vedic Gandharva) that is to appear in a Festschrift. It takes such an effort nowadays to write something that I must clearly stop with it, the more so because my eye-sight has considerably deteriorated this year, after three operations.

This is the main cause why I am so late in writing to you and thanking you for the present. I had hoped to read at least part of it before reacting but reading tries the eye so much that I have had to give up the idea.

After writing this I had yesterday my first visit to a new ophthalmologist, this time in Leiden (I had to switch over, because the operations had taken place in another part of Holland). She is a lady with a great reputation in this country. The eye that has been a problem ever since last summer, turns out to be much worse that I thought and that had been told to me. This obviously means that the article of the Gandharva is the last thing for me to have written. I have no reason to complaint, having been reasonably healthy up to this year and having been able to continue working until the age of 86. We shall see if life has still something more in store for me.

Excuse my writing more about myself than about your book and yourself. For the next time life in Russia will not become more comfortable. The elections do not indicate that a balance will be found soon. On the other hand it strikes me that the comments of our newspapers still seem to assume that ‘democracy’ is an export article and that the world as a whole will not be ‘normal’ until the West-European and American type of parliamentary democracy has been established everywhere. Its weak spots were already pointed out with perfect clearness in the 3th. cent. B.C. in Athens, and we are experiencing its vulnerability every day. But a better system would require a different type of men, I am afraid.

Anyway, my wife and I wish you a good Christmas and, if the circumstances permit it, a good and happy new year.

With warm regards
yours sincerely
Kuiper

Примечания
1 Т. Я. Елизаренкова. Язык и стиль ведийских риши. М.: Наука, Восточная литература, 1993.
York Press, 1995) вышло не в Чикаго, а в Олбани, но готовилось профессором Чикагского университета Венди Донигер.

Dear Mrs. Elizarenkova,

Thank you very much for sending me a copy of your Vedic grammar. It is a very original and thought-provoking work, which will certainly win its own place by the side of Renou and the older grammars. I have so far only read parts of it but I found your approach very stimulating. My compliments and congratulations!

There is one point of detail which struck me in passing. You follow Renou's practice, who in his Vedic grammar, p. 157, refers to the 'core inanimate'. The contrast between Renou and Wackernagel-Brünner vol. III (who do not even mention gender as one of the characteristics of noun inflections) is

I doubt if Renou was quite aware of the implications of the distinction anāmī versus ināmī, which he had adopted from Mellet. The letter has given a justification of this distinction in "La catégorie du core et les conceptions indo-européennes" (Linguistique historique et linguistique générale, first edition [1921], pp. 211-229). Mellet's argument, as far as I can see (see p. 217) mainly based on de Josselin de Jong's dissertation in wachtersingenselfschrijdende van "leven" en "levonlase" in het kelderhaan is vermelden met helaas de vereniging en eekels (1917). I am not sure about the origin and development of this notion in PIE linguistics but it would be interesting to compare the earlier and later editions of Mellet's Introduction in this respect.

It is of course quite possible that in PIE the system of nominal classification was connected with semantic ideas but assuming this is one thing, trying to demonstrate that this was still the case in historical times... in Homeric Greek, as Mellet did, another. The distinction anāmī versus ināmī is based on a theory about Proto-Indo-European which, plausible as it may be, does not seem to lend itself to a verification. The basic question (which Renou, quite understandably, ignores) is: was there anything at the phonological level that corresponded in the Vedic period to the formal distinction neuter vs. masculine/feminine (and also, we may ask, between masculine and feminine separately). If this cannot be proved, would it not be better to ignore the notions anāmī and ināmī when dealing with an Indo-European language attested in historical times? In any case you have clearly stated some of the implications which Renou took for granted.

(And Renou)

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I hope your book will get the recognition and appreciation it so much deserves. I wish you much success.

With warm regards

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Pisьмо Ф. Б. Йейкера Т. Я. Елизаренковой от 10 февраля 1983 г.