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Abstract

Etymological studies on the East Slavic vocabulary (*horošiŭ*, (*kamen'*) *Alatyr'*, *Svarogŭ*, *Xŭrsŭ*, *Mogovei'-bird*, *Vostrogot*, *Čečva*, *Iústrica*)

The author suggests new etymologies for some East Slavic words. The adjective *horošiŭ* 'good' (in Old Russian 'beautiful') comes from IE **ker(ə)*- 'burn, blaze' extended by the determinative *-s-*: richly attested **kor-s-* > Proto Slavonic **xor-x-* (> **xoršbjb*) with the affective *x-*, like many other words; i.e., it is related to **krasa* 'beauty'. The name of the magic stone (*A*)*latyr'* (frequently mentioned in the Russian and Belarusian folklore in a large number of variants) originates from Iranian **ar-θra-* or **ar-tra-* 'millstone; mill', reflecting the regular correspondence Slavic *l* : Arian *r* (< IE **l*) or, less likely, the distant dissimilation in Slavic. This etymology is confirmed by the fact that the controversial semantics of the stone *Alatyr'* can be explained only by analogy with the functions of millstone in the Indo-Iranian tradition. The name of the Slavic god of fire **Svarogŭ* is a participle from the Iranian root **x ũr-* < IE **sŭer-* 'paint (mostly with the dark color)', i.e. **Svarogŭ* means 'painting; painter'. This etymology is supported by the same meaning of the Baltic god name *Telyavel'* (this god is supposed to be identical to *Svarog*). The analysis of the early Old Russian written sources (Ostromir's Gospel and chronicles) allows to approve that the original form of the theonym *Xors* is *Xorŭsŭ* and comes from the genitive form of the Iranian word for 'sun' in the omitted combination of words (most likely, 'son of the sun' as a definition of the deity of sunrise). The name of the tale bird *Mogovei'/Magovei'* corresponds to Avestan (Gath.) *magavan-*, adj. 'belonging to the Zoroastrian community' etc. and corresponds to another fairy bird name recorded on the same territory (in the basin of the Mezen, the region of Archangelsk) – *Vostrogot* (*Vostrogor*) that continues Young Avestan *a-srāvayaŭ.gāθā* 'not chanting the Gathas'; i.e., these two mythonyms form an opposition based on the semantic feature 'initiated – uninitiated (into the Zoroastrian doctrine and ritual)'. The stems of the endemic Ukrainian-Serbo-Croatian toponymical counterpart the *Čečva* (a name of the big tributary of the Dniester) and *Čečava* (earlier *Čečva*, a village near Teslić) descend from personal names of the onomatopoeic origin. The name of the bird *Iústrica*, mentioned in two Russian folk puzzles, comes from the Baltic theonym *Aušrà*, *Austra*, that is confirmed by the parallelism of several mythological motives between them. The phonetic side of this etymology is supported by A. A. Zaliznyak's reliable statement that the loss of the *j*-prophetic before *u* in East Slavic was irregular and has got a lot of exclusions. In all these cases the Slavs borrowed not only lexemes, but corresponding mythological concepts and motives as well.

Keywords: *horošiŭ*, East Slavic mythology, Russian folklore, etymology, East Slavic languages, Iranian languages.