SOME RECONSTRUCTIVE DETAILS IN GREEK

ERIC P. HAMP

In the long known history of Greek we are fortunate in being able to recover many instructive situations for the study of mechanisms, regularities, and range of linguistic phenomena.

1. Greek medial obstruent clusters in final dental

I provided sufficient examples of morphologically generated consonant clusters to sustain my argument in Γλωσσολογία (*Glossologia*) 7-8, 1988-89, 8-9 and 10. However, that account was in this respect deficient; it is of interest to see the full range of such clusters as they have descended from Indo-European. In consulting the standard handbooks I do not find a complete or satisfying account of these clusters. It is our purpose to display here synchronically for Classical Greek a set of indubitable examples of reflexes of base-final consonants preceding dental suffixes to complete the account. In each case, to demonstrate the synchronic status of the cluster source, we pair with the cluster example a specimen of the base not similarly clustered. Such cluster combinations should always be exemplified in complete sets to show the range of possibilities.

k: ἀλέκτωρ "cock" : ἀλκί (dat.), ἀλκή "defence"

ǩ: ἀ-δερκτος "blind" : δέρκομαι, δέδορκα "look at", δράκων -οντ-, Skt. √dŗś-

p: βλεπτός "worth seeing" : βλέπω "look"
κλέπτης "thief", κλέπτρια "theft" : κλέπτω, ἐκλάπην "steal", κλέπος (neut.), κλοπός, Goth. *hlifan*, Eng. (*shop)lift* → κλοπεύς, κλοπή, κλόπιος, κλοπιμαῖος

t: κεστός "embroidered", κέστρος "kind of arrow" : κεντέω "poke", κοντός "poker, pole"
ἀ-δαστος "undivided": δατέομαι "divide"

g: στικτός "branded, spotted": στίγμα, στιγμή, στίζω "prick", German

stechen, Stich, Osset. *stīğyn / styğd, tīğ* "edge, corner", *cyrğ* "sharp"
< **tig-ra-*

ǵ: ῥεκτήρ "agent": ἔργον "work", ἔρδω, ῥέζω, Arm. *gorc*
    ἄκτωρ "leader" : ἄγω, Lat. *agō,* Arm. *acem,* Indic. *ájāmi*

b: στιπτός "trodden": στείβω "tread", στοιβή "plug", στιβαρός "dense,
    packed", Armen. *stipem* "press", *stēp* "frequent"

d: φειστέον "one must spare": φείδομαι "spare"
    ? μεστός "full": Goth. *mitan* "messen"

gʷ: σεπτός "holy" ← σεμνός : σέβομαι "feel awe",
    νιπτήρ "basin", τά νίπτρα "washing water"
    : χέρνῐβες "purifications with holy water", χέρνῐβ(εῐ)ον "hand basin"

gh: λέκτρον "couch", OHG *lehtar* "afterbirth", Lat. *lectus* "bed"
    : λέχος (neut.) "bed", λόχος (masc.) "lair", Slovene *lóga* "deposit",
    Czech *poloha* "position", *lože* "bed, lair", *ležeti* "to lie"

ǵh: ἕκτωρ "Halter", ἑκτικός, ἄ-σχετος "irresistible": ἔχω, ἕξω, σχεῖν, ἴσχω,

bh: θαπτέον "one must bury" : τάφος "burial"
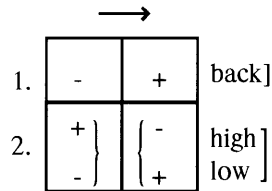
We have thus drawn on the following bases:

$*k^w$	pek^w-
k	$H_a elk$-
$\check{k}$	$de\check{k}$ -, $der\check{k}$-
p	$klep$-, $g^w lep$-
g^w	$bheg^w$-, $tieg^w$-, nig^w-
g	$(s)teg$-, $bheH_o g$-, $steig$-
$\acute{g}$	$he\acute{g}$- , $ure\acute{g}$-
b	$steib$-
$g^w h$	$dheg^w h$-
gh	$legh$-
$\acute{g}h$	$se\acute{g}h$-
bh	$dhrebh$-, $dh(e)mbh$-
t	$dH_a t$-, $\check{k}ent$-
d	$bheid$-, $?med$-
dh	$g^w endh$-

2. On parsimony in reconstruction

I have discussed elsewhere[1] the mechanisms and status of the regularities in

---

Mediaeval and Modern Greek whereby there is a sandhi replacement, when final (Auslaut) and initial (Anlaut) vowels adjoin within a phrase, resulting in the emergence (in surface or underlying form) of either Anlaut zero-syllabic or Anlaut vowel, and in the latter result the "stronger" of the two original vowels according to a gradation of feature strength, expressed in ordered application:

$$
\begin{array}{c}
\longrightarrow \\
1. \quad \boxed{\begin{array}{c|c} - & + \end{array}} \ \text{back]} \\
2. \quad \boxed{\begin{array}{cc} \left.\begin{array}{c} + \\ - \end{array}\right\} & \left\{\begin{array}{c} - \\ + \end{array}\right. \end{array}} \ \begin{array}{l} \text{high} \\ \text{low} \end{array}\Big]
\end{array}
$$

giving, besides zero, the following surface outputs:

$$
[\ \iota \longrightarrow \upsilon
$$
$$
\varepsilon \longrightarrow o
$$
$$
\alpha \qquad]
$$
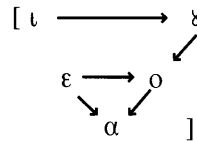
Within this framework the Modern Greek ξάφνου "suddenly, unexpectedly" furnishes an instructive lesson. K. Dieterich long ago (*IF* 16, 10) provided the essence of the source of this expression[2]: *ξαφνοῦ, genitive of ξαφνὸς < the ancient [Greek] phrase ἐξ αἴφνης. In detail, however, this derivation is both inaccurate and in violation of parsimony.

Under the entry ξαφνικός in EΛKN more information is coded in the form of ἔξαφνα, i.e. with -α which might explain the medial -α-. However the full explanation is not overtly given, and might easily escape the unprepared reader. Thus the presentation of Andriotis remains insufficiently explanatory.

The full derivation must be as follows: ἐξ αἴφνης > [εχς ἐφνις] → εξ + (τὰ) ἐφνα → εξ + (τ)άφνα / o[3] > εξ + άφνου → ξάφν-ου → DERIVATIVES, including (from εξ-άφνα) ἄξαφνα (EΛKN, 17β). This sequence, I see, will supplement the account of ΛNEΓ (1998) by specifying the various mechanisms.

No shifts of the accent are necessary. Gender change, outcome with the strong vowel, output with zeroing of ε- are all normal. The conservation of the

2. Summarized by N. Π. Ἀνδριώτη, Ἐτυμολογικὸ Λεξικὸ τῆς Κοινῆς Νεοελληνικῆς, Ἀθήνα 1951, 166β.

3. ἄφνω is attested by E. Legrand's *Nouveau dictionnaire grec moderne français,* and ἐξάφνης for Mediaeval Greek.

genitive case validates the continuity of our locution, which is what language as a social institution implies.

3. On the divergence of a lexeme

The Greek language has been notably conservative in the preservation of word shapes, in the continuity of syllables and of consonants over the past three millennia. It is therefore interesting to note how even in such a language the fates of mildly differing allomorphs can bring about startlingly dissimilar results.

Even after some millennia Armenian ep^hem and Classical Greek ἕψω / hépsǭ/ "I cook" had not diverged to an unrecognizable degree, especially considering the differences often encountered in the surface shapes of cognates in these two languages.

It is striking then to consider the progeny of ἐψήσω / hepsésǭ/ , the future formation of ἕψω, which gave rise in Mediaeval Greek to a new present ψήνω /psénǭ/ > /psino/, with perfectly routine sandhi apocope of the initial vowel. The regular participle, or verbal adjective, to this formation then turns out to be ἐψητόν /hepsętón/ (neuter) > ψητό /psito/ "roasted". I note that ΛΝΕΓ (1998) s.v. ψήνω is disquited ragarding the relation of Armenian ep^hem to ἕψω ἐψη-. I believe there is no problem. Arm. ep^h- would reflect IE *sep-H-, a set base (with a laryngeal extention, a phenomenon recognized by the Hindus); ἐψ- would be IE- *sep-s-, perhaps with a desiderative -s-.

The old verbal adjective to ἕψω /hépsǭ/ was ἐφθός /hepthós/ < */hepstós/. This lived on to become Modern Greek ὀφτός /oftós/ "grilled"[4]. The development is regular for the consonants, and the initial sandhi replacement by o- is routine.

Thus the modern psi-tó and of-tó-s are simply divergences of old allomorphs, with the one extended by a syllabified element, somewhat like English a stone wall vs. a stony beach. But such a subtle distinction is long past in these Greek forms.

E. P. Hamp

---

4. This explanation does not seem to appear in the handbooks. ΛΝΕΤ (1998) writes the headword ὀπτός; the cluster *pkʷ is not at all assured, and the o- remains unexplained.