

ERIC P. HAMP  
University of Chicago  
Department of Linguistics  
Chicago

UDC 807.5—541.2

## PREHELLENICA

## 3. στιφρός, στῖφος

The two obviously related words στιφρός 'compact, solid, stout' and στῖφος -εος neut. 'a close array' have not yet received a satisfactory explanation within Greek, and fail also to reach an acceptable source within presently well understood Indo-European. The solution here proposed requires no assumptions additional to those already entailed by other analyses which seem acceptable.

It is obviously undesirable to trace an allegedly related group of forms such as we find at Pokorny *IEW* 1015—16 to root shapes with all three possible labial terminations. Moreover, there seems to be no imperative need to associate with our words the set of Balto-Slavic terms for poles, stems and tubes represented by Lith. *stiebas* 'mast' (Fraenkel *Lit. EW* 903—4 s.v.) which would go back to *\*steibh-*.

It is further clear that Gk. στειβω 'tread' and Arm. *stipem* 'press' form a distinct set derived from a Helleno-Armenian innovation *\*steib-*, with a *\*b* which virtually failed to occur in IE.

Turning to the remainder, we now find that we appear to have but a single etymon *\*steip-*, represented by such reflexes as Lat. *stipō* (see this entry *LEW* 2 (1952) 593, *DELL*<sub>3</sub> 1147), MHG OE *stif*, Lith. *stipti* 'harden', *stipras* < *stiprus* 'strong'. Notice that *\*steip-* appears to belong dialectologically to European IE.

I suspect that Lat. *stipes -itis* and *stipula* result from a crossing of the etymon of Lith. *stiebas* with *\*steip-*.

It is now proposed that στιφρός is a transmission through Greek from the source we call Prehellenic; for my understanding of the latter see ŽA 29, 1979, 209; 31, 1981, 83—4 and 95—6; 32, 1982, 37—8; 33, 1983 (in press). Our form στιφρός is the precise equivalent of Lith. *stip-ras*. If the *\*t* might have turned out aspirate (cf. σφυρίς, ŽA 31, 1981, 95—6, and the discussion there) it would have been returned to *t* by the law of dissimilation of aspirates. We thus recover for Prehellenic an example of the IE quasi-participle in *\*-rō-*, *\*stip-rō-*. This is valuable support for the Lithuanian formation from this root.

It is now found that στῖφος has more than normal interest. This *s*-stem must be a concretized nomen actionis of the type of γένος and κλέος, and ideally would show an *e*-vocalism of the base; see my discussion of Lat. *sidus*, *AJP* 96, 1975, 64—6. Therefore we reconstruct *\*stēip-os*.

The implication of this is that *i* is indeed the Prehellenic reflex of *\*ei*, as V. I. Georgiev has diffidently surmised (*Introduction to the*

*History of the Indo-European Languages*, Sofia 1981, 102, last line). He remarks this a propos of σῆτος whose derivation however I cannot accept because I do not subscribe to a Prehellenic assibilation of the IE palatals. Nevertheless, we have at least two good instances of this reflex: σῆγή (: Germ. *schweigen*) < \*s<sub>1</sub>ēighā (Georgiev *loc. cit.* preceding line, who does not however give this reconstruction); ἔκρια 'mast, scaffolding' (OE *āc*, ON *eik*, OHG *eih* 'oak', an old fem. consonant stem) < \*eig-r-iH<sub>2</sub>, an old collective. It is seen that I differ on the IE reconstruction of the last item from van Windekens (*Le pélasgique* 1952, 94), to whom I owe the initial observation of the comparison.

I think we may now feel assured that the IE diphthong \*ei gave Prehellenic *i* > Greek *i*.

It is clear, then, that σπιφόρος and σπῆφος are well formed by IE rules of word formation.

Notice, too, that these two forms furnish a link once again connecting Prehellenic dialectologically with the North European languages.

#### 4.

It has already been suggested (see Frisk *GEW* 2.750 and Chantraine *DÉLG* 1028) that σμίλη 'knife' contains the suffix -λη and is to be related somehow to the Germanic etymon of English *smith*. We can now account for all aspects of the morphology and phonology, including the long *i* which troubles Chantraine, by reconstructing \*smei-lā, a nomen instrumenti.

Another derivative of the same Prehellenic base is seen in σμίνυη etc., which we reconstruct as \*smi-nú-. This -u- stem reminds us of γλαμός; cf. ŽA 32, 1982, 37.

Van Windekens has already proposed a Prehellenic explanation for σμίνθος 'mouse' (see *GEW* 2.750), and Georgiev incorporates the reconstruction \*smi-(yo)nt- 'gnawing, rodent' in his *Introduction to the History of the Indo-European Languages* (Sofia 1981) 103. However, Georgiev uses the two preceding forms as comparanda, identifying them as Greek, without, apparently, noticing that they cannot be inherited in Greek and must form a part of this substratum set. We therefore have a fine representation of this base in Prehellenic with \*smei-lā, \*smi-nú-, and \*smi-(o)nt-. The cohesion of this set makes importation of σμίνθος from Asia Minor seem dubious.

We may now correct Pokorny's entry (*IEW* 968), which should be headed \*smei-. The Greek should be deleted, and the above Prehellenic accounts substituted. The Germanic cognates remain valid. The Albanian verb *mih* 'dig' should be added; see my remarks *Die Sprache* 11, 1965, 139 footnote 8 (misplaced) to 154 No. 227. I now revise my reconstruction of Alb. *mih* to \*smi(t)-sk'-.

It is important to note that these reflexes associate Prehellenic dialectologically with North European.

Received 14<sup>th</sup> of Nov. 1983.