Proto-Indo-European verb and Slavic etymology

Summary

In Balto-Slavic, the large scope of stem variation within the verbal system inherited from Proto-Indo-European was reduced, on the paradigmatic level, to few apophonic verbs and nasal presents, but the former variety left traces in the lexicon, as alternate stems of an original paradigm gave rise to new paradigms, formally independent and semantically distinguished from each other. Bearing in mind this process may be helpful in solving etymological dilemmas and reconsidering problematic etymologies. This possibility is illustrated here by four instances of an etymological connection reestablishable, in Slavic, between apparently unrelated verbal stems if taking into account the Proto-Indo-European verb morphonology.

1) CSI *mesti, meti ‘to sweep’ and *městi, měto (nasal-infixed present), cf. SCR v(j)etrōmetina ‘windy spot’, vetar mete ‘the wind sweeps’, Russ (veter) metēt ‘it snows’ as compared to Russ dial. vetromjat ‘hole in (the wall of ) a log (cabin)’

2) *u-vēdněti ‘to wither’, originally *‘to dehydrate’ ~ Russ. udit ‘to ripen, i.e. to swell with sap (of grain)’ < Common Slavic *uditi or *uditi < PIE *yend- / *und- (or *oud-), based on a nasal-infixed present as reflected in Olnd unátti ‘springs, wets, bathes’, 3.pl. undánti, cf. OPruss unds, Lith. vanduō ‘water’, Latin unda ‘wave’, ultimately to Sl voda, Heth wātar, wetenas, Gk ἕδωρ, Olnd udán, udnás, etc. ‘water’, perhaps also Olnd ódman- ‘flood, flooding’, Av aōđa- ‘spring, well’. Alternatively *u-v-ēd- < *ēd- beside *ōd- in *ōditi ‘to smoke (meat)’ < *H₂e-n-d- as nasal-infixed variant of *H₂e-d- in Gk ἀẑesthai ‘to dry, wither’, Heth hādu.

3) *včzati ‘to tie, bind’, *včzti ‘to embroider’, *qosa ‘string’, *qže ‘rope’ < *ue-n-ğh- / *u-n-ğh-, to the samprasaraṇa root *ueg(h) / uḡ(h) ‘to weave’ in Olr -fighter, fāig.

4) SCR vēdati ‘to heal’, originally *‘to take the disease, wound, etc. out of the body’ ~ vāditi (also Mac, Bulg) ‘to take out, away (also of contusion, fever, spell)’ < CSI *v-yd- / *vad- < PIE *uH₂d- / *ueH₂d- in Lat vādō, -ère ‘to go’, vādāre ‘to wade’, Osl vāda ind., etc., originally ‘to go taking one self’s feet out of the water’.

Key words: etymology, verb, apophony, nasal presents, Common Slavic, Balto-Slavic, Proto-Indo-European