

Graeco-Aryan **g^uelb^h* - revisited

1. Greek

δελφύς (-ύος, ἡ) 7x (p.p. Lubotsky 1988: 124) ‘womb’
δολφός · ἡ μήτρα Hsch. ‘id.’ *R(o)-ó- agent noun
Δελφοί (-ών, οἱ) ‘Delphi (and inhabitants)’ *vṛddhi* form?
δέλφαξ (-ᾶκος, ἡ) ‘piglet’ cf. κόραξ, σκύλαξ. For sacrifice or banquet: Anan.5.4, Hdt.2.70, Epich.51.4, S.Fr.671; as piglets from mother swines Arist.HA 573b (contra Beekes 2010: s.v.)

δελφίς (-ῖνος, ὁ)
either a false cut on the accusative of an **-ih₂-* stem (Schindler 1975: 64; Pinault 2011: 295) or a Hoffmann suffix (from an *-i-* final *vṛddhi* form of the root? Olsen 2009: 355)
**g^uelbh-ih₂-(m)-* and **g^uelbh-i-h₃n-*.
Δελφίνιος & Δελφίνιον?

2. (Vedic) Sanskrit *gárbha-*

Generally accepted as ‘womb, embryo’. Probably a reified *nomen actionis* of the *R(ó)-o- type (Euler 1979: 30-31)
In the Family Books of the ṚV: 37x ‘embryo’, 3x ‘womb’ (ṚV 4.27.1; 5.45.3; 6.16.35)

3. Avestan

yā vīspanəm aršnəm xšudrā yaōždaδāiti | yā vīspanəm hāirišinəm zaθāi garəβa yaōždaδāiti | yā vīspā hāirišiš huzāmitō daδāiti | yā vīspanəm hāirišinəm dāitīm raθβīm paēma auua.baraiti ||Y. 65.2||
(She, Anahita), who sanctifies the sperm of all men, who sanctifies the *garəβa-* (acc. pl.) of all women for the birth, who makes all women light-in-labour, who brings the appropriate and regular breast-milk of women.

yō kainīnəm upāiti | stātō.ratūm vā astātō.ratūm vā paradātəm vā aparadātəm vā puθraṃca hē daδāiti | mā nō aeša yā kaine mašiianəm parō fšarəmat xʼatō garəβəm raēšaiiāt ||Vd. 15.11||
Who[ever] comes up to a girl, whether she be under the supervision of a religious leader or not, whether betrothed or not, and she gives him a son; let her not, the girl, destroy the *garəβa-* (acc. sg.) from herself, ashamed in front of the people.

‘Womb’ or ‘embryo’?

nmānahe nmānō.paitīm nāirikəm yaōždaθō gəuš paiti frauuaitiā | vaēsāsca pairiiaētrāšca yaōždaθō gəuš paiti vaziiā | nitəməmciṭ apərənāiīūkəm yaōždaθō pasəuš garəbuš anumaiehe ||Vd. 9.38||
“Cleansing the wife of a master of the house of the house for the value of a ploughing cow; cleansing day-labourers and manual-workers for the value of a draught cow; cleansing the lowest child, a *garəbuš* of sheep-cattle”

4. A verbal root? van Beek (2022: 464-466)

γλάφω (Scut. 431; διά- Od. 4.438); γλάφῶ (Hes.Op.533); γλαφυρός

Stage	Graeco-Aryan (early)	Graeco-Aryan (late)
Semantics	‘carve’ (verb)	‘womb’ (nouns, “special meaning”)
Verbal root & nouns	γλάφω (archaism)	δελφύς, δολφός, <i>garəβa-</i> (<i>gárbha-</i> + metonymy)
Derived forms	γλάφῶ, γλαφυρός	δελφίς, δέλφαξ, Δελφοί

5. Reinterpretation

vīṣṇur yónim kalpayatu tváštā rūpāṇi piṃśatu | ā siñcatu prajāpatir dhātā gárbhaṃ dadhātu te ||ṚV 10.184.1||
‘May Viṣṇu arrange the womb; may Tvaṣtar carve the forms; may Prajāpati pour out; may the Placer place the embryo for you.’

Stage	Graeco-Aryan	
Semantics	‘carve’	‘beget’ (metaphor)
Verbal root & nouns	γλάφω (archaism)	δελφύς, δολφός (agentes) <i>gárbha-</i> , <i>garəβa-</i> (actae)
Derived forms	γλάφῶ, γλαφυρός	δελφίς, δέλφαξ
Either meaning	Δελφοί	

ságarbhya- **sm̥-g^uelb^h-yo-* and ἀδελφεός **sm̥-g^uelb^h-es-ó-* both arise as independent developments because the inherited words for ‘brother’ (bhrātr-, φράτηρ) lack semantic and biological specificity

Doubtful formations: Lat. vulva, Gk. κόλπος, Hitt. *ḫuelpi-*; PG **hwalfa-*; **kalbiz-*

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