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ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF OXYTONE *o*-GRADE ADJECTIVES TO *-ú-* STEMS

The ancient Indo-European oxytone *-ú-* stem adjective is well known¹. It made, by preference, antonymic adjectives². It must be an ultimate specialization in meaning of original deverbal, participial formations³. The vocalism of such forms was, by rule, zero grade⁴. Such ancient formations as **suādú-* = *suVH_ad -ú-*⁵ must represent revocalizations motivated, perhaps, by the opaqueness engendered by a rule-generated **suH_ad-ú-* → [*su:dú-*]; note the revocalization seen in *ἀνδάνω* < **[s_uə-n-d(ŋ)-^e/o-]*.

The background of deverbal agentive adjectives of the form *τομός* is well understood⁶. These were, by rule, oxytone thematics and *o*-grade. Thus we see a potential equation or convergence of deverbals in IE:

**ø - ú-* "participial" = *o - ó-* "agentive"

In Baltic we see clear traces of the formation **ø - ú-*; Lith. *bingùs*, and, with revised vocalism, *platùs*. But, compared with the ample supply of *u*-stems, such formations are rare. The notable fact of Baltic is the appearance of *o*-grade bases in *-ú-*stems⁷: *kartùs* "bitter", *gajùs* "lively, vivacious"⁸, etc.; or even of pseudo-*o*-grade: *saldùs* "sweet" (: Eng. *salt*, Gk. *ἄλς*, Arm. *ał*, Lat. *sal*, Welsh *halen*). These last examples, of course, constitute direct successors to the old antonyms.

¹ Every standard handbook, as well as numerous monographs, recognizes the class and gives the essential facts, with supporting examples from Indo-Iranian, Greek, Baltic, less often Hittite, and with systematic transformations in Slavic, Latin, and Armenian.

² This is one of the most interesting Indo-European correlations of semantics and form-class.

³ This has been shown on the basis of the Hittite material by Dr. Howard Berman in his University of Chicago dissertation on Hittite noun formation.

⁴ See Wackernagel. *Altindische Grammatik*, Bd 2, T. 2.

⁵ Indic *svādú-*, *ἡδύς* etc.

⁶ The standard handbooks recognize the class, but often with repetitions and narrowly selected examples.

⁷ [references to Skardžius, etc.]

⁸ On *gajùs* see my contribution to the *Festschrift for Leonard R. Palmer* (Innsbruck, 1976, p. 87–91).

On the other hand, some old *u*-stems have been thematized⁹: Lith. *leñgvas* “light”¹⁰. Finally, some fresh *u*-stems have been created on older adjectives: *gajùs* > *gaiùs* “refreshing, vivifying”; “lively”.

Now if we turn to the fate of the IE class of *τομός*, F. Kortlandt has pointed out¹¹ that it is difficult in Balto-Slavic to distinguish exact descendants of true old simplexes, i. e. of disyllables. However Hamp has claimed¹² that a useful test for such formations lies precisely in the inventory of Baltic *o*-grade *u*-stems:

lankùs, lankstùs “flexible, pliant”: *lañkas* “bow, hoop, rim”. We see that in this paradigm the oxytone *o*-grade *u*-stem has taken the place of the oxytone *o*-grade thematic *τομός*. Such deverbal formations have then had a further great success in Baltic:

nemarùs “nemirtingas, kuris nemiršta, kuris negali mirti”, etc.

To close the circle, we find deverbal quasi = participial *u*-stems in *o*-grade as virtual synonyms of **-ró-* > *-ra-* *ø*-grade (Nullstufe) adjectives¹³:

Lith. *skaudùs* “sore, severe” : *skùdras* and also *véikus* “quick” : *vikras* “nimble”

Gk. *βλαδύς* : *βλαδαρός*

Hitt. *tepu-* : Skt. *dabhrá-*

Skt. *svādu-* : Toch. B *swāre*

Lith. *dubùs* : Toch. B *tapre*

And then in turn these *-ra-* stems, preserving their ancient oxytonicity, yield to the adjectival *u*-stem productivity:

Lith. *budrùs* “vigilant” = Slav. *bōdrъ*: *buděti bōděti*. On this last verbal relation see my discussion referred to in footnote 13.

⁹ On the IE rule for the vocalization of denominal (or nonverbal) thematics (the “*deiuos rule*”), see IF, 1977, 82, p. 75–76, and my fuller discussion in a series of studies in press.

¹⁰ See my discussion of this and related forms, *Études celtiques*, 1975, 14, p. 461 ff.

¹¹ Congress of Slavists, Zagreb–Ljubljana.

¹² *Rocznik slawistyczny*, in press.

¹³ See my discussion of these formations, currently appearing in a Festschrift.