

# Re: AS gebúr; bauer; neighbour

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*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.lang/2008-03/msg00740.html>

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- *From:* Trond Engen <[trondnet@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:trondnet@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Wed, 19 Mar 2008 15:50:51 +0100
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lorad474@xxxxxx skreiv:

On Mar 18, 1:55 am, Trond Engen <[trond...@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:trond...@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx)> wrote:

lorad...@xxxxxx skreiv:

On Mar 11, 4:35 pm, Trond Engen  
<[trond...@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:trond...@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx)> wrote:

Brian M. Scott skreiv:

[<[Craoibhi...@xxxxxxxxxx](mailto:Craoibhi...@xxxxxxxxxx)>:]

On Mar 11,  
7:03 pm,  
Duaan  
Vukoti  
<[dusan.vuko...@xxxxxxxxxx](mailto:dusan.vuko...@xxxxxxxxxx)>  
wrote:

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

Re: AS *gebúr*; *bauer*; neighbour

common?

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

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Same for 'salasa'.. although the related 'salashnas' is atypical ('as').

OK. No way to derive it as sala-sa or salas-a, then.

[...]

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

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

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

'Gather' is the most I can offer.

[Moving up:]

PS: Upon looking more closely.. the Latv.'salasa' is a compound... It is a construct; from the perfective 'sa' + 'lasiit' meaning 'to gather together'.

That makes sense, and I should have guessed. The originally strong verb 'lese' < \*las- is used for "gather (fruits etc.) (arch.); interpret (signs); read". The multiple meanings may be due to a calque based on Lat. <lect->. The weak verb 'lære' "teach" is possibly from a causative \*laisijan- or some such, in which case the calque is old.

'Salaanas' above is a straightforward derivation with the ending -nas. "Collectedness"?

This may not preclude any direct genetic relationship as regards 'germanic' or Slavic (sala/selo) related words.. but does reduce the possibility of the existence of any previous root having been common to all three on independent tracks (\*pie).

The Baltic and Germanic forms based on \*sal- seem to be close correspondences. Salasa is based on \*las-, which also has a close correspondence in Germanic.

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.

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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.

Without regularity, there's nothing.

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

"Uptown" or "inland town", perhaps, if we accept the collective meaning of the feminine plural. A more traditional explanation would be "the upper (or upland) halls", with some ad-hoc fix added to account for the feminine. 'Upp' is like its English cognate 'up', a directional adverb with a literal, geographical meaning.

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Trond Engen  
– saler opp

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