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A FEW WORDS OF DELIGHT

to the memory of Henrik Birnbaum

Lith. *lokšnùs* 'tender, etc.' is traced back, by way of dissimilation, to **losk-snù-*, derived with the adjectival suffix *-snù-*, productive in Baltic, from the I.-E. stem of Slavic *laska*, Lat. *lasc-ivus*, etc. In the second part of the paper the autor pleads for distinguishing, in Slavic, between *mirъ* 'peace' = OLith. *mieras*, Latv. *miêrs* < Balto-Slavic **mei-ro-* 'pleasure, leisure', akin to **mei-lo-* 'agreeable, kind', and *mirъ* 'κόσμος' < **binding, linkage*, to I.-E. **mei-* 'bind, link' in Skt. *mitrá-* 'friend', Avest. *miθra-* 'contract', etc.

Keywords: Etymology, Baltic, Slavic, Indo-European.

The following notes which I here offer, are the upshot, in part, of an attempt to find further order even if we cannot yet claim to reach unique solutions.

1. Lithuanian *lokšnùs*

In his groundlaying preliminary study¹ of expressions for 'love' in Slavic Henrik Birnbaum has adduced the Lithuanian adjective *lokšnùs* 'tender, etc.' (165). On good authority Birnbaum reproduces the comparison of Vasmer. In fact, the authoritative Fraenkel (*Lit. E. Wb.* 385) also reconstructs *lokšnùs* as **lāsknus*. But this violates Baltic Lautgesetze at the same time that it overlooks rules of Baltic word formation. In Baltic we cannot lose sibilants before obstruents without motivation; nor can we invoke metathesis without cause; nor do sibilants exchange capriciously. The same error is repeated in *Этим. слов. слав. яз.* 14 (1987) 37.

¹ *American Contributions to the 8th International Congress of Slavists*, Columbus, Ohio: Slavica Publishers Inc., 1978. 1 (ed. H. Birnbaum), 155-159.

Unfortunately the normally exhaustive P. Skardžius (*Lietuvių kalbos žodžių daryba*, Vilnius: Lietuvos Mokslų Akademija. 1943; pp. 223–5) does not register this adjective so far as I can see.

However we must first note that Fraenkel (*op. cit.* 386) records another, and an important, Lithuanian noun *loskà* which he does not hesitate to trace to a borrowing from Polish. Since Baltic had a thoroughly productive adjectival suffix *-snù-* it is eminently possible that *lokšnùs* resulted directly from **lo(s)k-snù-*. The dissimilation, or elimination in a complex cluster, of **-s-* is unproblematic.

There is, then, no real testimony that we have an independent witness from Baltic at all. Yet Slavic clearly attests *laska*, which Birnbaum has elegantly glossed, and Russ. *lásyj*.

Ernout-Meillet *DELL* s.v. *lasciūus* make it plain that this IE root, if indeed supported by the conventional citations, points to a stratum of IE characterized by Meillet “popular” features. I have (*IF* 82, 1977, 79) associated the **-ko-* suffix with the colloquial register of IE. If we remove the Lithuanian forms as borrowings from Slavic, we may other analyze Slavic *las-ka* (*Этим. слов. слав. яз.* 14, 1987, 36–7) as containing the colloquial IE suffix **-kā*. Of course, the origin of apparent IE **leH_{as-}* remains problematic, but we may at least identify the colloquial register of speech from which our term was originally taken.

There remains the possibility that we have Balto-Slavic **lās-*, yet the long **ā* leaves problems; if we accept IEW 654 in broad outline the Sanskrit *a* and zero cannot correspond to a laryngeal.

2. Slavic *milь*, *mirь*

The standard Slavic references, which are duly cited by Birnbaum (*op. cit.* 157–159), do not do justice to *milь* ‘pitiable; dear’. In fact, Machek’s views are quite wide of the mark. It is in Fraenkel’s *Lit. E. Wb.* 449 that we find the most adequate and discriminating account. Here we see *milь* related to Lith. *míelas* and congeners as an original derivative in **-lo-* from the base found in Skt. *máyas*, Lat. *mītis*, OIr. *móeth*.² I would simply add one further observation to the Baltic side: it seems to me to be insufficiently noticed that no motivation has been provided for the presence in Baltic of two entire series of formation with apparently divergent ablaut grades, i. e. the set of adjectives and derivatives represented by *míelas* and *meilùs* and that represented by *mýlas* and *mylùs*. I propose that

² The agreement of Italic and Celtic (including Welsh *mwydion*) in the *t*-suffix is striking.

míelas, *susimilti* etc. represent the original Baltic reflexes, that *mýlas* etc. reflect borrowings or contaminations from Slavic contacts, and that the acute accentuation results from revision of the accent class of this word family on the model of *mýlas* etc.

Vasmer (*REW* 2. 134) also claims a relation to the above of Greek *μείλια* (normally used in the plural), but this reflects a neglect of or inattention to Greek facts and Fraenkel properly omits it from his account. It is clear that *μείλια* had a colloquially extended form in *μείλιχος*, and the dialect variants of the latter point with their vocalisms (*μέλλ-*, *μηλ-*) to **μελ-v-*; see conveniently Frisk *GEW* 2. 195 and the more agnostic Chantraine *DELG* 678. Armenian *meł* reflects the same pre-form, and this constitutes one more significant Helleno-Armenian isogloss of detail. Fraenkel correctly registers these Greek cognates under *malónē*, *Lit. E. Wb.* 403; for a further relation to Greek *μέλω* and Welsh *gofal* see my analysis *Živa antika* 20, 1970, 5–6.

Moreover, **mei-lo-* did not stand alone in Balto-Slavic. OLith. *mieras*, Latv. *miērs* ‘peace, tranquillity’ has been equated with Slavic *mirъ* ‘peace’; see e. g. Vasmer *REW* 2. 137. Albanian *mirë* ‘good’ has also been associated with these; if so, we have one more link joining Albanian with Balto-Slavic. At any rate we may reconstruct for Balto-Slavic **mei-lo-* ‘agreeable, kind’ and **mei-ro-* ‘pleasure, leisure’ vel sim. The Slavic noun *mirъ* (Czech *mír*) may represent a *vřdđhi* derivative.

We must however distinguish *mirъ* (SCr. *mír*, *míra*) ‘peace’ from *mírъ* (SCr. *mír*, *míra*) ‘κόσμος’, and the latter is certainly not explained, as Machek thought it to be, by the root for ‘go, move’. I propose that *mirъ*, just as *κόσμος*,³ properly meant ‘order, arrangement’. We may then relate it as a **binding, linkage* to the root *mei-* ‘bind, link’ seen in Skt. *mitrá-* ‘friend’, Avest. *miθra-* ‘contract’.

Резиме

Eric P. Hamp

НЕКОЛИКО НЕЖНИХ РЕЧИ

Литавски придев *lokšnūs* ‘осетљив, нежан’ аутор своди путем дисимилације на праоблик **losk-snū-*, изведен придевским суфиксом *-snū-*, продуктивним у балтском, од основе слов. речи *laska* ‘љубав’, сродне са лат. *lasc-ivus* ‘весело, обестан’. У другом делу чланка залаже се за разликовање двају словенских хомонима *mirъ*, једног у значењу ‘мир’

³ The background of *κόσμος* is obscure, but I find Schulze’s and Heubeck’s claim of a relation to *κεδνός* merely possible. The original meaning of **κοδ-σμο-ς* would be ‘attachment, construction’; but cf. Chantraine *DELG* 571.

= лит. *mieras*, лет. *miêrs*, од балгосл. **mei-ro-* 'уживање, доколица', сродног са **mei-lo-* 'пријатан, мио', и другог *mirъ* 'κόσμος' < *'веза, спој', од ие. **mei-* 'повезивати, спајати' у стинд. *mitrá-* 'пријатељ', авест. *miθra-* 'уговор' итд.