

OLD PRUSSIAN -IS: A PARTITIVE GENITIVE IN THE ELBING VOCABULARY?

In his discussion of the fate of the Indo-European **o*-stem declension in Old Prussian, Mažiulis, 1970, 97, writes that the derivation of Old Prussian **(deiw)-as** (gen. sg.) from original Indo-European **-os* is not contradicted by Old Prussian **(deiw)-s** (nom. sg.) < Indo-European **-os*, because the stem vowel *-a-* could have disappeared in the nominative singular and could have been retained in the genitive singular for morphological rather than phonetic reasons. Possibly there was also a difference in stress, such that the nominative singular was stressed on the root and the genitive singular on the end. It is, of course, well known that the **o*-stem nominative and genitive singular forms were the same in Hittite, e.g. nom.-gen. sg. **-an-tu-uh-ša-aš** 'man', so the possibility of the original identity of the nominative and genitive singular in the **o*-stem declension certainly has a precedent. Although I am more inclined to Leskien's view, 1876, 31, that the Old Prussian genitive in *-as* is borrowed from the feminine *ā*-stem noun, the evidence of Hittite would support Mažiulis' view of the original identity of the Old Prussian **o*-stem nominative and genitive singular.

Now in the catechisms the **o*-stem linking vowel *-a-* seems to be only rarely attested in the nominative singular, thus, e.g. (nom. sg.) **Deiwas** 'God' occurs once (Trautmann, 1910, 63, line 5; Mažiulis, 1981, 194) as opposed to the numerous occurrences of **Deiws**. The genitive singular is, however, represented by the form **Deiwas**. In apparent forms of the nominative singular in the Elbing Vocabulary the *-a-* linking vowel is also sometimes lacking, e.g., (679) **awins** 'ster, ram', (355) **catils** 'kessel, kettle', (11) **cawy** 'tufel, devil', but for the most part one encounters the ending *-is* for nouns which are etymological **o*-stem nouns (according to the evidence of cognate languages). Thus, for example, (1) **deywis** 'gott, god' (beside Lith. **diēvas**), (316) **malunis** 'moele, mill' (beside Lith. **malūnas**), (55) **snaygis** 'sne, snow' (beside Lith. **sniėgas**), (56) **ladis** 'is, ice' (beside Lith. **lėdas**), etc.

Already Berneker, 1896, 263, had suggested that the *-is* was an intermediate stage (Mittlestufe) between the *-as* and the complete loss of this vowel. Trautmann, 1910, 213, wrote that in the Pomesanian dialect of the Elbing vocabulary the ending *-as* was weakened to *-is* or lost. Since here *a-*, *ja-* and *i-*stems have merged fre-

quently a certain differentiation is impossible. Endzelīns, 1943, 32, compares the occurrence of High Latv. *-ys* < *-as* and the central dialect forms **putnis** and **kaklis**, etc. Mažiulis, 1988, 172, writes that **dagis** = **dag^{is}* < **dagas*, a development for which clear evidence is furnished by the compound (260) **daga-gaydis** 'sommerweyse, summer wheat'. Mažiulis suggests also, 1988, 335, that **gegalis** (759) 'kleinetucher, small diving bird (*Colymbus minor*)' is **gegal^{is}* < **gegalas*, just like **deywis** = **deiv^{is}* < **deivas*. Levin, however, 1974, 48, regards this as morphophonemic, viz. 'the replacement of the *-o* stem Nom. ending by the *-i* stem ending.'

Now it is difficult to know what the genitive singular might have been in the Elbing Vocabulary, but let us suppose for the sake of argument that in position other than word-final position the **o*-stem genitive singular is represented by *-as* as in the initial element of (484) **silkas-drub** 'sydenslewir, silk cloak, veil' (Trautmann, 1910, 426; Levin, 1974, 54). We have seen above that the final syllable *-is* seems to represent an etymological **-as*. Now if this is a purely phonetic process as the majority of the scholars quoted above seem to believe and if the original **o*-stem genitive singular ended in **-as* then etymological **o*-stem words ending in *-is* in the Elbing Vocabulary may represent either the nominative or the genitive singular.

It seems to me to be reasonable to ask whether all of the words in the Elbing Vocabulary are listed in the nominative case or not. Mikkola, 1903, 3, compares the Old Prussian Elbing Vocabulary with the Polabian vocabulary of Parum Schultze in which we encounter such accusative singular forms as **breitkung** 'Mütze', **korwung** 'Kuh', **dumpung**, **tumpung** 'Taufe', **mohtung**, **mahtung** 'Mass' or such genitive forms as **medäu** 'Honig'. Mikkola suggests that the Elbing vocabulary words (345) **kalso** 'vlade, flat cake' and (401) **sticlo** 'glas, glass' are partitive genitives. Levin, 1974, 54, objects to this for two reasons: 'First, from its position in Elb, between **kragis** 'jar', and **kiosi**, Elb 402, 'cup', it is apparent that the referent of **sticlo** is a container, that is 'a glass', not the material. Thus, a partitive genitive would seem to be unmotivated here. Second it is doubtful that *-o* was a Gen. sg. ending at all. Of course, the *-o* stem ending attested in the later monuments, *-as* could easily be an innovation, but the form **silkas** in Elb is at least as likely to be a Gen. as **sticlo**..., and only one of the two forms is likely to be an *-o* stem Gen. But even if neither **kalso** nor **sticlo** 'glas, glass' are partitive genitives, this is still not evidence that a partitive genitive is impossible in the Elbing Vocabulary.

Could then the following words be partitive genitives rather than nominatives: (55) **snaygis** 'sne, snow', (56) **ladis** 'is, ice', (69) **scebelis** 'hoer, hair', (88) **snoxtis** 'rocz, mucus from the nose', (257) **seamis** 'wint'korn, winter grain', (258) **rugis** 'roc-ke, rye', (259) **gaydis** 'weyse, wheat', (261) **moasis** 'gerste, barley', (283) **schokis** 'gras,

grass', (284) **attolis** 'gromot, second mowing of meadow grass', (293) **soalis** 'krew-techt, weeds', (378) **taukis** 'smalcz, fat', (380) **mynsis** 'smer, fat', (383) **piwis** 'bier, beer', (390) **winis** 'wein, wine', (523) **ausis** 'golt, gold', (524) **siraplis** 'silber, silver', (527) **alwis** 'bley, lead', etc.? All of the words listed in this paragraph seem to be susceptible to a partitive interpretation. Although these words may be in the nominative case, a genitive interpretation is also possible.

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