

The diachrony of Modern Greek Complementiser *pos*

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1. The First Millenium AD: Reanalysis

Proto-Indo-European	Instrumental singular of <i>*k^wo</i> ‘who? what?’
Ancient Greek	<i>pô:s</i> ‘how?’
Middle Greek	
Modern Greek	

- (1a) *Élegen dè pròs toùs kekè:ménous parabolé:n, epék^ho:n p^o:s tàs pro:toklisías ekselégonto, légo:n pròs autoús...*
To the guests, whom he noticed \emptyset selecting the choicest places, He spoke this parable... (Revised Berkeley Version)
And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked *how* they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them... (King James Version) (Gospel of Luke 14:7, ca. 90 AD)
- (1b) *Ído:men (Eído:men?) p^o:s eggýs estin kai h^otí oudèn léle:thén autón tô:n ennoiô:n he:mô:n.*
Let us observe (know?) *how* near he [God] is, and *that* nothing escapes him of our thoughts. (Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians I 21:3, 95 AD)
- (1c) *T^hánatos tí estin? Mormolykéion. Strépsas autò katámath^e; idoû, p^o:s ou dáknei.*
What is death? A bugbear. Turn it about and learn what it is; see, \emptyset it does not bite. (Epictetus' Discourses II 1:17, 100~120)
- (1d) *Deîkson, h^otí dógmata ék^heis p^hiliká, deîksón sou tò aggeíon h^otí ou tétre:tai kai ópsei, p^o:s ouk anaméno: hína mou sý pisteúse:is tà sautoû, all' autòs el^hò:n sè parakalò: akoúsai tô:n emò:n.*
Show that your judgements are those of a friend, show that your vessel has no hole in it, and you shall see *how* I will not wait for you to entrust the knowledge of your affairs to me, but I will go myself and ask you to hear about mine. (Epictetus' Discourses IV 13:15, 100~120)
- (1e) *Gégraptai gár, p^o:s autô:i ho patè:r entélletai, lytro:sámenon he:mâs ek toû skótous hetoimásai heautô:i laòn hágion.*
For it is written *that* the Father enjoins on him that he should redeem us from darkness and prepare a holy people for himself. (Lake)
For Scripture tells us *how* the Father had charged Him to ransom us from the darkness, and create a holy people for Himself. (Staniforth) (Epistle of Barnabas 14:6, 70~200 AD)
- (1f) *Idò:n p^o:s he: mérimna autoû pâsa ê:n eis toùs pto:k^hoús...*
Seeing *that* all his care was directed towards the poor... (Acts of Xanthippe and Polyxena 80:34, iv AD or later)

(1g) *Kaì légo hymîn pō:s he: psyk^hê:, ho:s lêgei ho hágios Gre:górios, trimeré:s esti. Ékhei gàr to epit^hyme:tikòn, kaì tò ^hymikòn, kaì tò logikòn.*
 And I tell you *that* the soul, as St Gregory says, is composed of three parts. For it has a desirous part, and a wrathful part, and a reasoning part. (Dorotheus the Abbot, Teachings XXIII:2, †post 535)

(1h) *Os ikusen o yaðaros voos tin kafxisian, pos en to nevron tu makron ke eksepiromenon...*
 When the donkey heard the ox's boast *that* his penis is long and fiery-hot...
 (Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds 644–645; late xiv AD)

2. Modern Greek Dialects

(2) *Kaì metà k^hrónon ê:lt^hon hoi gérontes tou tôpou hóth^hen eksê:lt^he, kaì labóntes kaì tón adelph^hón hópou eíkt^he pròs autòn tè:n lýpe:n, apê:lt^hon parakalésai autòn, hína enétko:sin autòn eis tè:n monè:n autoû.*
 After some time the old men came from the place he had left, bringing with them the brother *who* had distressed him, to ask him to take him into his hermitage. (Motios §2; Apophthegmata Patrum—Alphabetical Collection, ca. 480)

Dialect of Modern Greek	Date of Divergence	posCOMP	pu (vi AD)	ðen (i AD)
Tsakonian	600?	✗	✓	✓
Italiot	1050	✗	✓	✓
Cappadocian	1100	✗	✗	✓
Pontic	1400	✓	✓	✗
Mainstream Dialects	—	✓	✓	✓

(3a) *O ðe episkopos ipen: “Exi i eklisia ke siyilon ke sistasi to pos epikrati”*
 And the bishop said: “The church has both a seal and a letter [indicating] *that* it has dominion” (Cusa: *Diplomi della capella Palatina etc. xiii; 1042*)

(3b) *Ekinon pu misis esi na miso; ekinon pu to thelis na mi filo.*
 Let me hate him *whom* you hate; let me be no friend of him *that* you wish. (Sultan Velid, Ghazal 885; late xiii AD)

3. In Praise of Philology

(4a) *Mè: phobeîst^he tò plê:t^hos autô:n kaì tò hórme:ma autô:n mè: deilo:t^hê:te; mné:st^he:te {ho:s/pô:s} esó:t^he:san hoi patéres he:mô:n en Thalásse:i Eryth^hrâ:i, hóte edío:ken autoùs Pharao: en dynámei.*
 Have no fear of their numbers and do not be dismayed at their onslaught. Remember *how* our forefathers were saved at the Red Sea, when Pharaoh was pursuing them with an army. (I Maccabees 4:8–9; i BC)

(4b) *Kaì eipóntos pròs autòn pō:s dià tè:n agápe:n o:phéle:són me*
 And saying to him *how* for the sake of love, do me good. (Life of John the Almsgiver 5:21, ca. 650)

Gezler (1893): And saying to him *that* “For the sake of love, do me good.”

Georg (1902): And saying to him “*How?* For the sake of love, do me good.”

Tabachovitz (1943): And saying to him “*How?* For the sake of love, do be so kind as to tell me.”