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BALTO-SLAVIC **naig-*, A NEGLECTED ISOGLOSS WITH EXTERNAL RELATIVES

Abstract. The relationship of the Latvian verb *naigāt*, *-āju* and the adj. *naīgs* with the Slavic noun **něga* and verb **něgati* was identified already by Bezenberger and Fick in 1881. Later attempts to add new comparanda have not been convincing. The present contribution discusses possible cognates in Tocharian and Celtic, implying the Indo-European protoform **neig^h-*.

Keywords: Latvian; Slavic; Tocharian; Celtic; positive emotion.

1. Balto-Slavic data

1.1. The Balto-Slavic root **naig-* was implicitly determined by Bezenberger and Fick (1881, 238), which connected Latvian *naigāt*, *-āju* “verlangen, dürsten nach etwas”, i.e. “to long, desire”, *naīgs* “schnell, flink, hurtig, fix; schlank; fest; schön” (ME 2, 689), and Church Slavonic (of Russian redaction) *něga* ‘ἐὐφροσύνη, voluptas’, *něgovati* ‘desiderare; molliter tractare’ (Miklosich 1862–1865, 458: Zlatostruj from 12th cent. in red. of Vostokov). Let us add other Slavic cognates derivable from the noun **něga*: Bulgarian *néga* “tenderness, gentleness, bliss, pleasure, delight” (probably of Russian origin), Macedonian *nega* “care, solicitude”; Serbian *něga*, Croatian *njěga* “care, nurturance, attendance” (> Slovenian *néga* “cultus, cura, curatio” – see Snoj 2016, 465, supposing that the Serbian and Croatian forms proper are of Russian origin), also *ńěga* “love, tenderness, delight, pleasure” (RHSJ 8, 274; Skok ERHSJ 2, 529–30); Slovak *neha*, Czech *něha* “tenderness, gentleness” (Jungmann SCN 2, 664) can be adapted from Russian in the first half of the 19th cent., while the gloss *neha* in *Mater Verborum* was probably added just in the 19th cent. (see Patera 1877, 500); Russian *néga* “well-being; pampering”, dial. (Arxangelsk; Kostroma etc.) “love, tenderness”, Ukrainian *níha*, Belorussian *něha* “care, love, tenderness” (Vasmer REW 2, 207; ESUM 4, 95–96; ESSJ 25, 97).

1.1.1. The semantic dispersion is comparable with examples, such as Czech *pěkný* “pretty” vs. *péče* “care” or Swedish *snäll* “good, nice”, earlier “quick, capable” (Buck 1949, §§16.81; 14.21).

1.2. According to ESSJ (25, 97) the noun **něga* represents a deverbal formation from the verb **něgati* > Croatian arch. *negati* “to pamper, caress” (RHSJ 8, 274); Russian dial. (Vologda) *negat*, *negúju* “to pamper, caress” (ESSJ 25, 97). The verb **něgati* corresponds exactly to the Latvian counterpart *naigāt* and together with it belongs to the IE verbal class in **-ā-* (i.e. **-eh₂-*). This specific class has been analyzed as a denominative formation originally based upon *o*-stems and *eh₂*-stems, e.g. the Latin 1st conjugation represented by such verbs as *dōnāre* “to make a present of”, formed from *dōnum* “present”; *pugnāre* “to fight” from *pugnus* “fist” or *curāre* “to take care of” from *cūra* “care” (see Sihler 1995, 528, §475); Greek verbs in *-άω*: *νικάω* “I win” from *νίκη* “victory”; *τιμάω* “I honor, value” from *τιμή* “honor” etc. (Sihler 1995, 521, §468); Slavic: Old Church Slavonic *metati*, *metajō* “to throw” vs. Slovenian *mèt*, *méta* “throw” (ESSJ 18, 121); Old Church Slavonic *dělati*, *dělajō* “to work” from *dělo* “work, act” etc. (ESJS 2, 128) etc. This implies the primary noun **noigo-*/*-ā-* in Pre-Balto-Slavic, which became a base for the verbal formation **noig-ā-je/o-*.

1.3. In several Slavic traditions the nominal stem **něgo-* was relatively popular for anthroponyms, first attested long before any hypothetical Russian influence, cf. women’s names such as Bulgarian *Njága* or Old Polish *Niega* (1389); men’s names such as Croatian *Něgomir* (13th cent.), *Něgoslav* (13–14th cent.), Old Polish *Niegosław* (1224), Old Ukrainian *Něgoslavъ* (11–14th cent.); Old Polish *Niegowoj* (1432) etc. (ESSJ 25, 97–98). These archaic proper names support the antiquity of the nominal formation in Slavic.

2. New comparanda

2.1. Other published attempts to find broader relatives were questioned by Vasmer (REW 2, 207 with references).

2.2. But there is one promising cognate beyond Balto-Slavic, namely Tocharian B *nekarske* adj. “pleasant” (Peyrot 2008, 121–22; Adams 2013, 363, accepting this cognate, adds still the adverbial meaning “pleasantly”). It remains to analyze its semantic, phonetic and structural history in order to see if they are also compatible with the proposed Balto-Slavic counterpart.

2.2.1. From the point of view of semantics, the meaning “pleasant” is fully compatible with the semantic spectrum of the Balto-Slavic forms. Concerning

the semantic dispersion, a convincing analogy may be found in derivatives of the IE root **preih₂-* “to be beloved” (Schirmer and Kümmel in LIV, 490) > Vedic *priyá-* “beloved, dear, pleasant” from the verb *pray-* “to please, gladden, delight, gratify, cheer, comfort, soothe, propitiate”, as well as Greek *πραῦς* “soft, gentle, mild” < **preh₂iu-* (Beekes 2010, 1228–1229) etc.

2.2.2. The Balto-Slavic root **naig-* indicates the IE diphthong **-oi-*. In Tocharian, all *i*-diphthongs continue in the uniform pattern: A *e*, B *ai* (van Windekens 1976, 30–31). If Tocharian B was really related to Pre-Balto-Slavic **noig-*, one would expect B **naik^o*. If the root vowel is *e* in Tocharian B, it should represent an adaptation of the unattested Tocharian A form. The vowel *e* instead of expected *ai* appears also in Tocharian B *nemce* (adv.) “certainly, surely” ~ A *neñci* id., if these forms are derived from the particle preserved in B *nai* “indeed, then, surely” ~ Greek *ναί* “really, yes” (cf. van Windekens 1976, 317; Adams 2013, 364, 368). Another example can be the Tocharian B vacillation in the preterit III 3pl. *maitar* vs. *metär*, derived from the verb *mit-* “to go; set out” (Malzahn 2010, 769)

On the other hand, it is necessary to take into account the possibility of a Proto-Tocharian ablaut variant with the root-vowel **-i-*, where the sporadic change **i > e* could also have happened in Tocharian B, cf. the verb *nip-* “to pledge”, with its probable nominal derivative *nep* (cf. Peyrot apud Malzahn 2010, 688).

2.2.3. Concerning the word-formation, van Windekens (1979, 70, §133, 89–91, §§177–180), followed by Peyrot (2008, 122), listed other nouns formed by the suffix *-arške* in Tocharian B: *klänkarške* “doubtful” from *klänk-* “to doubt”; *mällarške* “pliant” from *mäll-* “to press, crush”; *mäntarške* “evil” from *mänt-* “to disturb”; *pällarške* “praiseworthy” from *päl^r-* “to praise”; *pautarške* “honoring” from *paut^a-* “to honor, flatter”; *takarške* “faithful; clear” from *tāka*, the subjunctive stem from *nes-* “to be”.

According to van Windekens (1979, 70, 91), the Tocharian B compound suffix *-arške* consists of the suffix *-ar* (< **-r̥*) of abstract neuters, plus the diminutive suffix *-ške* (~ *-ške*). There is perhaps an analogy in Tocharian B *paitar* “calf” vs. dim. *paitarške* “young calf” (Adams 2013, 431). On the other hand, Adams (p.c.) concludes that the suffix *-arške* represents a unitary derivational morpheme and cannot serve as the argument for the old *r*-stem.

2.2.4. The existence of Old Chinese **n(h)ik^w* “hungry for, covet, desirous; hungrily”¹ provokes the question, if it was not borrowed from Tocharian?

¹ Chinese 怒 *nì* “hungry for, covet, desirous; hungrily” < Late Middle Chinese

The Chinese word was first recorded already in the ‘Book of Songs’ (詩經 *Shījīng*) compiled before 600 BCE, i.e. before the disintegration of Common Tocharian, datable to 400 BCE (Blažek, Schwarz 2017, 209–210).

The hypothetical Common Tocharian source should probably be reconstructed as **nikw*^o, similarly as in the case of Old Chinese **l(h)īk*^w “to clean up/out, denuded; to wash”², which was probably borrowed from a Common Tocharian source, continuing in Tocharian AB *lik*- “to wash”, B *laiko* “bath, washing” (Adams 2013, 600–01, 610; Malzahn 2010, 845–46) < IE **uleik*^u- (Kümmel in LIV, 696); cf. Latin *liquēre* “to be clear, liquid”, Old Irish *fliuch* “humid” concerning the presence of the labiovelar (Blažek, Schwarz 2017, 28).

2.2.5. The possible Common Tocharian borrowing in Old Chinese implies the labiovelar as the second consonant. Taking into account that IE **g*^u > Celtic **b* (Brugmann 1897, 605–06), it is possible to support this conclusion: Celtic **neibo*-³ (Pokorny 1959, 760) > Middle Irish *níab* “vigor,

**niajk* < Early Middle Chinese **nejk* (GSR, 1031p; Pulleyblank 1991, 224) ~ Middle Chinese **niek* < Late & Middle Postclassic Chinese **n(h)īēk* < Early Postclassic Chinese **n(h)īēuk* < Eastern Han Chinese **n(h)īāuk* < Western Han Chinese **n(h)īāuk* < Classic Old Chinese **n(h)īūk* < Preclassic Old Chinese **n(h)īk*^w (Starostin 2005) ~ Late (= Eastern) Han Chinese **neuk* < Old Chinese **niūk* (Schuessler 2009, 188, 14–18p).

² Chinese 涤 *dí* “to wash, clean up/out, denuded, clarify (spirits)” < Middle Chinese **diek* (GSR 1077 x: **diōk*) < Late & Middle Postclassic Chinese **d(h)īēk* < Early Postclassic Chinese **d(h)īēuk* < Eastern Han Chinese **l(h)īāuk* < Western Han Chinese **l(h)īāuk*, Classic Old Chinese **l(h)īūk* < Preclassic Old Chinese **l(h)īk*^w “to clean up/out, denuded” [*Shījīng*, c. 600 BCE], “to wash” [*Lǐjì*; Han], “to clarify (spirits)” [*Zhōulǐ*; Late Zhou] (Starostin 2005) = **liwuk* (Baxter, Sagart 2014, 301) = **liūk* (Schuessler 2007, 209).

³ It would be tempting to add the Hispanic hydronym **nēbis*, recorded by Pomponius Mela [3.10] as *Nebis*, Ptolemy [2.6.1] as Νήπιος (gen.), today *Neiva* (see Holder 1904, 695). The river name could really be interpreted as “vigorous”, but more probable is the interpretation based on the ‘more hydronymical’ homonym **neig*^u- “to wash”. In Celtic this root is known in Old Irish *nigid* “washes” (DIL, N-47) < **nig*^u-*īe/o-* with delabialisation of the labiovelar before **i* (Schumacher 2004, 493–494). Patrizia de Bernardo Stempel (p.c.) also thinks about a possibility to identify this root in the Celtiberian verb **n.e.bi.n.to.r** of the 1st Botorrita Bronze, but earlier she derived this verbal form from **neb*^h-*i-nt-or*, i.e. identifying here the IE root **neb*^h- “to become wet” (de Bernardo Stempel 2009, 687; Zehnder in LIV, 448).

spirit” (DIL, N-43-44); Middle (from the 13th cent.) and Modern Welsh *nwyf* “(strong) feeling, passion, (carnal) desire; joy, bliss; zest, vivacity, vitality, vigor, energy” (GPC). The Celtic forms have been connected with Old Irish *noib* “holy, sacred” (DIL, N-56), derivable from Celtic **noibo-*, which should be related to Old Persian *naiba-* “nice, good”, Parthian *nyw*, Middle Persian *nyw’/nēw’*, Persian *nēw* “good” (Brust 2018, 229; Pokorny 1959, 760). The existence of two *o*-stems in the same branch and of the same origin, which differ only in the ablaut *e/o*, would be rather strange.

3. Conclusion

The forms discussed above may be projected into the following Indo-European protoforms, to summarize their derivational morphology:

branch	noun	verb
Baltic	<i>*noig^uo-</i>	<i>*noig^u-eh₂-ie/o-</i>
Slavic	<i>*noig^u-eh₂-</i>	<i>*noig^u-eh₂-ie/o-</i>
Tocharian	<i>?*noig^u- / ?*nig^u-</i>	
Celtic	<i>*neig^uo-</i>	

Note: Trubačev (ESSJ 25, 97) speculated about a connection with the homonymous root **neig^u-* “to wash”.

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BALTŲ-SLAVŲ **naig-*, NEPASTEBĒTA IZOGLOSA SU IŠORĒS GIMINAIČIAIS

Santrauka

Latvių kalbos veiksmažodžio *naigāt*, *-āju* ir būdvardžio *naīgs* ryšys su slavų kalbų daiktavardžiu **něga* bei veiksmažodžiu **něgati* buvo nustatytas Bezzenbergio ir Ficko jau 1881 m. Vėlesni bandymai įtraukti naujų lyginamųjų atitikmenų nebuvo įtikinami. Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjami galimi atitikmenys tocharų ir keltų kalbose, suponuojant indoeuropiečių prokalbės pirminę formą **neig^u-*.

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