Slovenski jezik

Slovene Linguistic Studies

Resian *Pëňt'/Pëgnt'* 'Stone, Cliff'

It is not obvious what the Indo-Europeans would call a 'stone', i.e., how they would characterize it. I, like others, have been attracted to this question many years ago (Hamp 1967). This past year I have been forced to re-read what I said—my mind was not very clear where I had got to: I was sure I was undecided! What is clear is that a fair number of details, important ones, need revising—even beyond refining (e.g., Latin lapis, and Greek λᾶας)—but that is a job for another day. I see that I vacillated on a continuum between stone (e.g., pebble or gravel or slate) and mountain (via rock or cliff). I shall not depart, except in specificity, very far from that theme, at least for one parameter.

Of course, semantics must be parametric. And that must explain Slavic *kamy*, gen. *kamene* and Lith. *akmuõ,* gen. *akmens* (as well as ON *hamarr*)[1] and *skalá*. Resia has (Chinese-Huġjöu 2003: 146) *skalä* 'pietra'.

Chinese (2003: 155) reports *pëć* as 'sasso', *pëćynë* as 'sassoso', and *pyćyzä* as 'sassolino'. Regarding the *y* vocalism of the last, cf. the paradigm of Hamp 1993: 61 for *dësc* 'pioggia', *discgn-* [dižn̦-].

sg. nom. dësc[2]
    acc. dësc
    dat. discgnò
    instr. discgnän
    loc. discgnè
    gen. discgnà

Chinese reports as a native speaker of the Rožajánskë koro. He writes *ë, y* for muffled[3] *e* and *i* (≠ "clear" *e* and *i*), and *ć* for *cj, tj* (≠ *č*).[4]

Documentation of San Giorgio: *pę́ć,* gen. *paćɛ* 'boulder, stone', dat./loc. *pićə*, gen. pl., gen. pl. *pićí* (Steenwijk 1992: 292; 100 § 4.3.5.1); *pić̦ca* (diminutive).

Earlier attestations (Pleteršnik 1895) *pę̂č -î* fem. 1. 'Ofen'; 2. 'Fels' (Cigale 1860), ~*ína*; *peć* 'Stein' (rezijan.-Cafovo) -*ę̂n* adj. 'aus Stein'; *pę́ča* 'Felsenhöhle', Grotte'; *pečár, -rja* 'Steinhauer' (rezijan.-Cafovo) '*peči kreše*'; -*ę́ven* 'felsig'; -*evína* 'Felsenstück'; and productive suffixation.

As we shall see, the presence of the lexeme is assured, but too little of the inflection is displayed, and of course interesting phonology is concealed by graphic poverty. Our Resian evidence will be priceless. And once again we find ourselves indebted to the

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[1] On the eightieth birthday of Jože Toporišič a *kamen* for *hamarr,* in *kamen* from a *kmen* or a *hamarr*.

[2] In San Giorgio the alternation of the root vowel is absent, cf. nom. sg. *dësc*, gen. sg. *dëscgnà* (Hamp 1993: 61).

[3] See Steenwijk 1992: 7 § 1–2 ff., 1.4.2.1, 2, 4, 5.

[4] Steenwijk 19–32; 34 § 2.2.3.5; 49 ff., esp. 56.

late and beloved Anna Pusca Źekawa, whose astounding purity in the use of her language instructs us powerfully in our present problem, and is indispensible to a correct explanation of this important lexeme.

I repeat here the presentation of the inflexional paradigm of the noun *pëgnt'*, used and repeated countless times for me by Anna Ź. from 1976 until one year before her death, a paradigm constructed by me and published in Hamp 1993: 63 (orally 1991). All the forms presented in these paradigms were collected by me separately in complete natural sentences without attracting attention to the word in question.

There can be no question that the true ancient form of the noun is, in Osoane stem citation: *pëɲt'* (or *pëňt'* or *pëgnt'*) ~ weak-case oblique *pęt'*-. The sole published form which I have found to match this is *pënć* in the context …*si zrabol…nu pod no pënć…* 'si era fatto … tana sotto un grande sasso', in *Volpe* p. 6, ¶ 5, l. 3. (NB on p. 4: La rilettura del testo…in collaborazione con la signora Anna Pusca Čekawa):

sg.	nom.	pëgnt'
	acc.	pëgnt'
	dat.	pęt'è
	instr.	pęt'ò
	loc.	pęt'è
	gen.	pęt'ę̀
du.	nom./acc.	pęt'è
pl.	nom./acc.	pëgnt'è ~ pęt'ę̀
	dat.	pęt'ěn
	inst.	pęt'ème
	loc.	pęt'ähh
	gen.	pęt'ì

This accusative (NB *no* < *dnǫ) must confirm the validity of the strong-case form of Anna's paradigm, and Osoane shows us a true continuation of this Proto-Slavic *i*-stem or consonant-stem noun (perhaps an *agent *t*-stem rather than a *nomen actionis). We seem to have pre-Slavic **pénVt-* ~ *pn(H)t-*́ vel sim., or phonologically something close to *péta* 'heel', Russ. *pjatá*, Pol. *pięta*, Slvk. *päta* gen. pl. *piat*, Cz. *pata*, Croat. *péta* < *pęta, Lith. *péntis* : πτέσνη (**tpe(n)tsnH$_a$*, i.e., *tpen/r-t + sn-H$_a$*), pre-Skt. *pā́rsn-i-*, Latin *perna*, with complexities.

A task for another day is the elimination of kinship to other lexemes, e.g., Slvk. *päst'*, Cz *pěst*, cf. Machek (s.v.) and Ramovš (1936: 26–27, 30–34, 39ff.). But by far the most promising phonology and morphology is to be seen in Pol. *pień*, Cz. *peň* (Machek, p. 61), Croat *pânj* (Skok, p. 600) , and Slovene *pêcelj*, all from *pin(-*i*)-. But the semantics 'stump, trunk, stem, stalk' seems at first not encouraging.

Yet now, Slovak appears to be genuinely helpful: To *pěn, pňa* 'stump, trunk' we attach *pnik* 'stump', *pniak* 'large stump, stub', and these we derive from *pniet'* 'stick out', protrude, rise (– *sa*, Cz *pnouti se*). This leads to a gloss such as 'tower, rise high' and we may recall Pleteršnik's 'Fels'.

Now, when we remember 'Fels, cliff, and sasso' for Resia one thinks of the karst of the Trst area of limestone caves have collapsed. There are even such holes

between Prato/Ravënca and San Giorgio/tuw Bile where cabbages now grow. Does this suggest the route where Resians travelled from the east to reach Carnia westward behind the mountains?

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