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ON THE MODERN GREEK ORIGIN OF THE ALBANIAN KACA-PREFIXOIDS

Panagiotis G. Krimpas

Introduction

The Albanian vocabulary includes numerous nouns, adjectives and verbs (Gashi 2018: 5) that exhibit the element *kaca-* [kats̩a], *kaça-* [kat̪ʃa], *kaci-* [kats̩i], *kaçi-* [kat̪ʃi] or *kacu-* [kats̩u], e.g. *kacadre* ‘stag beetle’ < *dre* ‘stag; deer’; *kacimare* ‘water chestnut’ < *mare* ‘strawberry tree and its fruit’; *kaçadredhë* ‘curled object; curl; curl of hair’ < *dredhë* ‘twist, curve, curl’; *kaçirubë* ‘crest; rooster’s comb; forelock; mane’ < *rubë* ‘(black) kerchief; head kerchief; handkerchief’; *kacubri* ‘beetle’ < *bri* ‘horn; antenna’. This element, along with others ones such as *gala-*, *kala-*, *karra-* etc has been called a prefix, the Albanian term being *parashtesë* (Bokshi 2014: 82; Ajeti 2017: 518; Gashi 2018: 5–6), an affixoid (Çepani 2005: 147, 151–153), the Albanian term being *sindajshtesë* or *afiksoid*, a prefixoid (Orel 2000: 174–175; Çepani 2005: 141–144), the Albanian term being *prefiksoid*, a ‘pre-morph’ (Uruçi 2013: 128), as I render the Albanian term *paraformë*, or just a ‘forming element’ (Lazri 2017: 155), as I render the Albanian term *formant*. For the purposes of this article, I call it a *prefixoid*, in the sense of a combining form with allegedly no prior currency as independent lexeme and, seemingly, with no directly identifiable meaning. As reported by Çepani (2005: 141), such elements are also classified under the hyperonym category

of *pseudo-affixes* (Alb. *pseudoafikse*), *quasi-affixes* (Alb. *kuaziafikse*) or *semi-affixes* (Alb. *semiafikse*), while various linguistic traditions use yet other terms to denote them.¹ Indeed, the etymological source of the *kaca-*, *kaça-*, *kaci-*, *kaçi-* and *kacu-* set of prefixoids -whether single or varied- is uncertain, judging from what Orel wrote of *kaca-* (Orel 2000: 174–175), even though he did not expressly connect it with the similar prefixoids *kaça-*, *kaci-*, *kaçi-* or *kacu-*. On the other hand, according to Ajeti (2017: 518–519) *kaça-*, *kaci-* and *kaçi-* are variants of *kaca-*, and according to Gashi (2018: 5–6) *kaca-* and *kaça-* are two variants of the same prefix. In this article I attempt to examine the main issues posed by *kaca-* and its variants. In particular, the discussion will address the following questions: a) whether *kaca-* and its possible variants have only an expressive function or a more concrete meaning; b) whether *kaci-*, *kaça-*, *kaçi-* and *kacu-* are indeed variants of *kaca-*; c) whether *kaca-* and its variants have counterparts in other Balkan languages; and, most importantly d) whether *kaca-* and its possible variants are indeed of uncertain etymology.

¹ For a more detailed discussion about the linguistic terms used in Albanian and other languages to denote such prefixable elements see Çepani (2005).

Occurrence and semantics of *kaca-*, *kaça-*, *kaci-*, *kaçi-* and *kacu-*

In this section I attempt to explore the semantics of nouns containing the prefixoids *kaca-*, *kaça-*, *kaci-*, *kaçi-* or *kacu-* by examining the semantics of the respective or comparable non-prefixed nouns. For obvious reasons, I do not consider: i) derivatives of the prefixed nouns in question (e.g. *kacafytas* ‘grappling’ < *kacafyt* ‘to grab by the throat; to seize (emotion)’, *kacagjelthi* ‘pretentiously show off, in a swaggering manner’ < *kacagjel* ‘carpenter ant, sugar ant; cocky show-off, empty braggart’ etc) unless they have a noteworthy meaning; ii) cases when the *kaca-*, *kaci-*, *kaça-*, *kaçi-* or *kacu-* element has entered Albanian as part of a word borrowed from known sources, and hence it is unrelated to the prefixoids in question, e.g. *kaçavidë* or *kacavidhe* ‘screwdriver’ (conflation of Modern Greek *katsavidi* [κατσαβίδι] < Venetian *cazzavide* < *cazzar* ‘to hunt’ + *vida* aka *vide* ‘a screw’ with Italian *cacciavite* < *cacciare* ‘to hunt’ + *vite* ‘a screw’ through) or is part of the stem rather than a prefixoid, e.g. *kaçamak* ‘corn mush, polenta’ < Turkish *kaçamak* ‘id. lit. escapade; to escape’ or *kacilore* ‘small one-liter recipient’, which is most probably an antimetathesised borrowing from Venetian *cazzar(i)òla* ‘pot, saucepan’; and iii) cases such as *kaçarret* ‘men’s jacket with short sleeves and wool-fringed collar’, where it cannot be established whether the first two syllables are indeed the prefixoids in question or part of the stem, given *both* the obscure origin of what follows the prefixoid-like element *and* the semantic unrelatedness of the word to other words that demonstrably contain the prefixoids in question.

Most English equivalents to Albanian words given -and the Albanian words themselves except for *kacarry*, *kaçapordhicë*, *kaçarrënë*, *kaçarrum*, *kaciram* and *kaçibabi*- below come from entries of Oxford’s *Albanian-English Dictionary* (Newmark, Ed. 1999). Words containing the prefixoids in question are less than thirty in Standard Albanian, but in regional variants are more numerous. Uruçi (2013: 128) notes that *kaca-* occurs in both north and south (i.e. in both Gheg and Tosk dialects) and that this suggests its early presence in Albanian, while Ajeti (2017: 518) notes that it has a limited presence in the Gheg dialect and in the Calabrian Tosk variants, but it seems that it was once present all over the Albanian-speaking territory. My own impression is that those prefixoids, especially

kaca- and *kaci-*, are to be found both in northern and southern variants, but they are much more common in southern variants.

Albanian words prefixed with *kaca-*

Words exhibiting the prefixoid *kaca-* are more numerous rather than the ones exhibiting the other four variants. They usually have an easily identifiable stem, although there are some exceptions, the stem of which is of uncertain or only indirectly identifiable etymology. The *kaca-* words, some of which occur also in a non-standard *kaça-* variant, comprise nouns and verbs (Bokshi 2014: 82) such as:

a) *kacabu* ‘cockroach (*Blatta orientalis*); beetle’, which, according to Çabej (2014: 5) is a back-formation of *kacabuell* > pl. *kacabuj* > sing. *kacabu(-n-)* > *buall* ‘buffalo; stag beetle (*Lucanus cervus*)’;²

b) *kacadre* (and its variant *kaçadre*) ‘stag beetle (*Lucanus cervus*)’; cf. *dre* ‘stag, deer’;

c) *kacafik* ‘stack of hay or straw having three or four support poles; (straw) hut used by a guard of a field or vineyard; hut, hovel’, which has been connected to *fik* ‘fig (tree and its fruit) (*Ficus carica*)’ (Ajeti 2017: 518), but such as connections seems semantically difficult to explain;

d) *kacafyt* ‘to grab by the throat; to seize (emotion)’, cf. *fyt* ‘throat; gullet; pipe, duct’;

e) *kacagjel* ‘carpenter ant, sugar ant (*Camponotus*); cocky show-off, empty braggart’, cf. *gjel* ‘rooster, cock; pompous or pretentious person; feisty person’ (Orel 1998: 161);

f) *kacagjelë* (non-standard) ‘repercussion’, which is not connected to *kacagjel*, has an obscure second element *-gjelë* that, in my semantically and morphophonologically induced opinion, could be borrowed from Modern Greek (feminine) noun *gëla* [γκέλα] ‘bounce; a backgammon term roughly denoting that the turn passes to the other player; fig. big failure’, which is generally etymologised from Turkish *gele* ‘a backgammon term roughly denoting that the turn passes to the other player’ (< *gelmek* ‘to come’) (Bampiniōtis 2009: 305 s.v. γκέλα);

² Roaches are not related to beetles (apart from both being insects), but they look similar to non-specialists, which explains the semantic transition from ‘beetle’ into ‘cockroach’, cf. Modern Greek *katsarida* [κατσαρίδα] ‘cockroach’ < Hellenistic Greek *kantharis* [κανθαρίς] ‘wheat bug’ < Ancient Greek *kántharos* [κάνθαρος] ‘beetle, scarab.’

g) *kacambyt*, which is semantically (but not etymologically) identical to *kacafyt*, cf. *mbyt* ‘choke, suffocate’;

h) *kacamic* (non-standard) ‘roebuck’, cf. **mitëz* ‘roe’ (Orel 1988: 161);

i) *kacamit* (non-standard) ‘stag’, with the element *-mit* being almost certainly the unattested, non-diminutive source of **mitëz* ‘roe’ (Orel 1988: 161; cf. Çepani 2005: 152);

j) *kacarrum* -with its variant *kaçarrum* (Ajetei 2017: 519)- ‘corn cob’, cf. non-standard *rrum* (Orel 1988: 161) ‘stalk, corn-stalk; maize cob stripped of corns; bell clapper; plunger, ramrod’;

k) *kacarry* (Ajetei 2017: 518) ‘windpipe, trachea; larynx; Adam’s apple’, cf. *rryl* ‘id.’;

l) *kacavarem* (and its variant *kacavirrem*) ‘to clamber up; to twine around in an upward direction; to persevere, stick to’, cf. *varem* ‘to hang down; to hang on’.

Albanian words prefixed with *kaç-*

Words exhibiting the prefixoid *kaç-*, sometimes being variants of ones prefixed with *kaca-* but anyway less numerous than the latter, comprise some nouns and at least one verb such as:

a) *kaçaberr* ‘corn cob with only a few kernels, the connection of which with *berr* ‘small livestock (sheep or goat)’ seems semantically difficult, but not impossible in view of the word *rraberr* ‘emaciated livestock about to die’, which, if consisting of *rra* ‘threadworm’ and *berr* ‘small livestock’ (lit. wormy livestock), could provided the basis for a metaphor connecting the the emaciated livestock and a lower quality corn cob;

b) *kaçadel* (non-standard) ‘shoot growing out of a bulb’, cf. *del* ‘to exit, come outside’;

c) *kaçadredhë* ‘curled object; curl, curl of hair’, cf. *dredhë* ‘twist, curl, curve’;

d) *kaçalyt* ‘pigeon with a tuft of feather on top of the head’, the stem of which (*-lyt*) is obscure to me, although its first part *kaç-* is probably the prefixoid discussed here, given the semantic similarity with *kaçirubë* (see below on *kaçi*-words);

e) *kaçamik* ‘to pinch, nip’, the stem of which (*-mol*) is of obscure origin, although its first part *kaç-* is probably the prefixoid discussed here, given the semantic similarity with *kaçanduk/kaçanuk* (see below);

f) *kaçamill* and its non-standard variant *kacamill* ‘snail; sea snail’, cf. *mill* ‘scabbard, sheath’, due to the similarity of the snail’s shell with a sheath and/

or probably via folk etymology of the word *kërmill* ‘snail; cochlea’ (cf. Ajetei 2017: 519);

g) *kaçamol* ‘corn with small ears; corn with few kernels’, the stem of which (*-mol*) is obscure to me, although its first part *kaç-* is probably the prefixoid discussed here, given the semantic similarity with *kacarrum/kaçarrum* and *kaçaberr*;

h) *kaçanduk* and its non-standard variant *kaçanuk* ‘to pluck; to pinch, tweak’, cf. *nduk* ‘to pinch, nip; to pluck, pull at’;

i) *kaçapordhicë* ‘bullshit, nonsense’, cf. *pordhicë* ‘bubble, blister’ < *pordhë* ‘fart’;

j) *kaçarrënë* (Gheg) ‘whopping lie’, cf. *rrënë* (Gheg), *rrenë* (Tosk) ‘fib, lie’.

Albanian words prefixed with *kaci-*

Words exhibiting the prefixoid *kaci-* are a very small group with no more than a single digit number of nouns denoting plants such as:

a) *kacimare* -and its variant *kaçimare* (Ajetei 2017: 519)- ‘water chestnut (*Trapa natans*)’, a plant notable for its horned fruit that reminds of an oxhead’, cf. *mare* (also called *kocimare*) ‘strawberry madrone, strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*) and its fruit’ (having a rough, bumped surface);

b) *kacirom* ‘semantically identical to *kacimare*’, the stem of which is not clear, but, in my opinion, it could be either connected to *rrome* ‘bare corn cob; something said as a joke; comic verse, doggerel’ or be a product of antimetathesis of *kacimare*, given that a variant *kaciram* is also attested (Lazri 2017: 155). It is less probable for *kacimare* to be a product of antimetathesis of *kaciram* because the serrated leaves and the white flower of the plant named *kacimare* may recall the ones of the plant named *mare*, while the variant *kocimare* (if indeed containing a further, irregular *KACA*-variant) suggests that the prefixoid was first attached to *mare*, given that there is no plant name *ram* or *rom* (in case the antimetathesis scenario is correct).

Albanian words prefixed with *kaçi-*

Words exhibiting the prefixoid *kaçi-* are similarly very few, as they virtually comprise only nouns denoting animals (insects) or parts of animals such as:³

³ On *kaçibardhë* see below.

a) *kaçibabi* (non-standard) 'ladybird (insect of the family *Coccinellidae*); cf. *babi* 'dad', for the semantic connection with 'dad' cf. 'daddy longleg', another name for crane-flies;

b) *kaçirubë* 'crest; rooster's comb; forelock; mane'; cf. *rubë* '(black) kerchief; head kerchief; handkerchief'.

Albanian words prefixed with *kacu-*

There seems to be only one word exhibiting the prefixoid *kacu-*, namely the non-standard noun *kacubri* 'beetle', cf. *bri* 'horn; antenna', which denotes a coleopterous insect like many of the above-mentioned words.

Semantics of *kaca-*, *kaça-*, *kaci-*, *kaçi-* and *kacu-*

Çepani (2005: 152) writes that the analysis of Albanian prefixoids leads to old Albanian roots that, for unclear reasons, have become obsolete or to seemingly unrelated words that come out with common roots. Indeed, a semantic analysis of the words briefly discussed above clearly suggests that the prefixoids *kaca-*, *kaça-*, *kaci-*, *kaçi-* and *kacu-* have no just expressive meaning, nor are they meaningless elements. According to Ajeti (2017: 518), *kaca-* has a primitive diminutive meaning, while in some verbs it conveys a sense of sudden movement. Ajeti's remark about the sense of sudden movement is right, but I did not find any traces of diminutive sense in the words examined above. On the contrary, an analysis of the above words and their meanings suggests that the *kaca-*, *kaça-*, *kaci-*, *kaçi-* and *kacu-* prefixoids confer to the stem a sense of sharpness, pointedness, scaliness, asperity, roughness, unevenness, dryness and/or curvity. This is why words exhibiting those prefixoids denote usually:

i) coleopterous insects (*kacabu* when meaning 'beetle', *kacadre*, *kacagjel*, *kaçibabi*, *kacubri*), other insects with a rough and/or shell-like appearance (*kacabu* when meaning 'cockroach'), shelled gastropod mollusks (*kaçamill*) and horned artiodactyl (ruminant) mammals (*kacamic*, *kacamit*), probably because beetles have generally a rough appearance due to their hard elytra, their often moniliform or serrated antennae and/or various other protruding/pointy parts common in insects (e.g. legs, mandibles, pincers), snails have hard (some species also horn-like) shells, and stags (and male ruminants in general) have sharp,

rough, curved and protruding horns (*kacamic*, *kacamit*);⁴

ii) names of plants with thorns, spines and/or serrated leaves (*kacimare*, *kacirom/kaciram*);

iii) parts of plants or animals with pointed, scaly, protruding, curve, dry, rough and/or serrated outlook, especially corn-cobs (*kaçaberr*, *kaçadel*, *kaçamol*, *kacarrum/kaçarrum*) or other protruding and/or cartilaginous curved parts (*kacarry*, *kaçirubë*);

iv) verbs and at least one abstract noun denoting abrupt and sudden movement (*kacafyt*, *kacambyt*, *kaçanduk*, *kacagjelë*), given that abruptness and suddenness is closely connected with sharpness and roughness;

v) other rough and curve objects (*kaçadredhë*);

vi) abstract nouns denoting something gross and/or whopping (*kaçapordhicë*, *kaçarrënë*).

The similar meaning of all five prefixoids is obvious from the above discussion, a fact which, combined with the occasional interchangeability of *c* and *ç* (e.g. *kacadre/kaçadre*, *kaçamill/kacamill*, *kaçanduk/kacanuk*, *kacarrum/kaçarrum*), clearly suggests that *kaca-*, *kaça-*, *kaci-* and *kaçi-* are all variants of one and the same prefixoid, hereinafter collectively referred to as the *KACA*-prefixoids (and the words exhibiting them the *KACA*-words). Note, however, that *kaca-* alternates only with *kaça-* and *kaci-* only with *kaçi-*, i.e. there is no interchange between *-a-* and *-i-* in the same word – but this does not negate the very similar shape and function of both *-a-* and *-i-* forms. Interestingly, even words that originally did not contain the *KACA*-prefixoids but denoted some element of sharpness, roughness, suddenness etc have been folk-etymologised on the basis of those prefixes;

⁴ On the semantic connection between beetles, snails and horned artiodactyls (ruminants), cf. *bobol* 'scarab beetle', Modern Greek, reg. *bóvolas* [μπόβολας] 'snail', both from Venetian *bòvolo* 'snail', which probably comes from a Vulgar Latin form of *bubalus* 'buffalo', as indirectly suggested e.g. by Calabrian *bovalaci* 'snail', borrowed from Italiot Modern Greek *buvalàci* (Cortelazzo and Marcato 2005: 55) or *bufalàci* (Karanastasis 1984: 64) 'snail' (cf. Standard Modern Greek *vuvalàki* [βουβαλάκι] 'little buffalo'). Cf. also Venetian *cornòlo* 'snail' < *cornò* 'horn', because of the shell shape of some species, as well as Pugliese *cerevòume* 'snail', probably from Latin *cervus* 'stag, deer'. This semantic connection makes it more probable for the stem of *kacabu* ('cockroach', but also 'beetle') to derive from *buall* 'buffalo; stag beetle (*Lucanus cervus*)' (see above).

however, if the first two syllables that resemble the KACA-prefixoid are removed, the remaining stems are either meaningless or have a meaning incompatible with the one that existed before the syllable removal (this, however, does not preclude a more remote relationship of the stem of some of those pseudo-KACA-words with the true KACA-prefixoid -but this will be dealt with further on). Some examples are:

a) *kacaturrë* ‘a kind of double-edged dagger or bayonet’ (i.e. a sharp object), which has nothing to do with *turrë* ‘wood pile’, as it comes from Modern Greek *kasatura* ‘bayonet’, itself from Italian *incassatura* ‘rifle stock, scabbard, slot’;

b) *kacalec*, a corrupted variant of *karkalec* ‘locust, grasshopper’, itself a corrupted borrowing from Bulgarian *skakalec* ‘id., lit. jumper’ probably under the influence of some expressive word such as *karkal* ‘excrements’ (Meyer 1891: 178; Orel 1998: 171);

c) *kacarra(n)* ‘long stick ending in an angled hook’, the *-rra* part of which has nothing to do with *rra* ‘threadworm’ (a variant of *rre*), as suggested by semantic and morphological considerations (it has nothing common with a threadworm apart from its long shape and it is an *-n* stem in contrast to *rra*); this suggests that the stem of this word is *kacarr-* and the *-a(n)* is a suffix;

d) *kacarrik* ‘large supporting prop at one end; small forked distaff’, the *-rrik* part of which has no independent meaning (i.e. it has never existed as a separate word); this means that the stem of this word is *kacarr-* and the *-ik* is a suffix;

e) *kacarroj* ‘to hug’ (passive voice *kacarrohem* ‘to climb by hugging on with hands and feet; fig. to show off’), which is probably not a compound of *kaca-* and *rroj* ‘to live, stay alive; survive for a long time; dwell’, as suggested by its close similarity with Rom. *a se cățara* (and its variant *a se acățara*) ‘to climb’, which is possibly connected to *a se acățta* ‘to grasp, hold on to’, a conservative variant of *a agățta* (< Lat. **accaptiare* < *captiare* ‘to take’) and Bulg. *katerja se* [катеря се] ‘to climb’ (of uncertain origin), both of which do not seem to be borrowed from Albanian for phonological reasons; moreover, *kacarroj* seems rather to be a derivative of the above-mentioned root *kacarr-* and the common deverbative *-oj*;

f) *kaçabek*, most probably a corrupted variant of *kaçubet* (and its non-standard variants *kacybet* and *kaçabet*) ‘kite (*Milvus*)’ and *kacubane* ‘skylark (*Alauda arvensis*)’ themselves from *kaçubë* ‘bush,

shrub’, which may derive from or relate to *kaçe* ‘dog rose (*Rosa canina*)’;

g) *kaçibardhë* and its variant *kacibardhë* ‘dog rose (*Rosa canina*)’, which is in fact left-headed and hence its *kaçi-/kaci-* part is not a KACA-prefixoid, but the very noun *kaçe* ‘dog rose (*Rosa canina*)’ modified by the adjective *e bardhë* (fem.) ‘white’, i.e. *kaçe e bardhë* ‘white dog rose’, although the [ts] in *kacibardhë* and the [i] in both *kacibardhë* and *kaçibardhë* are probably due to the folk etymological influence of *kaci-/kaçi-* because of the thorns (another issue is whether the noun *kaçe* could be etymologically connected with the KACA-prefixoids, but this will be discussed further on). Such ‘pseudo-KACA-’ words are sometimes grouped together with the true KACA-words listed in works of Albanian scholars,⁵ which suggests that native Albanian speakers feel that they morphologically and/or semantically belong together.

Some scholars⁶ explicitly or implicitly speak also of a *kac-/kaç-* prefixoid (i.e. they leave out the final vowel). However, this is neither morphologically, nor etymologically correct, given that if one removes *kac-/kaç-* from any Albanian word, the remaining element is meaningless before removing also its initial vowel (e.g. *kacadre* ‘stag beetle’ cannot be analysed into *kac-* and *-*adre*, because the latter is meaningless, by contrast to *dre* ‘stag, deer’), while many times the remaining element is not even a stem but part of a simple word (e.g. *kaçubë* ‘bush, shrub’, with *-ubë* having no meaning in itself). This means that the KACA-prefixoid never drops its final vowel in Albanian, and hence not all words starting with *kac-/kaç-* are KACA-words. However, as I will argue further on, some of them may be more remotely connected with the KACA-prefixoid, in the sense that they may come from the same root as the latter.

Etymology of KACA-prefixoids in Albanian

Vladimir Orel was initially of the opinion that *kaca-* was just a form of *kac* ‘goat’, which then became a prefix, occasionally meaning ‘up, over’ (Orel 1998: 161), but later on he attributed an expressive

⁵ E.g. Çepani (2005: 153), or Ajeti (2017: 518), who mention *kacarroj*, *kacaturrë* and *kacibardhë*, respectively, in their lists of KACA-words. Cf. also Orel (1998: 161 and 2000: 175).

⁶ E.g. Bokshi (2014: 82) or Lazri (2017: 155).

origin to the prefixoid *kaca-* and numbered it among the affixes of uncertain etymology (Orel 2000: 174–175) without, however, trying to connect it with other prefixoids of similar shape, namely *kaça-*, *kaci-*, *kaçi-* and *kacu-*. The above-mentioned word *kac* itself is usually considered a variant of *kec* (also *keç*) ‘kid, goat less than a year old’ (Orel 1998: 174), which in their turn are considered variants of *kedh* (Orel 1998: 174–175), probably as derivatives of *kedhëz*, originally a diminutive of *kedh* ‘kid, goat less than a year old’.⁷ On the other hand, Kyriazis (2001: 256), on the basis of a remark by Xhuvani and Çabej (1980[1956]: 374) that *kaca-* denotes a vehement movement of the body as well as by commenting on the regional synonym verbs *kataalem* and *kacavaalem* ‘to tussle’, adds that *kaca-* is just an allomorph of the regional *kata-*, which he etymologises from Greek *kata-* [κατα-]. Like Orel (see above), he refers only to *kaca-* without trying to connect it with *kaça-*, *kaci-*, *kaçi-* or *kacu-*. I agree with him that the *kata-* prefix is most probably borrowed from the Greek prefix *kata-* [κατα-], which is in fact the Greek preposition *katá* [κατά] in its function of prefix. Moreover, *kaca-* could have been semantically influenced by *kata-* to some extent, but the change [t] > [tʃ] is not regularly expected in Albanian. This means that *kata-* is no first-class candidate for the etymology of *kaca-* and, given that *kaça-*, *kaci-*, *kaçi-* and *kacu-* seem to be just its variants, the same is true of them as well. Admittedly, the *KACA*-prefixoids are both semantically and phonologically compatible with *kac* ‘goat’, but I think that one should not stop at this connection, because a much more attractive etymology is possible and, what is more, this has not just semantic and phonological, but also morphophonological and lexical support.

A close examination of other Balkan languages shows that similar prefixoids are absent in more northerly Balkan languages such as Serbo-Croat, Bulgarian or Rumanian. Equivalents of *KACA*-words are limited in Southern Balkans, as suggested by a handful of such words in Modern Greek, to which one should add numerous family names based on Christian names starting with *katsa-* [κατσα-]

[kaʦsa], *katsi-* [κατσι-][kaʦsi] and *katso-* [κατσο-][kaʦso], and a possibly comparable word in Aromanian starting with *katsa-*.⁸ Again, obvious derivatives and similarly sounding words of other well-known origin are excluded from this list, e.g. *katsavídi* [κατσαβίδι] < Venetian *cazzavide* < *cazzar* ‘to hunt’ + *vida/vide* ‘a screw’; *katsamáki* [κατσαμάκι] ‘corn mush, polenta; pretext’ < Turkish *kaçamak* ‘id. lit. escapade; to escape’ or *katsaróla* ‘pot, saucepan’ < Venetian *cazzaróla* ‘id.’. The Modern Greek words in question are:

a) *katsávracha* [κατσάβραχα] with its rare variant *katsóvracha* [κατσόβραχα] and its even more rare (mostly Epirote) variant *katsiávracha* [κατσιάβραχα] (the latter being pronounced [kaʦtʃavraxa] or [kaʦʃavraxa] ‘crag’, cf. *vráchos* [βράχος] ‘rock’;

b) *katsipodía* [κατσιποδιά] (dialectally also pronounced [kaʦʃpoʦja]) ‘setback, misfortune’, originally a derivative (with the abstract noun suffix *-iá* [-iá]) of *katsipódīs* [κατσιπόδης], a dissimilated variant of *katsopódīs* [κατσοπόδης] ‘jinx (for persons)’, cf. *pódi* [πόδι] ‘foot’, both of which surviving only as family names (*Katsipódīs* [Κατσιπόδης] and *Katsopódīs* [Κατσοπόδης]);

c) *katsónycho* [κατσόνυχο] (non-standard; mostly Italiot Greek) ‘bird’s spur; pig’s second or fifth toe (not touching the earth)’, cf. *nýchi* [νύχι] ‘nail; hoof; claw’;

d) *katsóprinos* [κατσόπρινος] with its variants *katsíprinos* [κασιπίρινος] and *katsipriniá* [κασιπρινιά] ‘holly oak, holm oak (*Quercus ilex*)’, cf. *prínos* [πρίνος] ‘kermes oak (*Quercus coccifera*)’ (this is its older and botanic name, the standard being *purinári* [πουρνάρι] < *prináron* [πρινάριον], a diminutive of *prínos* [πρίνος]);

e) *katsómalla* [κατσόμαλλα] (non-standard) ‘coarse hair’, cf. *malliá* [μαλλιά] ‘hair’; cf. also family name *Katsimállis* [Κατσιμάλλης] ‘coarse-haired; curly-haired’;

f) *katsóchoiros* [κατσόχοιρος] (non-standard; mostly Cypriot Greek) ‘hedgehog’ (standard *skantzóchoiros* [σκαντζόχοιρος]), cf. *choiros* [χοίρος] ‘pig, hog’.

⁸ Aromanian, another Southern Balkan language has the word *katsaflaku* ‘clitoris’ (Nikolaidis 1909: 211), which could well be a *KACA*-word, given that clitoris is a protruding organ; however, since the element *-flaku* is obscure in Aromanian (at least to me), this is just guesswork.

⁷ Now *Kedhëz* is the name of a nymph in Albanian folklore (Kuteli 1990[1965]: 386–387).

A close examination of the above Modern Greek words reveals not only interesting semantic and phonological, but also morpho(phono)logical similarities to the Albanian KACA-words. All the above Modern Greek words confer the stem a sense of sharpness, asperity, roughness, unevenness, dryness and/or curvity, usually with neutral, jocular or negative connotations, and their semantic function is even more clear in Modern Greek than in Albanian.⁹ From doublets such as *katsávracha/katsiávracha/katsóvracha*, *katsóprinos/katsíprinos* etc it becomes clear that all those prefixoids are variants of a single prefixoid. Modern Greek has exact phonological and allomorphic reflections of all Albanian variants: *katsa-* [κατσα-] [kats̥a] is the same as *kaca-*; *katsia-* [κατσια-] [kats̥ja]/[kats̥ja] (mostly Epirote) is the same as *kaça*; *katsi-* [κατσι-] [kats̥i] is the same as *kaci-*; [kats̥i] (in dialects where the sibilants are palatalised before /i/, e.g. most of Peloponnese) is the same as *kaçi-*; *katso-* [κατσο-], with its variants *katsu-* [κατσου-] (in Northern dialects) and *katsio-* [κατσιο-] [kats̥jo]/[kats̥jo] (mostly in Epirote dialects), now surviving only in family names such as *Katsugiánnis* [Κατσουγιάννης] or *Katsiogiánnis* [Κατσιογιάννης], historically variants of *Katsogiánnis* [Κατσογιάννης], which originally must have meant something like ‘wild/fierce/rough/coarse/tricky John’¹⁰ is virtually represented only in the word *kacubri* in Albanian. However the *-o-/-u-* (rather than *-a-* and *-i-*) variants must have been the original ones in Modern Greek, given that *-o-* (pronounced [u] when unstressed in Northern dialects) is the linking vowel normally expected in the boundaries of Modern Greek compounds. The *katsa-* variant (which is phonologically identical with Albanian *kaca-*) is due to assimilation with a following [a]-sound as in *katsávracha*, while the *katsi-* variant (which is phonologically identical with Albanian *kaci-*) is due to either assimilation with a following

[i]-sound as in *katsíprinos* (beside *katsóprinos*) or dissimilation from a following [o]-sound as in *katsipódis* (< *katsopódis*). This being the case, I will be hereinafter calling all those variants the KATSO-prefixoid (and the words that contain it, KATSO-words).

As to the etymology of KATSO-prefixoid in Modern Greek and its presence in the above Modern Greek examples the following should be noted: Andriotis, in his etymological dictionary (Andriōtīs 1967: 153, s.v. κατσο-) cites Filintas’ proposal (Filintas 1924: 149) that *katso-* is the Modern Greek development of the stem *akantho-* [ἀκανθο-] < *ákantha* [ἄκανθα] ‘thorn; spine’,¹¹ and provides the examples *katsó-prinos* and (*s*)*katsó-choiros* [(σ)κατσό-χοιρος] ‘hedgehog’ (standard *skantzóchoiros*). This is why, also in the light of what discussed in the preceding paragraph, the meaning ‘the wrinkled one’ (*zaroméno*s [ζαρωμένος]) given by Andriotis in the same entry is just a secondary and marginal one, if *katso-* comes indeed from *akantho-*, i.e. the affixed stem of *ákantha* ‘thorn; spine’. Indeed, this etymological scenario is very plausible since, apart from the words for ‘hedgehog’, the change [nth] > [ts̥] in Modern Greek is also documented from *katsarída* [κατσαρίδα] ‘cockroach’, which is unanimously etymologised from Hellenistic Greek *kantharis* [κανθαρίς] ‘wheat bug’ (the semantic shift among different insects being very frequent in all languages) as well as from the adjective *katsarós* [κατσαρός] ‘curly, frizzy’, usually etymologised from Hellenistic Greek *akanthēros* [ἀκανθηρός] (Andriōtīs 1967: 153, s.v. κατσαρός; LKN s.v. κατσαρός; Mōysiadiš 2005: 126)¹² ‘thorny; spiny’.
¹¹ Modern Greek *agkáthi* [αγκάθι].

¹² Less convincing etymological proposals about *katsarós* [κατσαρός] involve *katsí* [κατσι] < *katí* [κατι] ‘kitten’ (Andriōtīs 1967: 153; Bampiniōtīs 2002: 873; Bampiniōtīs 2009: 659, all s.v. κατσαρός) and Persian *kāj* ‘a species of cedar with ridged leaves’ (Bampiniōtīs 2009: 659). The former is semantically more complex than *katsarós* < *akanthēros*, but still possible. In the case of the latter, it would be improbable for a Persian borrowing to take a Greek derivative suffix (*-arós* [-αρός]) and become almost Panhellenic without leave traces of its basal form, given the very little (if any) direct linguistic contact between Helladic Greek and Persian. As for Medieval Greek *katzaraía* [κατζαραία] ‘wild cedar’ and Cappadocian Greek *kátzara* [κάτζαρα] ‘cedars’ (Bampiniōtīs 2009: 659) they could well come from *akanth-* root due to their sharp, pointed needles rather than from Persian *kāj*. In

⁹ The same prefixoid could also occur in the rather obscure word *katsívelos* [κατσιβελος] ‘Rom, Gipsy; (Fig.) swarthy person’ (slightly pejorative), usually etymologised from Italian *cattivello* ‘mischievous, naughty’ or from an unheard-of Romanian **cacivel* (both < Latin *captivus* ‘captive’ + dimin. *-ellus*).

¹⁰ Other variants are *Katsagiánnis* [Κατσαγιάννης], *Katsiagiánnis* [Κατσιογιάννης], *Katsigiánnis* [Κατσιογιάννης] and *Katsiogiánnis* [Κατσιογιάννης] are also extant.

However, despite the more or less clear etymology and meaning of the *KATSO*-prefixoid, various etymologists have failed to recognise *katsávracha*, *katsipodiá* and *katsónycho* as *KATSO*-words, despite the unanimity prevailing about other similarly prefixed words such as *skantzóchoiros* ‘hedgehog’ < Hellenistic Greek *akanthó-choiros* [ἀκανθό-χοιρος], *lit.* ‘spiny hog’, obviously via Medieval Greek forms/spellings such as *ka(n)-tzóchoiros* [κα(ν)τζόχοιρος] > Cypriot Greek *katsóchoiros*.

As to *katsávracha* ‘crag’, various authoritative sources such as the Standard Modern Greek etymological dictionary by Andriotis or the Standard Modern Greek dictionary of Bambiniotis include two etymological proposals: one involving an unattested **akanthá-vracha* [*ἀκανθά-βραχα] (Andriōtīs 1967: 153, s.v. κατσάβραχα, citing Filintas 1924: 149; Bampiniōtīs 2002: 872 s.v. κατσάβραχα), *lit.* ‘spiny rocks’, and another involving *katávracha* [κατά-βραχα] (Andriōtīs 1967: 153, s.v. κατσάβραχα; Bampiniōtīs 2002: 872 s.v. κατσάβραχα). Ilioudis thinks of *kaká vráchia* [κακά βράχια], *lit.* ‘bad rocks’ (Ilioudis 2001, cited in Mōysiadis 2005: 124). Georgacas thinks of **kakiá vráchia* [κακιά βράχια] ‘id. through a non-standard form *kakiós* [κακίός] ‘bad’ (Standard *kakós* [κακός]) sibilantised via ‘tsitacism’ (i.e. **katsá vráchia* [*κατσά βράχια]) (Georgacas 1982: 336–337, cited in Mōysiadis 2005: 124), a view endorsed by Mōysiadis (2005: 124–125) and reproduced in Bambiniotis’ etymological dictionary (Bampiniōtīs 2009: 659 s.v. κατσάβραχα).¹³ On the etymological proposal involving *katávracha* [κατάβραχα], one must note that a compound of the above-mentioned prefix *kata-* [κατα-] ‘downwards; too-much (*inter alia*)’ and *vráchos* [βράχος] ‘rock’ is used only as an adverb in Modern Greek and means ‘on/towards the rocks’ rather than ‘crag’. Morphologically, it is not usual for noun such as *katsávracha* [κατσάβραχα] to derive from an adverb. Phonologically, the change [t] > [tʃ]

this connection one should not forget that the graph *tz* [τʃ] was just a convention for [tʃ] in Medieval Greek, which further reduces the similarity with *kāj*.

¹³ Cf. though Bambiniotis’ different stance in a previous work (< **katávracha* or **akanthávracha*) (Bampiniōtīs 2002: 872 s.v. κατσάβραχα).

is not expected before back vowels in Modern Greek. Semantically, it is difficult to imagine why something denoting the state of being on/moving towards the rocks could ever have evolved into denoting a steep rock face. Ilioudis’ etymological proposal involving *kaká vráchia* [κακά βράχια] has been plausibly rejected by Moysiadis, who highlights the impossibility of a [ka] > [tʃa]¹⁴ change given the back vowel (Mōysiadis 2005: 124). Georgacas’ proposal involving **kakiá vráchia* (i.e. **katsá vráchia*) is problematic because, even if the first part of the word was a regional adjective *kakiós* [κακίός] (which I have never come across, by the way), it would have turned into *kakió-* [κακιό-] in compounding, with the change [o] > [a] being possible only by assimilation (which neither Moysiadis nor Georgacas seem to argue for). Secondly, diffusion of a dialectal word in almost the entire Greece is rather rare (although not unheard of). Thirdly, if palatalisation of /k/ had taken place before a front vowel, the same should have happened to /x/ as well, i.e. **[ka'tʃea 'vraea]*; in such a case, a phonological back-formation from a self-standing form ['vraea] into an affixed form [-vraxa] does not seem probable, given the perceived phonological difference between the two forms. By contrast, the etymology of *katsa-* from **akantha-* [*ἀκανθα-] is probably on the right path, especially if made more accurate as follows: *katsa-* is a variant of *katso-*, which comes from the well-documented *akantho-* and in some cases became *katsa-* by assimilation to a following [a], as clearly suggests the above-mentioned non-standard (mainly Cypriot) form *katsóchoiros* ‘hedgehog’, which undoubtedly comes from Hellenistic Greek *akanthóchoiros*, just like the Standard Modern Greek form *skantzóchoiros* [σκαντζόχοιρος] (where the [s-] is prothetic due to a common re-segmentation after a preceding word ending in [-s]). I wonder why Moysiadis did not even consider the above-mentioned *akantho-* scenario, given that he is aware of and does mention the change [nt^h] > [tʃ] in the very next page (Mōysiadis 2005: 126, where he conventionally represents this

¹⁴ In fact sibilantisation of [k] in most Modern Greek vernaculars gives normally [tʃ] rather than [tʃs]; however, Moysiadis speaks indistinctly of ‘tsitacism’ (Mōysiadis 2005: 123–127) independently from the outcome. Personally I avoid this term as too vague and not internationally established.

change as /nθ/ > /ts/¹⁵ and briefly discusses views on various possible intermediary changes).

As to *katsipodiá* [κατσιποδιά], etymological explanations like the ones reported by Andriotis (Andriōtis 1967: 153, s.v. κατσιποδιά), namely **kako-podiá* [*κακο-ποδιά], *lit.* ‘bad footedness’, **a-sympodiá* [*α-συποδιά], *lit.* (approx.) ‘non-aligned steps’ or **katsiko-podiá* [*κατικο-ποδιά], *lit.* ‘goat footedness’, are impossible or unconvincing. The first one because the change [ko] > [tʃi] is impossible without mediation of an equally unattested **kakipodia* [*κακιποδιά], given that [k] is followed by a back vowel. The second one because the addition of an initial [k] is anyway impossible. And the third one because a haplogy of *katsiko-* into *katsi-* is just unnecessary, given that the semantic qualities of KATSO-prefixoids are sufficient to justify its use in a word that denotes something negative. On the other hand, a semantic conflation and/or a remote etymological connection with *katsika* [κατσικά] ‘goat’ could still be possible by a different pathway, which is explained in the next sections. The semantically identical standard form *katsikopódaros* [κατσικοπόδαρος] ‘jinx (for persons)’ *lit.* ‘goat-footed’ may have influenced the etymological views on *katsipódis* or have been itself modelled on *katsipódis* by re-analysis on the basis of Christian representations of evil spirits as goat-footed.

As to the word *katsónycho* ‘bird’s spur; pig’s second or fifth toe (not touching the earth)’, it is reported by Karanastasis (Karanastasis 1988: 119), who inaccurately spelled it κατσώνυχο as if based on Ancient Greek *ónyx* [όνυξ] ‘nail; hoof; claw’ (rather than on Modern Greek *nýchi* [νύχι]), where the initial /o/ would be lengthened in right-headed compounding. Besides, he thought it derived from the Ancient Greek adjective *gampsónychos* [γαμψώνυχος] ‘hooknailed; hook-clawed’, which is phonologically and semantically less straightforward than my own etymological proposal, according which the first part is the

KATSO-prefixoid; this is because, to my knowledge, the change [mps] > [ps] > [ts], although possible, has no precedent in Italiot Greek (nor in other Modern Greek dialects), as well as because the main characteristic of a *katsónycho* [κατσόνυχο] is not hookedness (which is not necessarily present anyway), but rather its quality of protruding/pointing outwards.

So far I have shown that the Albanian KACA-prefixoid is morpho(phono)logically, phonologically and semantically equivalent to the Modern Greek KATSO-prefixoid, so that their connection is virtually indisputable. They cannot be inherited (i.e. Indo-European) cognates, given that they are not traceable to some reconstructed Indo-European root that could have evolved similarly in both languages. I think that the Albanian prefixoid is borrowed from the Modern Greek one and not vice versa, for the following reasons: a) the origin of the Modern Greek KATSO-prefixoid is almost certainly the Greek word for ‘thorn’ or ‘spine’ detached from N+N compound words and given the status of a prefixoid, while the morphological and semantic details of *kac* ‘goat’ as the source of the Albanian KACA-prefixoid are less clear; b) the fact that Modern Greek has more variants of this prefixoid, in particular the one with linking vowel -o-, which shows regular changes if etymologised from *akantho-*, the latter being the source of all other variants in Modern Greek as suggested by well-documented changes (assimilation, dissimilation); c) the fact that Albanian has borrowed many affixes from Modern Greek (Kyriazis 2001: 254–260; Krimpas 2017: 440–443) and not vice versa; d) the fact that the KACA-prefixoid is common mostly with family names the stem of which has been borrowed from a Modern Greek Christian name, e.g. *Kacajani/Kacijani/Kacojani* (< *Jani* < *Giánnis* [Γιάννης] [ˈjanis]), *Kacandoni* (< *Andoni* < *Antónis* [Αντώνης] [a(n)ˈdonis]); such family names are almost ubiquitous in Greece, which adds to the possibility of a Greek-to-Albanian direction of borrowing rather than vice versa; e) the fact that the KATSO-prefixes are used throughout Greece, even in parts where no contacts with Albanian speakers took place. But if it is almost certain that the Albanian KACA-prefixoid is borrowed from the Modern Greek KATSO-prefixoid, which could be the connection between the prefixoids in question and the Albanian noun *kac* ‘goat’?

¹⁵ I say ‘conventionally’ because it is rather improbable for the Ancient Greek cluster νθ [nθ] to ever evolve into [nθ] in spontaneous speech. The evidence from Modern Greek vernaculars shows rather that it evolved into [tːʰ] > [tθː] > [θː], no matter how it was spelled and/or pronounced in learned variants, which are based on a letter-to-letter reading.

Thorns, spines, oaks and... goats?

Interestingly, a variant of the Albanian word for 'goat' (*kec*) is *kac*, which is very similar to Modern Greek *katsíka* 'goat', a back formation on Modern Greek *katsíki* [κατσίκι]! This may suggest there might indeed be a more remote etymological connection between the *KACA*- and *KATSO*-prefixoids, on the one hand, and Albanian and Greek words for 'goat', on the other hand. Although the Albanian word *kac* is generally considered a variant of *kec*, the word *kaciq* (definite form *kaciqi*) is identical with Modern Greek *katsíki*, which is often etymologised from Turkish *keçi* with [e] > [a] change plus the Greek diminutive suffix *-íkí* (LKN s.v. κατσίκι). However, a Turkish origin for this Modern Greek word is impossible for phonological, morphological and pragmatic reasons. In particular, the [e] > [a], apart from being rather unusual in Modern Greek except in cases of assimilation/dissimilation, is definitely not expected following /k/, which is palatalised before front vowels both in Modern Greek and Turkish (in the latter palatalisation is much stronger than in Modern Greek). This means that Greek-speakers had no reason to depalatalise the /k/ in this position, as clearly shown by examples such as Turkish *keçe* > Modern Greek *ketsés* [κετσές] [ce'tsēs] 'felt' or Turkish *key(i)f* > Modern Greek *kéfi* [κέφι] ['cefi] 'joy, cheerfulness; fun'; but even if accepted that Modern Greek changed Turkish [e] into [a] in this environment, one would expect **kiatsí-* [κιατσί-] [ca'tsi] rather than *katsí-* [κατσί-], a change that retains the palatalised /k/. Moreover, no Turkish loanword in Modern Greek has ever been extended by the diminutive suffix *-ík-i*, which was not productive at the time of language contacts between Modern Greek and Turkish.¹⁶ Turkish

¹⁶ Even if the Ancient Greek word for 'goat' was borrowed, the donor language could not have been Turkish before the 11th c. AD. Interestingly, given that Oghuz Turkish (i.e. the westernmost group of Turkic languages comprising Turkish, Azeri and Turkmen) is exceptional among Turkic languages in exhibiting an initial antimetathesis in the word for 'goat', cf. Turkish/Azeri *keçi*/Turkmen *geçi* vs. Uzbek *echki*, Uyghur *uchke* [اۆچكە], Kazakh *eshki* [ешки] or Kyrgyz *echki* [эчки], it is tempting to think that the language of Turkic-speakers moving westwards was influenced by some language in which the

is then to be abandoned as the donor language for Modern Greek *katsíki*.

The Albanian word *kaciq* is generally etymologised from the above-mentioned Modern Greek word *katsíki*. However, it could also be explained as being a diminutive of *kac*, given that the diminutive suffix *-iq* (< Old Church Slavonic *-itv*, cf. Serbo-Croat *-ić*, with possible partial conflation with Medieval/Modern Greek *-ík-i-o-n/-ík-i*) does exist in Albanian, cf. *guriq* 'little rock, pebble' < *gur* 'rock'. If this is the case, then the Modern Greek word is borrowed from Albanian (Andriōtīs 1967: 153, s.v. κατσίκι, citing Meyer), given also the existence of the similar word *kacek* 'bag made of sheepskin/goatskin; black-smith's bellows; (Coll.) bagpipe; (Med.) utricle'; the very close pastoral connections between Greeks and Albanians could account for such a scenario. However, the Medieval Greek form *katsikón* [κατσικόν] (pl. *katsiká* [κατσικά]) 'goat(s)', which has plausibly been proposed as the direct source of *katsíka* and *katsíki* (Bampiniōtīs 2009: 659 s.v. κατσικά) could not be expected neither from Albanian *kaciq*, nor from *katsíki* [κατσίκι], since Medieval/Modern Greek *-ík-i-o-n/-ík-i* itself derives from Medieval/Modern Greek *-ík-ó-n/-ík-ó* (a possessive and relative suffix), plural *-ík-á*. This suggests that Medieval Greek *katsikón* is the source of Modern Greek *katsíki* and not vice

word for 'goat' began with /kV/. This language could be Greek, as long as the second-syllable [i] of Greek *katsíki* [κατσίκι] would normally turn the first-syllable [a] into [e] under Oghuz Turkic vowel harmony rules (cf. Gk. *Kallípolis* [Καλλιπόλις] > Tk. *Gelíbolu*). As to the Albanian variant *keç* (Standard Albanian *kec*) 'goat', which resembles the Oghuz Turkic word for 'goat', the only possible influence direction is again from Albanian into Oghuz Turkic, since the non-palatalised initial /k/ of *keç* [keʧ] could not have been borrowed from Oghuz Turkic *keçi* [ceʧi] with its palatalised initial /k/, since in that case the Albanian-speakers would have retained the palatalisation and spelled the word as **qeqç* rather than *keç*, cf. *qejf* 'fun; pleasure' < Turkish *key(i)f*; *qehaja* 'steward (for a landlord); agent (for a guild)' < Turkish *kehaya*, while most Turkic languages automatically palatalise /k/ before and after front vowels. On the other hand, the final *-ç* [ʧ] instead of *-c* [ts] could be due to conflation with the similar Turkish word for 'goat', since [ʧ] is not expected from [ðs] < [ðəz] (*kedhöz* > **kedhs* > *kec*). Of course, all this is just guesswork that calls for further research.

versa. Besides, the Albanian word *kaciq* shows a regular development if borrowed from *katsíki*, cf. Albanian *dhokaniq* < Modern Greek *dokaniki* [δοκανίκι] (Standard *dekaniki* [δεκανίκι]), which makes almost certain a Modern Greek of this word in Albanian. But where does that Medieval Greek *katsikón* come from? Bambiniotis' etymological dictionary (Bampiniōtis 2009: 659 s.v. κασίκα), after rejecting as improbable the connection with either Albanian *kats* [sic] or Turkish *keçi*¹⁷ and plausibly indicating Medieval Greek *katsikón* (pl. *katsiká*) as the source of *katsíki* and *katsíka*, etymologises the latter from an unattested **(ai)gikatsikón* [*(ai)γικατσικόν] < **(ai)gikátsin* [*(ai)γικάτσιν] < **(ai)gikákin* [*(ai)γικákιν], a diminutive of Hellenistic *aigikón* [αιγικόν] < Ancient Greek *aix* [αἶξ]. However, this etymology does not convince me, first and foremost because it posits too many unattested forms for a word that denotes a very common animal. Secondly, it would not be normally expected for a dialectal form (as suggested by the sibilantisation of /k/) to expand to virtually the entire Greece. Thirdly, it would be a morphologically unique case for a Greek noun already ending in *-ik-ó-n* (*aig-ik-ó-n*) to develop an additional *-ik-ó-n* after a diminutive suffix (**aig-ik-ak-ik-ó-n* [*(ai)γ-ικ-ακ-ικ-ό-ν]).

In the light of the above considerations, my guess is that the origin of the Modern Greek word *katsíki* 'goat' has to be searched for elsewhere. Interestingly, the Ancient Greek word for 'goat' (*aix* [αἶξ], stem *aig-* [aiγ-]¹⁸) strikingly resembles two other Ancient Greek words, namely *aigílops* [αιγίλωψ] 'a species of oak tree (*Quercus cerris*)' reported by Theophrastus (LSJ s.v. αιγίλωψ) and *krátaigos* [κράταιγος] 'a species of spiny plant' (LSJ s.v. κράταιγος). Considering that *Quercus cerris* is notorious for its sharp lobe tips and its spiny cupule, it would not be strange to be given a name that reflects such qualities: given that *lōps* [λῶψ] meant 'bark; cover', the name *aigílops* could refer to the spiny cupule of the plant's fruit, hence '(a tree with) spiny cupule'. Similarly, *krátaigos* could mean 'the one with the hard thorns/spines' (< *kratús* [κρατύς] 'hard; strong; powerful'). To

take further this hypothesis, if there indeed were an Indo-European root **h₂eyǵ-* that denoted something thorny/spiny, then the Ancient Greek word for 'goat' may derive from it and be connected with (or even have provided the model for) such words as *aigílops* or *krátaigos*. The very word 'oak' in English comes from the Germanic reflection of the abovementioned Indo-European root, i.e. **aik-* (cf. German *Eiche* 'oak'), which could well be the same as the one seen in *aigílops*. Latin *aesculus* 'edible acorn' may contain the same root, if coming from **aig-sk-*. Non-diphthongised variants of this root seem to exist for both 'oak' and 'goat' words, cf. the nasalised Lithuanian *qžuolas* and Latvian *ozols* 'oak' or the sibilantised Lithuanian *ožys* 'he-goat', Sanskrit *ajáh* 'id.' and Old Church Slavonic (*j*)*azno* (< **azbno*) 'skin, leather' (originally 'goatskin'). The sibilants in the root of the above-mentioned Baltic, Sanskrit and Slavic words, and in the Armenian word for 'goat' (*aydz*), as well as the dental fricative in two other Albanian words for 'goat' (*edh* and *dhi*) (Orel 1998: 83, 85 s.v. *dhi*, *edh* respectively) clearly suggest that the Indo-European root for 'oak' and 'goat' words is **h₂eyǵ-* rather than just **h₂eyg-*. The similarities and shared alternations are too numerous to be just coincidental. An extended variant of the same root is probably to be found in Ancient Greek *āiganēē* [αἰγανέη] 'hunting spear, javelin' (because of its pointed shape) and *aige(i)ros* [αἰγε(ι)ρος] 'black poplar (*Populus nigra*)' (because of its pointed and serrated leaves) and/or *aigithos/aigiōthos* [αἰγίθος/αἰγιοθος] 'a kind of bird (*perhaps* a sparrow)' (due to its pointed bill?), although a non-Greek origin for some of all of these words has been proposed (Sommer 1937: 260), including for the 'goat' words in most Indo-European languages; however even this would not negate the semantic connection between 'goat', 'oak' and 'spine'.¹⁹ But if Indo-European, all those root variants may be voiced variants

¹⁷ Interestingly, the same author in a previous work stated that the word probably came from either Albanian *kats* [sic] or Turkish *keçi* (Bampiniōtis 2002: 873 s.v. κασίκα).

¹⁸ Also meaning 'large wave' (cf. the Aegean Sea) for still obscure semantic reasons, if it is indeed the same word.

¹⁹ For the semantic connection of spears and oaks cf. also Lat. *sparus* 'hunting spear; javelin' and Alb. *shparr* 'oak'; I dare wonder whether a further semantic connection with small birds could account for the phonological similarity with En. *sparrow*, Gk. *spérgoulos* [σπέργουλος] 'small field bird' and *psar* [ψάρ] or *psáros* [ψάρος] 'starling'. For the semantic connection between goats and tree species cf. *erīneós* [ἐρίνεός] 'wild/male fig tree; billy goat', as well as *caprifig* (< It. *capra* 'goat').

of the semantically and phonologically similar **h₂eyk-* and **h₂ek-* roots (diphthongised and non-diphthongised variants), denoting sharpness, pointedness (> Gk. *aikhmḗ* [αἰχμή] ‘a point, edge’ < *h₂eyk-s-m-ā*, Lat. *acus* ‘a needle’ < **h₂ek-u-s*).

So if the Ancient Greek word for ‘goat’ has to do with something spiny and/or pointed, could the same be true of its Modern Greek counterpart? Given the existence of the Hellenistic Greek adjective *akanthikós* [ἀκανθικός] ‘thorny; spiny; related to thorns or spines’ (< *ákantha* ‘thorn; spine’), the change of [nt^h] into [ts] described for *katso-* (< *akantho-*), the pointed shape of a goat’s horns as well as its rough hair and its fierce behaviour, I dare posit that *katsikón* (> *katsiki*) derives from the neuter form of the above-mentioned adjective, i.e. *akanthikón* [ἀκανθικόν] ‘the spiny one; the pointed one’, and hence ‘the horned one’, ultimately ‘goat’. If this is true, then the root *akanth-* [ἀκανθ-] is the ultimate source not only of the Modern Greek *KATSO*-prefixoids, borrowed into Albanian as the *KACA*-prefixoids, but also of the Modern Greek word for ‘goat’, borrowed into Albanian as *kaciq* and re-analysed²⁰ as *kac-* + *-iq* to give *kac* by back-formation, also encouraged by the existence of the Albanian word *kec* ‘goat’, which derives from *kedhëz* via regular changes: **kedhz* < **kedhs* < *kec*²¹, cf. and has nothing to do with either the Modern Greek words for ‘goat’ or with the Albanian word *kac*. In such a case, *kac* is not a variant of *kec*, but a word of different origin that conflated with *kec* due to coincidental semantic and phonological similarity.

Other possible cognates?

Perhaps other Albanian words denoting something thorny, spiny, pointed, scaly, rough, protruding, fierce and the like and starting with *kac-*, *kaç-* (Albanian) or *kats-* [κατσ-] (Modern Greek) could ultimately derive from the Albanian *KACA*-prefixoids by de-affixation and re-autonomisation with loss of final vowel due to compounding with vowel-initial stems, and/or from the word *kac* ‘goat’ by adding derivative affixes of various origin (*-ubë*, *-ub-et*, *-ul*, *-ule* etc).

²⁰ Re-analysis is extremely usual in Albanian, especially in borrowings, cf. Kyriazis (2001: 261–264).

²¹ Cf. a similar development in *guxoj* ‘to dare, act bravely’ < (older) *kuxonj* < **kutëzonzj* (cf. Romanian *a cuteza* ‘id.’) or in *shulk* ‘gate/door bar, door bolt; roller (in a loom)’ < *shulës*.

If this is the case, then the root *akanth-* [ἀκανθ-] ‘thorn; spine’ may be the ultimate source of a populous word family denoting similar qualities and concepts, e.g. *kaçubë* ‘bush, shrub’ and its derivatives *kaçuban* ‘having coarse hair sticking up; having a tuft of feathers’ and *kaçubet*, also *kaçabet*, *kaçabek*, *kacybet* ‘kite (*Milvus*)’; *kacule* ‘small sheaf of grain; muzzle used to prevent baby animal from suckling at the udder’; *kaçul* ‘tuft (of feathers), crest; rooster’s comb; horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris* L., *Alauda alpestris*)’; (*Fig.*) child dressed in raggedy clothes; very poor child’ and its derivatives *kaçulitë* ‘tuft of feathers; nose-horn of a sand viper’, *kaçul(l)ar* ‘braggart’, *kaçullatë* ‘tuft of feathers; crested fowl’ and *kaçulore* ‘chicken with a tuft of feathers on the head’); *kaçup* ‘small leather bottle; blacksmith’s bellows; tuft of feathers; corn tassel; small sheaf of corn’; *kaçurrel* ‘curly; curly-headed’ and its derivative *kaçurrelë* ‘ringlet, curl’; *kaçe* ‘dogrose (*Rosa canina*)’ and its derivatives *kacibardhë* or *kaçibardhë* ‘id.’; *kaçë* ‘empty walnut; corncob’; *kaçel* ‘lame’; *kacer(r)* ‘(man) with a turned up handle-bar mustache; (goat/ram) with horns pointing straight up; very naughty/mischievous (child)’; *kaçerr* ‘icicle hanging from a tree branch’. The same is true of at least some of the pseudo-*KACA*-words (*kacarran*, *kacarrik* etc) mentioned above. Conflations among originally unrelated roots and stems via folk etymological and re-analysis processes are anyway very probable for an unknown number of such words, e.g. the original *kësulë* ‘brimless cap, skullcap’ may have conflated with *KACA*-words or with their possible relative *kac* ‘goat’ to give *kaçul(l)e* ‘hood of a cloak or raincoat; pointed wool cap typically worn by children’, but further research is needed to tell apart cases of conflation from genuine remote derivatives of the *akanth-* root. The same is true of Modern Greek words such as the verb *katsiázo* [κατσιάζω] ‘to make/get stunted’, which is unanimously considered a derivative of *katsí* [κατσι] < *katí* [κατί] ‘kitten’ (Andriōtis 1967: 153, s.v. κατσιάζω; Bampiniōtis 2002: 873 s.v. κατσιάζω; Bampiniōtis 2009: 659 s.v. κατσιάζω)²² but could very well fit into the etymological and semantic processes discussed above.

²² Alternatively from Medieval Greek *kátsa* [κάτσα] ‘dirt’ (of unknown origin) (Bampiniōtis 2009: 659 s.v. κατσιάζω), but the semantic connection between ‘wrinkle’ and ‘dirt’ is less clear.

Conclusion

The Albanian *KACA*-prefixoids have been borrowed from Modern Greek *KATSO*-prefixoids, a fact reflected also in their variants. Various other Albanian and Modern Greek words, such as the ones for 'goat' could derive from or have been influenced by the same root, ultimately going back to Ancient Greek *ákantha* 'thorn; spine' and having become more productive in Albanian. Albanian etymology is a very rich and challenging field that deserves more study. This is clearly illustrated by semantic connections that seem impossible at first glance, such as the one among thorns/spines, scales, corncobs, shelled mollusks, coleopterous insects, negatively judged behaviours, goats and oaks.

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SUMMARY & KEYWORDS

On the Modern Greek origin of the Albanian KA-CA-prefixoids

This article argues that, contrary to current views, the Albanian prefixoid *kaca-* (e.g. *kacadre* ‘stag beetle’ < *dre* ‘stag; deer’), as well as its occasional variants *kaça-*, *kaci-*, *kaçi-* and *kacu-* (e.g. *kaçadredhë* ‘curled object; curl; curl of hair’ < *dredhë* ‘twist, curve, curl’; *kacimare* ‘water chestnut’ < *mare* ‘strawberry tree and its fruit’; *kaçirubë* ‘crest; rooster’s comb; forelock; mane’ < *rubë* ‘(black) kerchief; head kerchief; handkerchief’; *kacubri* ‘beetle’ < *bri* ‘horn; antenna’) are neither just expressive, nor borrowed from the Greek prefix *kata-* [κατα-], but rather from identical Modern Greek prefixoids, all of which may ultimately go back to the Greek word *ἀκανθα* ‘thorn; spine’, which is most probably also the source of Modern Greek *katsarós* [κατσαρός] ‘curly’ and possibly variously connected with other Albanian and Modern Greek words denoting pointedness, sharpness, scaliness, protrusion, roughness and the like. Such conclusions are reached through a close diachronic and synchronic examination and comparison of phonological, morphological and semantic properties of those affixes and lexemes.

Keywords

► affixation; Albanian; Balkan linguistics; derivation; etymology; grammatical borrowing; historical linguistics; Modern Greek; KACA-prefixoid; uncertain etymon

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