Derivational Properties of "Adjectival Roots"

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Abstract

1. It has been observed elsewhere that a derivational property of Indo-European — and therefore presumably Proto-Indo-European — "adnominals" (i.e. adjectives and adnominal case forms — chiefly instrumental and genitive-ablative-locative) is that they systematically serve as the bases for secondary formations, of four or five specifiable morphological types, that are simultaneously (for all intents and purposes):
a. Abstracts (typically fem.) of the adnominal from which they are made (*'rot'* → *'das Rot'*):
    Hitt. *ḫappina-* 'rich' → *ḫappinatt-* 'wealth' (c.)
    Ved. *hári-* 'tawny' → **harít-* 'tawniness' (→ *hárit-a-* 'tawny', *hárit-vant-* 'id.').
b. Simple, purely endocentric (typically masc.) substantivizations of those adnominals (*'rot'* → *'der/die/das Rote'*):
    Ved. *hári-* 'tawny' → *harít-* 'tawny one, horse of the sun (masc.), bay mare (fem.)'
— with the added wrinkle that such substantivizations are frequently "re-adjectivized" in a "weak adjective"-like development:
    Gk. γυμνός 'unclothed' → γυμνήτ- 'light-armed soldier'
    Gk. ἀργός 'shining'   → ἀργήτ-/ἀργέτ- 'shining'

2. It has also been suggested that beside PIE roots that are generally analyzed as having a "verbal meaning" (transitive or intransitive, eventive or not) — **h₁es-* 'be', **sed-* 'sit', **h₁ei̯-* 'go', **deh₃-* 'give', **gʷʰen-* 'strike' etc. etc. — there are those that have been described as "stative roots" or as "adjective verbs" — e.g. **h₁reudʰ-* conceived as 'be red'.

3. In the contribution abstracted here it will be proposed that this latter class are advantageously regarded simply as "adjectival roots" — i.e. roots with an inherent adjectival meaning. It will then be suggested that just as adnominal words make simultaneous abstract and substantivizing secondary derivatives, the primary derivatives of "adjectival roots" paired these two derivational semantic values as well.