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ALBANO-CAUCASICA PASTORALIA¹

The paper deals with two Balkan words belonging to the ovine terminology: Albanian *dash*, Romanian *daş* 'ram' and Alb. *ugiç*, *ogiç*, Serbian *ugič*, Bulgarian *jugič*, *jogič* 'bellwether'. In the Balkans, they both seem to be of an Albanian origin, but in a larger perspective their closest parallels are found in the Caucasian and East-Anatolian area.

Keywords: etymology, pastoral terms, Albanian, Romanian, South Slavic, Iranian, Caucasian, Turkic.

This paper is arisen in margins of my work on the maps 320 'béliér' and 321 'béliér châtré' of the *Atlas linguarum Europae* (ALE). The insight into the comprehensive materials collected in the frame of this Pan-European project enables us to provide a typology of designations for the concrete notions, which further may be supplied by the additional data from the ancient and modern languages and as a result lead to establishing new and/or reconsidering some old etymologies of the terms in question. Here two Balkan designations for male sheep are focused, both of Albanian provenance but without an etymology generally accepted, for lack of a transparent internal derivation in Albanian as well as of external cognates undoubtedly recognized. It remained unnoticed so far that both terms have close parallels in the Caucasian and East-Anatolian area, which might throw some light on their ultimate origins.²

1. Alb. *dash*, Rum. *daş*

The far-reaching phonological changes the inherited IE words and early loan-words of Albanian have undergone leave a vast scope for

¹ The present paper resulted from the project No 148004 financed by Serbian Ministry of Science and Environmental Protection.

² I will make it clear that the present research is indifferent to the old concept of a Caucasian origin of Albanians, based on the homonymy between them and an ancient peo-

etymologising those of them, that have no convincing parallels in other Indo-European or neighbouring languages; yet the chance of finding a final solution is inversely proportional to the number of possible proposals. This is the case of Alb. *dash* ‘ram’, borrowed to Romanian *daș*, Greek dialectal δάσος (in Epirus), Bulgarian dial. *dășko* (BER I 322), Macedonian dial. *daše*. Several etymologies of it have been proposed which are surveyed by Orel (57). The most popular one traces it back to PIE word for ‘breath, breathing, animal’, **dhouso-* (thus St. Mann, *Language* XXVI 387 and Orel himself) or **duoso-* (thus Jokl 1923, 240 f., 329 f. and recently D. Q. Adams in EIEC 82), cf., from the same IE root, Goth. *dīus*, ON *dýr* ‘wild animal’, Lat. *bestia*, *bēlua* ‘id.’, further Slav. *duxъ* ‘spirit’, Lith. pl. *dausos* ‘paradise’, etc.³ Consequently the ‘ram’ would have been, for the pastoral Proto-Albanians, the ‘animal, animated being’ par excellence. This is not impossible, but I would stress that no instance of such a general semantics is found in the materials of the ALE related to ‘ram’ and ‘wether’ or in the other designations of the male sheep known to me. From the typological point of view, the attempt seems more plausible to explain *dash* as **dalsh*, **delsh* ‘suckling (lamb)’ (thus Barić 1919, 6); formally uncertain, it has the advantage of establishing a link between the Albanian word for ‘ram’ and that for the female sheep, *dele*, which is commonly derived from PIE **dheH₁(i)-* ‘to suckle’. There are many designations of ‘ram’ going back to ‘young male, lamb’; the intermediary stage of this semantic development would have been ‘still uncastrated’. Other explanations of *dash* deserve, in my opinion, less consideration, and I mention them but in passing: to Gr. δάσκιλλος ‘kind of fish’ (Camarda), to Alb. *dem* ‘young bull’ (B. Demiraj, 124 f.), to Alb. *dua* ‘to love’, aor. *desha* (S. Bugge, BB 18/1892, 184),⁴ to Goth. *tagl* ‘hair’ (Çabej 1986, 109 f., 1987, 171 ff.), to Lat. *dēnsus* (La Piana); for further references see Orel l.c.

Admitting the possibility of an earlier form **dalsh*,⁵ Albanian *dash* may be compared to Ossetic *dalys* (Iron), *dalis* (Digoron) ‘one year old

ple in the Caucasus region, whose country was named Albania (in fact, it is so called by Greek and Roman authors, the local name being Aghbania or Aghvania).

³ Its possible cognate within Albanian is seen by Orel 54 in *dak* ‘big ram’ < **dauka-* ~ Lith. *dvekti* ‘to breathe’; cf. Çabej 1987, 153.

⁴ Wherefrom Alb. PN *Dash*, which is compared with Illyrian *Dasius*, cf. Çabej 1987, 174 s.v. *dashur*.

⁵ As already supposed by Barić, see above. Jokl 1923, 329 f. dismisses Barić’s etymology for phonetical reasons, the simplification of the cluster *lsh* into *sh* being unparalleled in Albanian; Çabej 1987, 172 admits the possibility of such a development, but rejects himself, as semantically improbable, the interpretation deriving the designation of adult male from the name of female with the deminutive suffix *-sh*; in his opinion, it would

lamb', whose origin, in Cheung's words (2002, 177) "remains a mystery". In the first volume of his etymological dictionary Abaev *sub voce* (p. 342) merely notices that the word recurs not only in West-Caucasian, as Svan *dalisw*, *dalüs* 'young lamb, about 6–12 months old', but also far from Caucasus, in the Novgorod dialect of Russian, as *dávis*' (*давись*) 'yearling'.⁶ In an additional note to the same volume (p. 655), Abaev proposes an Iranian etymology of the word: **dāriša-* (m.) or **dāriši-* (f.), akin to OInd *dārikā-* 'daughter, girl', *dāraka-* 'boy; young animal',⁷ and compares it, on the other hand, with the word for 'goatskin' in East Iranian Pamir languages: Sariqōli *δors*, Wakhī *δürs*, Munjī *lürs*. The latter rapprochement has been rejected by Steblin-Kamenskij (167) and Rastorgueva/Edel'mann II 354 as semantically improbable, and the former is rather doubtful in view of the fact that the Old Indian word family in question, that of Skt. *dārā-* 'wife', is etymologically problematic and has no assured Indo-Iranian or Indo-European pedigree (cf. Mayrhofer I 720 f.).⁸ Nevertheless, Cheung's conclusion l.c., that a „Caucasian source (of Osset. *dalys*), most likely from Svan, is preferable“, seems premature.⁹ An Iranian origin seems to me probable, but rather than a connection with the Sanskrit words cited above, I would propose a derivation from I.-E. **dheH₁-l-* 'to suck, to suckle' which is represented in Iranian with Kurdish Kurmanji *dēl*, *dālik*, Sorani *del*, *dal* 'female', Tāleshi *del* 'id.', Zāzā *dal*, *til* 'bitch', Luri *del*, *dal* 'id.', *dāleka* 'mother' (Rastorgueva/Edel'man II 447), cf. further OInd. *dhāri-* 'suckling', Gr. *θηλυσ* 'nourishing', Lat. *fēlix* 'fruitfull, prosperous, happy', Mlr *deil* 'teat', Latv. *dīle* 'suckling calf', Alb. *dele* 'sheep, ewe' cited above, etc. (Pokorny 242; EIEC 82). It is only normal that a lamb is designated as suckling, or seeking for the nursing one, i. e. its mother sheep, if we consider **-is* in *dalys* / *dalis* to be not a (rare) suffix, but the verbal stem of Avest. *isaiti*, OInd. *icchāti* 'to

be a proper term for 'lamb' and not for 'ram'; for this very reason B. Demiraj l.c. assumes a deminutiv in *-sh* from the name for 'bull', i.e. 'ram' being designated as 'little bull'.

⁶ According to Abaev l.c., *-v-* instead of *-l-* may be due to the mediation of Komi-Permyak, where a regular change of *l* in *v* occurs; he refers to the existence of other lexical connections between Permic and Ossetic.

⁷ A *l* before *i* in Ossetic is normally derived from the Common Iranian **r* reflecting both I.-E. **r* and **l*.

⁸ Both Abaev V 10 and Cheung 2002, 178 connect with the same OInd word family Ossetic Iron *dærk* 'calf', Digor *dærk'æ* 'one-year old kid', which they identify with Skt. *daraka-* (with *ā* in the root?) 'young animal', but only the former relates it to *dalys* (and also to gr. *δόρκας* 'roe').

⁹ In spite of some West Caucasian assonances, cf. Geogr. *dola* 'hornless cow', Mingr. *dulu* 'hornless (of goats)' and Fahnrich/Sardschweladse 113.

endeavour to obtain, strive, seek for', cf. the analogous compounds Avest. *ašō.iš-* 'striving for justice', OInd. *gaviṣ-* 'wishing for cows; desirous, eager', *paśviṣ-* 'wishing for cattle'.

Such an interpretation of Ossetic *dalys* / *dalis* provides some evidence to support the etymology tracing Alb. *dash* back to **dalsh* as akin to *dele*, an interpretation which is, as said above, typologically plausible in view of many instances of the semantic development 'suckling, lamb > ram' in European languages. If there is any connection between two words, it could be interpreted either in terms of a common heritage (Urverwandtschaft), or of a parallel formation from the same root in both languages (note the difference in quantity of the root vowel Alb. *a* < *ǎ* vs. Osset. *a* < *ā*) or of a borrowing from one into another. In Iranian, **dāriš(a)-* seems to be old enough, and North Russian *dávis'* indicates a Wanderwort spread from North Pontic steppes at a time as Sarmato-Alanic ancestors of the Ossetes still lived there, i.e. before the Hunnic invasion in 4th century A.D. drove them away to the Caucasian highlands. An early contact between the Sarmatians (Alans) and Proto-Albanians is imaginable particularly on the eastern slopes of Carpathians and on the lower Danube. However, *dash* is, like most Albanian words, ambiguous as for its phonetic reconstruction, and the vague possibility of tracing it back to **dalsh* cannot justify any far reaching conclusion. Nevertheless, the comparison with Ossetic *dalys* / *dalis* opens a new horizon for further discussion on its origin.

2. Alb. *ugiç*, *ogiç*, SCr *ugič*, Bulg. *jugič*, *jogič*

The word Alb. *ugiç*, *ogiç* 'bellwether' occurs also in Serbian dialects of Kosovo and Montenegro as *ugič* and in Bulgarian as *jugič*, *jogič* 'id.'. There is little doubt about its Albanian provenance in Balkan Slavic. However, its ultimate origin is sought in Slavic, with reference to Slav. *vodič* 'guide' used in some Bulgarian vernaculars to designate the bellwether. Yet the phonetical development of *vod-* into *ug-* is unparalleled; Skok (III 537) tried to surmount this difficulty by supposing a contamination of two Slavic words in Albanian, *vodič* cited above and *agnьcb* '(male) lamb', which is in itself hardly convincing and ultimately wrong in view of the fact that the same word occurs far from Balkan and Slavic area, in Asia Minor and Transcaucasia. In the new etymological dictionary of Kurdish (Cabolov 445) we find the word *hōgač*, *hōgič*, *ōgač* (m.) 'two years old ram; barren sheep'. Two words are so similar both in form and the meaning, that there must be some connection between them. The Kurdish word is derived by Cabolov from Turkish *öveç* 'two or three years old ram',

Azerbaijan *ögüj* ‘two or three years old sheep; four years old sheep; ram under three years’. In a paper (VJa 1973/2, 40) È. V. Sevortjan cites also the form *höγüç* and argues that both the shift *v/γ* and the *h*-prothesis may have taken place in Turkic languages. As for the ultimate provenance of the word, Cabolov seems to assume for it an Altaic origin when he compares Mong. *hōkar* ‘bull’. If the word is originating in Turkic languages, we can only guess about the time and the place it entered Albanian and Balkan Slavic. It could be one of many (Ottoman)Turkish loanwords in Balkan languages, but also an earlier borrowing from another Turkic language, perhaps even Proto-Bulgarian.

If there were any doubt regarding the Altaic etymology of the word in question, I would like to draw attention to the similarity of the Turkish form *öveç* cited above with Common Slavic **ovъcbъ* ‘ram, wether; sheep in general’ (an old masculinum to **ovъca* f., cf. Furlan 2000), and on the other hand to a possible connection between Alb. *ugiç*, *ogiç*, Kurdish *hōgač*, *hōgič*, etc. with Alb. *hakoç* / *hokoç* / *harkoç* ‘uncastrated male swine, boar’, which is variously etymologized. Within Albanian, it seems to be somehow connected with *hakërri* ‘mating (of swines)’, but in view of its varying form, this connection might be a paronymological one. Meyer compared *hakoç*, etc. to Pers. *xuk* ‘swine’ (153), Çabej to Alb. *harr* ‘to weed, to prune, to cut’ (1976, I 232), whereas Orel 141, 150 derives it together with *hakërri* from the onomatopoeia **hark*, **hork* imitating pig’s grunting. The word is also found in Serbian vernaculars of Montenegro as *akoč* ‘id.’,¹⁰ *jakoč* ‘ram or goat left for breeding’. A borrowing from Albanian into the neighbouring Slavic dialects seems more probable than in the opposite direction, although the broader meaning of the form *jakoč* indicates a reanalysis of the word in Serbian, where its ending seems to have been assimilated to the (rare) suffix *-oč*¹¹ and the stem identified with the adjective *jak(i)* ‘strong’, which serves also to designate a male capable of breeding.¹² In Montenegro the variant *hak* occurs too, which might confirm the suffixal nature of *-oç*, presupposed by all the etymologies cited above; but so far as the corresponding form is not attested in Albanian itself, the possibility remains that this shorter variant arose in Slavic mouth, by decomposition of the final sequence in **hak-oč* which was mis-

¹⁰ The form *akōr* cited by Popović 1953, 203 will be the same as *akoč*, falsely read from the materials of RSA.

¹¹ P.ex. in *glav-oč* ‘sea fish *Gobius*’ (*glava* head), *prask-oč* ‘a kind of grass, *Scabiosa Transsilvanica*’ (*praskati* ‘to explode’), cf. Skok I 566, III 24.

¹² In Bosnia and Hercegovina *jaki* is used to designate an incompletely castrated ox, cf. RSA s.v. *jak*.

understood as a Slavic suffix. On the other hand, the existence in Albanian of the Turkish loanword *koç* 'ram, wether'¹³ suggests the possibility of an alternative analysis as *ha(r)-/ho-koç*, which is imaginable in terms of a re-interpretation rather than of an ultimate etymology of the word.

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¹³ For whose Common Turkic origin cf. Räsänen 274.

RSA: *Речник српскохрватског књижевног и народног језика* Српске академије наука и уметности, Београд 1959–.

Резиме

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ALBANO-CAUCASICA PASTORALIA

Алб. реч *dash* 'ован' постоји још у румунском (*daş*) и као позајмица из албанског у неким новогрчким и македонским говорима. За њу је досад предложено више етимологија, од којих се типолошки највероватнијом чини она која је преко **dalsh* везује са алб. *dele* 'овца', дословно 'дојиља', од ие. *dhē-l-* 'дојити'. То извођење може се поткрепити паралелом коју пружа осетски језик, припадник иранске језичке породице на северном Кавказу: ирон. *dalys*, дигор. *dalis* 'јагње од једне године' < стиран. **dār-iš(a)-* 'дојенче, оно које тражи дојиљу'.

Алб. реч *ugiç*, *ogiç* 'ован предводник', срп. дијал. (Косово, Црна Гора) *угич*, буг. *югич*, *йогич* неће бити од слов. *водич*, већ има најближу паралелу у курдском, опет једном иранском језику у Малој Азији и Закавказју: курд. *hōgaç*, *hōgiç*, *ōgaç* (m.) 'двогодишњи ован', можда (али не сигурно) турског порекла.