

Re: AS gebúr; bauer; neighbour

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- *From:* lorad474@xxxxxx
 - *Date:* Tue, 18 Mar 2008 21:14:40 -0700 (PDT)
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On Mar 18, 1:55 am, Trond Engen <trond...@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

lorad...@xxxxxx skreiv:

On Mar 11, 4:35 pm, Trond Engen <trond...@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

Brian M. Scott skreiv:

[<Craoibhi...@xxxxxxxxxx>:]

On Mar 11, 7:03 pm, Duan
Vukoti
<dusan.vuko...@xxxxxxxxxx>
wrote:

Could
anyone [...] explain [...] what the words neighbour, Ger. Bauer and Serb. seljak (peasant) have in common?

<Seljak> is obviously a derivative of <selo> 'soil, hamlet, village', which is cognate with OIc <salr> 'room, hall'. So

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far as I know, the root is restricted to Gmc.
and
(Balto-)Slavic.

[...]

This is rather messy, apparently. Bjorvand and Lindeman mention
ON/OIc <salr> "hall" m. and <sel> n. "cottage", OE <sele>
and <sæl>
n., etc., find a common meaning "room, single building", and tell
that it's not possible to sort out if it's an original i-, a- or
s-stem. They cite Balt. <sala> f. "village" and Lat. <solum>
"soil"
as cognates, leading back to IE *sel- "settlement", but prefer to
take Slav. <selo> <*sed-lo-. They recount, but reject, the
objection that the semantic connection between the Germanic and
Baltic words is thin. For some reason they don't mention any
semantic problem with Lat. <solum>.

Could this be an old neuter singular/femine collective pair?
Bjorvand (1994) doesn't touch this word, but trying to follow
his
example, I think that a neuter *sal(j)a- "dwelling" could
yield a
non-individualizing collective feminine plural *sal(j)az.

Very nice synthesis... 'salasa' means 'a collection'; Latv. ...
Perhaps the origin of 'sala' (village).

If, and this is a big if, 'salasa' is related, I'd expect it to be a
fairly recent singular based on 'sala' or on the collective plural
*salas "takings, possessions". Is -sa to a feminine or -a to a plural a
regular derivational ending?

Nominative sing.feminine for 'sala'.
Same for 'salasa'

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This would logically mean "village" in the same way as *<engjar>* fpl. "grassland" is derived from *<engi>* ns. "piece of land". (The feminine plural of *<sel>*, *<seljar>*, is known from toponyms, as are many other feminine plurals of neuters.) The dominant forms of this feminine plural are equal to the masculine and might in turn have yielded an analogous masculine *<salr>*. This is not as far-fetched as it may sound, since it happened to several words, e.g. *<óss>* "rivermouth", which has been a masculine in Ins. Scand. and W. Norw. for a long time. (Bjorvand, BTW, takes Lat. *<o:ra>* f. "rim, coast" as a creation from the collective feminine plural of *<o:s>* "mouth".) Baltic has lost the neuter and would have replaced the old neuter singulars with secondary feminines.

Why this concern over gender anyway?
The roots are of greater concern..

Because disturbing details have to be explained. Now the difference in gender and semantics between the Germanic and Baltic forms seemed to fit the hypothesis of the collective feminine plural. If so, the disturbing differences are explained and entirely regular, and both the common etymology and the hypothesis are strengthened.

'Osa' is Latv. for 'river mouth', also.
And also looks to be related to the Latin 'ostia'.

Yes, that's part of the explanation. I was too short.

The neuter **sal(j)a-* could possibly be derived from **sel-* "take".

'To collect'... as I indicated. But as a 'collection/village'.

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I prefer "taking" > "possession" > "dwelling", "dwellings" > "village"
and, perhaps, "possessions" > "collection".

'Gather' is the most I can offer.

think one would need a verbal noun *sVI- "taking" >
"farmland",
perhaps surviving in Lat. <solum>, and take the a-stems as
derivations meaning something like "house on farmland".
But now I'm
far out.

It would be nice to have Slavic <selo> fit into all this, and I
suppose it can be done, but I don't know how.

Well.. The most likely is Baltic 'sala'.. as indicated above..

Not just like that, anyway. Baltic 'sala' is quite likely due to the
Baltic replacement of neuters with secondary feminines, and the stem
vowel is wrong, so, at best, it's an independent formation from the same
verbal root. Or so it seems to me. More disturbing details.

Only disturbing if you adhere to that formulaic recepie.

PPS: Upon looking more closely.. the Latv.'salasa' is a compound... It
is a construct; from the perfective 'sa' + 'lasiit' meaning 'to
gather together'. This may not preclude any direct genetic
relationship as regards 'germanic' or Slavic (sala/selo) related
words.. but does reduce the possiblity of the existence of any
previous root having been common to all three on independent tracks
(*pie).

PPS: interesting happenstance: 'Upsala' means 'river island' or 'river
town' in Baltic.. can I presume 'high town' in Old Swedish?

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