K r z y s z t o f   T o m a s z   W I T C Z A K
University of Łódź

LITHUANIAN *bužỹs* 'INSECT, COCKCHAFER, BEETLE, LOUSE' AND RELATED PROBLEMS

Abstract. In his paper the author suggests that Lith. *bužỹs* 'insect, cockchafer, beetle, louse' and Latvian *buzis* 'louse' (both from East Baltic **bužias* m.), as well as Latv. *bŭza* 'louse', were originally derivatives from the Indo-European word for 'she-goat' (IE. **bhuĝos* m. 'buck, he-goat', **bhuĝā* f. 'she-goat'), cf. Armenian *buc* 'lamb; young goat, kid', Avestan *būza-* m. 'he-goat', New Persian *buz* 'goat' and so on. The same semantic development is also attested in other Indo-European languages, cf. Arm. *bcic* 'louse' : Arm. *buc* 'lamb; young goat, kid'; Yazghulami *vazák* 'a tiny black insect, which moves about by jumping' : Yazgh. *vaz* f. 'goat'; Shughni *vazič* f. 'grasshopper' : Sh. *vaz* m. 'he-goat', *vāz* f. 'she-goat'. The suggested transformations may be reconstructed in the following way: 'goat' (early IE) > 'jumping kid' (IE) > 'jumping insect' (a late Indo-European or post-Indo-European process, attested in Iranian, Armenian, East Baltic) > 'louse' (Armenian, East Baltic) > 'any insect' (only in Lithuanian).

Under the headword *babaũžė* ('Papanz, Schreckgespenst, mit dem man Kindern Furcht einjagt') Ernst F r a e n k e l (1962, 29) registers Lith. *bužỹs* m. 'insect / Insekt' (also 'Popanz, Schreckgestalt, Vogelscheuche') and Latvian *bŭza* f., *buzis* m. 'louse / Laus' (used in the speech of children). Although the relation between Lith. *bužỹs* 'insect, cockchafer, beetle', also 'louse'[1], and Latv. *buzis* 'louse' (both from East Baltic **bužias*) seems obvious, the origin and the earliest meaning of these words are quite uncertain.[2]

In my paper, I intend to demonstrate that the East Baltic terms in question

---

[1] According to LKŽ 1, 1229f., the Lithuanian appellative *bužỹs*, also *būžỹs* m. (4 accentual paradigm) demonstrates seven different meanings, among them (1) 'vabzdys, vabalas / insect, cockchafer, beetle', also dialectal 'utėlė / louse', used in the childish speech, (2) 'kankorėžis, žirginys / cone; catkin', (3) 'vaikų baidyklė, baubas, maumas / children's fright, scarecrow, fright'. It is clear that the first meaning was basic and the most important for the authors of the monumental "Dictionary of the Lithuanian Language" (*Lietuvių kalbos žodynas*).

[2] The East Baltic words in question are not mentioned by T r a u t m a n n (1923 [1970]), K a r u l i s (1992) and S m o c z y ń s k i (2007).

are etymologically and semantically connected with Armenian *bcic* 'louse', Yazghulami *vazák* 'a tiny black insect, which moves about by jumping / название мелкого черного насекомого передвигающегося прыжками' (R a s t o r g u e v a, E d e l m a n 2003, 194) and Shughni *vazič* f. 'grasshopper / кузнечик' (Z a r u b i n 1960, 252).

The Armenian appellative for 'louse', *bcic*, is clearly derived from the noun *buc* (*o*-stem and *i*-stem) 'lamb; young goat, kid / ягненок, козленок' (D j a - h u k i a n 1967, 174) and IE *bhū̆ĝos* m. 'buck, he-goat / Bock' (P o k o r n y 1959, 174; M a l l o r y, A d a m s 1997, 229). By analogy, the Pamir Iranian (i.e. Yazghulami and Shughni) forms denoting 'a kind of jumping insect' are related to Yazgh. *vaz* f. 'goat' and Sh. *vaz* m. 'he-goat', *vāz* f. 'she-goat' (see M o r g e n s t i e r n e 1974, 87), respectively. The Pamir words in question derive from Iran. *būźa-* m. 'he-goat' and *bŭźā-* f. 'she-goat', cf. Avestan *būza-* m. 'Ziegenbock' (B a r t h o l o m a e 1904, 969), NPers. *buz* 'goat' (B o d r o g l i g e t i 1971, 122), Chotan Saka *buysa-* 'goat' (B a i l e y 1979, 297), Khwarezmian *'βz* [əβza] f. 'she-goat' (< *bŭźā-*), Pashto *wuz, wz, uz* m. 'he-goat', *wuzá, wza, uzá, bza*, dial. *bezá* f. 'she-goat' (M o r g e n s t i e r n e 1927, 94; 2003, 94), Bartangi *vaz*, Roshani *vaz* f. 'she-goat' (S o k o l o v a 1960, 165), Yidgha *vˀzó*, Munji *vázo* m. 'he-goat', *váza* f. 'she-goat' (G r j u n b e r g 1972, 373), Tadjik *nar-buz* 'he-goat' (see R a s t o r g u e v a, E d e l m a n 2003, 191– 194). In the Iranian languages we find a number of derivatives ending with *-ya-*, e.g. Avestan *buzya-* adj. 'pertaining to a goat; goatish' (B a r t h o l o m a e 1904, 969), Ossetic *boʒ* 'goat' (A b a e v 1959, 264), Parachi *bug*, Fari *væg* 'id.', Pashto *wužɣúnay* m., *wəžɣūne* f. 'goat's hair', Waziri *wužɣwunē* 'id.' < Iran. *buźya-gauna-* 'goatish hair' (M o r g e n s t i e r n e 2003, 94). The Iranian form *buźya-* (displaying short *u*-vocalism) corresponds formally with the East Baltic *bužjas* m. 'insect, esp. louse'. Moreover, Iranian *bŭźā-* f. 'she-goat' seems to be an exact equivalent of Latv. *bŭza* f. 'louse'. The affinity of the Iranian and Baltic forms is striking and unquestionable from the phonological point of view, though the semantic aspects of the suggested comparison require some additional comments.

The Armenian term for 'louse', *bcic*, attested as early as in the 6th century AD,[3] appears to be a diminutive form of the basic noun *buc* 'goat' derived by

---

[3] G r e p p i n (1990, 206) cites Arm. *bcic* 'louse' among the words borrowed by the Ar- menians from an unidentified (non-Indo-European) substrate. However, both *anic* 'nit' and *bcic* 'louse' demonstrate the same suffix *-ic* and both derive from the Indo-European protolanguage. The relation between *buc* 'lamb, kid' and *bcic* 'louse' (< *bhuĝ-id-i̯o-*) seems unquestionable.

means of the suffix *–ic*, which is seen in Arm. *anic* (*o*-stem) 'nit; the eggs of a louse' (G r e p p i n 1983, 290). The suffix *–ic* may be related to Albanian *-(i) zë* and Ancient Greek -ίδ-, -ίδιον,[4] Modern Gk. -ιδα, -ίδι, cf. Alb. (Gheg) *thëní*, (Tosk) *thërí* f. 'louse; nit', dimin. *thërízë*, *thërrízë* f. 'nit; little louse', (Arberesh) *thëríez* f. 'id.' (D e m i r a j 1997, 397; O r e l 1998, 476), Gk. κονίς f. (-ίδ-stem) 'nit', usually pl. κονίδες 'eggs of lice, fleas, bugs; nits', Mod. Gk. κόνιδα, κονίδα f., dimin. κονίδι n. 'nit'[5]. Evidently, the louse – a small, jumping insect, living on the bodies of animals and humans (mostly under dirty conditions) – was named *bcic* (literally 'kid, small goat', cf. Arm. *buc* 'lamb, young goat'), as if lice could jump as kids.

Yazghulami *vazák* 'a little black jumping insect' (liter. 'a kid; small or young goat', cf. Yazgh. *vaz* f. 'goat') acquired its name by means of the same semantic motivation, i.e. the similar way of jumping shared by insects and kids. Shughni *vazič* f. 'grasshopper / кузнечик' (< Iran. *$b\bar{u}z\bar{a}\check{c}\bar{\imath}$–) and *vaz* 'goat / коза' (Z a r u b i n 1960, 252; R a s t o r g u e v a, E d e l m a n 2003, 194) attests a similar *Benennungsmotiv*, as the grasshopper has long hind legs adapted for jumping and is commonly defined as 'jumping insect which makes a shrill, chirping noise' (H o r n b y 1974, 377).

The same semantic development which is observed in Armenian, Yaz-ghulami and Shughni must also be assumed for the East Baltic forms. The semantic shift from 'kid; small or young goat' to 'louse' is attested both in Armenian and Latvian. The meaning 'jumping insect' appears in the Iranian languages of the Pamir area, whereas the Lithuanian data show an analogous development: 'goat, kid' > 'jumping kid' > 'jumping insect' (esp. 'louse') > 'any insect'. This is why the East Baltic lexemes *$b\breve{u}\check{z}\bar{a}$* f. and *bužias* m. should be reconstructed with the original semantics 'insect jumping like a kid, esp. louse'. It is highly probable that the above-mentioned Lithuanian and Latvian nouns are reflexes of the Indo-European term for 'goat' (IE. *$bh\breve{u}\hat{g}\bar{a}$* f. > Latv. *bŭza* f. 'louse') and the corresponding adjective *$bhu\hat{g}ios$* 'goatish, pertaining to a goat', from which are derived certain secondary forms in Iranian (cf. Parachi *buǰ*, Fari *væǰ*, Ossetic *boʒ* 'goat') and Baltic (cf. Lith. *bužỹs* m. 'insect; cockchafer, beetle; louse', Latv. *buzis* m. 'louse').

---

[4] The suffix -ίδιον frequently appears in names of animals, cf. Gk. αἰγίδιον n. 'kid', Mod. Gk. γίδι n. 'id.' (< αἴξ, αἰγός f. 'goat'), ἐχίδιον n. 'young viper' (< ἔχις m. 'viper'), ὀφίδιον n. 'young serpent', Mod. Gk. φίδι n. 'snake, serpent' (< ὄφις m. 'serpent'), χοιρίδιον n. 'young pig' (< χοῖρος m. 'id.').

[5] On Indo-European name for 'nit', see P u h v e l 2003; W i t c z a k 2003.

It cannot be excluded that the semantic variation 'goat' and 'jumping insect' goes back to as early as the Indo-European times. The lexical data from Armenian, Baltic and Iranian make this suggestion possible. Many years ago, J a n z é n (1938, 29) suggested that the Indo-European names for 'biting insect / zwickendes Insekt' (P o k o r n y 1959, 187f., s.v. ***deiĝh***-) and 'goat / Ziege' (P o k o r n y 1959, 222, s.v. ***digh***-) might be related to each other. In fact, we may easily reconstruct the following Indo-European term:

IE *$diĝh$- 'goat' (1) and 'insect' (2)

1. Alb. *dhizë* f. 'she-goat'; Anc. Gk. (Laconian) δίζα f. 'id.'; OHG *ziga* 'goat (Male and female)', *zickî*, *zickîn* 'female goat', G *Ziege* 'goat', *Zicklein* 'kid'; OE *ticcen* 'kid', Norw. *tikka* 'sheep';

2. Arm. *tiz* 'bedbug / Wanze'; MIr. *dega* 'Hirschkäfer' (< Celt. *$digāt$-); MHG *zecke*, *zeche* m. f., G *Zecke* f. 'tick', also 'leech / Blutegel', MLG *teke* m., ODu. *teecke*, Du. *teek* 'Milbe, Holzbock; Hundelaus, *Ixodes ricinus*'; E *tick* (< Gmc. *$tigōn$ ~ *$tikkōn$).

It is not out of the question that the same situation is seen in IE. *$bhŭĝā$ f. 'she-goat' (1) and 'louse' (2), although the evidence rather points to a change of meaning from 'goat' to 'jumping insect'. Nevertheless, the existence of two sets of semantic equivalents in the Indo-European languages, namely (1) Khwar. *'βz* [əβza] f. 'she-goat', Pashto *wuzá*, *wza*, *uzá*, *bza*, dial. *bezá* f. 'she-goat', Bart. *vaz*, Rosh. *vaz* f. 'she-goat', Munji *və́za* f. 'she-goat' vs. (2) Latv. *bŭza* f. 'louse', is noteworthy.

Additional note: In Slavic, there are several terms for insects derived from the onomatopoeic root *$bъzati$ / *$bъžěti$ / *$bъziti$ / *$bъzykati$ 'to buzz, to hum', cf. Serbo-Croatian *zólja* 'wasp' (< *$bъzol'a$), Bulg. dial. бъзу́н 'hornet', бъзун 'cockchafer, may bug / chrząszcz majowy', бъзу́н 'cockchafer in general', Russ. dial. бзык 'gadfly', Ukr. бзик 'id.', Pol. *bzyk* 'a kind of buzzing insect' (S ł a w s k i 1974, 467–468). They are commonly regarded as deverbative nouns, apparently unrelated to Lith. *bužỹs* m. 'insect, cockchafer' and Latv. *bŭza* f., *buzis* m. 'louse'. It could be suggested that Russ. dial. бзык 'gadfly' and Ukr. бзик 'id.' were originally related to Lith. *bìzas* m. 'a type of insect stinging cattle (gadfly) / насекомое, которое изводит скот (слепень, овод)' and the verb *bizóti*, *bizúoti* 'to run after being stung by gadflies (of cattle)' (A n i k i n 1998, 99f.) rather than to Lith. *bužỹs*.

LIETUVIŲ *bužỹs* 'VABZDYS, VABALAS' IR SUSIJUSIOS PROBLEMOS

Santrauka

Straipsnyje keliama mintis, kad lie. *bužỹs* 'vabzdys, vabalas, utėlė' ir la. *buzis* 'utėlė' (abu iš rytų bl. *bužįas* m.), taip pat la. *bŭza* 'utėlė', yra buvę vediniai iš ide. žodžio, reiškusio 'ožka' (ide. *bhuĝos* m. 'ožys', *bhuĝā* f. 'ožka'), plg. arm. *buc* 'ėriukas; ožiukas', Av. *būza-* m. 'ožys', n. persų *buz* 'ožys, ožka' ir t. t. Tokia pati semantinė raida paliudyta ir kitose ide. kalbose, plg. arm. *bcic* 'utėlė' : *buc* 'ėriukas; ožiukas'; jazgulamų *vazák* 'smulkus juodas šokinėjantis vabzdys' : *vaz* f. 'ožys, ožka'; šugnų *vazič* f. 'žiogas' : *vaz* m. 'ožys', *vāz* f. 'ožka'. Suponuojami pakitimai gali būti rekonstruojami taip: 'ožys, ožka' (ankst. ide.) > 'šokinėjantis ožiukas' (ide.) > 'šokinėjantis vabzdys' (vėlyvas ide. ar poide. procesas, paliudytas iranėnų, armėnų, rytų baltų kalbose) > 'utėlė' (arm., rytų bl.) > 'bet koks vabzdys' (tik lie.).

REFERENCES

Abaev 1989 – Василий Иванович Абаев, *Историко-этимологический словарь осетинского языка* [Historical and etymological dictionary of the Ossetic language] 4: *U–Z*, Ленинград: Наука, 1989.

Anikin 1998 – Александр Евгеньевич Аникин, *Этимология и балто-славянское лексическое сравнение в праславянской лексикографии. Материалы для балто-славянского словаря* [Etymology and Balto-Slavic Lexical Comparison in the Proto-Slavic Lexicography. Materials to the Balto-Slavic Dictionary] 1: *a-* – *go-*, Новосибирск: Сибирский хронограф, 1998.

Bailey, Harold Walter 1979, *Dictionary of Khotan Saka*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bartholomae, Christian 1904, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*, Strassburg: Verlag von Karl J. Trübner.

Bodrogligeti, András J. E. 1971, *The Persian vocabulary of the Codex Cumanicus*, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.

Demiraj, Bardhyl 1997, *Albanische Etymologien*, Amsterdam, Atlanta: Rodopi.

Djahukian 1967 – Геворк Бегларович Джаукян, *Очерки по истории дописьменного периода армянского языка*, Ереван: Издательство Академии наук Армянской ССР, 1967.

Fraenkel, Ernst 1962, *Litauisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* 1, Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Greppin, John A. C. 1983, An etymological dictionary of the Indo-European components of Armenian, *Bazmavep* 141, 235–323.

Greppin, John A. C. (1990), The Make-up of the Armenian Unclassified Substratum, in: T. L. Markey, John A. C. Greppin (eds.), *When worlds collide*: *The Indo-Europeans and the Pre-Indo-Europeans*, Ann Arbor: Karoma Publishers, 203–210.

Grjunberg 1972 – Александр Леонович Грюнберг, *Языки восточного Гиндукуша*: *Мунджанский язык* [Languages of the Eastern Hindukush: The Munji language], Ленинград: Наука, 1972.

Hornby, Albert Sydney 1974, *Oxford advanced learner's dictionary of current English*, Oxford: Oxford University Press (reprinted in 1981 in Warsaw).

Janzén, Assar 1938, *Bock und Ziege. Wortgeschichtliche Untersuchungen*, Göteborg: Elander.

Karulis, Konstantīns 1992, *Latviešu etimoloģijas vārdnica* 1–2, Riga: Avots.

LKŽ 1 – *Lietuvių kalbos žodynas* 1: *A–B*, Vilnius: Mintis, 1968.

Mallory, James Patrick, Douglas Q. Adams (eds.) (1997), *Encyclopedia of Indo-European culture*, London, Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers.

Morgenstierne, Georg 1927, *An etymological vocabulary of Pashto*, Oslo: I Kommisjon hos Jacob Dybwad.

Morgenstierne, Georg 1974, *The etymological vocabulary of the Shughni group*, Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag.

Morgenstierne, Georg 2003, *A new etymological vocabulary of Pashto*, compiled and edited by J. Elfenbein, D. N. MacKenzie and N. Sims-Williams, Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag.

Orel, Vladimir 1998, *Albanian Etymological Dictionary*, Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill.

Pokorny, Julius 1959, *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, Bern, München: Francke Verlag.

Puhvel, Jaan 2003, On terms for 'nit' in Baltic and Balto-Finnic, *Studia Indogermanica Lodziensia* 5, 2003 (publ. 2005), 103–106.

Rastorgueva, Edelman 2003 – Вера Сергеевна Расторгуева, Джой Иосифовна Эдельман, *Этимологический словарь иранских языков* [Etymological dictionary of the Iranian languages] 2: *B–D*, Москва: Восточная литература, 2003.

Sławski, Franciszek (ed.) 1974, *Słownik prasłowiański* [Proto-Slavic dictionary] 1, Wrocław, Warszawa, Kraków, Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo PAN.

Smoczyński, Wojciech 2007, *Słownik etymologiczny języka litewskiego* [Etymological dictionary of the Lithuanian language], Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla.

Sokolova 1960 – Валентина Степанова Соколова, *Бартангские тексты и словарь* [Bartangi texts and dictionary], Москва, Ленинград: Издательство Академии наук СССР, 1960.

Stebline-Kamensky 1999 – Иван Михайлович Стеблин-Каменский, *Этимологический словарь ваханского языка* [Etymological dictionary of the Wakhi language], Санкт-Петербург: Петербургское востоковедение, 1999.

Trautmann, Reinhold 1923, *Baltisch-Slavisches Wörterbuch*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht (reprinted in 1970).

Witczak, Krzysztof Tomasz 2003, 'Nit' in Indo-European, *Studia Indogermanica Lodziensia* 5, 2003 (publ. 2005), 107–110.

Zarubin 1960 – Иван Иванович Зарубин, *Шугнанские тексты и словарь* [Shughni texts and dictionary], Москва, Ленинград: Издательство Академии наук СССР, 1960.

Krzysztof Tomasz WITCZAK
Department of Linguistics and Indo-European Studies
University of Łódź
Ul. Lipowa 81,
PL-90-568 Łódź
Poland
[ktw@uni.lodz.pl]