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Czech (i)hned, Slovak (i)hned¹ 'at once'

The adverbs Czech *hned* and Slovak *hned*¹ exist in many variants. In Czech one finds also *hnedka*, *hnedky*, *hnedle*, *ihned* with the identical meaning 'at once, quickly, right away', in Slovak *hnedky*, *ihned*¹, with the same meaning. The basic common form is *hned*(¹).

Most authoritative etymologists derive these adverbs from the Common Slavic word which is represented in Old Church Slavonic as *inogda* ~ *inъgda* 'once; some time' (SJS 14, 771). The form *ihned* is considered the oldest among those known today in Czech and Slovak. For the underlying Common Slavic form Machek (213) hesitates among (1) **ino-goda* or (2) **inъ-goda* or (3) **inogo-goda* or (4) (loc.sg) **ině-godě* (all hyphens inserted by me). He has to assume a replacement of one or both *o* by *ъ* "vlivem rychlé, úsečné výslovnosti" (which would result in (1, 2, 3) in *inъgъda* - in (3) by means of a haplology), in (4) in *iněgъdě*, with then, as he assumes, *iněgedě* changing subsequently into *inhed* which is actually and copiously attested in Old Czech alongside with the less frequent *ihned*. Machek gives more variants and more elaboration but basically he develops the idea of Gebauer (585), who also spoke of *inъgda* ~ *inogda* and of "oslabenina" of *o* into a *jer*. From the form *inъgъda* in cases (1, 2, 3) Machek derives the same form *ihned* without explaining why the alleged strong *ъ* was lost while the weak one became *e*, an unusual development even under conditions of "úsečná výslovnost." Having arrived, thus, at a form *inhed* he assumes then a loss of *i-* (rather unusual in Old Czech and Old Slovak, especially in the root *in-*) and the metathesis *nh-* > *hn-*. Entirely parallel Slovak data are found in Stanislav (578). Palatalization of *-d* in Slovak is not explicitly explained.

Konečný (224) prefers to assume only one Common Slavic form **jъnъgъd-* from which he derives as the oldest Czech form *inhed*, like Gebauer and Machek. Konečný does not posit the word final vowel. To derive the form *inhed* he should have assumed *-ъ* (or *-ь*?) because otherwise one would expect the form **inegd* which seems not to have existed (to judge by Gebauer's data, ib.).

Trubačev (8, 231f) has no doubts that the Czech and Slovak words belonged to the pronominal adverbs of the type **jъnogъda* ~ **jъnъgъdъ*

even though the former would have yielded *(j)-*nohda* and the latter *inhed* but not *ihned* so that one has to assume a metathesis for which reasons are not given. Trubačev concludes that all the Slavic adverbs he cites are based on the basic morpheme *jъn(ъ) followed by the particles -gъ and -da (which is more likely than the reduction of the original *goda* based on the substantive *godъ*).

There is no need to continue this survey of opinions by etymologists. One will find no new ideas there. (One more will be discussed at the end of this article.). The views represented by Gebauer/Machek and their successors differ only in detail; essentially they follow the same trend. They want to establish connections by all means between *inъgъd-* in some variants of this Common Slavic word while disregarding those difficulties which this approach entails, such as arbitrarily assumed metatheses, losses of vowels etc. Besides those difficulties already shown in the brief survey above, the following are to be pointed to:

1. At least for Czech the lack of prothetic j- before i- in *ihned* is unmotivated. As is known, in Czech initial i- as a rule is an earmark of loanwords, the sole exception being the conjunction and particle i and -*ihned*! Why should this be the case in the latter? Etymologists play this fact down. Kopečný (224) refers to "spojkově chápané i-," but does not explain why it was so perceived; he only states this in order to explain the switch from *ihned* to *hned*. Even if one would think that the word came to Czech from Slovak, an unlikely assumption anyway (see below), it should have been adapted to the Czech pattern.

2. In order to explain the form *inhed* as the oldest one on which all the other forms would have been based while rejecting the connection with *godъ*, a substantive, as Trubačev (cited above) does, one has to accept that, in his terminology, "the enclitic particle" *da* in this case appeared in the form **dъ*. This is, however, an *ad hoc* form posited specifically for this case. The particle in question typically appears as *da*, *dy*, *de*, *dě*, rarely *du*, but not **dъ* (cf. Kopečný 1, 308-310); it is to be kept apart from that *dъ* which is used in the prepositional derivation, as in Old Church Slavonic *nadъ*, *podъ*, *prědъ*, Macedonian and Bulgarian *zad* (cf. Kopečný 1, 127, 197 a.o.). Forms with final -*d* like Serbo-Croatian *kad* 'when', Slovene *kod* 'where to', etc. result from apocope and not from the loss of a *jer*. Most likely this apocope took place after the loss of *yers*.

3. There is no reason to believe that a strong *jer* could at any time have been the result of the reduction of *o*. In the Neogrammarian tradition the *jer*s were called "reduced vowels." But this is a misleading name. Only weak *jer*s became reduced and only in a later development (cf. Shevelov 435f).

These three circumstances of phonetic character as well as those previously mentioned above make the derivation of (*i*)*hned* from *inȝəd(a)* very uncertain.

A semantic difficulty may be added. Slavic **jъnъ* ~ *inъ* is known with two original meanings: 'one' and 'other'. A semantic transition from 'other' to 'quickly, at once' is hardly thinkable at all. But is it much safer with the meaning 'one'? Of all the etymologists of recent date who seriously dealt with (*i*)*hned* only Machek has tried to build a semantic bridge from the pronoun in question to the adverb. He operated with the meaning 'one'. He posited the original meaning of *ihned* as "jednoho téhož času, tj., v jednom čase právě s tím, kdy bylo slovo vysloveno" (213). The connection between the meaning of simultaneity with the act of speech and that of rapidity of reaction, suddenness, "unforeseenness" is not entirely impossible but is rather tenuous. In addition, there are chronological difficulties involved. Our Czech data begin in the fourteenth century; the Slovak data are certainly not older. By that time the meaning 'one' was entirely dead, except perhaps, for a few relics in isolated compound words and the like, of the type of Slovak *inochod* 'pacer' (possibly, however, a modern time loan from Russian), and even these are not in Czech. There hardly is any evidence of the meaning 'one' in Serbo-Croatian (Rječnik 827ff). Even in Old Eastern Slavic (Kiev) among those two or three examples of *inъ* 'one' (Sreznevskij I, 1110; Trubačev 8, 233) are some which are not certain. E. g., in SPat in "*inъ* pastoux ... xožaaše" (60) the underlined word easily can have meant 'a certain' and not 'one'.

In all likelihood *inъ* 'one' was dead in Slavic at latest in the tenth century. To be actively used in Czech, as the assumptions go, we have to place the phenomenon of *ihned* in the period of transition from Common Slavic to Czech. Can we accept such an age for any form of *ihned*, even if, for a moment, we concur with Schuster-Sewc (297) in considering the word as Common West Slavic (i.e. Czech, Slovak, Sorbian, Polish and Kashubian. For a discussion of this problem see below). The very wealth of phonetic and morphological variants in Old Czech and Old Slovak rather

points to a relative innovation, not a well-established and generally accepted part of Czech vocabulary of the fourteenth century.

In summary:

1. The belief that *inhd* was the oldest form of the word under scrutiny cannot be taken for granted;
2. The meaning 'one' of the root of that word is doubtful;
3. The etymological derivation of *(i)hned* from *inǣgǣd(a)* in spite of its broad acceptance cannot be proved to be correct.

In fact one should put in doubt the very idea of a pronominal root in the word meaning 'quickly, without delay, unexpectedly, at once' (although cf. Russian *vdrug*). It possibly would be more plausible to look for a nominal or verbal root.

This essentially negative conclusion emerges from the brief sketch above. Its purpose is to encourage etymologists in the Slavic field to seek another, a positive solution of the problem. To build a new house one must first demolish obsolete buildings which encumber the plot. The workers who operate bulldozers and those who erect new walls do not have to be one and the same and usually are not. In this article the author identifies himself primarily with the first team.

Yet it is difficult to resist the temptation to proceed from demolition to construction. Even if one is aware that the new building will have no fewer and perhaps even more shortcomings than the older one had. There are some benefits in such a search even if it fails. What follows is just a supplement and it is presented with the intention of being rejected.

In a search of a non-pronominal etymology of *hned* let us putatively explore the possibility of its connection, if any, with the verb (Common Slavic) *gъn-ati*, the root of which also appears in the form *žen(q)*, 1 sg and *gon(ъ)*, substantive. Purely phonetically, there are no amendments to be done, *gъn-* can be taken as it is. Semantically, the development from 'to drive, to chase, to hunt' to the meaning of a quick, sudden, unexpected action is simple and common. It easily can acquire affective character, and this is clearly its earmark in Old Czech as witnessed by numerous variants of the word which deviate from the form *hn(ed)*.

In fact, the petrified case forms with the root in question appear in Slavic with the meaning of a quick, more or less unexpected action, e.g., Czech *honem*, Polish *gonem* 'in a hurry' (SW 1, 871) and *honem* (from Czech) (SW 2, 52), Belorussian *hónki* 'quick' (*Thum.* 2, 69), Ukrainian *hónom* 'quickly' (Hrinčenko 1, 344 and Bilodid 2, 92), cf. also *hinkýj* (Bilodid 2, 71), Russian dialectal *gónom* (Dal' 1, 925), *gónko* 'fast' (SRNG 7, 7), *gónom* 'incessantly' (ib., 15). Apparently such adverbs do not appear in South Slavic standard languages.

Yet an etymology based on the root *gъn-* although appealing semantically, for the time being cannot be accepted because of problems of word derivation. They are two. The less decisive is the form of the root. In all attested derived forms, be they adverbial, adjectival or substantival, the root has the form *gon-* and not *gъn-* as is the case with the Czech and Slovak forms *od hněd*('). True, the *gon-* and *gъn-* forms had a complex interplay in this verb; but all generalizations of the two root forms occurred in verbs and did not expand to nouns. Such an expansion cannot be ruled out, theoretically, in Old Czech but to my knowledge it cannot be demonstrated in any attested language, either old or modern, and therefore would remain but a theoretical construct.

An even more serious objection to the alluded etymology of *hněd* is posed by the second component of that adverb in Czech and Slovak: *-ed*(') be it originally *-ed*('), *jer + d + jer* or even *-ędъ*. A suffix of the latter form did exist in some Slavic languages of older time, e.g. Old Russian *peštredъ* 'motley fabric' (Sreznevskij 2, 1978), Russian dialectal *gněd* 'rot' (Vondrák 654; SRNG 6, 244), Russian *rúxljad* 'lumber, junk, Czech *havěd* ('*havět*'), Slovak *hávěd* 'small fry' but neither its collective meaning nor the derivational basis (usually an adjective or, if verbal, an *-l*-participle) fits into the pattern of *hn-ed*(') unless one accepts that *hn-ed*(') < **gъn-ędъ* originally was a collective substantive 'what is driven, driven objects' transferred to an adverb, a development which was not completely impossible but, to say the least, hardly paralleled by similar developments in other adverbs.

If a suffixal derivation is to be excluded, another thinkable way of development could have been a blending, a form like, say, **gъn-ъmъ* blended with adverbs of the type represented in Modern Slavic by Czech *vpřed*, Slovak *napred*, Polish *naprzód*, Belorussian *upérad*, Ukrainian *vperéd*, Russian *vperéd*, Bulgarian *nápřed*, Macedonian *napred*, Serbo-Croatian *nápřed*. Such a blending could have taken place if one assumes

that what we know as *hned*(') was typically used, say, in a phrase **gъnъmъ vъprědъ* subsequently "univerbalized" into **gъnъ-dъ* or **gъn-edъ*. If this would have been the case the palatalization of -d in Slovak *hned* should have been secondary, patterned on such Slovak adverbs ending in palatalized dentals as *opět* 'again', *spět* 'back', *snád* 'perhaps', a type which was represented in Old Slovak more than in the modern language (cf. the data in Stanislav 1958, 575f.).

It follows from the above brief presentation of pros and cons for the "non-pronominal" hypothesis of the origin of *hned* that this hypothesis, in the light of the evidence we have at our disposal, cannot be considered as fully proven. The flaws of both hypotheses, the traditional "pronominal" and the "non-pronominal" cannot be removed as of today. Certain obscure links in the chain of developments which brought about the form (i)*hned*(') are explained by one hypothesis, others by the other one, but neither can explain all of them.

The two hypotheses do not necessarily exclude one another. An attempt may be undertaken to combine them into one. As the point of departure one may take the pronominal form **inъgъdV*, the latter letter meaning an unspecified vowel, subsequently lost. If this vowel was a *jer* the resulting form would be *inhd*; if it was some other vowel early lost this would bring about **inehd*. The former is well attested in Old Czech (Gebauer 584); in fact this was, to judge from his data the most widespread form in Old Czech texts. The form **inehd* is not attested but it may have served as the foundation for the attested (but not so frequent) *inehd* (Ráj duše 1383 a.o., 2x) and, with metathesis, *ihend* (Mastičkář, late 14th c., 1x). Then one would have to assume that somewhat later, *inhd* could fall under the influence of the root *gъn-* > *hn-*, whose impact produced a semantic shift of the type 'some times' > 'one time' > 'at once' > 'quickly' and the metathesis *nh* > *hn*. A blending with a word of the type *vъprědъ* becomes unnecessary in such a case. The advantage of this "combined hypothesis" is that it motivates the wide expansion of the form *inhd* in Old Czech (which in both the "pronominal" and the "non-pronominal" hypotheses remained passed in silence), but the reason for the rise of semantic connection between the word meaning 'sometimes' and the root *gъn-* as a starting point for the change of meaning in the adverb (and, then, the metathesis *nh* > *hn*) becomes far less motivated (arbitrary) than in the preceding, i.e. "non-pronominal" hypothesis.

It is possibly the impasse in all the above hypotheses which has led to still another attempt at explanation which may be labelled "ultra-pronominal." It has been advanced by Schuster-Šewc (297f) in his etymology of Upper Sorbian *hnydom* 'at once, right away', Lower Sorbian *ned*, same. He rejects the traditional view that *hned* originally was Czech only and that it penetrated to other Slavic languages (Slovak, Sorbian; Polish *wnet*) from Czech.

This thesis of his is not really borne out by facts. Specifically for Slovak a borrowing from Czech is obvious - not so much because of a somewhat later appearance of the word in Old Slovak texts than in Old Czech ones (cf. Kopečný 2, 224) - but rather by the distribution of *hned* in dialects. The data of ASJ (IV, 1, 324 and IV, 2, 217) clearly show that *hned* is used only in West Slovak and even there in a very limited manner. Also Schuster-Šewc's rejection of the fact of borrowing in Polish and Kashubian cannot be shared (cf. Basaj 85 and Basaj-Siatkowski 18). In all West Slavic languages (with possible exception of Polabian) in the view of Schuster-Šewc, one deals with genuine native developments independent of each other but identical typologically. Their principle was "typische agglutinative Zusammensetzung verschiedener ursprünglicher deiktischer Partikeln" (298). The particles in question are *ne* and *d'* ("ebenfalls deiktisch", 298). For both particles Schuster-Šewc accepts varying forms. For *ne* they were also *no*, *ny* (as in Old Church Slavonic *nyně* ~ *нѣнѣ* 'now' SJS 448), for *d'* also *dy*. As for *h-* he suggests that it was "eine Prothese, die vor allem vor nasalen Konsonanten auftreten kann" (299). The form *ne* is needed for explaining the Czech, Slovak, Lower Sorbian and Polish variants, the *ny* form for the Upper Sorbian variant. What remains unclear - if one accepts Schuster-Šewc's view that the word was native to each of those Western Slavic languages - is how on such a vast linguistic territory from Czech to Kashubian the same derivational pattern, and, moreover, fairly complex one, was applied while various forms of pronominal ("deictic") particles were used. In addition, no reasons for the choice of a specific form of the particle(s) in a specific language are given so that the choice looks rather arbitrary.

There also may be a valid objection as to how a piling up of deictic particles could produce an adverb with the meaning of 'quickly', etc. As Durovič (122f) says, the typical characteristic of pronominal adverbs is their obligatory concretization in a specific situation. *Tam* without such a concretization means nothing or little. *Hned* does not meet this requirement

and Schuster-Šewc does not show how the pronominal type of meaning could have changed to a non-situational one.

As to the prothetic *h-* the only examples of prothetic *h-* before *n-* cited by him *hnikati* 'squeak, neigh' and *hmožditi* 'trample' (where there is incidentally no *n-*) are both onomatopoeic and/or affective formations and hardly of great antiquity. They cannot be placed besides Czech and Slovak (i) *hned*(') even though affectivity in the latter cannot be ruled out.

All in all this latest attempt at an etymology of *hned* and the related forms cannot dissipate one's doubts. The "pronominal", the "non-pronominal", the "combined" and the "ultra-pronominal" hypotheses all fail to clarify all the details we know and we do not know in the history of the word under scrutiny and therefore fail as a whole. The origin of the word must remain unclear until an etymology is suggested which would be able to answer all the questions posed by this difficult word, not one shedding light only on some of them while leaving others in the dark. Thus, the negative conclusions of this article outweigh its positive suggestions.

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