

Slavic **ljuby* ‘love’ < **lewb^h-ōs* and the heterogeneity of the **-y*, **-ьve* inflectional class

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§1. It has been intermittently noted in individual studies, though not sufficiently appreciated either in Slavicist or IE-ist literature, that PSI. feminine nouns in **-y*, **-ьve* are not universally old *uh*-stems (**bry* **brьve* ‘eyebrow’ < **h₃b^hruh-*, Gr. ὀφρῦς; **svekry* **svekrьve* ‘mother-in-law’ < **swekruh₂-*, Ved. *śvaśrū-*) but may have other PIE sources too.¹ A number of nouns appear to have developed a NOM.SG in **-y* from a different phonologically regular source and subsequently innovated a full paradigm in **-y* **-ьv-*, by analogy to examples like **svekry* **svekrьve*.²

§2. Cf. **ǵlh₂-ōs* ‘husband’s sister’ (Lat. *glōs*, Gr. Att. γάλως) yielding PSI. **zъly*,³ which then developed a full paradigm with OBL **zъьv-* (rather than ***zъlas-* or ***zъles-*) analogically. (Witczak 1998).⁴

§3. A conspicuous group of PSI. words in **-y*, **-ьve* are adjectival abstracts, conventionally analyzed as **-u-h₂*. However, there is no correlation with PSI. *u*-stem adjectives, and the type is generally poorly documented in IE [isolated examples: Gr. *iθύς* ‘straight’ → *iθύς* (f.) ‘direction’, Ved. *tanú-* ‘thin’ → *tanū-* (f.) ‘body’].

§4. In the present study, it is suggested that such PSI. abstracts may at least partly originate from PIE *s*-stems as well. Thus, the familiar PSI. **ljuby* **ljubьve* ‘love’ (source of the word for ‘love’ in a number of modern Sl. languages, cf. Ru. *ljubónь*, B/C/S *ljúbav*) can be derived from an amphikinetic *s*-stem abstract **lewb^h-ōs*. The existence of the latter can be surmised based on the following observations:

- In the closely related Balt., the only trace of the root **lewb^h-* ‘please, infatuate’ is Lith. *liaupsė* ‘praise’ (and derivatives). This isolated word can now be interpreted as a derivative of the very *s*-stem that is continued directly in Sl. (via **lewb^h-s-iyō-* etc.).
- In the ancient IE languages,⁵ the (rare) abstract type in **-ōs* correlates with the semantics of emotion/mental state. The clearest examples are Ved. *bhiyás-* ‘fear’, Gr. *αἰδώς αἰδῶος* ‘awe’, *ἔρωξ ἔρωτος* (earlier **ἔροπος*⁶) ‘desire’.
- Furthermore, these abstracts seem to correlate with root middles and other ‘stative-intransitive’ formations (*bháyate* ‘fear’, *αἰδομαι* ‘be ashamed’, *ἔρωμαι* ‘to love’). This sort of alignment can be suspected for the root **lewb^h-* as well (Majer 2015).

¹ Loanwords from Germanic etc. are not considered here.

² Such developments have good parallels in Slavic; cf. the old *r(n)*-stems **voda* ‘water’, **doba* ‘(right) time’, which got (almost) completely integrated into the *ā*-stem paradigm and feminine gender after acquiring a NOM.SG in **-a* < **-ōr*. See Ackermann 2014.

³ Phonological development known from inflectional morphology, such as **nōs* ‘us’ > PSI. **ny* etc.

⁴ For certain other proposed cases see Snoj 1994: 505–506, Repanšek 2016.

⁵ Excluding Lat., where the type in *-ōs/-or*, *-ōris* became very productive.

⁶ Weiss 1998.

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