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A FEW WORDS OF DELIGHT

to the memory of Henrik Birnbaum

Lith. *lokšnus* 'tender, etc.' is traced back, by way of dissimilation, to *lošk-šnû-, derived with the adjectival suffix -šnû-, productive in Baltic, from the I.-E. stem of Slavic *laska*, Lat. *lascīvus*, etc. In the second part of the paper the autor pleads for distinguishing, in Slavic, between *mir* 'peace' = OLith. *mieras*, Latv. *miērs* < Balto-Slavic *mei-ro- 'pleasure, leisure', akin to *mei-lo- 'agreeable, kind', and *miēr* 'košmuco' < *binding, linkage', to I.-E. *mei- 'bind, link' in Skt. *mitra- 'friend', Avest. *mitra- '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 *lokšnus*

In his groundlaying preliminary study of expressions for 'love' in Slavic Henrik Birnbaum has adduced the Lithuanian adjective *lokšnus* 'tender, etc.' (165). On good authority Birnbaum reproduces the comparison of Vasmer. In fact, the authoritative Fraenkel (*Lit. E. Wb. 385*) also reconstructs *lokšnus* as *lāšknus*. 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.

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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 *lokšnìus* resulted directly from *lo(s)k-snù*- . The dissimilation, or elimination in a complex cluster, of *-* 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. *làsîj*.

Ernout-Meillet *DELL s.v. lasčiûs* 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 *-* 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 *-* . Of course, the origin of apparent IE *leHàs*- 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 *-* leaves problems; if we accept IEW 654 in broad outline the Sanskrit *a* and zero cannot correspond to a laryngeal.

2. Slavic *mìlò, mîrò*

The standard Slavic references, which are duly cited by Birnbaum (*op. cit.* 157–159), do not do justice to *mîlò* ‘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 *mîlò* related to Lith. *mielas* and congers as an original derivative in *-* from the base found in Skt. *màyas*, Lat. *mítis*, Olr. *mòeth*. 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 *mielas* and *meilùs* and that represented by *mýlas* and *mylíus*. I propose that

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2 The agreement of Italic and Celtic (including Welsh *mwydion*) in the *t*-suffix is striking.
mielas, susimilti etc. represent the original Baltic reflexes, that mylas 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 mylas etc.

Vasmer (REW 2. 134) also claims a relation to the above of Greek μείλα (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 μείλα had a colloquially extended form in μείλιχος, and the dialect variants of the latter point with their vocalisms (μέηλ-, μηη-;) to *μελ-ν-; see conveniently Frisk GEW 2. 195 and the more agnostic Chantraine DELG 678. Armenian mel reflects the same pre-form, and this constitutes one more significant Helleno-Armenian isogloss of detail. Fraenkel correctly registers these Greek cognates under malone, Lit. E. Wb. 403; for a further relation to Greek μελα 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 mir ‘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 mir (Czech mir) may represent a vṛddhi derivative.

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

Резюме

Eric P. Hamp

НЕКОЛИКО НЕЖНИХ РЕЧИ

Литавски придев lokšnis ‘осетљив, нежан’ аутор своди путем дисимилације на праоблик *lošk-sni-, изведен придевским суфиксом -sni-, продуктивним у балтском, од основе слов. речи laska „љубав”, сродне са lat. lasc-iivus „весео, обестан”. У другом делу чланка заједно се за разликовање двају словенских хомонима mir, једног у значењу ‘мир’

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