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Studies in Armenian etymology : with special emphasis on dialects and culture Indo-European heritage

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STELLINGEN

I

Arm. *acuť*, dial. **anco/ut* 'coal' points to a PIE hysterodynamic *l*-stem: NSg **h₁óng^w-ōl*, gen. **h₁ng^w-l-ós*, together with Skt. *āṅgāra-* 'coal', Lith. *anglis* m. 'coal' and OCS *oglb* 'coal'.

II

Ancient traditional interpretations relying upon internal etymologies should not be discarded too quickly. Thus, *atk* 'at' 'pauper, beggar, homeless' that has been connected with Gr. *ὀλίγος* 'little, small, weak' etc. may in fact be composed of Arm. *atx* 'furniture, possessions, entourage, tribe' and the privative suffix *-at* from *hat-* 'to cut, split, divide', as has been assumed by Grigor Tat'ewac'i (14-15th cent.).

III

It is hardly accidental that *analut* 'hind, deer' and *tawsax* 'box-tree', which are listed as products of the province of Gugark' in the 7th century Armenian Geography (*Ašxarhac'oyc'*) by Anania Širakac'i, have only been preserved in the dialect of Hamšen, spoken in the vicinity of old Gugark'.

IV

Ačāryan (HAB 1: 295a) treats Arm. *arahet* 'road, path' as composed of *ayr*, *ar-* 'man', conjunction *-a-*, and *het* 'trace'. Thus: 'path of men/people'. In view of the parallel in Šamsadin (Łarabať-group) *mərt'əkəccan* 'path' < **mard-a-kacan* 'path of men/people', there are no solid reasons to follow A. Perixanjan (*Materialy k etimologičeskomu slovarju drevnearmjanskogo jazyka*. Part 1. Yerevan: Academy Press, 1993, pp. 9, 22), and to look for an Iranian etymology.

V

There are no solid grounds for separating Arm. *arcui* 'eagle' from Skt. *ṛjīpyá-* and YAv. *ərəzifīia*. The Urartian or East Caucasian interpretations of the Armenian word should be revised. Urartian *Aršibini* (name of a horse) is rather an Armenian loan.

VI

Dialect material should be taken into account in Armenian etymology. In doing so the individual developments should be taken into consideration. Thus, in Łarabať and adjacent dialects the initial syllable of polysyllabic words regularly drops. Bearing this in mind, we can successfully identify

unetymologized dialectal words with Classical Armenian ones. In this way, Goris *čəravand* ‘thick beams of the ceiling’ can be identified with **(aw)čar-a-vand* ‘wooden framework of the ceiling’, cf. *a(w)čar* ‘ceiling’.

VII

Valuable information on the semantics of dialectal words can be obtained not only from dialect descriptions and folklore texts but also from Modern Armenian literature. In the tale ‘The potter’s son’ of Aksel Bakunc’ (1899-1937), a native speaker of the Goris dialect, the word *lisemnə* (Standard Arm. *lusan* ‘lynx, marten’), appears as an animal with curly hair, walking like a wolf and laughing like a man. Clearly, this is the hyena.

VIII

Arm. *yatak* ‘bottom, hell, abyss’, which has been connected with Arm. *ot* ‘foot’ etc., finds a better interpretation as **y-atak*, with **atak* borrowed from Iranian unattested **a-tak-* < **ṇ-tak* ‘bottomless’ (cf. *tak* ‘bottom’, dial. **an-tak* ‘bottomless, abyss, hell’). The same pattern is seen in Arm. synonymous *andund-k* ‘abyss’ deriving from IE **ḡ-bʰudʰno-* ‘bottomless’.

IX

One of the dialectal forms of Arm. *p’aycatn* ‘spleen’, viz. Xotorĭur *sipex*, has been derived from an OArm. archaic **sipetn* or **sipaytn*. In fact, it has been borrowed from Cappadocian Greek *πεῖσάχι* ‘spleen’, itself a loan from Arm. *p’aycatn*.

X

Arm. *c’ax* ‘branch’, Skt. *śākhā-* ‘branch, twig’ etc. derive from PIE **kōk-H-*. In some Armenian dialects (Ĭarabaĭ, Agulis, Lori, etc.) we find also a form with *-k’* instead of *-x*. The alternants *c’ak’* and *c’ax* probably reflect a nom. **-k-eh₂-* and gen. **-k-h₂-ós*, respectively.

XI

No serious etymological and/or dialectological investigation should be undertaken without consulting Ačaryan’s basic etymological dictionary (*Hayeren armatakan baĭaran*).