

ОГЛЯДИ. РЕЦЕНЗІЇ

У журналі “North-Western European Language Evolution” (NOWELE) 2010, vol. 60-61, p. 221-230 (Данія) опублікована рецензія на «Этимологический словарь германских языков» В.В. Левицького*. З дозволу головного редактора журналу професора, доктора Ганса Фреде Нілсена (Hans Frede Nielsen) і автора рецензії професора, доктора Анатолія Лібермана (Anatoly Liberman) редколегія збірника „Германська філологія” передруковує текст рецензії, вважаючи, що українському читачеві буде цікаво познайомитися з думкою іноземних колег про праці українських дослідників.

Anatoly Liberman

A RICH HARVEST OF PROFESSOR VIKTOR LEVITSKY

V. V. LEVITSKY. *Etimologicheskii slovar' germanskikh iazykov / An Etymological Dictionary of the Germanic Languages / Etymologisches Wörterbuch der germanischen Sprachen*. 2 volumes. Vinnitsa: Nova knyga, 2010. (614 pages; 317 pages.) *Semanticheskie i foneticheskie sviazi v leksike indoevropskogo praiazyka. Opyt kvantitativnogo analiza etimologicheskogo slovaria*. [Semantic and Phonetic Connections in the Proto-Indo-European Vocabulary: An Attempt at a Quantitative Analysis of an Etymological Dictionary]: Chernovtsy: Ruta, 2008. 231 pages. *Osnovi germanistiki* [Foundations of Germanic Linguistics. Vinnitsia: Nova Kniga, 2008. 527 pages.**

Viktor Vasil'evich Levitsky has been a prolific and highly regarded scholar for decades. His multiple contributions span several fields: sound symbolism, statistical methods in linguistics, etymology, and

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** In German Professor Levitsky transliterates his family name as *Levickij*. My transliteration is from Russian according to one system accepted in the English speaking countries. It could also have been *Levitskii*. *Osnovy* is in Ukrainian, so, strictly speaking, *Levit'skii* would have been correct. The same is true of the name of the town: *Vinnitsa* (Russian) versus *Vinnitsia* (Ukrainian). Something is odd about the way the name of the publishing house is given on the title pages. I reproduced both variants as I found them.

the entire field of Germanic. He is the author of excellent textbooks and of fundamental works pertaining to all the areas of his expertise, and in recent years we have witnessed a stream of his new books, including, in addition to those featured in the title of the present review, *Zvukovoi simvolizm: mify i real'nost'* [Sound Symbolism: Myths and Reality] (2009) and his autobiography (also 2009).

A professor at Chernovtsy (Ukraine), he never forgets the needs of his students, and even his dictionary opens with some information on the division of the Indo-European languages and sound correspondences. This dictionary has a long history. An initial sketch appeared in 1994. Also in 1994 "Ruta" published his *Germanskije iazyki i drevnie germantsy* [The Old Germanic Languages and Their Speakers] and in 1997 *Etimologicheskie i semasiologicheskie issledovaniia v oblasti germanskikh iazykov* [Studies in Germanic Etymology and Semasiology]. Six years later the same publishing house brought out a three-volume Germanic etymological dictionary. In 2001 a fourth volume appeared, and in 2003 a fifth. These volumes had a relatively homey appearance, unlike the impressive-looking hardcover set now offered to the public. Its sponsor is the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences.

A comparative Romance dictionary by Diez came out in 1853. Körtling's and Meyer-Lübke's works followed Diez's classic. The first comparative Slavic dictionary (by Miklosich) is also nearly 125 years old (1886). Walde-Pokorny (1927-1932) will celebrate its hundredth anniversary in the foreseeable future. One could have expected that their Germanic analog would have headed this list. Yet such a dictionary had not existed until Levitsky wrote it. Vladimir Orel's *A Handbook of Germanic Etymology* is dated 2008. Edgar C. Polomé considered a proposal that would have funded work on a comparative Germanic dictionary, but he began thinking of it at the end of his career, realized that he would never finish it, and gave up the project. Even an up-to-date etymological dictionary of Old English remains a desideratum. Only an etymological dictionary of Old High German is advancing at a respectable speed, and an incomplete etymological dictionary of Old Frisian was published in 2000. As regards Modern Germanic, we have a new dictionary of Norwegian, and Elmar Seebold keeps revising "Kluge." It does not look like anyone in the West is planning a Germanic analog of Meyer-Lübke. Those familiar with the state of the art will appreciate Levitsky's courage and perseverance.

As noted, the dictionary appeared in two volumes. Volume 2 contains indexes of words and Indo-European roots (in the form in which they are codified in Pokorny) and an extremely useful and innovative semantic glossary (so that one can discover what is said about any concept touched on in the text: nouns, adjectives, verbs, and a few form words), an index of 254 regular semantic connections, and indexes of morphological and phonetic processes, phraseological units, and of situations involving languages in contact. The most astounding index bears the title “The Entries Containing the Author’s Original Ideas” (over 250 of them!). That index alone would have been sufficient to win the author the admiration of the users. Dictionary makers work like moles; they burrow diligently and construct complex galleries under the ground, but an outsider staying above has a hard time tracing their moves. Also, in no other branch of linguistics is plagiarism so rampant as in lexicography: the lack of references in them is the norm. It would be a blessing to open “Kluge” and be told which entries have been revised in comparison with the previous editions, which replaced Mitzka’s (not in respect of format but of content), and which still go back to Kluge himself (probably not a single one!).

The focus of Levitsky’s dictionary (and herein lies its greatest value) is on semantics. He is chiefly interested to learn how one meaning engenders another. Etymologists begin by trying to reconstruct a phonetically viable protoform. Levitsky, who is fully aware of all the intricacies of historical phonetics and who has published extensively on so-called irregular ablaut, set out to reconstruct a maximum number of protomeanings, that is, such nuclear syncretic meanings as later branched out and produced numerous descendants. Having learned everything from the Neogrammarians, we now know how often sound laws are derailed (I am trying to stay as close as possible to Levitsky’s favorite word *Entgleisungen*) and how many processes interfere with them. A search for comparable semantic laws has been moderately successful, though the school of *Wörter und Sachen* made great strides in that direction.

However, semantic typology exists. Certain regularities came to light long ago. For example, words for “child, offspring” tend (tend: do not have) to go back to “offshoot”; “bright” is a natural partner of “loud,” “flow” sometimes forms a partnership with “din.” Every time we begin to work on a new etymology, we hope to find parallels. *Man* is a word of obscure origin. What is the “primitive” concept from which the idea

of a human being usually (frequently, naturally) develops? “Tree,” “earth”? What else? The derivation of **mann-* from a root meaning “think” (Bopp) carries no conviction, partly because the postulated development is incredible (the earliest views of people on animals militate against Bopp’s hypothesis) and partly because the shift from “a creature endowed by reason” to “human being” would be isolated. Typology is the brand name of the universals of language. Reference to them constitutes no proof; yet they provide an indispensable framework.

Despite the fluidity of semantic correspondences, people seem to have recurring associations (like the one from “twig” to “child”). The same beliefs and customs result in the same transfer of names (such as from “knee” to “generation”), and identical metaphors serve as the motor of the development of meaning in various languages. Levitsky is the first to offer such a broad panorama of these developments. My occasional doubts about some of the paths he reconstructs do not matter. In principle, he is a follower of Jost Trier, whose word histories often strike me as fairy tales, but he avoided many pitfalls of Trier’s method (and of Trier’s ardent disciple Jan de Vries), for he based all his conclusions on precedent (“typology”). When he pleads a case, he invariably cites analogous cases as evidence (while Trier used to progress from concept to concept), and he chose a reserved style vastly different from that of his model.

Even when Levitsky is in agreement with Trier, he does not feel bound by his conclusions. Trier resembles a poet whose strength lies in the beauty of exposition (the reader is overawed, overwhelmed by the opening vistas and does not notice a precipice under his feet), whereas Levitsky offers a sober, critical analysis of every etymology. On p. 31 (“Introduction”), he reproduces the entire scheme of Trier’s *Niederwald*. This scheme shows how Trier etymologized dozens of words. Levitsky accepts the scheme but contends that “thread, needle” and others should be excluded from it and sets up the seme “sinew, bowstring” to account for them. In his book on semantic and phonetic connections in the Proto-Indo-European vocabulary, he isolated 37 “hypersemes”: <separate, divide, disunite>, <bind, connect, weave together>, <bend>, <movement>, <sound>, <shine, glitter>, <color>, <olfactory sensations>, <wet, liquid>, <taste>, <press>, <swell>, <heap, crowd>, <inquire>, <keep, guard>, <let go, weaken>, <pull>, <smear, draw a line>, <seize>, <perceive>, <quiet, immobile>, <wish, desire>, <burn (transitive and intransitive)>, <cold, frost>, <strong, big>, <weak, tender>, <positive attitude,

emotions>, <to stay out of reach>, <work, make an effort>, <grow>, <fall>, <branch, beam>, <flat, broad>, <strength, struggle>, <hair, tuft of hair>, <stone>, <disappear>, <entrails, bowels>, <reed>, and <crawl>. One short example of how hypersemes work will suffice (the words are in German):

33. <strength [strength, struggle] – Kraft, Macht, Kampf, kämpfen, Lebenskraft, struggle> Widerwille, Haß, männlich, Krieg, streiten, Geisteskraft, Sieg.

From the commentary: “Hyperseme 33 <strength, struggle> – Kraft, Kampf, Macht, kämpfen. In Pokorny, the microseme *Mann* often belongs here: **ner/aner*- 1) magische Lebenskraft, 2) Mann, männlich, kräftig”; **uīros* ‘Mann, eig. der Kräftige’ (p. 27 of the book). One can see that Levitsky resorts to componential analysis: every meaning is represented as a sum of semantic features that have been obtained from Pokorny’s definitions.

The picture won’t be complete without showing how a single seme (not a hyperseme) functions as a bundle of variants. (I will list the variants but leave out the illustrative examples, except for “f.”) <Cut>: a) sharp; a cutting, pricking instrument (sword, plow, arrow, and so forth), b) to cut, separate > a group of people, crowd, herd, c) brisk, quick, nimble, d) wound, maim, castrate, e) separate > purify, clean, f) a fragment of stone, wood, and so forth; splinter, pole, shard, rag, anything made of it: OHGerm. *scivaro* ‘splinter, a fragment of stone’ (< *skei* ‘cut’); Lith. *lūskos* ‘rag’, Latv. *laūska* ‘fragment’ (< *leu* ‘cut’); OHGerm. *skaft* ‘shaft, spear’, OSax. *skaft* ‘spear’ (< *skep* ‘cut’); Goth. *skildus* ‘shield’, Lith. *skèltis* ‘a cut off piece’ (< *skel* ‘cut’); OIrish *scīath* ‘shield’ (< *skei*- ‘cut’); MHGerm. *schîe* ‘a stake in a fence (“a piece of wood split off” < *skei* ‘cut, separate’); OEngl. *telga* ‘branch’ (< *del* ‘split, cut out’); Goth. *hallus* ‘rock’, OIcel. *hallr* ‘stone, rock’ (< *skel* ‘cut’); Albanian *kerpë* ‘cliff, rock’ (< *sker* ‘cut’); OIcel. *brík* ‘board, bench’ (< *bhrēi* ‘cut’); Middle Irish *bairrenn* ‘a piece of rock’ (< *bher*- ‘work with a sharp instrument, cut, rub, split’).

g) meat, flesh (the two meanings are closely connected: see Adolf 1937); h) bark, skin, rough surface, i) cut, separate > perceive, recognize; clever, skillful, j) short, curtailed, small, k) cutting edge, margin, border, l) something gouged, hollowed out > container, sheath, trough, vessel, m) bail water (based on the meaning ‘cut off the upper layer of water’), n) quite often the meaning “cut” yields the meaning “draw a line, make a trace or furrow,” o) the meaning “cut, strike fire” produces the meaning “lay spells on, use magic arts,” often in conjunction with the semes < an

object of sorcery, letter>, p) vibrate, tremble (and further to “fling, throw stones at”), q) move by turning around, whirring, jumping; hurry; quick, r) the meaning “move back and forth; tremble; vibrate” frequently develops the meaning “shine, glimmer, glitter,” for “lively movement” and “glimmer, shine” often “form a correlation” (Pokorny 1099).

It will be seen that Pokorny’s *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* has been mined for two databases: every root with all the cognates (to the extent that it has relevance for Germanic) appears in the dictionary as a special entry, and invariant meanings have been abstracted from the definitions. Nor are syncretic meanings lost sight of for a moment. Compare the following: “...the syncretic meaning ‘cut/bind/bend’ is based on the concept ‘sinew; work with sinews’, which was designated by the Indo-European root **se-sett*. This concept, originally understood as undivided, generated the semes <cut>, <wind (verb)>, <bend>, <sow, scatter seeds>, <bowstring>. The seme <bowstring> generates in turn the semes <tremble, vibrate>, <hurl, fling>, <wound, injure>, and so forth. The seme <weaken, release the bowstring> generates the semes <release>, <leak, flow>. (*Connections*, p. 9) This summary is by now familiar from the material presented above. The dictionary features 1630 Germanic roots. Over 27,000 words of the Germanic languages are mentioned in the entries, but (as we have also seen) many other languages are represented, so that altogether over 35,000 words found their place in Volume I. As Levitsky points out, his dictionary (in regard of its scope) will bear comparison with the best-known etymological dictionaries of English and German (those include more entries because they have to deal with numerous borrowings).

I will translate two entries from the dictionary. Fortunately, Levitsky has published many articles in German (in *Indogermanische Forschungen* and elsewhere). I say “fortunately,” because one need not have any illusions about the ability of Germanic philologists in the West to read any Slavic language. The first entry is “medium long” and “conservative”; the second is one of the longest and contains a bit of polite polemic.

HLAIB ‘bread’.

1. Engl. *loaf*, OEngl. *hlāf*, Germ. *Laib*; OHGerm. (*h*)*leib*, OFris. *hlēf*, Swed. *lev*, OIcel. *hleifr*, Goth. *hlaifs*; < Gmc. **hlaibaz* ‘baked bread’ (< IE **kloi-bho*). Slavic *khleb* (Old Slavonic “*chlěb*” is a borrowing from Germanic).

Origin unclear. Jost Trier connects Gmc. **hlaib-* with the technique of covering woven things with clay (< IE **kel* “lean (against)”); according

to Otto Schrader, **halib-* is akin to Greek *klíbanos* ‘clay vessels for baking bread’ (metonymy: “vessel” > “the vessel’s content”). But Gmc. *b* (< *bh*) does not accord with Greek *b*; besides, the Greek word may have been borrowed from some unknown language. Therefore, Trier’s version seems more probable. Acceptance of his version allows us to connect the nest under consideration with Goth. *hleibjan* ‘help’, OHGerm. *libēn* ‘protect, take care of’, OIcel. *hlifa* (the same) and *hlif* ‘shield’ (< “weave (together)”), OE *hlif* ‘young moon’ (transferred by similarity?). But Trier’s version needs modification. I believe that IE *klei-* is a derivative of the root **(s)kel*, which has the syncretic meaning “cut/bind/bend” (rather than “lean”). See *skelh-*. The Germanic root **hlaib* designated “bread” (apparently, “a piece of bread baked as a separate quantity”; this follows from the meaning of “loaf”) before it was replaced with the root **braud-* (see *braud*) for extralinguistic reasons (a new technology of cooking bread was invented).

2. Engl. *lord*, MEngl. *lōverd*, OE *hlāford* (< **hlaif-weard* ‘bread ward; the head of a household whose dependants “eat his bread”’); Engl. *lady*, MEngl. *leafdi*, OEngl. *hlǣfdige* ‘bread kneader’ (see *dīg*), Goth. *gahlaifa* ‘companion’ cf. Germ. *Genosse*; see *neut-4*).

This entry gives an adequate idea of Levitsky’s style and choice of detail. He makes no attempt to offer a survey of the literature, so that we do not learn that the correspondence *hlaifs* – *hleibjan** was suggested long ago, that **hleibjan* has been all but given up by etymologists, that Lehmann, in his edition of Feist, also referred, though noncommittally, to Trier in both entries (*hlaifs* and *hleibjan*), or that the relation of the Germanic and Slavic forms is one of the most vexing questions of both philologies. Levitsky highlights only the points that lead to the solution and his version of the etymology. If he had adopted Feist’s or even Walde’s manner of exposition, he would never have completed his work, so he preferred to do what could be done (a wise approach, as far as I can judge).

HUG- ‘to think; mind’

Goth. *hugs* ‘mind’, Old Icel. *hugr* ‘thought, mind’, Swed. *håg* ‘intention’, OEngl. *hygge*, Dutch *heug* ‘thought, understanding, mind’, OFris. *hei*, OSax., OHGerm. *hugi* ‘thought’ (< Gmc. **hugu-/hugi*); Germ. *högen* ‘rejoice’, OHGerm. *huggen*, *huckan*, Dutch *heugen* ‘remember’, OSax *huggen*, West Fris. *hugia*, OIcel. *hyggja*, Goth. *hugjan* ‘think, consider’ (< Gmc. **hugjan*); < Gmc. *hug-* ‘think; thought, mind, understanding’. Origin unclear.

Lehmann (1986:193) prefers as a remote possibility comparison with IE **keu-* (see *haus-*) ‘perceive, hear’. Johannesson (1956:205) traces Gmc. **hug-* to IE *keuk* ‘shine’ (similarly Flowers [1983:125-26]). The semes <perceive> and <wisdom> are connected regularly (cf. *saf-*, *wōd̄*). The semantic development “shine” > “wise” is less likely.

Semantic typology, to the extent that, among others, Russ. *dumat* ‘think’ goes back to *dut* ‘blow’, *dyshat* ‘breathe’ (so Trubachev V:155-56, and see the literature there), allows us to put forward one more hypothesis on the origin of Gmc. **hug*: this root can be a derivative of IE *keu*, which Pokorny (631, 628) defines as ‘pant, puff, sigh’ and ‘whistle, hiss’. The semantics of the cognates (Skt. *śvasati* ‘breathes, puffs, sighs’, Lith *šv-añkšti* ‘breathe, puff’, *švýkšti* ‘wheeze’, Oícel. *hvísla* ‘whistle; whisper’, Russ. *svistet* ‘whistle’, and so forth) makes it possible to interpret IE *keu-* as ‘breathe’. Armenian displays the same set of semes as in the derivatives of Russ. *dut* / *dyshat* : *šunc* ‘breath; soul; spirit’. The semantic series “blow – breathe – soul – spirit – think” in the root **dheu-* has an analog in the root *keu-* (the seme <blow> is represented by the sense “whistle,” that is, “blow”). Consequently, Gmc. *hug* may be a derivative of IE *keu* ‘breathe’. One finds other variants of this root in *hwīn-* and *hwōs-*.

Robert Woodhouse (1999) also refers to semantic typology and points out that in many languages the concept “think” is connected with the concept “weigh” and that Gmc. *hug* can be traced to IE *k^ueuk*, whose reconstructed meaning is ‘weigh; move; think’. In his opinion, the meaning “weigh” has been attested in the Anatolian languages, the meaning “move” in the Baltic languages, and “think” in Germanic. From a semantic point of view, this is undoubtedly an interesting hypothesis, but it encounters phonetic difficulties, because, to identify the Baltic with the Anatolian forms, the latter (e.g. Hittite *kunk-* ‘weigh, let swing, let hang’), with their *n*, have to be explained as representing a nasalized variant of the Indo-European root. The correspondence IE *k^u* : Gmc. *h* (rather than *hw*) will also be valid only if we admit the loss of a labial in Germanic (perhaps before *u*; cf. *hals-*). In his most recent publication (2005:265), Woodhouse took into account my objections and reconstructed IE **keuk/kuk-* for Gmc. **hug-*. This approach is most promising.

OEngl. *-hygd* ‘thought, mind, reflection’; OSax. *gi-hugd*, OH-Germ. *huct*, Goth. *go-hugds* ‘thought, mind, conscience’ (< Gmc. **hugđi*) belong here too.

◇ In our polemic, Woodhouse (2005:263-68) responded to my doubts (*Etimologičeskii slovar’* IV:105) about the correspondence IE k^u : Gmc. *h* and wrote that I had misconstrued his root $*K_2ewk$. But I interpreted his notation in light of the values he ascribed to k^1 and k^2 in Woodhouse (1999:212).

He stated that K_2ewk should be read as K^uewk for the centum languages (consequently, also for Germanic) and as $*kewk-$ for the satəm languages (consequently, for Slavic and Baltic). Thus, in dealing with Proto-Germanic, I set up initial k^u (rather than $k^!$) according to Woodhouse and only then questioned the correspondence IE k^u : Gmc. *h*. Later (see above) Woodhouse reconstructed IE $Kewk-$ (not k^uewk-) for Gmc. **hug*. Although this form contradicts Woodhouse’s “bitectal” theory (1999), for from the point of view of that theory $*kewk$ is a satəm, rather than a centum form, it does correspond to Gmc. **hug-*.

We can see that the misunderstanding arose not because someone misinterpreted the form $*k_2ewk_1$ but because the “bitectal” formula permits a non-unique interpretation of the *centum* and the *satəm* languages. The author had to make use of the traditional tritectal notation $*kewk$, and the misunderstanding disappeared. It follows that in etymological research the universally accepted tritectal approach to both groups of languages is preferable. (284-85)

Semantic bridges are not among the safest, but those constructed by Levitsky are definitely worth crossing.

Foundations of Germanic Linguistics is an exemplary introduction to the subject, and Ukrainian students will be all the better for having it. It discusses every subject one expects to find in such a book: from the history of the early *Germanen* to their vocabulary (the last hundred pages), via phonetics and morphology.

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