

REGARDING PS *ĚDŮ

The poison is a substance of herbal, animal or mineral origin able to cause serious disease or even extinction of an organism already in insubstantial quantity. This definition emphasises the origin and effect of poisonous substances. And it is exactly the origin and effect that are often motivation for the names of the poison in IE languages¹.

Some names of poisons emphasise the herbal origin of the poison. Poisonous herbs used to be used as a medicament as well. The treatment used to be often accompanied by various spells for increasing the effect. Semantic development of herb → medicament → poison is documented in IE languages, e. g. with OIr *luib*, Ir *luibh* 'herb', Olce *lýf* 'medicinal herb', OS *lybb* 'poison, spell', OHG *luppi* 'herbal juice, poison, spell' (everything from IE **leup-*, **leub-*, **leubh-* 'peel, break, pick, damage, injure'²), or with Gr *fármakon*, Ngr *farmáki*, orig. 'medicament, magic product' → 'poison', or Lat *venēnum* (< IE **uen-*, **uenə-* 'struggle for, endeavour for', 'wish, love, be friendly' and similar³), orig. 'medicament, drink' → 'drink of love' (cf. Fr **wenes-no-* > *Venus* 'Venus, goddess of love') → 'poison'. By means of Norm languages, it was borrowed e. g. in Bret *binim*, Welsh *gwenwyn* 'poison' or in E *venom* 'snake, insect poison'.

Another time, the motivation for naming the poison was apportioning, giving (medicament, poison). Sem. development of give (put and similar) → poison is evident e. g. OIr *nem*, MÍr *neim* 'poison' (< IE **nem-* 'take, allocate and similar'⁴). G *Gift* n. (to *geben* 'give'), originally 'gift' f., from the 11th cent. 'poison' n. (maybe parallel to Gr *dās* f. 'gift; given, served medicament, poison') have similar motivation. With the mean. 'gift' remains only as relict word⁵. Sem. development is interesting in OHG *gift*: 'gift' and similar → '(given) magic drink, prepared of poisonous herbs' → 'poisonous drink, poison'⁶. — Lith *nuodaĩ* 'poison' (-*nuo-* 'down, from' + *-daĩ* < *děti* 'put'

¹ Buck, C. D., A dictionary of Selected Synonyms in the Principal Indo-European Languages. Chicago 1949, 311n.

² Pokorny, J., Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch, Bern 1949-1969, 690n. Hereafter Pokorny.

³ Pokorny 1146.

⁴ Pokorny 763.

⁵ Kluge, F., Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache. 23. Auflage, bearbeitet von E. Seebold. Berlin-New York 1999, 324. Comp. G. *Mitgift* 'dowry'.

⁶ Althochdeutsches Wörterbuch 4, Berlin 1991, 252-254.

< IE **dhē-* id.) is partially connected with the mean. 'give, put', also Bret *kontamm* 'poison' (< Lat *contamināre* 'desecrate, dishonour' < *contagid* 'touch' < IE **tag-* 'touch, reach'⁷) is semantic close.

Virulence and lethal effects of the poison is the motivation of Skrt *viṣa-*, Av *viš*, *vīša*, Ir *fī*, Lat *vīrus*, all 'poison' (from IE **ueis-* 'flow, run', **uós-o-* 'substance', 'poisonous substance'⁸) and Lett *nāveklis*, *nāves zāles* 'lethal medicament, poison' (< IE **nāu-* 'death, corpse'; hence e. g. also ORuss *навъ* id., OCz *náv* 'the other world, hell'⁹).

Another important motivation for naming the poison in IE languages is the way of using the poison. "Poisons can get into the body in different ways: *they are swallowed most often, embodied in digestive organs...*, is mentioned e. g. in Ottův slovník naučný¹⁰. The poison is served in drinks or food most often. Semantic shift of something eaten → poison is e.g. in Lat *pōtiō* 'drink' > Fr *poison* 'poison', it is borrowed in ME, E *poison* (everything to IE stem **pō(i)-*, **pī-* 'drink'¹¹) with the same meaning; in Skrt. *gara-* 'drink, volatile substance': *garala-* 'poison' (< IE **g^her-*, **g^herə-* 'gulp, swallow up, bolt', to which belong e. g. also Lith *gerti* 'drink' and Slav *žьрѣ зьрти пожьрѣти* 'gulp, eat, swallow up'¹²).

Facts speak for the idea that also PS **ědbъ*, pan-Slavonic: Bulg Maced *jad*, SCr *jād*, *jād*, *jéd*, *jíd*, Sln *jād*, Slk Cz *jed*, OCz, Up So *jéd*, Pomer *jād*, Pol Br, Ukr seldom, Russ *jad*, Ukr also *jid*, everything 'poison', metaph. 'anger, temper' (Bulg Maced Sln Pomer Pol Br), 'sorrow, woe' (Maced SCr Sln), 'penury, need' (SCr) belong among the names with the same motivation.

Above all older interpretation that regards PS **ědbъ* 'something eaten' as deverbative of PS **ěsti* 'eat' (< IE **ēd-* id.) conforms from the point of view of speech-sounds and semantics. It was Miklošić who has been already considering the connection **ěsti* → **ědbъ*¹³. Trubačev¹⁴ has been connecting **ědbъ* with **ěsti* more recently.

7 Pokorny 1054.

8 Pokorny 1134.

9 Pokorny 756.

10 Ottův slovník naučný 13, Praha 1898, 177.

11 Pokorny 839.

12 Pokorny 474n.

13 Miklosich, F., *Radices linguae slovenicae veteris dialecti*. Leipzig 1845, 109 and the same, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der slavischen Sprachen*. Wien 1886, 98. In more details Brückner, *Archiv für slavische Philologie* 21, Berlin 1899, 119 and Brückner, A., *Słownik etymologiczny języka polskiego*, Warszawa 1957, 196; comp. also Holub, J. – Kopečný, F., *Etymologický slovník jazyka českého*. Praha 1957, 150 (hereafter H-K); Holub, J. – Lyer, S., *Stručný etymologický slovník jazyka českého se zvláštním zřetelem ke slovům kulturním a cizím*, Praha 1967, 207 (hereafter H-L); Šanskij, N. M., – Ivanov, V.V. – Šanskaja, T.V., *Kratkij etimologičeskij slovar' russkogo jazyka*, Moskva 1971, 523 (hereafter Šanskij).

Besides the mentioned Fr *poison* and Skrt *garala-*, the family of Slav *truti* with the mean. 'process food in the digestive organs, digest', but also 'take poison' (CS *otraviti*, Bulg dial. *tráva sa*, Maced *true (se)*, *truva (se)*, SCr *otròvati*, Sln dial. *trovāti*, Slk dial. *potruc*, *potrávic*, *potruť*, OCz *tráviti*, Cz *trávit*, dial. *truť*, *trúti*, *otrouti*, Pol *truć*, dial. *otruć*, *otruwać*, *otravić*, Br *truc*, *trúćic*, *travíc*, Ukr *travýty*, *otrújity*, ORuss and Russ dial. *otravít*, *otrútit* ao.), with derivatives with the mean. 'poison' (Croat CS *otrava*, Bulg *otróva*, Maced *otrov*, SCr *òtrov*, Slk older *otrova*, dial. *trova*, *truť*, OCz Cz *otrava*, dial. *truť*, *trutina*, OCz *trávenie*, *trávenina*, OPol, Pol dial. *trucina*, dial. also *otrawa*, Br *atrúta*, dial. *vtrúta*, *atráva*, Ukr *otráva*, *otróva*, *otrúta*, older *trúta*, ORuss, Russ dial. *otráva*, Russ dial. also *otrúja*, *otrúta*).¹⁵ Everything belongs under the stem **teru-*, **treu-* (from **ter-* 'rub, paint ao.').¹⁶ The basic meaning for Slav *truti* is 'consume, wear (by rubbing, biting, nibbling, chewing)', hence another mean. 'etch', 'chase', 'be naughty' ao. It is apparent the meaning of the 'poison' is connected with 'eat, digest ao.' also here.¹⁷

Another interpretation connects PS **(j)ědbъ*, **jadbъ* with OHG *eiz* 'ulcer, tumour', G *Eiter* 'pus', Gr *oĩdos* 'swelling', Aram *aitumn* id. ao., from IE **oid-* 'swell up, inflate, fester'¹⁸. Phonetic development from diphthonic **oi-d-* subject to secondary PS **jadbъ*, **jedbъ*¹⁹ conform less for PS **ědbъ* (< IE *ēd-*) where PS *ě* corresponds to IE *ē*. Moreover, semantic development 'swell up, inflate, fester'

¹⁴ Etimologičeskij slovar' slavjanskich jazykov. Praslavjanskij leksičeskij fond. Red. O.N. Trubačev. Vypusk 6, Moskva 1979, 46. Trubačev refuses Pisani, Paideia 13, Brescia 1958, 314n, by right. He assumes the meaning 'the one who eats, gluts' with **ědbъ*.

¹⁵ Also Cz *otrušik* (Pol dial. seldom *otrusik* 'arsenic', *otrusiaki* 'chem. compound of phosphor, arsenic and antimony') also belong here. It is a parallel of borrowed OCz *utrajch*, Cz *utrejch* (from OHG *hutterauch*; G *Hüttenrauch*, literally 'smoke from iron works', i. e. 'arsenic depositing when melting metals'). Compare H-K 404, H-L 459 (4. publ. from 1992).

¹⁶ Pokorny 1071, 1073.

¹⁷ Rozwadowski, Język polski, Kraków 1913, 1, 108-13; Rudnycki, ibid. 115.

¹⁸ Fick, Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung auf dem Gebiete der indogermanischen Sprachen, begründet von A. Kuhn. Berlin 1873, 21, 5n; so also Bezzenger, Beiträge zur Kunde der indogermanischen Sprachen, herausgegeben von Adalbert Bezzenger, Göttingen 1902, 27, 172, Pokorny 774, Sławski, F., Słownik etymologiczny języka polskiego, Kraków 1952, 1, 484 (hereafter Sławski), Machek V., Etymologický slovník jazyka českého, Praha 1968, 219; from more recent interpretations e. g. Schuster-Šewc, H., Historisch – etymologisches Wörterbuch der ober- und niedersorbischen Sprache, Bautzen 1978, 1, 450n; Etymologický slovník jazyka staroslověnského, Praha 1995, 5, 267; Snoj, M., Slovenski etimološki slovar, Ljubljana 1997, 193.

¹⁹ Mentioned already by Meillet, Mémoires de la Société de linguistique de Paris, Paris 1907, 14, 387n.

→ 'poison' causes troubles. Therefore, some people assume the original meaning 'anger, temper, flush'²⁰ with **ědъ* and connect it with *gněvъ* id. that is interpreted from **gniti* 'rot, decay'²¹ most often. Sch.- Šewc 450n assumes for **ědъ* 'anger, temper' IE **aid-* 'burn', parallel to IE **oid-* 'swell up, inflate ao.'.

However, the meaning 'anger, temper ao.' is not original²². Since it appears also – as metaphor – also in other names of the poison (comp. G *Gift* 'poison', dial. 'temper', Olce *eitr* 'poison' also 'temper'²³, Cz dial. *trutina*, *trutizna* 'poison' also 'naughty child', Ukr *otrúta* 'poison', 'temper, hate') and in other derivatives or related terms even oftener (Sln older *ujédavec* 'bad, bitter man', Sln *strúp* 'poison'²⁴, *strupénost* 'anger, temper', *strupénc*, *strupenják* 'angry man', OCz *jedati sě*, *jedovati sě* 'be angry, be furious', Cz dial. *jeďit se* 'be angry', OPol *jadogniewnik* 'angry man', Pol dial. *jadowisko* 'great anger, temper', *ozpajedzić się* 'get angry', ORuss *jadъ* 'anger, temper', Maced *true* (*se*), *truva* (*se*) 'get angry' ao.). Oruss *jadъ*, Ocz *jědati sě*, Pol dial. *jadowisko* ao. deny the unjustified opinion at the same time that only So Slav languages²⁵ know 'anger, temper', 'torture, concern', 'grief'.

Newer ethymologic dictionaries mention sometimes Kořínek's interpretation of PS **ědъ* as 'something added'²⁶. Kořínek²⁷ starts from Brugmann's interpretation of IE stem **ěd-* 'eat' from **ē + d + o/u* 'adding'²⁸. He mentions literally: "Je-li správný výklad Brugmannův, že *ěd-* 'jísti' vzniklo z **ē + d(ō)-*, pak tento výklad slov. **ědъ* splývá se starším výkladem z *ěd-* 'jísti'."²⁹ According to this remark, Kořínek endorse the interpretation **ědъ* 'poison'

²⁰ So already Bezenberger l.c.

²¹ Berneker, E., *Slavisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, Heidelberg 1908, 1, 313; s. also Preobraženskij, A. G., *Etimologičeskij slovar' russkogo jazyka*, overprint Moskva 1958, 1, 133, Mladenov, S., *Etimologičeski i pravopisen rečnik na bǎlgarskija knižoven ezik*, Sofija 1941, 103 ao.

²² So already Trubačev l.c.

²³ Sławski 1, 484.

²⁴ In this mean. not before 16th cent., comp. Bezlaj, F., *Etimološki slovar slovenskega jezika*, Ljubljana 1976, 1, 216.

²⁵ Fortunatov, *Archiv für slavische Philologie*, Berlin 1889, 12, 100, more recently e.g. Černych, P. Ja., *Istoriko-etimologičeskij slovar' sovremennogo russkogo jazyka*, Moskva 1993, 2, 466.

²⁶ Comparison with G *Gift* is a bit out of place in this case if we take into account semantic development of the G word.

²⁷ Kořínek, *Listy filologické* 57, 1930, 14, note 1 and 3, *Listy filologické* 61, 1934, 53.

²⁸ Brugmann, K., *Lehre von den Wortformen und ihrem Gebrauch*, Straßburg 1913, II/3, 96.

²⁹ „If Brugmann's interpretation is correct that *ěd-* 'eat' originated from **ē + d(ō)-*, so this interpretation of words Slov **ědъ* merges with the older interpretation from *ěd-* 'eat'.“ Kořínek, *Listy filologické* 57, 1930, 14, note 3.

from **ěsti* 'eat' with the fact that he accepts Brugmann's above-mentioned interpretation **ěsti*.

Trubačev o.c. connects also Russ *jédkij* 'etching, malicious, poisonous ao.' with **ědъ* and words of similar meaning in Br Ukr SCr Sln Slk Cz Pol. However, also other words with these meanings exist in Slav. languages, e.g. Russ *travít'*, Ukr *travýty* 'etch', Russ *travlénije*, *trávka* 'etching' (< *traviti* < **truti*), Cz *žiravina* 'etching substance' (< **žrěti*), Pol *zgrzyźliwy* 'malicious' (< **gryzti*), *kaźliwy*, Cz *kousavý* (< **kosati*) ao. that refer more to semantic connection with food, digestion, eating (etching), biting, nibbling. Therefore, apparently also Russ *jédkij* and related words belong more to **ěsti* 'eat'.³⁰

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³⁰ Comp. Šanskij 138 (1971), Cyganenko, G.P., *Etimologičeskij slovar' russkogo jazyka*. 2. publ., rewritten and completed, Kijev 1989, 122.