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SOME GREEK FORMS IN σ-

1. συχνός

Since Brugmann (see Frisk *GEW* 2. 825, 1968) συχνός has been connected with σάττω; but a reconstruction of *τυκ-σν-ός will not be appropriate since *τ did not assilate before syllabic υ¹.

For σάττω Bechtel was surely right (*GEW* 2. 681, 1967) in claiming an original voiced value for γ in σαγή and άγμα on the basis of Gortyn συνεσάδη². The Indo-European account of the root has meantime been enriched by van Windekens's comparison of Toch. AB *twānk-*. We may therefore reconstruct σάττω/-σάδη as *tuŋg-iō.

It is now possible to envisage a nominalisation of the form *tuong-s-no-, i.e. *tuonksno-. The latter would yield, with the surrounding nasal and lip-rounded [ŋ]³ an early Greek *tuŋksno-, which we may suppose would have dissimilated to *tuŋksnó-. The last would give immediately συχνó-. The cluster of tuonksno- would motivate the ττ in σάττω.

It is not clear that German *zingen* can ultimately be derived from this root.

2. σμάω, σμήω

The prehistory of this verb has been baffling⁴ not the least reason being the puzzling initial.

I have recently shown (*Studia Celtica* 14/5, 1979—80 106ff.) that, the Celtic base reflected in early Ir. *imbolc* 'Candlemas', *mlegon* 'milking', *do'ommalg(g)* 'mulxi', Welsh *armel* 'second milking' is related to Skt. *mṛj-* and developed as a fused simplex from *uts-melg- < *ud-s + melǵ-. In the Celtic a fossilized preverb became unrecognizably fused onto the initial of the verb stem.

¹ Chantaine *DÉLG* 1072—3 declares for συχνός „pas d'étymologie“, doubting both Brugmann and Schwyzer.

² Chantaine *DÉLG* 989—90 makes no decision here, and declares σάττω „sans étymologie“, Lejeune's Myc. *sakemeno* *έσάγημην (*Parola del passato* 19, 1964, 328) would equally fit our interpretation.

³ *MSS* 29, 1971, 71—4.

⁴ *GEW* 2. 748, *DÉLG* 4 (1977) 1027.

The meanings of Skt. *mṛj*, together with its preverbs, 'wipe, rub, cleanse, polish, stroke, smear, annoint' strikingly match those of *σμάω*. Note that the Sanskrit occurs with the preverbs *ud* (=OIr. *oss-*) and *ni* (=OIr. *ind-*), as well as *apa* (=ἀπο-). If we translate **ud*-(s) and *ni* (=ἐν-ς) into Greek terms it is easy to see how an early pair **υτ(σ)-σμη̄-* and **ἐνσ-σμη̄* could have arisen. These would have become **υσσμη̄-* and **εσσμη̄-*, before their initial members became too opaque to survive.

Then, for the compounds (ἀπο-, ἐκ-, δια- etc.) that continued, a base *σμη̄-* was extracted from these obscure primary compounds. Thus for all these assumptions we must begin with a base **smeH_a*—(or **smeH_e*—? cf. Chantraine *loc. cit.*).

It seems possible that a trace of this base in the sense 'wipe' is seen in Latin *macula*, for which Ernout-Meillet, *DÉLL* 671, gives no etymology⁵. It may also be that in the sense 'cleanse' we see a formation parallel to *factus* (:**dheH_e*-) in the isolated religious locution *mactus macte* (*sies/esto*).

3. σφάλλω

I have dealt at some length⁶ with Germanic **fallan*, Armenian *p'lanim*, Lithuanian *púolu púolė púlti*, and I have reconstructed a root **peH_ol-* for these. The unusual shape of this root led to the superficially divergent results in the various languages. The zero-grade nasal present **pHl-n-* gave the **pH* cluster which resulted in the Armenian aspirate *p'*.

If now for Greek⁷ we assume a root shape with *s*-mobile we may start from a *-te/o*-present, which has been so productive for Greek, **spHliō*. Here as in Armenian the laryngeal aspirated the labial, i.e. **spHli̯-* > **sphali̯-*. The identical Greek and Armenian allophonic treatment is noteworthy.

If the original IE result of **pH_o* before syllabic was apparent **b* (as in the well known **pibeti* 'drinks') we must assume that the paradigmatic relations in Helleno—Armenian *(*s*)*peH_ol-* led to a renewed initial **pH* in the zero-grade. This would then provide an explanatory bridge for the vocalism of the aorist σφῆλαι, Doric σφᾶλαι with apparent **speH_al-*.

4. σφήν

The original stem form of σφήν has not been well clarified; for attestation and reference to literature see *DÉLG* 4 (1977) 1076. It is likely that a noun such as σφήν -ος was once ablauting; therefore

⁵ The pre-form would then be **smH_a-tlā* or **smH_e*-.

⁶ *Indogermanische Forschungen* 84, 1979, 255—8.

⁷ Frisk *GEW* II 828 s.v. σφάλλω: Eine sichere Etymologie fehlt. Chantraine *DÉLG* 4 (1977) 1075, while enriching and clarifying the internal Greek testimony, adds nothing further to a substantive search for an origin.

**speHn-*, **spHn-os*. The latter would have syllabified as **spHn̄-os* > **σφαν-*. This would have given rise to σφ-. It seems that σφάνιον Hesych. and Ceos σφηνό-πους reflect **ā*. Therefore we have **speHān-*.

To this stem DÉLG 4. 1031 relates σπάθη, citing Frisk's equation with Gmc. **spāðan ðn-* < **spə₂dh-*.

Though the value of **-n-* and **-dh-* would here be ambiguous, we reach a possible root **speHā-*. However this offers difficulties in reconciling these Greek forms with Germanic **ē* (Eng. *spoon* etc.). Though the background is still unclear IEW 980 should be revised to take account of the clear initial which we have.

5. σπυρίς, σφυρίς and σπάρον

A number of aspects of the noun σπυρίδ- etc. 'basket' have been explained. The suffix -ιδ- for utensils and implements is known; cf. σκαφίς. The Latin *sporta* can be understood as a borrowing, seemingly via Etruscan. For details see Frisk GEW II 773, Chantraine DÉLG 4 (1977) 1041.

The semantics would make plausible a relation to σπάρον, yet σπάρον itself has not been clarified to the degree one might wish. Frisk GEW II 758—9 treats σπάρον as a zero-grade *-to-* adjective which has been substantivized. Phonologically and even morphologically such an analysis is unobjectionable. But the semantics of 'Tau, Seil, Schnur', suggest equally a nomen instrumenti. We are then strongly reminded of the nomina instrumenti in *-to-* and *o-*grade represented by Old Prussian *dalptan*, Russ. *dolotó*, Czech *dláto*⁸, Albanian *daltë*, and by κοίτος⁹. These formations in Baltic have been discussed by B. Jēgers in T. F. Magner and W. R. Schmalstieg edd. *Baltic Linguistics* (Pennsylvania State University 1970) 81—86 but I can not agree with the attempt by Jēgers to derive these old nouns from the *-to-* participle. We might then look for σπάρον to reflect an ancient **spor-to-m*, and we will return to this below.

Surley the most troublesome aspect of σπυρίς is the vacillation found in the initial σπ-. ~ σφ. But that is not the only problem presented; Frisk is far too little worried by the need to derive a υ vocalism from the zero-grade **γ*) and Chantraine simply appeals to the poorly understood ἄγυρίς. We simply cannot give a principled Greek account in this fashion.

Yet if we recall the stratum of vocabulary represented by πύργος¹⁰ a solution for σπ-~σφυρίδ- lies ready to hand. The vocalism υρ would

⁸ In the South Slavic (Scr. *dlijèto*, Bulg. *dletò*, Mak. *dleto*) the *e*-grade is an innovation.

⁹ In this connexion see my explanation of *Vesta* in *Ériu* 25, 1974, 258—9, which also bears on εὐστόν.

¹⁰ See A. J. van Windekens, *Le pélasgique*, Louvain 1952, and my remarks on βάρραχος ŽA XXIX, 2, 209 s., esp. footnotes 1 and 2, references there cited. On the general question and on πύργος itself one will now consult with profit the entry s.v. in Chantraine DÉLG 3 (1975) 958.

now point properly to **ɣ* (van Windekens 7 § 13), and the φ would be explained as *p* (*ibid.* 18 § 35). Perhaps **p* gave φ but **sp* gave σπ; this would explain the variation seen in the forms here under discussion and in van Windekens §§ 13, 15, 35. Our form (σ)φυρίδ- seems to reflect an earlier *i*-stem, perhaps via *(*s*)p^hi-; cf. σπεῖρα, πείρινς -ινθος 'wicker cart body'. It is not clear whether πείρινθ- would reflect a dissimilation of aspirates (van Windekens 126—7) or a variant from the **sp*- reflex of this root; on πείρινθα see Chantraine *DÉLG* 3, 871.

The variants σπυρίδιον ~ σπυρίχνιον recall the alternation ὀρνιθ- ~ ὀρνιχ- and κλη(F)ῖ-δ ~ κλα(F)ῖ-κ- which I have discussed *Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli* (Sezione Linguistica) 4, 1962, 54—55. It makes one feel, in the context of the above, that the question posed by van Windekens (*op. cit.* 35 § 69) regarding the genesis of the Greek suffix -ιδ- in „Pelasgian“ formations must be answered in the affirmative. Later, different suffixal successor alternants were favoured in Greek on a dialect basis.

The way is now clear to attribute σπάρτον < **spor-to-m* to this same linguistic stratum; for IE **o* > „Pelagic“ α. The plant name would likewise come from the substratum and plausibly so¹¹.

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¹¹ Thus, contrary to Chantraine *DÉLG* 4, 1033, there is a single unitary explanation for the rope and for the plant based upon their common function.