

## On hypothetical Slavic continuants of IE *\*H<sub>1</sub>ek<sub>2</sub>mo-* "horse"

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1. In older handbooks of Indo-European lexicology the continuants of the IE basic designation of "horse", *\*H<sub>1</sub>ek<sub>2</sub>mo-*, are missing in Anatolian, Armenian, Albanian and Slavic (Schrader & Nehring 1929, 170; Pokorny 1959, 301-02: already with Lycian *esbe-*). In more modern lexicological studies Armenian *ēš* "ass" and the data from the Luwian subbranch of Anatolian are included (Gamkrelidze & Ivanov 1984, 544-45; Mann 1984-87, 237-38; Adams, Mallory & Miller, *EIEC* 273). Quite recently Huld (2004, 186-95) has identified this zoonym in the Albanian plant-name *sasë* "horsetail rush / Equisetum spp.", deriving it from the compound *\*ek<sub>2</sub>ó-ĝ<sup>h</sup>at<sub>1</sub>ō* or *\*-sat<sub>1</sub>ō*, where the second component is reconstructed after Greek *χαίτη* "hair, lock" or Latin *saeta* "bristle", in both cases with metathesis characteristic for Albanian (Huld 2004, 193). This etymology has been included in the most recent handbooks (Mallory & Adams 2006, 139; Wodtko, *NIL* [2008], 231). Traces of *\*H<sub>1</sub>ek<sub>2</sub>mo-* also appear in onomastics of various relic languages, e.g. Thracian *Βετέσπιος*, *Esbenus*; Macedonian *Ἐπειός*, *Ἐπό-κιλλος* (Pokorny 1959, 301-02); Lusitanian *Iccona* (~ Gaulish *Epona*), *Eque-unubo* (Witczak 2005, 352). The only IE branch where no traces of this zoonym were identified remains Slavic.

2. The etymology of the Albanian plant-name hiding a continuant of the IE term for "horse" may serve as an inspiration: The lost appellative "horse" could be preserved in botanical terms. There are several such examples:

- (i) Polish *konitrud*, dial. also *trudzikoń* 'Gratiola', from Slavic *\*konjь* "horse" & *\*trutiti* "to poison" (Machek 1968, 273);
- (ii) Polish, Russian *\*komonica* 'Melilotus' vs. Slavic *\*komonjь* "horse" (cf. Machek 1968, 271);
- (iii) Lithuanian *ašvók(š)lė*, *-is*, *ašókliai*, *ešóklė* "currant(s)" : *ašvà*, also *ešvà* (Bretkun) "mare";
- (iv) German *Roßbeere* "whortle-berry, bilberry", dial. also *perdsbier* (Fraenkel 1962-65, 19), lit. "horse's berry";
- (v) Gothic *aíhva-þundi* "bramble, prickly bush", lit. *\*"horse-tooth"*, i.e. "horse-thorn" (Lehmann 1986, 15);
- (vi) Gaulish *epo-calium* gl. 'ungula caballina' = *callio-marcus* 'Tussilago' [Marcellus of Bordeaux], lit. "horse's hoof" (Delamarre 2001, 182);
- (vii) Latin *equi-saetum* 'Equisetum' [Pliny XVIII, 259], lit. "horse's mane" (André 1985, 95);
- (viii) Greek *ἵππουρις* 'Equisetum', lit. "mare's tail"; *ἵπποφαές* 'Euphorbia spinosa', lit. "horse's light", etc.

3. Taking into account these examples, it might be promising to seek a Slavic equivalent among plant-names. There are even two hypothetical candidates:

(A) Slavic *\*sverěpь* > Croatian *sverepek* "Festuca, Aegilops", Czech *sveřep* "Bromus", Polish *świerzop* "Raphanus", *świerzepa* 'Sisymbrium', *świerzepia róža* "dog-rose", Russian *svirepa* 'Raphanus', *svirėpka*, Ukrainian *svyripa* 'Beta, Erysimum'; also in the function of the adj. "wild growing", hence "wild": Old Church Slavonic *sverěpь* 'ἄγριος' (Supr.), Bulgarian *svirep*, Slovenian *sverěp*, Czech *sveřepý*, Old Russian *sverěpь*, Russian *svirėpyj*. Machek (1954, 286; 1968, 595) thought that Slavic *\*sverěpь* consisted of the reflexive possessive *\*svo-* (with assimilation to *sve-* under influence of *\*-ě-*) and the root *\*rěp-*, which he also identifies in Bulgarian *repej*, Old Czech *řepí* "burdock / Arctium", Russian *repěj* "fruit of burdock, Agrimonia, Xanthium", Ukrainian *repyk* 'Agrimonia' etc., all from Slavic *\*rěpъje* or its derivatives (Machek 1968, 530). The compound *\*svo-rěpь* proposed by Machek may reflect original *\*(e)svo-rěpь* "horse's burdock", which was after the replacement of the

hypothetical Slavic *\*esvo-* reinterpreted according to a formally similar reflexive. The loss of the initial vowel has an analogy, for example, in Prussian *sweikis* 'Pflugpfer' (EV 432), if it is derivable from *\*asveikīs* (Mažiulis IV, 172). Michiel de Vaan (2009, 200-01) elegantly explained Greek ἵππος / ἵκκος "horse" as a continuant of the zero-grade *\*H<sub>1</sub>k<sub>uo-</sub>*, and the same formation would be expected in compounds. A connection of the hypothetical component *\*(e)svo-* in the compound *\*sverěpь* precisely with the meaning "horse" can be documented in its dialectal Czech equivalent *koňský řepiček* (South Bohemia) "horse's Agrimonium" = Russian *repij dikij*. It is further necessary to mention Church Slavonic > Rumanian *sireáp*, arch. *svireáp* "rampant (on a horse)" (*BER* 6, 554), Czech *sveřep(ec)* "breeding stallion", Old Polish *świerzopa* (1441), *świerzopa* (1494) "mare", *świerzepic* 'equus admissarius', borrowed into Prussian *sweriapis* 'Keynhēgeft' (EV 431). Smoczyński (2000, 104) deems that this meaning replaced the meaning of the entry EV 430 *sirgis* 'Hengeft'.

(B) Czech *svízel* 'Galium' vs. *svinízel* 'Hyoseris' (Machek 1954, 219, 231 otherwise) allows us to isolate the second component forming both plant-names as *\*zēlb* "grass, vegetation, plant" (cf. Slovenian *zel*, Slovak *zel'*, Old Russian *zēlb* - see Machek 1968, 714). If *sviní* represents the possessive adjective from the word *svině* "sow", it is promising to consider an analogous motivation in the case of the first component *\*sví-* as well.

4. In light of the preceding arguments it is legitimate to contemplate a hypothetical Slavic starting point *\*(e)svo-* *\*"horse"*.

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