

LEGE ARTIS

Language yesterday, today, tomorrow

Vol. IX. No 1 2024

MILK-SUCKING "THIEVES" IN INDO-EUROPEAN FOLKLORE: AN ETYMOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF ZOONYMS

Mikołaj Rychło * 

Faculty of Languages, University of Gdansk, Poland

Elwira Kaczyńska 

Faculty of Philology, University of Lodz, Poland

Andrzej Kowalski 

Faculty of History, University of Gdansk, Poland

Krzysztof Tomasz Witczak 

Faculty of Philology, University of Lodz, Poland

*Corresponding author

Received: 15.12.2023 Reviewed: 4.03.2024 and 19.04.2024

Similarity Index: 2%

Bibliographic description: Rychło, M., Kaczyńska, E., Kowalski, A. & Witczak, T.K. (2024). Milk-sucking "thieves" in Indo-European folklore: An etymological analysis of zoonyms. In *Lege artis. Language yesterday, today, tomorrow*. Trnava: University of SS Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, IX (1), p. 84-103. ISSN 2453-8035 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34135/lartis.24.9.1.05>

Abstract: The paper investigates the etymologies of several species of reptiles, amphibians, and birds whose names draw on the ancient cattle-sucker myths rooted in cultures of Indo-European origin. New or corrected explanations are suggested for a number of animal names, including the Lithuanian *žal(k)tys* 'grass snake', South Slavic **guja* 'snake, viper', Hittite *akuḫakuḫaš* 'toad', which seem to confirm a primitive conviction of prehistoric people that some frogs, toads, lizards, snakes, and even birds drink milk and are able to take it directly from udders.

Keywords: animal terminology, diachronic word-formation, etymology, Indo-European folklore, Indo-European mythology, Indo-Europeans.

1. Introduction

Unmasking the etymological meaning of words in many individual cases reveals certain ancient beliefs held by our ancestors. In the course of time, the original semantic motivation becomes blurred and, after centuries, the original meaning does not seem obvious, especially if it is at variance with



the contemporary understanding of the world. A good example of such a scenario is apparent in the names of different species of reptiles, amphibians, and birds, which, in the light of present scholarship, are demonstrably not nourished by the udders of lactating hosts. The correct etymology of the analyzed animal names reveals morphemes denoting 'milk', 'to suck', and the names of mammals that produce milk, such as cows and goats.

The present paper investigates a number of zoonyms, offering an improved innovative interpretation accompanied by a critical discussion of ancient beliefs. Some of the etymologies are not new, but they strengthen the argument for these curious cases, in which the explanation of animal names revolving around cattle-sucking has yet to be accepted (e.g. Hittite and Luwian terms for 'toad', Lithuanian term for 'grass snake'). Our aim is to demonstrate that the interpretation of most of the analyzed zoonyms based on the alleged inclination of some animals (esp. amphibians, reptiles, and birds) to suck milk is definitely better than their traditional or alternative rival etymologies.

Section 2 introduces the material and the methodology. Section 3 concentrates on names of reptiles, especially non-venomous snakes (Subsection 3.1). Subsection 3.2 focuses on denominations of lizards, and Section 4 investigates names of amphibians. Among the ornithonyms, i.e. bird names, discussed in Section 5, we focus our attention on Greek *αἰγοθήλας* 'nightjar', which, as a result of loan translation, was borrowed first into Lat. *caprimulgus* 'id.' and subsequently was absorbed into many modern European languages. Section 6 presents the conclusions.

Many of the zoonyms discussed in our article are transparent in terms of morphology and etymology. For instance, the Ukrainian compound *molokosys* 'lizard, salamander' contains two components with clear semantics: 'milk' (Ukr. *molokó*) and 'sucker' (Ukr. *ssáty* 'to suck', Bulg. *sísam* 'I suck'). The same observation can be easily repeated in relation to E. *cow-sucker* 'the common kingsnake, *Lampropeltis getula* L.', Slovenian *kravoses* 'Aesculapian snake', Lat. *caprimulgus* 'nightjar' (orig. 'goat-sucker') and so on.

We provide these obvious and transparent cases in order to explain the remaining zoonyms, in which the original morphological boundaries have become blurred by phonological developments, lexicalization, and semantic changes.

2. Material and methodology

The methodological approach which has been adopted in the present paper seeks to combine the evidence coming from several disciplines: etymology, history, and ethnology. It seems that such an

approach enhances the credibility of the etymologies that will be offered below. This is because we bear it in mind that the logic behind the coinage of the old words that we investigate reflects the way of thinking of our distant ancestors, whose world view differed considerably from our contemporary outlook. One such important difference consists in a diminished role of spiritual and mythical aspects of today's life. It goes without saying that etymology often reveals religious connotations which have been bleached over the course of time. As a result, words like *holiday*, *festival*, or *enthusiastic* have no sacred associations today although their etymological meaning is clearly linked with 'holy' and 'god'¹. These examples illustrate the importance of extralinguistic facts pertaining to the culture and lifestyle of our ancestors. An understanding of these aspects is the key to revealing the semantic motivation behind many old words. We analyze as many as 34 animal names in our research.

In the case of cattle-sucking parasitic animals, the analyzed names often refer to reptiles, amphibians and birds, which are not normally associated with being nourished by the milk taken from udders of lactating hosts. This fact, however, was not necessarily obvious to our distant ancestors, who named these animals. Since the Indo-Europeans named different animals in such a way, they must have been convinced of milk-suckling proclivities of the amphibians, reptiles, or birds in question. The examples that will be analysed in the following sections not only illustrate these convictions, but also show that etymological analysis holds significant potential for revealing the beliefs of our ancestors.

Furthermore, we assume that etymologies in general can be graded according to their verifiability, i.e. the likelihood of their correctness (Rychło 2017). Theoretically, there can be only one correct history of a word, but from the point of view of the researcher who must deal with fragmentary evidence, there are frequently several conceivable scenarios. It is sometimes possible to choose a more probable etymology based on certain linguistic criteria, but it is often the case that two or more etymologies seem to be equally likely. In such cases, independent evidence coming from a different field may strengthen one of the competing etymologies.

In general, the fields which often contribute include history, archaeology, ethnography, not to mention various subfields of linguistics. In some cases, archaeological findings can provide significant input (Kowalski & Rychło 2020; Kowalski et al. 2020, Witczak & Rychło 2022), but material culture has obvious limitations. In the field of onomasiology, not only are the names of subjects investigated, but so is the study of designation processes in general, especially the formation of primary representations about natural phenomena can offer significant insights (Panassenko 2023). Contrasting modern

cognates can also lead to new etymologies, e.g. Rychło (2016; 2019; 2021), Rychło and Witzak (2021).

In the case of milk-suckling reptiles, it seems that we have found such interdisciplinary evidence in the *Kitāb al-ḥayawān* ("The book of animals") written by Al-Jāḥiẓ (ca. 776-ca. 868). The Arab author describes in detail what he learnt from his Slavic slaves: the snake in these countries approaches the cow, wraps itself around the cow's hind leg, then lifts its body towards the udders so that its mouth is able to reach the nipples. The cow cannot move, no matter how hard it tries. The snake continues to suckle the udder for milk. As a result, the cow becomes weaker. The original Arabic text is to be found in "Kitab al-Hayawan" (1966: 109-110); there is a partial translation in Donini (1991: 92), Ermacora (2017: 71), and Lewicki (1956: 169; 1961: 282); see also Klímová (1973: 205-206), Kowalski et al. (2024).

Al-Jāḥiẓ's account of the Slavic beliefs shows that an etymology which might seemingly lack credibility from a modern perspective can sometimes be verified thanks to interdisciplinary evidence.

3. Names of reptiles

This section investigates selected terms for snakes and lizards. Subsections 3.1 and 3.1.1 concentrate on names of large harmless snakes including American English *cow-sucker* and Latin *bovae*, *bova*, *boa* (referring to several species of enormous non-venomous snakes so named after the Latin term *boves* 'cows' and derived from the proto-form **bōjā* < Plt. **gʷoujā* f.). Subsection 3.1.2 focuses on Slavic terms for snakes descended from PIE **gʷous*, namely: Bulg. dial. *зѣя* (f.) 'viper'; Serb. *зѣја* (f.) 'snake, viper', derivative *зѣјана* (f.) 'earthworm'; Cr. *гѣја* (f.) 'non-venomous snake', dial. 'children's roundworm, *Ascaris* L.'. Subsection 3.1.3 discusses Baltic terms for 'grass snake', i.e. Lith *žaltỹs* (dial. *žalktỹs*, *žalktis*), Latv. *zālk̃tis* (m.), Latgalian *zalkts* (m.), Semigalian *zāltis* (m.) 'grass snake, (non-venomous) snake', sometimes 'newt' in dialects, all of them from Proto-Baltic **žālk̃tijas* < **žal̥₂ktijās* (m.) 'non-poisonous snake, grass snake'. We postulate that these Baltic names of snakes derive from PIE **ǵal̥₂ktijos* 'milky (snake)'. Subsection 3.2 investigates terms for lizards, including Vedic *godhā* (f.) 'a species of large lizard, esp. iguana or the monitor lizard', Lat. *būfō* (f.) 'toad' (< Plt. **gʷoufōn*, orig. 'cow-sucker'), Armenian *kovadiac*^c 'toad, kind of lizard', PC **bowdī-kos* (m.) (dimin.) 'earthworm' / PC **bowdīkom* n. coll. 'set of earthworms', NPers. *bozmaj(j)e* 'an animal from the lizard family, which, according to local beliefs, sucks milk from goats and then poisons them with its venom' < PIr. **buza-mačyaka-*, literally 'goat-sucking', and Lari *pa(h)mezak* 'large lizard that sucks milk from goats' < PIr. **pašu-mačyaka-*, literally 'sucking sheep (or goats)'.

3.1 Names of non-venomous snakes

One of the commonest American folktales revolving around snakes is that they like milk and can suckle cows. This tale must have been brought to the Americas by the European settlers. According to Hertzog (1967: 16), such a tale is especially popular in the Dutch farming community of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Milk snakes (*Lampropeltis triangulum* Lacépède), which are commonly believed to suck milk from cows, live in eastern North America (Schmidt 1929: 13). Furthermore, the English herpetonym *cow-sucker* (or *cowsucker*) frequently appears in American English and denotes an endemic kind of the harmless snake living in the United States of America and Mexico, called alternatively *the chain kingsnake* or *the common kingsnake* (*Lampropeltis getula* L.). Such American folktales connected with milk snakes and cow-suckers are widespread especially in many states of North America (Hertzog 1967: 16-17; Schmidt 1929: 12-14). It is obvious that these tales were introduced to North America by European settlers.

3.1.1 *Italic folk beliefs connected with the large non-venomous snake called bo(v)a*

The ancient Romans, like the Slavs in the Middle Ages and in early modern times, believed that some species of snakes fed on cow's milk. Pliny the Elder (*NH* VIII 14, 36) records a folktale, according to which Italy was home to several species of enormous non-venomous snakes called *bovae*, so named after the Latin term *boves* 'cows'. The reason for that was that cow's milk was believed to be their main food source. It is worth quoting the original Latin version and the English translation by Rackham (1967):

Lat.: "*Faciunt his fidem in Italia appellatae bovae in tantam amplitudinem exeuntes, ut Divo Claudio principe occisae in Vaticano solidus in alvo spectatus sit infans. Aluntur primo bubuli lactis suco, unde nomen traxere*" – [Eng.: "Credibility attaches to these stories on account of the serpents in Italy called boas, which reach such dimensions that during the principate of Claudius of blessed memory a whole child was found in the belly of one that was killed on the Vatican Hill. Their primary food is milk sucked from a cow; from this they derive their name"] (ibid., 28-31)

Pliny the Elder (the Roman encyclopaedist, d. 79 CE) does not specify whether the snakes were able to independently obtain food from cow's udders or whether they were intentionally fed with cow's milk by inhabitants of ancient Italia. This information is significantly supplemented and expanded by a writer from the 3rd century CE, Gaius Julius Solinus, author of the work entitled *Collectanea rerum memorabilium*, who provides the following information (II 33-34):

Lat.: "*Calabria chersydris frequentissima et boas gignit, quem anguem ad immensam molem ferunt convallescere. Captat primo greges bubulos et quae plurimo lacte rigua bos est, eius se uberibus innectit, suctuque continuo saginata longo in saeculo ita fellebri satietate ultimo extuberatur, ut obsistere magnitudini eius nulla vis queat, postremo depopulatis animantibus regiones quas obsederit cogit ad vastitat. Divo Claudio principe, ubi Vaticanus ager est, in alvo occissae boae spectatus est solidus infans*" (Kołoczek 2020: 116) – [Eng.: Calabria abounds in water snakes and gives birth to boas, which – as it is said – reach an enormous size. They prey primarily on herds of cattle and cows that have the most milk. Wrapped around their udders, continuously sucking, the boa grows fat for a long time, until finally, thanks to the absorbed weight of food, it swells so much that no force can resist its size. Ultimately, after exterminating all living creatures, the boa brings ruin to the area in which it has appeared. During the reign of the divine Claudius, a whole baby was found in the belly of a boa slaughtered in the Vatican Field] (transl. by Kaczyńska and Witczak).

Isidore of Seville, one of the Fathers of the Church, also discusses the snake called *boas* in his work entitled *Etymologiae sive origines*. Let us provide a brief description of the snake in question, to which the Christian writer from the 7th century CE attributes a very negative impact on the number of cattle (*Etym.* XII 4, 28):

Lat.: "*Boas, anguis Italiae immensa mole, persequitur greges armentorum et bubalos, et plurimo lacte riguis se uberibus innectit et sugens interimit, atque inde a boum depopulatione boas nomen accepit*" (Valastro Canale 2014: 50) – [Eng.: "The boa (*boas*), a snake in Italy of immense size, attacks herds of cattle and buffaloes, and attaches itself to the udders of the ones flowing with plenty of milk, and kills them by suckling on them, and from this takes the name 'boa,' from the destruction of cows (*bos*)]" (Barnley et al. 2006: 257).

All these references in the Italic (and Latin) folklore, recorded by Pliny the Elder, Solinus, and Isidore of Seville, are not based on rational grounds since no reptile has the ability to suck a cow's udders. There is no doubt, however, that the belief widespread in Italy was a continuation of the superstition inherited from the Indo-European ancestors of the Italic tribes (Ermacora 2017: 59-81) and not necessarily the result of such folk etymology based on the phonological similarity of the two Latin zoonyms: Latin *bova*, *boa* (f.), secondarily *boas* (m.) 'a species of non-venomous snake of large size' and *bōs*, gen. sg. *bovis* (f.) 'cow' (Gaillard-Seux 2012: 271; Maltby 1991: 82; Mejer 1996: 140; Mikołajczyk 2019: 596).

In the context of denominations of other milk-sucking animals, our paper endeavours to show that the similarity of the Latin names of snake and cow was not accidental but inherited from Indo-European ancestors who were engaged in breeding domesticated animals, including: cows, sheep, goats, pigs, and horses. The Indo-European people erroneously attributed the tendency to suck milk from cows, goats, or sheep to various reptiles (e.g. snakes, lizards), amphibians (e.g. frogs, toads, salamanders, newts), or birds (e.g. nightjars), resulting in a loss or breakdown in milk production which regularly occurs in farm animals and does not always depend on external factors (Ermacora 2017; Witczak 2020; Witczak et al. 2023) and is incomprehensible to the layperson.

The Italic folk beliefs can be confirmed by the etymological analysis of the Latin word *bova*, *boa* (f.), which can be derived from the proto-form **bōiā* (< PIt. **g^houīā* f.). The change of the Indo-European (Proto-Italic) labiovelar consonant **g^h* into the phoneme /b/ is regular in all Osco-Umbrian languages, as is the monophthongization of the diphthong **ou*, which first developed into the long vowel **ō* [o:], and then into **ū* [u:] in the Italic languages (Buck 1905: 32-33; Weiss 2009: 103). The disappearance of the intervocalic sonant **j* is typical of all Italic languages, cf. Lat. *trēs* 'three', Osc. *tris* nom. pl. 'three', Umbr. *treif*, *trej* acc. pl. 'three' (< PIt. **trejes*, acc. pl. **trejens* < PIE **trejes*, acc. pl. *trejns*). The Latin form *boa* therefore represents the Sabine archetype **bōiā* according to the Italic sound laws, whereas Lat. *bōs* (f., m.) 'cow, ox' reproduces Sab. **bōs* (< PIE **g^hous*). The *bova* variant attested in Latin texts results either from inserting an auxiliary consonant *v* in the place of the hiatus caused by the disappearance of **j*, or from maintaining the diphthongal pronunciation (perhaps due to the influence of the derivational base **bov-* 'cow, ox', clearly attested in the oblique cases, cf. Latin *bovis* gen. sg., *bovi* dat. sg.).

3.1.2 Slavic terms for snakes

Further evidence in favour of PIE **g^hous* comes from several South Slavic terms for snakes, which reveal the same etymological structure: Bulg. dial. *зѹя* (f.) 'viper'; Serb. *зѹја* (f.) 'snake, viper', derivative *зѹјана* (f.) 'earthworm'; Cr. *гѹја* (f.) 'non-venomous snake', dial. 'children's roundworm, *Ascaris* L.¹²

It has been argued (Witczak et al. 2023) that these South Slavic words are inherited from the Proto-Slavic herpetonym **guja* (f.) 'snake, viper' and that it is the exact cognate of the Italic term **g^houīā* (cf. Lat. *boa*, *bova* (f.) 'a large non-venomous snake' discussed in the previous section). Also in the South Slavic context, there is a common belief that snakes are interested in cow's milk as a liquid food (which is probable) and that they themselves are capable of sucking at a cow's udders (which,

in turn, is rationally impossible). The lexical material explicitly documents this type of belief among Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs, while ethnographic and literary documentation relating to the folklore of the Western and Eastern Slavs, as well as to the Balts (see 3.1.3), confirms the antiquity of the myth about cow-sucking reptiles (Witczak et al. 2023). It seems that already in Indo-European context (at least in some groups) there was the zoonym *gʷou̯iā (f.) 'large non-venomous snake', whose etymological meaning can be reconstructed as 'a bovine (i.e. cow-sucking) reptile' (← PIE *gʷóμi̯os adj. 'cow-like, bovine, related to a cow').³

3.1.3 Baltic terms for 'grass snake'

In contemporary folklore reports from the areas of Lithuania, Samogitia, and Ducal Prussia, milk from cows was allegedly stolen by a non-poisonous snake, called *žaltỹs*, in dialects *žalktỹs*, *žalktis* (this term usually means 'grass snake'). Nesselmann, referring to folk beliefs from Ragneta (German: *Ragnit*, now Nieman, a town in the Königsberg region), defines the Lithuanian herpetonym as follows: 'a snake, especially a large slowworm with bluish-white spots (i.e. turquoise slowworm) that sucks milk from cows (1851: 538). The above dictionary definition clearly shows that the term *žal(k)tỹs* meant not only the grass snake (*Natrix natrix* L.), the most popular non-venomous snake in Central and Eastern Europe, but also (at least among the Lithuanian population of Ragneta) the slowworm (*Anguis fragilis* L.),⁴ especially the turquoise slowworm with its characteristic abundance of startling blue and white spots (Witczak 2020: 145).

Apart from the simplified literary form *žaltỹs*, Lithuanian shows numerous dialectal forms, e.g. Lith. dial. *žalktỹs*, *žalktis*, *žalektỹs*, *žaliaktỹs*, *želektỹs* 'grass snake, non-venomous snake', less often 'slug' (Altlitauisches etymologisches Wörterbuch 2015: 1288; Fraenkel 1965: 1288; Smoczyński 2018: 1715). Zoonyms of identical structure and very similar semantics are attested in other East Baltic languages, cf. Latv. *zalktis* (m.), Latgalian *zalkts* (m.), Semigalian *zaltis* (m.) 'grass snake, (non-venomous) snake', sometimes 'newt' in dialects (Fraenkel 1965: 1288; Müllenbach & Endzelins 1929-1932: 684-685). All the Baltic words noted above stem from the Proto-Baltic *žāłktijas, previously *žalḥ₂ktijas (m.) 'non-poisonous snake, grass snake' (Witczak 2020: 145). The zoonym is not motivated in Baltic languages and does not have a clear etymology. On the basis of regular phonological correspondences and a well-documented belief held by both the Balts and the Slavs that the grass snake can drink cow's milk, we postulate the research hypothesis that Eastern Baltic words (Lith. *žaltỹs*, *žalktỹs*, Latv. *zalktis*, etc.) can derive from PIE *ǵalḥ₂ktijos 'milky (snake)'. The ultimate base of this derivative must be the Proto-Indo-European appellative *ǵalḥ₂kt n. (t-stem) 'milk', clearly attested in several Indo-European languages, cf. Gk. γάλα (gen. sg. γάλακτος, also γάλατος) n. (t-

stem) 'milk'; Lat. *lac* (gen. sg. *lactis*) n. (*t*-stem) 'id.'; Alb. *dhallë*, *dhalltë* f. 'buttermilk', Arom. *dhálă*, *dálă*, *zálă* f. 'id.'; Rom. dial. *zară* 'id.'; Hitt. *galaktar* n. (secondary heteroclitic *r/n*-stem) 'a soothing substance (drink)' (Witczak 2020: 145).

Various medieval and Renaissance sources agree that the pagan Balts once worshipped snakes and fed them with milk both in temples and in private homes. As a case in point, we adduce some passages taken from Alexander Gwagnin's work entitled "Sarmatiae Europaeae description" published several times in the second half of the 16th century, beginning in 1578 or even 1574 (Wilgosiewicz-Skutecka 2007: 11-19). Describing the religion of the Baltic Prussians, Gwagnin states that in the temple of the god Patrimp, a snake was bred and fed with milk:

Lat.: "*Ex altera parte collocatum erat Patrimpo idolum, cuius cultus erat in serpente vivo retinendo, qui lacte, ut eo commodius viveret, alebatur*" (Wilgosiewicz-Skutecka 2007: 11-19) – [Eng.: "On the other side was placed the idol of Patrimpus, whose worship consisted in keeping alive the serpent, which was fed with milk, so that it might live more comfortably"].

Snakes were worshiped in Samogitia and Lithuania, where they were considered the guardian deities of the family, corresponding to the Roman Lares and Penates, and thus were kept at home and fed with milk.⁵

The proposed etymology, according to which the Baltic term for 'grass snake' derives from the Proto-Indo-European noun for 'milk', can be used to argue that the ancestors of the Balts already in the very distant Proto-Indo-European era attributed an inclination to drink milk, as well as to take milk directly from the udders of cattle, to grass snakes (as confirmed by Nesselmann 1851: 538). An additional source that confirms and at the same time complements such beliefs is the testimony of the Arabic geographer Al-Jāhiz (ca. 776-ca. 869), who, in his work *Kitāb al-ḥayawān* ("The book of animals"), presented the beliefs of the ancient Slavs about a snake sucking milk from cows (cf. Section 2).

3.2 Names of lizards

The Vedic appellative *godhā́* (f.) 'a species of large lizard, esp. iguana or the monitor lizard' is etymologically explained as '(a reptile) milking cows', cf. Skt. *go-* 'cow' and Skt. *dhā-* 'to milk' (Ermacora 2017: 71; Lüders 1942: 44-45; Mayrhofer 1992: 498; Riegler 1921: 141; Witczak 2020: 138).

An identical morphological structure and etymology is also found not only in Lat. *būfō* (f.) (*n*-stem) 'toad' (< PIt. **g^houfōn*, orig. 'cow-sucker'; see Subsect. 4.4), but also in the Armenian term *kovadiac^c* 'toad; kind of lizard', which originally meant '(an animal) suckling a cow', cf. Arm. *kov* 'cow', *diem* 'to suck, drink mother's milk' (Ermacora 2017: 70; Martirosyan 2008: 210, 323, 636; 2009: 239; Ronzitti 2016: 316-317). It cannot be excluded that a trace of the Indo-European myth is preserved in the Celtic language world as PC **bowdī-kos* (m.) (dimin.) 'earthworm' and PC **bowdīkom* n. coll. 'set of earthworms' (Jørgensen 2021: 10-26)⁶.

Iranian peoples also believed that lizards were able to suck milk from goats or sheep, as evidenced by the rich lexical material: NPers. *bozmaj(j)e* 'an animal from the lizard family, which, according to local beliefs, sucks milk from goats and then poisons them with its venom' < PIr. **buza-mačyaka-*, literally 'goat-sucking' (Edelman 2015: 170); Lari *pa(h)mezak* 'large lizard that sucks milk from goats' (Edelman 2015: 170; Molchanova & Nowruzi 2016: 88) < PIr. **paśu-mačyaka-*, literally 'sucking sheep (or goats)', cf. Lari *pa* 'sheep', sometimes also 'goat' (Edelman 2015: 170).⁷

4. Names of amphibians

Indo-European tribes believed that cows were suckled not only by reptiles (especially snakes and lizards), but also by amphibians. First, we intend to discuss such tailed amphibians as salamanders (Ukrainian *молокосіц* 'salamander', also 'lizard') and newts, and then move on to tailless amphibians, i.e. frogs and toads (Hittite *akuuakuuāš*, and Luwian *auuauāš* 'id.' and Latin *būfō* 'toad').

4.1 The salamander

When discussing the Polish word *młokos*, Karłowicz mentions the Ukrainian word *molokosys* (Ukr. *молокосіц*) meaning 'salamander' (also 'lizard' in some jargons⁸) and adds that "in Ukraine and in Poland they say that it sucks cow's milk" (1894-1905: 382). Vasmer agrees with his opinion, admitting that "there is a belief that various animals suck milk from domestic cattle" (Фасмер 1987: 690). Indeed, Ukr. *молокосіц* (m.) 'salamander, lizard' (literally 'milk-sucker') (Ermacora 2017: 71) seems to present the starkest lexical evidence for this fascinating folk belief.

4.2 The newt

The Semigallians, living in Linden (Birzgale Parish), treat the European newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris* L.) as a milk-loving amphibian, i.e. sucking milk from cows. It is named *zāltis* 'a newt' (Müllenbach & Endzelins 1929-1932: 685) < PB **žālktijas*, orig. 'milky' (see 3.1.3).

4.3 The frog

In some regions of Poland, frogs were (or still are) "accused" of taking milk from cows. Cows suckled even once by these amphibians lost milk for a long time. According to the late Dr. Honorata Skoczylas-Stawska (died in 2018), an outstanding dialectologist from the Wieluń region of Poland and a notable expert on dialects, there used to be a folktale in her area about a frog that could suck a cow dry (Witczak 2020: 134). Reports from the Kalisz region dating from the 17th century linked the milk-drinking proclivity of a frog with the harmful activity of a witch. Baranowski emphasizes that "almost throughout Poland, and therefore also in the discussed area (i.e. the Łódź Voivodeship), the view was widespread that a witch comes to collect cow's milk in the form of a frog" (1967: 92). Furthermore, in Subcarpathian Voivodeship, there is a superstition to this day, according to which farmers should stab a frog or toad with a pitchfork as the amphibian may be a witch intending to take milk from a cow (Cząstka-Kłapyta 2015: 94-98).

4.4 The toad

The oldest chronological evidence documenting the folk view that toads (or frogs) can suck milk from cows seems to be two Anatolian zoonyms, attested in the second millennium BC, namely the Hitt. *akuṽakuṽaš* c. 'toad' and Luw. *auṽauṽaš* c. 'id.'⁹. Both of these appellatives may derive from the Anatolian archetype **ag^ua-g^uauas*, literally '(an amphibian) sucking cows' (Witczak 2020: 144), cf. Hitt. *eku-* / *aku-* 'to drink, drink to, toast', Pal. *aḫu-* 'to drink', Luw. *au-* / *u-* 'to drink, to suck (?)' (Kloekhorst 2008: 236-237), as well as Hitt. *GU₄-uš* = **kuṽauṽaš* c. 'cow', Luw. *uṽauṽ/iš* (or *GU₄-iš*) c. 'id.' (ibid., 507-508).

The Latin appellative *būfō* (f.) (*n*-stem) 'common toad, *Bufo bufo* L.' also has an equally ancient origin. This word (of Sabine or Oscan origin) is commonly derived from the Indo-European proto-form **g^uou^hd^hōn* (< PIE **g^uou^h-d^hh₁-on-s*), literally 'cow-suckler' (Fick 1891: 321; Jørgensen 2021: 3-8; Riegler 1921: 141; Witczak 2020: 139), cf. Lat. *bōs* (gen. sg. *bovis*) (f.) 'cow' (< PIE **g^uous* (f., m.) 'cow, ox, bull'), see also dat.-abl. pl. *būbus* 'to cows; with cows'.

We should also recall Balkan lexical material, especially the Albanian word *thithëlopë* (f.) 'a large toad once believed to suck milk from cows: common toad (*Bufo bufo* L.)' (Newmark 1999: 892; Witczak 2020: 139). The Albanian zoonym is a structurally transparent word for 'a cow-sucker; (an animal) sucking cows', cf. Alb. *thith* 'to suck, suck out, inhale, absorb', Alb. *lopë* (f.) 'cow'. It should be noted that the Albanian dialectal term *blloçkëlopë* (f.) 'common toad' has a very similar origin (Newmark 1999: 89) and designates an animal "chewing cows", cf. Alb. *blloçit* 'to chew'. In the light

of the lexical data cited, it can be presumed that the ancestors of the Albanians believed that the common toad had a tendency to suck milk from cows' udders.

5. Names of birds

In ancient times, there was a view in Greek folk beliefs that the nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus* L.) suckled goats at night, which then caused them to lose milk and go blind (Arnott 2017: 10; Ermacora 2017: 70; Pollard 1977: 50-51; Trepka 1988: 234). This fantastic myth is known and repeated by at the very least two experts on the subject – the Greek philosopher and scientist Aristotle of Stagira¹⁰ and the Roman animal expert Claudius Aelianus of Praeneste.¹¹ Such a conviction was confirmed, among others, by Greek and Latin bird names for a nightjar. The Greek ornithonym *αἰγοθήλας* 'nightjar' is a compound word derived from the Greek noun *αἶζ* (gen. sg. *αἰγός*) (f.) 'goat' and the verb *θηλάζω* 'to breastfeed, to suck' (Arnott 2017: 11; Thompson 1936: 24-25). Also Lat. *caprimulgus* 'nightjar' is an old compound motivated by the phrase *capras mulgere* 'to milk goats' (Capponi 1979: 126; Riegler 1921: 136-144; Ronzitti 2011: 32-33, 51-54). The belief that the nightjar drew milk from goats was borrowed from the ancient Greeks and Romans and penetrated many European languages,¹² for instance Polish, hence the Polish name *lelek kozodój* 'nightjar' or *kozodój lelek* (Majewski 1889: 166). The semantic motivation of the term *kozodój* (literally 'goat-milker') is still so conspicuous that it does not require a special analysis (Bralczyk 2019: 136; Majewski 1889: 191; Trepka 1988: 234). It is not certain whether the Proto-Slavs shared the belief held by the Greeks and Romans that the nightjar approaches after dark when shepherds cannot see and so is able to stalk a goat and drink its milk. It is usually claimed that our Slavic ancestors developed such superstitions due to overriding foreign influences. It seems that we are dealing here with a typical morphological calque (a loan translation), in which the Latin compound *caprimulgus* became translated over time into a number of modern languages using native components, cf. German *Ziegenmelker*, English dial. *goat-sucker*, Spanish *chotacabras*, Italian *succiacapre*, Old Czech *kozodoj*, Russian *козодои* (Bralczyk 2019: 136; Capponi 1979: 126).

6. Conclusions

Greek and Latin literary sources document the ancient status of the well-known myth about a goat-sucking bird, called *αἰγοθήλας* in Greek, *caprimulgus* in Latin, *goat-sucker* in English (cf. Aristotle's statement in his *Historia animalium* and Aelian's opinion in his work *De natura animalium*), as well as that involving a large cow-sucking snake called *bova*, *boa* in Latin. Although no reptile, amphibian, or bird is able to suck from the udders of cows or goats, these fanciful myths seem to share an Indo-European origin. The same primitive imagination, registered in Slavic folk beliefs by modern researchers, first appeared in the ninth century CE in an Arabic source. Names of many cattle-sucking

reptiles (esp. snakes and lizards), amphibians (esp. toads, frogs, or salamanders), or birds (esp. nightjars) are additionally attested in the Albanian, Baltic, Germanic, Indo-Aryan, Iranian, Italic and Slavic ethnographical or literary data. Moreover, most daughter languages of Proto-Indo-European have preserved possible traces of a similar folk belief in their vocabulary.

The oldest chronological evidence is documented in two Anatolian zoonyms denoting 'toad, *Bufo bufo* L.': Hitt. *akuuakuušaš* and its Luwian counterpart *auuaušaš*, originally '(an animal) sucking cows'. Both these terms are attested as early as in the second millennium BC. The Hittite-Luwian comparison is an ideal basis for reconstructing a Proto-Anatolian word **ag^ha-g^hauas*, which is considered to have been created two or more millennia earlier. Moreover, the previous evidence from Anatolia shows full compliance with the existing Albanian and Italic data, according to which the toad was treated as a cow-sucker by some Indo-European tribes.

The Lithuanian herpetonym *žal(k)tỹs* 'grass snake' is particularly noteworthy. From its lexical definition, confirmed in the dictionary of Nesselmann, it is irrefutable that this non-venomous snake, in the opinion of the Lithuanian population, sucked milk from cows. Although the indicated etymology of the snake called *žal(k)tỹs* in Lithuanian (< PIE **ǵalh₂ktijos*, literally 'milky' ← PIE **ǵalh₂kt* n. 'milk') may seem controversial, it gains a lot of credibility in the light of Al-Jāhiz's description, as well as in the context of many other names of "milk thieves" believed by ancient Indo-European peoples to enjoy cow's (or goat's) milk, such as Vedic *godhā* (f.) 'a species of large lizard, esp. iguana or the monitor lizard', Lat. *būfō* (f.) 'toad' (< PIt. **g^houfōn*, orig. 'cow-sucker'), Armenian *kovadiac* 'toad; kind of lizard', PC **bowdī-kos* (m.) (dimin.) 'earthworm' / PC **bowdīkom* n. coll. 'set of earthworms', NPers. *bozmaǰ(ǰ)e* 'an animal from the lizard family, which, according to local beliefs, sucks milk from goats and then poisons them with its venom' < PIr. **buza-mačyaka-*, literally 'goat-sucking', and Lari *pa(h)mezak* 'large lizard that sucks milk from goats' < PIr. **pašu-mačyaka-*, literally 'sucking sheep (or goats)'. In addition, it may be construed that the South Slavic term **guja* (f.) 'snake, viper' represents an inherited formation, which is related to Lat. *bova*, *boa* (f.) 'a large non-venomous snake' (< **bōiā*). The reconstructed Indo-European archetype **g^houjā* evidently denotes a "bovine reptile", i.e. a serpent having a passion for cow's milk, as both Latin and Slavic sources unanimously show.

Another undeniable conclusion is that etymological analysis of the zoonyms attested in the Indo-European languages can confirm wholly fantastic beliefs of our Indo-European ancestors, according to which some parasitic amphibians, reptiles, and birds have the ability to suck milk directly from

udders. These false beliefs are well attested in the Ancient Greek literature (referring to the nightjar) as well as in the Latin literature (referring to the nightjar and a large non-venomous snake). Earlier scholars found possible traces of this belief in Indo-Aryan, Iranian, Italic, Celtic, and Slavic languages. The novelty of the current paper consists in tapping into the significant remains of the Indo-European myth about harmful animals that like mammalian milk and are alleged in the lexical data of the Albanian, Anatolian, Baltic, Germanic, and Slavic languages to be able to extract milk from udders. The Indo-European myth on parasitic animals having the ability to suck cow's or goat's milk has its roots in the oldest layer of prehistoric folklore, as it is confirmed already in the second millennium BC in the Hittite and Luwian names for 'toad', which are literally translated as 'cow-sucker'.

Notes

1. The word *enthusiastic* contains the root of Greek origin: θεός 'god'. The word *festival* is derived from Lat. *festus* 'festive'. Both Gk. θεός 'god' and Lat. *festus* 'festive' are descendants of PIE **dʰéh₁s-*. There are many other words which have lost their religious connotations, even those arising from the same root. For example, we can mention such English words as *feast* (Spanish *fiesta*, German *Oktoberfest*), *fair* (cf. today's meaning 'a gathering of stalls and amusements for public entertainment'), etc.
2. See also Cz. dial. *huja* (f.) 'stuffed sausage', Moravian *hujec* (m.) 'stuffed intestine, stomach, sausage' (Трубачев 1980: 168; Gluhak 1993: 252). It is worth emphasizing that the above-mentioned Czech-Moravian words cannot be related to Cz. *chuj* (m.) 'penis'.
3. It should be added that both Lith. *gaujà* (f.) 'flock, pack, herd, bunch, band, gang' and Latv. *gauja* (f.) 'crowd' represent collective nouns (with the original meaning 'herd of cows'), related to Skt. (Pāṇini) *gavyā* (f.) 'herd of cows' and Gk. Lac. βοῦα (f.) 'a band of young Laconian boys' < 'herd of cows' (Kaczyńska 2019: 93-103, Rychło & Witczak 2022, Witczak et al. 2022: 163). In other words, the East Baltic terms cannot be direct cognates of PSl. **guja* (f.) 'snake, viper' (orig. 'bovine').
4. It should be noted here that, from a genetic point of view, the slowworm is a legless lizard, not a snake. The common people, however, treat the slowworm as a species of non-venomous snakes.
5. Lat.: "Serpentes deos esse credebant eis que cultum praecipuum exhibebant et singuli patres familias, cives, coloni et nobiles singulos serpentes domi asservare solebant, quos pro Penatibus et Laribus familiaribus adorabant lacque et gallos gallinaceos eis immolabant" (Gwagninus 1578). The Latin text can be translated as follows: "[The pagan Samogitians and Lithuanians] believed that snakes are gods and offered them the main worship. And also individual masters of house, citizens, farmers and nobles used to keep individual snakes at home, which they worshipped as the Penates and the household Lares, and sacrificed milk and domestic fowls to the snakes" (transl. by Kaczyńska & Witczak).
6. The Celtic lexical material can be presented as follows: MBret. *buzug* [byθyg] coll. 'earthworms', NBret. *buzhug* coll. 'earthworms', *buzhug du* coll. 'lugworms' (literally 'black earthworms'); MBret. *buzuguenn* [byθygenn] (f.) 'an earthworm', NBret. *buzhugenn* (f.) 'id.'; MCorn. *vethygā* 'earthworms', LCorn. *bulligan*, *beligann* 'earthworm' (< PC **bowdīkom* n. coll. 'set of earthworms'); Gascon *bu'zik*, *bu'dik* 'earthworm', Saintongeais *bwi*, *bwik*, *bwit* 'earthworm' < Gallo-Romance **bodīcus* ← Gaulish **bōdīkos* < PC **bowdī-kos* (m.) (dimin.). It is worth

emphasizing that Proto-Celtic **bow-dī-* and some related formations (attested in Armenian, Indo-Aryan and Latin) derive from PIE **gʷous* (f.) 'cow' and PIE **dʰeh₁-* (zero-grade **dʰh₁-*) 'to suck'. In other words, the Proto-Celtic term for 'earthworm', **bowdīkos*, seems to indicate 'a little cow-sucker' (Jørgensen 2021: 10-26). The semantic development in Celtic is analogous to that in the Romance languages, cf. Logodurese *buvone* 'weevil', Gascon *buhun* 'mole', Sicilian *bifuluna* 'turtle' < Lat. *būfō*, gen. sg. *būfōnis* (f.) 'toad' (de Vaan 2008: 76).

7. The Iranian terms for 'lizard' may ultimately be due to Aramaic influence. Note that Neo-Aramaic nouns denoting 'monitor lizard' are commonly explained as 'goat sucker' or the like (Mutzafi 2021: 398-399).
8. The salamander is wrongly claimed to be a kind of lizard in folk beliefs. In fact, it is a tailed amphibian, not a tailed reptile.
9. A detailed analysis of the semantics and etymology of both words is provided by Witczak (2020: 140-148).
10. Aristotle (*HA* 618b) describes the nightjar's alleged love for goat's milk: "It flies to goats to suck them, hence even its name *goatsucker* (*αἰγοθήλας*) derives. It is said that when it finishes suckling the goat's udder, the udder dries up and the goat itself goes blind" (transl. by Kaczyńska and Witczak).
11. Aelian (*NA* III 37) repeats Aristotle's message: "It seems that the goatsucker (nightjar) is the most audacious of creatures, for it despises small birds but assails goats with the utmost violence, and more than that, it flies to their udders and sucks out the milk without any fear of vengeance from the goatherd, although it makes the basest return for being filled with milk, for it makes the dug 'blind' and staunches its flow" (transl. by A.F. Scholfield (1958: 198-201) with some small modifications).
12. Trepka emphasizes that "the ancient Greeks believed that the nightjar sneaks up on goats at night to drink their milk. Through Rome, this fantastic fairy tale was spread all over Europe" (1988: 234; our own translation).

Abbreviations

abl. – ablative; acc. – accusative; Alb. – Albanian; Arm. – Armenian; Arom. – Aromanian; Bulg. – Bulgarian; c. – common gender; ca. – circa; Cr. – Croatian; Cz. – Czech; dat. – dative; dial. – dialectal; f. – feminine; gen. – genitive; Gk. – Greek; Hitt. – Hittite; Lat. – Latin; Latv. – Latvian; LCorn. – Late Cornish; Lith. – Lithuanian; Luw. – Luwian; m. – masculine; MBret. – Middle Breton; MCor. – Middle Cornish; n. – neuter; NBret. – New Breton; nom. – nominative; NPers. – New Persian; Osc. – Oscan; Pal. – Palaic; PB – Proto-Baltic; PC – Proto-Celtic; PIE – Proto-Indo-European; PIr. – Proto-Iranian; PIt. – Proto-Italic; pl. – plural; PSl. – Proto-Slavic; Rom. – Romanian; Sab. – Sabine; Serb. – Serbian; sg. – singular; Skt. – Sanskrit; Ukr. – Ukrainian; Umbr. – Umbrian

References

1. Aelian. *On the characteristics of animals*. (1958). Scholfield, A.F. (transl.). Vol. 1. London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
2. *Altltauisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*. (2015). Hock, W. (ed.). Vol. 2. Hamburg: Baar-Verlag.
3. Arnott, W.G. (2017). *Birds in the ancient world from A to Z*. London – New York: Routledge.
4. Baranowski, B. (1967). *Zanik tradycyjnego chowu krów oraz wierzeń i zabobonów z nim związanych na terenie obecnego województwa łódzkiego*. Łódź: Łódzkie Towarzystwo Naukowe.


5. Barnley, S.A., Lewis, W.J., Beach, J.A. & Berghof, O. (2006). *The etymologies of Isidore of Seville*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
6. Bralczyk, J. (2019). *Zwierzyniec*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Agora.
7. Buck, C.D. (1905). *A grammar of Oscan and Umbrian*. Boston: The Atheneum Press.
8. Capponi, F. (1979). *Ornithologia Latina*. Genova: Istituto di Filologia Classica e Medievale dell'Università di Genova.
9. Cząstka-Kłapyta, J. (2015). Żaby, zaczarowane demony z Grywałdu. In *Polski region – Pieniny*, 13 (2), p. 94-98.
10. de Vaan, M. (2008). *Etymological dictionary of Latin and the other Italic languages*. Leiden – Boston: Brill.
11. Donini, P.G. (1991). *Arab travelers and geographers*. London: Immel Publishing.
12. Edelman, D.I. (2015). *Etymological dictionary of Iranian languages*, Vol. 5. Moscow: Nauka – Vostochnaya literatura. / Edelman D.I. *Etimologičeskij slovar' iranskikh jazykov*, Tom 5. Moskva: Nauka – Vostochnaya literatura. / Эдельман Д.И. *Этимологический словарь иранских языков*, Том 5. Москва: Наука – Восточная литература.
13. Ermacora, D. (2017). The comparative milk-suckling reptile. In *Anthropozoologica*, 52 (1), p. 59-81.
14. Fick, A. (1891). Etymologien. In *Beiträge zur Kunde der indogermanischen Sprachen*, 17, p. 319-324.
15. Fraenkel, E. (1965). *Litauisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*. Vol. 2. Heidelberg: Carl Winter.
16. Gaillard-Seux, P. (2012). Le serpent, source de santé: Le corps des serpents dans la thérapeutique gréco-romaine. In *Anthropozoologica*, 47 (1), p. 263-289.
17. Gluhak, A. (1993). *Hrvatski etimološki rječnik*. Zagreb: August Cesarec.
18. Gwagninus, A. (1578). *Sarmatiae Europaeae descriptio*. Cracoviae: Typis Matthiae Wirzbietae.
19. Hertzog, P.H. (1967). Snakes and snakelore in Pennsylvania. In *Pennsylvania folklife*, 17 (1), p. 14-17.
20. Jørgensen, A.R. (2021). *Celtic cow-sucklers and other chthonic creatures*. A presentation given at Indo-Ecologies, SCAS, October 21th, 2021.
21. Kaczyńska, E. (2019). Laconian βοῦα 'Band of Boys' as a collective noun. In *Graeco-Latina Brunensia*, 14 (1), p. 93-103.
22. Karłowicz, J. (1894-1905). *Słownik wyrazów obcego a mniej jasnego pochodzenia*. Kraków: W.L. Anczyc i Spółka.
23. *Kitab al-Hayawan*. (1966). 'Abd al-Salām Hārūn, M. (ed.). Vol. 4. Cairo: 'Isa al-Babi al-Halabi.
24. Klímová, D. (1973). Zum Studium der Schlangenthematik in der Prosafolklore der Slawen. In *Ethnologia Slavica*, 5, p. 197-213.
25. Kloekhorst, A. (2008). *Etymological dictionary of the Hittite inherited lexicon*. Leiden – Boston: Brill.
26. Kołoczek, B.J. (2020). *Gajusz Juliusz Solinus. Zbiór wiadomości godnych uwagi albo Polihistor*. Kraków: Towarzystwo Wydawnicze "Historia Iagellonica".
27. Kowalski, A.P. & Rychło, M. (2020). Gothic containers from organic materials and their cognates. In *The journal of Indo-European studies*, 48 (3-4), p. 425-443.
28. Kowalski, A.P., Rychło, M. & Witczak, K.T. (2020). Is Old Norse *gammi* an inherited or a borrowed word? In *Skandinavskaya filologiya*, 18 (1), p. 72-84.
29. Kowalski, A.P., Rychło, M. & Witczak, K.T. (2024). Przekaz al-Dżahiza o wierzeniach Słowian. Folklorystyka w badaniach nad prasłowiańską mitologią. In *Slavia Antiqua*, 65 [in press].

30. Lewicki, T. (1956). *Źródła arabskie do dziejów Słowiańszczyzny*. Vol. 1. Wrocław: Zakład imienia Ossolińskich, Wydawnictwo PAN.
31. Lewicki, T. (1961). L'élevage des animaux domestiques chez les anciens Slaves d'après les sources arabes et persanes du IXe au XIIIe siècle. In *Folia Orientalia*, 3, p. 275-313.
32. Lüders, H. (1942). Von indischen Tieren. In *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 96 (1), p. 23-81.
33. Majewski, E. (1889). *Słownik nazwisk zoologicznych i botanicznych polskich*. Vol. 1. Warszawa: Księgarnia Teodora Paprockiego i S-ki.
34. Maltby, R. (1991). *A lexicon of ancient Latin etymologies*. Leeds: Francis Cairns.
35. Martirosyan, H. (2008). *Studies in Armenian etymology with special emphasis on dialects and culture. Indo-European heritage. An unpublished doctoral dissertation*. Leiden: Universiteit Leiden.
36. Martirosyan, H.K. (2009). *Etymological dictionary of the Armenian inherited lexicon*. Leiden – Boston: Brill.
37. Mayrhofer, M. (1992). *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen*. Vol. 1. Heidelberg: Carl Winter.
38. Mejor, M. (1996). *Sebastian Fabian Klonowic. Roxolania. Roksolania czyli ziemie Czerwonej Rusi*. Warszawa: Instytut Badań Literackich.
39. Mikołajczyk, I. (2019). *Gajusz Pliniusz Sekundus, Historia naturalna*. Vol. 2. Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika.
40. Molchanova, E.K. & Nouruzi, A. (2016). From the vocabulary of non-written languages and dialects of southern Iran. In *To the 100th anniversary of Vera Sergeevna Rastorguyeva. Iranian miscellany*. Molchanova, E.K., Dodykhudoeva, L.R. & Edelman, D.I. (eds.). Moscow: Yazyki Narodov Mira, p. 84-92. / Molchanova E.K., Nouruzi A. Iz leksyki bespis'mennykh yazykov i dialektov Yuzhnogo Irana. In *K 100-letnemu yubileyu Very Sergeevny Rastorguevoj. Iranskiy sbornik*. Molchanova E.K., Dodykhudoeva L.R., Edel'man D.I. (red.). Moskva: Yazyki narodov mira, s. 84-92. / Молчанова Е.К., Ноурузи А. Из лексики бесписьменных языков и диалектов Южного Ирана. В *К 100-летнему юбилею Веры Сергеевны Расторгуевой. Иранский сборник*. Молчанова Е.К., Додыхудоева Л.Р., Эдельман Д.И. (ред.). Москва: Языки народов мира, с. 84-92.
41. Müllenbach, K. & Endzelins, J. (1929-1932). *Lettisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch*. Vol. 4. Riga: Lettische Kulturfond.
42. Mutzafi, H. (2021). Neo-Aramaic animal names. In *Studies in the grammar and lexicon of Neo-Aramaic*. Khan, G., & Noorlander, P.M. (eds.). Cambridge: Open Books Publishers, p. 389-413.
43. Nesselmann, G.H.F. (1851). *Wörterbuch der littauischen Sprache*. Königsberg: Verlag der Gebrüder Bornträger.
44. Newmark, L. (1999). *Albanian-English dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
45. Panasenko, N. (2023). The essence of onomasiological bases and their types in phytonymic lexicon. In *Legis artis. Language yesterday, today, tomorrow*. Trnava: University of SS Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, 8 (2), December 2023, p. 35-52.
46. *Pliny. Natural history*. (1967). Rackham, H. (transl.). Vol. 3 (Libri VIII-XI). Cambridge – Massachusetts: Harvard University Press – London: William Heinemann.
47. Pollard, J. (1977). *Birds in Greek life and myth*. London: Thames and Hudson.
48. Riegler, R. (1921). Caprimulgus und Verwandtes. In *Wörter und Sachen*, 7, p. 136-144.
49. Ronzitti, R. (2016). Etymological hypotheses between Armenian and Indo-Iranian. New proposals and remarks. In *Greek texts and Armenian traditions. An interdisciplinary approach*. Gazzano, F., Pagani, L. & Traina, G. (eds.), Berlin – New York: De Gruyter, p. 311-325. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110489941-020>.

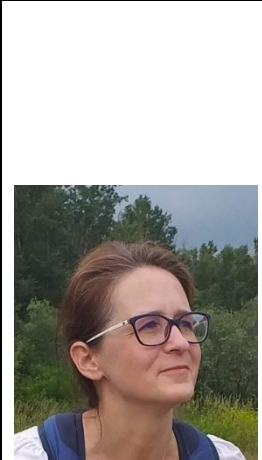
50. Ronzitti, R. (2011). *Quattro etimologie indoeuropee: lat. būfō, it. gufo, ingl. smog e drug*. Innsbruck: Institut für Sprachen und Literaturen der Universität Innsbruck.
51. Rychło, M. (2016). Can weep lure? An analysis of a controversial Slavico-Germanic pair of cognates. In *Beyond philology*, 13, p. 103-124.
52. Rychło, M. (2019). *Contrasting cognates in modern languages from a diachronic perspective*. Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego.
53. Rychło, M. (2017). Kontrowersyjne ślady zmiany pie. *p > pgerm. *f utrwalone w polsko-angielskich wyrazach pokrewnych: zestawienia sporne i wczesne zapożyczenia. In *Język Polski*, 97 (3), p. 114-128.
54. Rychło, M. (2021). Slavic and Germanic reflexes of Proto-Indo-European root *h₂ueh₁- 'wind': A comparative study. In *Lege artis. Language yesterday, today, tomorrow*. Trnava: University of SS Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, 6 (1), June 2021, p. 190-231.
55. Rychło, M. & Witczak, K.T. (2022). Proto-Indo-European collective nouns in *-iiom: Lexical evidence. In *The journal of Indo-European studies*, 50 (1-2), p. 153-174.
56. Rychło, M. & Witczak, K.T. (2021). Proto-Indo-European *moghtis f. 'might, power'. In *The journal of Indo-European studies*, 49 (1-2), p. 171-186.
57. Schmidt, K.P. (1929). *The truth about snake stories*. Chicago: Field Museum of Natural History.
58. Smoczyński, W. (2018). *Lithuanian etymological dictionary*. Vol. 4. Berlin: Peter Lang.
59. *The etymological dictionary of Slavic languages: Proto-Slavic lexical stock*. (1980). Trubachev, O.N. (ed.). Vol. 7. Moscow: Nauka. / *Этимологический словарь славянских языков: Праславянский лексический фонд*. Trubachev O.N. (red.). Том 7. Москва: Наука. / *Этимологический словарь славянских языков: Праславянский лексический фонд*. Трубачев О.Н. (ред.). Том 7. Москва: Наука.
60. Thompson, D.W. (1936). *A glossary of Greek birds*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
61. Trepka, A. (1988). *Gawędy o zwierzętach*. Katowice: Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza.
62. Valastro Canale, A. (2014). *Isidoro di Siviglia. Etimologie o origini*. Novara: De Agostini.
63. Vasmer, M. (1987). *Etymological dictionary of the Russian language*. Vol. 3. Moscow: "Progress". / *Фасмер М. Этимологический словарь русского языка*. Том 3. Москва: "Progress". / *Фасмер М. Этимологический словарь русского языка*. Т. 3. Москва: Прогресс.
64. Weiss, M. (2009). *Outline of the historical and comparative grammar of Latin*. Ann Arbor – New York: Beech Stave Press.
65. Wilgosiewicz-Skutecka, R. (2007). Komu było dedykowane dzieło Gwagnina "Sarmatiae Europeae descriptio"? – rozwiązanie zagadki znanego polonicum XVI w. In *Biblioteka*, 11 (20), p. 11-27.
66. Witczak, K.T. (2020). Baba, żaba i krowa, czyli rozważania o tym, jak dawne są ludowe wierzenia o żabie wysysającej mleko krowie. In *Slavia Occidentalis*, 77 (1), p. 133-151.
67. Witczak, K.T., Kowalski, A.P. & Rychło, M. (2023). Dwa południowosłowiańskie herpetonimy w oświetleniu językoznawczym i etnograficznym (psł. *korvosъsъ 'wąż Eskulapa', psł. *guja 'wąż, żmija'). In *Slavistična revija*, 71 (4), p. 355-368.
68. Witczak, K.T., Habrajska, G. & Rychło, M. (2022). Proto-Slavic collectives in *-bje from a historical and comparative perspective. In *Slavistična revija*, 70 (2), p. 157-173.
69. Witczak, K.T. & Rychło, M. (2022). Soot in the Saami and Germanic languages. In *Skandinavskaya filologiya*, 20 (2), p. 269-287.

Contact data


Author #1

	<p><i>name:</i> <i>academic title / rank:</i></p> <p><i>department:</i></p> <p><i>institution:</i></p> <p><i>e-mail:</i> <i>fields of interest:</i></p>	<p>Mikolaj Rychlo Dr Hab. in Linguistics Associate Professor English Language and Theoretical Linguistics Division. Institute of English and American Studies. Faculty of Languages University of Gdansk 51, Wita Stwosza St., Gdańsk, 80-308, Poland mikolaj.rychlo@ug.edu.pl Etymology, history of English, history of Polish, morphology, diachronic phonology, Proto-Indo- European, historical and comparative linguistics.</p>
---	---	---


Author #2

	<p><i>name:</i> <i>academic title / rank:</i></p> <p><i>department:</i></p> <p><i>institution:</i></p> <p><i>e-mail:</i> <i>fields of interest:</i></p>	<p>Elwira Kaczyńska Dr Hab. in Linguistics Associate Professor Department of the Classical Philology Faculty of Philology University of Lodz ul. Pomorska 171/173, Łódź, 90-236, Poland elwira.kaczynska@uni.lodz.pl Classical philology, Ancient Greek, Latin, Modern Greek, Cretan studies, Mycenology, Greek etymology, Greek-oriental language contacts, Greek mythology, Greek vocabulary, Greek onomastics, ancient hydronyms, Hellenistic literature, Callimachus of Cyrene, Isidore of Seville, Indo- European protolanguage, historical-comparative linguistics, etymology, loanwords, ancient medicine, animal studies, Mediterranean flora and fauna.</p>
--	---	---

Author #3

	<p><i>name:</i> <i>academic title / rank:</i></p> <p><i>department:</i></p> <p><i>institution:</i></p> <p><i>e-mail:</i> <i>fields of interest:</i></p>	<p>Andrzej Kowalski Prof. Dr Hab. in Anthropology Full Professor Institute of Anthropology Faculty of History University of Gdansk ul. Bielańska 5 St., Gdańsk, 80-581, Poland andrzej.kowalski@ug.edu.pl Anthropology of culture, prehistoric societies, social archaeology, productivity of primitive peoples, symbolism of human products, Indo- European culture, Germanic and Balto-Slavic antiquities, Nordic, comparative mythology, early history of art, historical linguistics, origins of ancient philosophy, regional studies.</p>
---	---	---

Author #4

	<p><i>name:</i> <i>academic title / rank:</i></p> <p><i>department:</i></p> <p><i>institution:</i></p> <p><i>e-mail:</i> <i>fields of interest:</i></p>	<p>Krzysztof Tomasz Witczak Prof. Dr Hab. in Linguistics Full Professor Department of the Classical Philology Faculty of Philology University of Lodz ul. Pomorska 171/173, Łódź, 90-236, Poland krzysztof.witczak@uni.lodz.pl Classical philology, Ancient Greek dialects, Mycenaean studies, Greek deities, ancient religions and myths, Roman love elegy, Proto- Indo-European, historical-comparative linguistics, etymology, language contacts, loanwords, lexicography, onomastics, Indo- European fauna and flora, ancient medicine, Slavic antiquities, biographical dictionaries, regional studies, Jewish culture.</p>
--	---	--