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SOME UNRESOLVED ISSUES IN LIBORIUS DEPKIN'S LATVIAN-GERMAN DICTIONARY

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Any discussion of the unpublished dictionary by Liborius Depkin (1652-1708) must be prefaced with the observation that the manuscript (LD) as we have it is by no means ready for publication, not only because the material is largely unordered, but also, and more pertinently, because Depkin has accumulated a very large number of examples from various sources which are often inconsistent with one another. That Depkin has not on the whole introduced editorial consistency into the corpus strongly suggests that his manuscript is basically a collection of notes on which he intended to work more seriously when the data-gathering phase had been completed. Thus, when citing Depkin, we must recognise that we are normally citing his sources, rather than adducing his own opinion. This is a question to which we shall return below. Nonetheless, Depkin's eclecticism provides us with a broad overview of the language of the time, although admittedly as this was perceived by the contemporary Baltic-German clergy.

A case in point is the conjugation of verbs ending in *-ināt*. Conventional wisdom has it that such verbs (e.g., *aicināt* 'to invite') are conjugated according to the third conjugation, unlike the overwhelming majority of *-āt* verbs (e.g., *runāt*, 'to speak') which are conjugated in the second conjugation.

In the 17th century, however, not all authors conform to this principle: Fürecker, for example, writes *winsch mitt mittina* "Er entläst sich nach gerade, gar sehr" (Für. I, 147; Für. II, 230) and the same sentence appears in MLG, 320R, with attribution to Fürecker. Here the form *mittina* is present, third person singular and seemingly third conjugation. One page later, however, we have *Mittina-jatees, draudsiņi* 'langt zu, thut euch wohl freunde' (Für. I, 148; Für. II, 231), which too is taken over by MLG (321). In this instance the verb is second person plural imperative, and obviously of the second conjugation. Somewhat anecdotally, we may add here that we have

observed similar fluctuations in modern speech and writing. The only early grammarian to pronounce on the question is G.F. Stender:

“Die *Polysyllaba* in naht aber gehen auf beyderley Art, als: skubbinaht ‘*anspuđen*’,

es skubbinaju, tu skubbina, wińsch skubbina

[presupposing the continuation -ajam, -ajat/-ajeet, -a – TGF]

auch es skubbinu, tu skubbini, wińsch skubbina.

[presupposing the continuation -am, -at, -a – TGF]

Aber dahwinaht geht blos nach der *littera characteristică*.”

[i.e., -aju, -a, -a, -ajam, -ajat/-ajeet, -a – TGF]

[Stender 1761, 46, § 100(2)]

This statement is repeated in Stender (1763, 46, § 100(2)). The same view is expressed in Stender (1783, 87, § 93), but here the reference to the special status of *dahwinaht* has been omitted. Thus, for Stender at least, either model is acceptable for the entire group of *-ināt* verbs.

There is an obvious ambiguity in the third person (singular and plural), where the termination *-a* may represent either a short *a* or a long *a*, except for rare instances in which the spelling is *-ah*, e.g., *lahdinah* (Für. I, 120) as opposed to *lahdina* (Für. II, 195) and *suttinah* (Für. I, 18; II, 10), which appears as *suttina* in MLG (12 and 308).

For the first person singular, *-aju* is the only ending cited by LD in that part of the manuscript (the first quarter) which we have been able to study in detail: thus *apleezinaju* (LD 825) and *dsimdinaju* (LD 370), as opposed to Adolphi's (1685) *darrinu* and *tezzinu* (Adolphi, 57). In the second person singular (indicative and imperative), Depkin's *apleezinajees* (LD 825) and *isluttina* (LD 871) are in line with Adolphi's *kureesina* (Adolphi, 250) and *purrsina* (Adolphi, 249), while Fürecker is more flexible: cf. *kirzina* (Für. I, 106; Für. II, 171) but *wirrini* (Für. I, 282; Für. II, 496). Mancelius, on the other hand, seems to use *-i* more regularly: *ee=dädseni* (Mancelius 1638, XII, 309), *ee=kurrini* and *ißwirrini* (Mancelius 1638, XI and XII, 307), *raddini* (Mancelius 1638, VII, 274), *raudini* (Mancelius 1638, V, 249).

The reflexive forms of the third person seem to be consistently in the second conjugation. Thus Depkin has *paaugstinajahs* (LD 113), *liddinajahs* (LD 288), *lihdsinajahs* (LD 833, 845, 846) among numerous other examples, and Fürecker too regularly has the second conjugation ending *-a(h)ja(h)s*: *audsinajahs* (Für. I, 20; Für. II, 28; MLG 27) and *wihzinahjas* (albeit in another hand: Für. II, 529R), and this same regularity seems to hold for the first and second persons plural, with which we include here the present participle passive, since this is directly derivable from the first person plural of the present indicative. Depkin's examples include *dseedinajams* (LD 337, 453), *gohdinajams* (LD 436), *lihdsinajams* (LD 845, 846) and *ne islihdsinajamâ* (LD 827, 845). Fürecker has *mehdsinajam* (Für. I, 157; Für. II, 222). Langius has *kustinahjams* (Langius, 65). The only counter-example we have found is *Midsinama dseesma* (Für. II, 272L, in another hand). The second person plural (indicative and imperative) follows the same pattern: Depkin gives *peedsirdinajeet* (LD 355) and *lihdsinajeetes* (LD 827), forms which are not contradicted elsewhere in the material readily available to us: thus *mittinajatees* (Für. I, 148; II, 231 and MLG 321), *rassinahjeet* (Langius, 108).

If we can believe the evidence of the various 17th-century authors mentioned above, then we are led by and large to accept Stender's view of the facts, perhaps incorporating some reference to preferred variants particularly in the first and second persons plural. Endzelīns (1951, 833-837, §§ 662-664) introduces some regional and dialectal considerations, but concedes that the historical development of these verbs is rather unclear.

Another point of interest is the application of masculine endings to nouns that were (and still are) widely held to be feminine. Variations in stem-class have long been recognised (see Fennell 1991, 339-340, and the literature there cited on pp. 345-346), but it is less common for a shift in class to be accompanied by a shift in gender. Nonetheless, shifts in gender (real or imaginary) from singular to plural are not completely unknown: cf. Adolphi (1685, 25-26) who gives for the masculines *Tirgus* and *Allus* the parallel plural forms (*tee*) *Tirgi* / *tahs Tirgus*, (*tee*) *Alli* / *tahs Allus*. Cf. likewise the now non-standard masculine plural *uguņi* for the feminine noun *uguns*.

The forms given in LD also include several adjectives, thereby exemplifying an aspect of the general problem which has been even less researched than the issue of nouns.

In inflectional morphology, it is normally the plural that is most affected by the apparent gender shift. Instances in the singular are rarer: *Grahmats* for *Grahmata* (LD 432) presumably indicates that the source considered the word to be masculine throughout, which would render the example irrelevant for our purposes. Genitives of the type *dseeśma=Laiks* (LD 335) are perhaps more pertinent, but may well reflect a different phenomenon altogether. They are discussed inconclusively in Fennell (1991, 340-341). In fact, in addressing the forms in question from the point of view of word-compounding, V. Prikṇa (subsequently Skujiṇa) (Prikṇa 1960, 32, 104, 105) proposed a very different approach, viz. that the vowel *-a* in such examples should be considered as a compositional morpheme (and thus removed from any affiliation with case forms, along the lines of the English *-o-* in phrases like Franco-Prussian, Anglo-Indian, etc. or the spurious genitive plural *-u* discussed by Zeps (1990, 597-599) as in *peldu iestāde*. Zeps (1990, 598) concludes:

“It is my contention that the FGP [false genitive plural – TGF] is not a genitive plural at all, but a connecting (derivational) empty morpheme, like the *-o-* in English *laundr-o-mat*.”

In view of the possibility that the *-a* of *dseeśma-Laiks* is likewise not a genitive at all, let us pass on directly to the plural forms.

One of the most striking examples in the nominative plural is the form *gulti* (for *gultas*: LD 473). Presumably this struck Depkin as so unusual that he appended the comment “erit corrig.” [‘will need to be corrected’] – a rare example of explicit editorial intervention, which stands in contrast with the similar example *Glaima*. pl. *Glaimi* (LD 417), where no annotation was added. In similar vein we may cite *wehtri* (for *wehtras*: LD 392), *sehkli* (for *sehklas*: LD 835) and *sohsi* (for *sohsis*: LD 381), among other examples. In a few instances, e.g., *diwi dsihśli* (for *diwas dsihślas*: LD 352 – although a nominative singular *dsihślis* is mentioned earlier in the same entry), *diwi reisi* (for *diwas reises*, and syntactically an accusative? – LD 317) it is possible that the forms are survivals of the old dual – cf. *abi kāji*,

diwi roki. See further Endzelīns (1951, 450-452, §§ 314-315). Consequently it would be premature to regard these latter in the same light as our earlier examples.

A further complication arises with the example *Nejehgi* (LD 485), since we are here dealing with a masculine *ā*-stem. *Nejehga* belongs to the same morphological sub-group as *puika*, *lauva*, *slep-kava* and others. In the modern standard, these words, although masculine, are to be declined with feminine endings throughout, except in the dative singular, where the masculine termination *-am* is used instead of the feminine *-ai* (Mllvg I, 416-417, §§ 473-474). Stender (1783, 39, § 29) declines *slep-kava* with masculine endings throughout (except, obviously, in the nominative singular), thereby giving in the plural Nom. *šlepkawi*, Dat. *šlepkaweem*, Acc. *šlepkawus*, Loc. *šlepkawôs*. In espousing this view, Stender is merely perpetuating the view first expressed by Adolphi (1685, 27) that masculine *ā*-stems are to be declined like Wihrs. Thus Depkin's form *Nejehgi* (LD 485) need not be considered unusual for the 17th and 18th centuries, and the same could be said of his dative plural *Nejehgeems* (LD 485), although his wording *starp Nejehgeems pro nejehgahms* might well be taken as implying some dissatisfaction with the masculinisation, and the issue is raised again by his remarks elsewhere on the declension of *lauva*. Insisting on the masculine status of *lauva* ("generis masc. et terminatione foeminin." – LD 593), Depkin nonetheless offers *lauwa berni*, in breach of his own dictate, contrasting with *ruhkdami Lauwas* (LD 799). On the following page, there are similar remarks and similarly contrasting examples (LD 800). Somewhat later, he concedes a parallel nominative singular *Lauwis*, a form which is not to be found in ME or EH.

In the dative plural we find such forms as *Awjeem* (LD 354), *dsihreem* (LD 343), *Gatweem* (alongside *Gatwehm* and *Gatwahn*: LD 400), *iskapteem* (LD 505), *Lahseem* (LD 786) and *dsihšleem* (LD 778), but worthy of special note are two examples where a masculine adjective is used in association with a feminine noun which retains its feminine ending: *ar diweem durwihm* (LD 365) and *ar ihsteem wehstim* (LD 551). The early grammarians have nothing to say about examples of this kind, although as far as the incongruence is concerned

there is an extraordinary parallel in Langius: "*Bittes nohslaidúschees in śasmettuschas uhs kruhm*" [‘The bees have flown down and settled on a bush’ – Langius, 18a] where a masculine plural reflexive past participle is used in agreement (or disagreement?) with an obviously feminine subject. It can hardly be claimed that the feminine plural form was unknown, given that it occurs two words later.

On the other hand, there are indications in early grammarians of masculine-looking feminines in the accusative plural. Leaving aside the rather strange paradigms in Rehehusen (1644, 8), we observe that Dreszell (1685, 7, 8, 11) notes as regular the accusatives plural *Seewas* / *Šeewus* (preferring in fact the latter), *Mahtes* / *Mahtus* and *Ahwis* / *Ahwus*, thereby allowing the masculine ending *-us* in all three feminine declensional types. From Depkin's material we may cite *luhpus* (quoting and querying Mancelius: LD 870) and *Pukkus* (without comment: LD 785). In respect of forms like these, one might well take issue with Endzelīns, whose response to an accusative plural *sēklus* was to hypothesise the possible existence of a masculine noun "**sēkls(??)*" alongside the normal feminine *sēkla* (EH, 481). In the same entry, Endzelīns noted also "*auzus statt auzas!*" but was not led thereby to contemplate a masculine variant **auzi*.

Coming to the locative plural, we note such forms as *dsirnôs* (LD 879), *robeshôs* (LD 103), *Madlenôs* (LD 874), along with the exceptional triple example *wiśśôs Mallôs* et *Weetôs* (LD 880), where the two nouns are associated with an adjective. These locative forms are not, to the best of our knowledge, mentioned in the literature, and Depkin appends no comment on them.

As far as derivational morphology is concerned, there are occasional instances where feminine nouns give rise to masculine diminutive forms: thus *dseešmīnšch* (which has actually been corrected to *dseešmīna*, LD 336) invites us to speculate that Depkin is not keen on the gender shift, although the numerous examples of *mahrzīnšch* (LD 883, 884) have been left untouched. Depkin's view becomes rather more explicit with the example *mallīnôs* (LD 880), to which he has added "*ist nicht recht. melius Mallīnâs.*" While, in view of what we have seen above, the two last-mentioned could theoretically be associated with a feminine nominative singular, this cannot be

the case for the first two, which parallel numerous similar examples in Langius, e.g., *Laiwiņgs* (Langius, 43), *Lappiņgs* (Langius, 68a), *Rohziņgs* (Langius, 9a), *Dwähselihds* (Langius, 33a). Again the literature is silent on the point, and in spite of Depkin's stance, there would appear to have been some difference in usage among the 17th-century writers. Reasons might be sought in the regional variants represented by the divergent forms noted, particularly Langius' exposure to Tamian forms, but much work remains to be done before there can be any certainty over the fidelity of the forms found in Depkin's sources on this and other matters, since the number of references which would need to be checked is enormous: a very rough estimate would be from 50,000 to 100,000!

But even that is not the end of the matter. The very preliminary and cursory checking that we have been able to undertake has revealed another major problem.

While it remains true that Depkin did not on the whole edit or standardise his material, it is also the case that he did not always faithfully transcribe his source material. While one can hardly object to his frequent practice of writing citation forms in place of a declined or conjugated form in the source sentence, e.g., citing a noun in the nominative singular or a verb in the infinitive, where the source actually has some other form, one cannot be so accommodating of other occasional modifications, such as changing the passive auxiliary from *tapt* to *kluht*, the verb form from *neward* to *ne irr*, or seemingly unmotivated changes in verb tense and word order. This is a very substantial topic in its own right, which will not be pursued here: let a couple of indicative examples suffice. We note that Depkin has written *Padohms eeschaujahs* where the source has *eeschahwahs...* *Padohms* (LD 378) and *kā wiņsch tew dewis irr* where the source has *ka deews dewis* (LD 375). The most striking example we have so far encountered is not in fact from Depkin's manuscript, but from the catalogue of his books, where he has listed Adolphi's *Erster Versuch Einer kurtz=verfasseten Anleitung Zur Lettischen Sprache* as *Anleitung zur Unteutschen Sprache* (Catalogue, 39). Similarly, Dreszell's *Gantz kurtze Anleitung Zur Lettischen Sprache* is noted as *Anleitung zur Unteutschen Sprache* (Catalogue, 49). Changes such as these fall

outside the scope of editing or standardisation, and even if we regard them as simple errors in transcription, they are sufficient to put in doubt the fidelity of Depkin's adherence to his sources.

It would be particularly revealing if a number of research students were to check all of Depkin's citations against the original sources and find regular patterns in the way he has altered the material, or indeed, from a different perspective, find no pattern at all. In the meantime, work is continuing in order to make Depkin's text more readily available to researchers, in the hope that some of the unanswered questions here might in due course find a satisfactory resolution.

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Rakstā iztīrītas vairākas īpatnējas parādības Liborija Depkina (1652-1708) latviešu-vācu vārdnīcā. Vispirms aplūkoti verbi ar izskaņu *-ināt*, kas vārdnīcā bieži konjugēti kā otrās konjugācijas verbi, piemēram, *apleezināju*, *dsimdināju*, īpaši refleksīvo verbu trešās personas formas, piemēram, *paaugstinājahs*, *liddinājahs*. Otra interesanta parādība ir vīriešu dzimtes galotņu lietojums sieviešu dzimtes lietvārdiem. Dsk. nom. *gulti*, *sehkli*, *wehtri* varētu uzskatīt par vecu divsk. formu, taču dsk. dat. formas *Awjeem*, *dsihreem*, *Lahseem* vai dsk. lok. formas *dsirnós*, *robeshós*, *wiśšós Mallós* ir grūti skaidrojamas. Viens no problēmas izskaidrojumiem varētu būt tāds, ka Depkins ir ieguvis savu materiālu no dažādiem avotiem, kas atspoguļo atšķirīgas latviešu valodas izlokšnes un nav to mainījis.