

To the reconstruction of Common Slavic agricultural terminology (**tokъ* ‘threshing-floor’)

Etymological studies have always been connected with the research of ethnic history and culture. Particularly the importance of etymology has recently been appreciated in reconstructing of ancient cultures, including Slavic one [Benveniste, Trubachev].

One of the most significant reconstructed spheres is agriculture which is studied by means of research of its terminology in the ancestral language of all Slaves.

In this report I consider the problem of the origin of the Common Slavic term **tokъ* ‘threshing-floor’. According to the traditional treatment, this noun stems from the verb **tekti* ‘to move’: running horses circle a device for grain threshing. Thus the meaning changes from **tekti* ‘to move’ to **tokъ* ‘place where something (somebody) is moving’ [Fasmer 4: 70; Machek: 531].

This noun is undoubtedly included in the family of the verb **tekti* but I would like to offer another semantic base for it.

In Slavic languages (as obviously in other Indo-European languages) words with the initial meaning ‘movement of a liquid’ quite often develop the meaning ‘movement of dry substances’. For example, Rus. dial. *výlit* ‘to pour out’ (*Krupu nado vylit’ iz meshochka*), *plávit’sya* ‘to fall’ (*Korzina neprochnaya okozalas’*. *Chernirtsya plavitsya iz neyo. Pesok iz-pod nog tak i plavitsya*), *tochít* ‘to spill’ (*Ne tochi psheno-to*), Ukr. *tékti* ‘pour out (for sand, grain)’, Blr. *tochítstva* id, Pol. *zalać, zalewać* ‘to fill up (e.g. with coins)’.

The derivative meaning from ‘pouring out’ is ‘falling of grain from a spike’. For example, Rus. dial. *istekát* ‘to fall (for grain in a spike)’, *oplávit’sya* id., Ukr. *tékti* id.; whence – Rus. *tochók* ‘heap of grain’, *sol’yé* ‘grain’, *plavún* ‘kind of flax with falling seeds’, *tekún* ‘kind of poppy with falling seeds’, Blr. *tsekún* id., Pol. *ciekun* id., Blr. *ploushachki* ‘siftings in grain threshing’, *ploushy* id. (cf. Lit. *plaušos* id.).

Probably **tokъ* ‘threshing-floor’ is related to this group of words. Consequently, the initial meaning of this noun could be formulated as ‘place where grain is poured out’.

References

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