# Lith. *šiēnas*, OChSl. *sěno* 'hay' and IE *k̂ei-* 'to lie'

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*Lith. šiēnas and OChSl. sěno 'hay' are traditionally connected with Greek (Hesych.) κοινά 'χόρτος', but no reliable etymology has been proposed as far. Here a connection with the IE root *k̂ei- 'to lie' is suggested.*

In this article a new explanation is proposed for Lith. *šiēnas*, Latv. *sìens* and its Slavonic cognates OChSl. *sěno*, Rus. *сено*, Serb.-Cr. *sȉjeno*, Pol. *siano* (Vasmer 1987: 601).

Most authors dealing with these words (Trautman 1923: 297; ME$_{III}$ 1927–1929: 859; Pokorny 1959: 610; Fraenkel 1965: 980; Vasmer 1987: 601 etc.) merely repeat Per Persson's (1893: 257) suggestion according to which Lith. *šiēnas*, OChSl. *sěno* could be related to Gr. (Hesych.) κοινά 'χόρτος; Grass' (< *koi-no-*, possibly neuter plural). Persson wrote: "Über die wurzel von κοινά, lit. *szėnas*, abg. *sěno* möchte ich nicht entscheiden" ("As to the root... I would not like to commit myself") and he repeated the idea of Fick and Brugmann according to which the words under discussion could be connected with OInd. *śyāná-* 'trocken geworden', *śīná-* 'geronnen', though Persson thought that the meaning 'hay, grass' could not be old.

Būga (1959: 170) reconstructs Balt. *šeina-n* (according to him OChSl. *sěno* < IE *koino-m* would correspond to Lith. *šainas*). Karulis (1992: 177) supposes that the word for 'hay' corresponds to an IE root *k̂ei-* underlying colour terms such as Lith. *šývas*, *šěmas* 'grey (of a horse)'.

The evidence adduced below allows us to reconstruct a Balto-Slavic archetype *śei-na / śaina* (neuter gender).

The phonetical correspondences point to an initial *ś-* which manifests itself in Lith. *šienas* and appears in a number of Baltic-Fennic loanwords as *h-* < *ś-* (Fin. *heinä*, Est. *hein*, Veps. *hein*, Vot. *einä* and SEst. *hain*, Liv. *āina*, Sam. *suoid'ne*; cf. Thomsen 1891: 223; Būga 1959: 170; Stang 1966: 54). The same correspondence is observed in Fin. *herne* 'pea' from a Baltic word reflected in Lith. *žìrnis* 'id.' There are two reflexes of the root vocalism, viz. *-ei-* and *-ai-*, as far as we can judge from the evidence of the Baltic-Fennic loanwords (cf. Fin. *heinä*, Est. *hein* as opposed to SEst. *hain*, Liv. *āina*) as well as from Old Church Slavonic *sěno* < *śaina*. The attested Baltic forms Lith. *šiēnas*, Latv. *sìens* yield no evidence as to the original diphthong because Lithuanian and Latvian *ie* can also go back to *ai*: cf. Lith. *diēvas* 'God' : Fin. *taivas*, Est. *taevas* 'sky', Lith. *piemuõ* 'shepherd' : Gr. ποιμήν, Fin. *paimen* 'shepherd' etc. This

entitles us to assume that both forms (*šeina and *šaina) could have coexisted in the old Baltic and Slavic dialects (though not both in the same dialect). OChSl. sěno and Fin. heinä point to a neuter gender ending Balt. *-a (cf. Fin. silta : Lith. tìltas 'bridge', OPr. assara-n, Rus. озеро: Lith. ẽžeras 'lake') which is discussed in Mažiulis (1970: 84–87). A derivational analysis reveals a root *šei-/šai- and a suffix -na- as in Lith. bérnas, Latv. bḛrns, Got. bairns 'child' : IE *bʰer- 'to carry' (Gr. φέρω, Lat. ferre, Goth. bairan etc.).

I would like to venture here that Lith. šiẽnas, OChSl. sěno derive from the IE verbal root *k̂ei- 'to lie, liegen'.

IE k̂ei- 'to lie, liegen' is attested in most IE languages: Hitt. kitta(ri), OInd. śeté, Gr. κεῖται 'liegt'; with m-suffix: OIr. coim 'lieb', Goth. haims 'Dorf, Flecken', Lith. šeimà (> Fin. heimo), Latv. sàime, Rus. семья 'family', OPr. caymis, Lith. káimas 'Dorf', kiẽmas, Latv. cìems 'Dorf, Versammlungshaus', with u̯o-suffix: OInd. śeváḥ 'traut, freundlich, lieb, wert', Lat. cīvis 'Bürger', Goth. heiwa-frauja 'Hausherr', OHG. hīwa 'Gattin', Latv. siẽva 'Weib' (Pokorny 1959: 539–540; Rix 2001 s.v.).

An overview of Baltic words derived from the IE root *k̂ei- 'to lie, liegen' (not mentioning Lith. šiẽnas, OChSl. sěno) is given in Mažiulis (1993 s. v. caymis; 1993 s. v. keytaro), Toporov (1980 s. v. caymis).

The argumentation I have to offer in support of this hypothesis is based on the following semantic considerations.

(i) To the above examples we could add Lith. šíekstas, šíeksta 'tree or bush lying in the water' (LKŽ$_{XIV}$ 735–737), Latv. sieksts, siêksta (< *šei-sta-) (Karulis 1992: 176–177), which could also be related to IE *k̂ei- 'to lie, liegen' and show a certain similarity to Lith. šienas with respect to their derivational model.

(ii) Goth. hawi, Germ. Heu, Engl. hay, Swed. hö 'hay' and Germ. heuen, Engl. hew, Swed. hugga 'to cut hay' derive from Proto-Germ. *kau-i̯/u̯-o- 'that which is cut, that which is to be cut' (Onions 1966: 431, 439), which can be traced back to IE *keh₂u- 'to cut, schlagen' (Rix e.a. 2001 s. v.). Now if we accept the assumption that that which is cut is lying down, a semantic connection can be established between Proto-Germanic *kau-i̯/u̯-o- 'that which is cut, that which is to be cut' and Balt. (or Balto-Sl.) *šeina/ šaina, and in that case we could attempt to connect the latter with IE *k̂ei- 'to lie, liegen'. The Germanic tribes could have imagined hay as the grass which has been cut (and is therefore lying to the ground) whereas the Old Baltic (and Slavic) tribes could have imagined it as the grass which is lying down after cutting (cf. Lith. pjauti šieną 'to cut the hay' and kirsti rugius 'to cut the rye'[1]). Of course, such a comparison would require more typological parallels from other languages.

As far as Gr. (Hesych.) κοινά 'grass, hay' is concerned, it would be possible to assume a similar origin and structure (*koi-no- from the IE root *k̂ei- reflected in

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[1] The use of different verbs for 'cutting the hay' and 'cutting the rye' was pointed out to me by Prof. Vytautas Mažiulis (p.c.).

Gr. κεῖται), but, on the other hand, its similarity to the Baltic and Slavonic words could also rest on a mere phonetic and semantic coincidence.

## ABBREVIATIONS

LIV – *Lexikon der indogermanischen Verben. Die Wurzeln und ihre Primärstammbildungen*. Unter Leitung von H. Rix, unter der Mitarbeit vieler anderer bearbeitet von M. Kümmel, T. Zehnder, R. Lipp, B. Schirmer. Zweite, erweiterte und verbesserte Auflage bearbeitet von M. Kümmel und H. Rix, Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2001.

LKŽ – *Lietuvių kalbos žodynas* I–XX, Vilnius, 1941–2002.

ME – *Kārļa Mǖlenbacha latviešu valodas vārdnīca* I–IV. Rediģējis, papildinājis, turpinājis J. Endzelīns, Rīga, 1923–1932.

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