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## LINGUISTIC CALQUES IN THE OLD PRUSSIAN AND YATVINGIAN TOPONYMY<sup>1</sup>

*In the memory  
of Kazimieras Būga*

Kazimieras Būga (1879–1924) was an esteemed philologist who contributed many scholarly works to Baltic linguistics and onomastics, as well as to the study of the ancient past of the Baltic tribes. In his article *Vietų vardai – istorijos šaltinis* [“The names of places – a wellspring of history”], originally published in 1922, Būga (1961, 491) wrote the following words:

Kur kurios tautos senovėje gyventa, gali mums pasakyti žemė: reikia tik ji mokėti paklausti ir jos atsakas suprasti (...). Vietų vardais į mus kalba pati žemė. Jos kalbos žodžiai – tai miestų, sodžių, upių, ežerų, balų, girių, kalnų ir kt. vardai. Vietoms vardus pramena žmonės. Vienos tautos praminti žemės vietoms vardai gali patapti ir kitos tautos žemėvardžiais. Tai atsitinka, kai svetima tauta įsibrauja ne į savo žemę. Įsibrovėliai naujokai daliai vietų palieka tuos pačius vardus, kuriais rado vadinant senuosius to krašto gyventojus, daliai duoda naujus, iš kurių dažnas esti atsineštinis iš senosios tėviškės.

(The land itself can tell us who lived where in the ancient past: one simply needs to know how to ask and understand the answers (...). It is the land itself that speaks to us by means of place names. The words of the land’s language give us the names of cities, orchards, rivers, lakes, marshes, forests, hills and other such places. People give names to places. The names of places for one nation may become the place names of another nation. That happens when a foreign power encroaches upon territory that does not belong to it. For some of the places the new invaders leave the same names they found used by the former inhabitants of the land; for other places they give new names often brought from the original fatherland).

(Cited in English after Sabaliauskas 1993, 20)

It was obvious for many nineteenth-century scholars that names of places, especially names of rivers and lakes, may tell more about the ancient past of a nation than the

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<sup>1</sup> The first draft of this paper was presented at the International Conference devoted to Kazimieras Būga (Vilnius, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2001).

“mute” archaeological sources. According to Prof. Leszek Bednarczuk (1996, 117–118), two great researchers of the Baltic languages with the Indo-European interest, Kazimieras Būga and Jan Michał Rozwadowski (1867–1935), created a modern research of the hydronymy of the Baltic and Slavic language area. Neither of the scholars was able to bring their own research to a successful end: Būga because of the premature death, Rozwadowski because of excessive cautions. Their works appeared for many years after their death (Rozwadowski 1948; Būga 1958–1961).

Būga (and independently of him, Rozwadowski) compared a number of Slavic hydronyms with the names of rivers and lakes in Lithuania and Latvia and arrived at the following conclusion:

The names of rivers in White Russia (in the provinces of Minsk, Mogilėv and Smolensk) indicate that one should search for the ancestral land of the Lithuanians and Latvians north of the Pripet (along its left tributaries), along the Berezina and the Upper Dniepr river, almost as far as the midpoint of the Sozh river.

(quoted in English after Sabaliauskas 1993, 24)

Kazimieras Būga (1923 = RR III 601–602) distinguished also a separate hydronymical area, represented by the river names ending with *-da* (e.g. *Jasioł-da*, *Griv-da*, *New-da*, *Sieg-da*, *Sokol-da*, *Got-da*). The hydronymic suffix *-da* was a regional innovation, firmly attested in the historical area of the Yatvingian tribes. This is why Būga concluded that the broad distribution of the element *-da* demonstrates the ancestral land of the Yatvingians. Most baltists agree with Būga’s conclusions<sup>2</sup>.

As one of the most renowned researchers of the Baltic toponymy Būga paid attention to the onomastical translations or linguistic calques, which appear in the primary Old Prussian and Yatvingian lands. We can observe some different foreign influences (especially German, Polish and East Baltic) in the toponymy of the West Baltic area.

I quote here the well known case of a Latin-German-Polish onomastic complex, attested in the territory of the Old Prussians. We can not say with certainty what Old Prussian name was given to the river, called now *Zimna Struga* or *Warkalski Rów* (Bioliński 1987, 260). It is obvious, however, that the primary Old Prussian hydronym was glossed in Latin as *fluvius Frigidus* ‘cold river’ (1331 *a fluvio, qui frigidus appellatur*) and later translated into German *Caldeflys* (1380) and Polish *Zimna Struga* (1924). It is not impossible to reconstruct Old Prussian hydronym

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<sup>2</sup> L. Bednarczuk (1996, 127) accepts the Yatvingian character of the *da*-formant, though he does not agree with the suggestion, given by Būga, that the element *-da* represents the Baltic name of water *\*udā*.

\**Salt-ape* (literally ‘cold river’, cf. OPrus. *saltis* ‘cold’ and *ape* ‘river’) by analogy to Lith. *Šalt-upė* (cf. Vanagas 1981, 325).

The other standard example of the complex onomastical translation is discussed by Toporov and Trubačev (1962). The river name *Lopatka* (in the Orlov district) is linked to the Lithuanian, Latvian and Prussian hydronyms, derived from the Baltic word for ‘fox’ (cf. Lith. *lāpė*, OPrus. *lape*, Latv. *lapsa* ‘fox’). The river in question flows into a river called usually *Ropša* or sometimes *Lisička*. The former name is motivated by the Iranian word for ‘fox’ (cf. Ossetic *robas* ‘fox’, Khotan Saka *rruvasa*- ‘jackal’ < Iran. \**raupāsa*-), the latter one by the Slavic appellative for ‘fox’ (cf. Pol. *lisica*, Russ. *лисица*). These three river names, which demonstrate exactly the same meaning, represent typical calques (Abayev 1979, 300). The modern names of rivers are adapted from a Baltic, Iranian and Slavic source, respectively. So the Balts, Slavs and Iranians made contact with each other in the same place in the ancient past. The names of fox, having been preserved in the names of rivers, are a sufficient proof of this contact.

There are many similar examples in the West Baltic toponymy. Some Old Prussian and Yatvingian names were also gradually Lithuanized. Unfortunately, many translations of such type, or – to say exactly – many onomastical calques, are ignored by toponymists or passed over in silence.

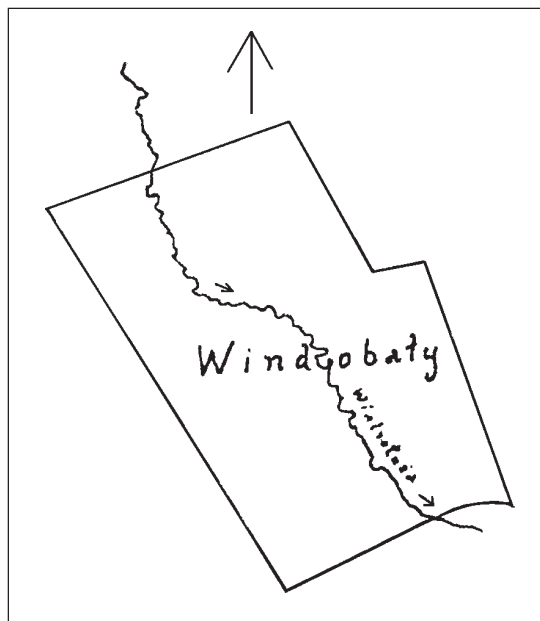
In my presentation I would like to discuss a number of onomastic translations, which have not been so far identified in some standard monographs.

1. OPruss. *Laidegarbe* (1352, 1366, 1422), an unlocated village near Kolno and Tarniny (see Pospiszylowa 1987, 85; Przybytek 1993, 143), cannot be dissociated from German *Leimberg* (1339, 1348), a village called now Mołdyty (Pospiszylowa 1987, 87). Both these names, Old Prussian *Laide-garbe* and German *Leim-berg*, mean literally nothing other than ‘a clay hill’ and both refer undoubtedly to the same settlement (Kolno, Tarniny and Mołdyty lie near each other), thus the German name *Leimberg* must be a translational calque of the Old Prussian toponym *Laidegarbe*.

2. An undistinguished calque may be also restored in the name of a dried lake near the villages Bogdany and Skajboty: *Krupolinek* (in 1772 *Kropilink*, niem. *Kroplineck See* 1924, *Kroplingsee* 1938) or *Krutinek* (1924). The Slavic derivations from Pol. *kropła* ‘drop’ and Russ. *кпymoй* (adj.) ‘steep, abrupt, precipitous’ (as suggested by Biolík 1987, 118), as well as etymologies based on Lith. *krãpyti*, *kropyti* ‘besprengen, spritzen’ and *krutėti* (Biolík 1993, 124), are weakly motivated. In my opinion, the German name *Kropling See* is a phonetic adaptation of Old Prussian \**Krupeilingis* (literally ‘[lake] full of frogs’, see OPrus. \**krupeilē* ‘frog’, see Mažiulis 1993, 287). The alternative form *Krutinek* is a Polish version

of German *\*Krötling See* (liter. ‘lake of toads [or frogs]’, cf. G. *Kröte* ‘toad’, also ‘frog’ in some dialects), which is a partial translation of OPrus. *\*Krupeil-ingis*). Thus two names of the same dried-lake confirm the opinion of most Baltists that the Old Prussian gloss *trupeyle* ‘vrosch = Frosch’ (EV 780) should be corrected into *\*crupeyle*. This opinion was suggested on the basis of a possible comparison of the Old Prussian gloss with the Lithuanian and Latvian lexical material, cf. Latv. *krupis* m. / *krupe* f. ‘toad’, Lith. dial. *krūpis* m. / *krūpė* f. ‘id.’. In other words, both the lexical and onomastical data are conformable.

3. A similar case occurs in Yatvingian toponymy. The stream *Wiatrołuża* or *Windobalska rzeka* flows through the marshy area called *Windobały* in the district Suwałki (Falk 1973, 53–54).



**Map 1.** The river Wiatrołuża and the marsh Windobały (a picture according to forester map from the first half of the 19th century, reprinted in Falk 1973, 54).

Kazimieras Būga suggested that both these names (*Wiatrołuża* and *Windobały*) are of Baltic origin, and the former represents a late Slavic adaptation of Lith. *vėtralauža* ‘wind-fallen wood’. However, it seems more promising to suggest that the name *Wiatrołuża* is really a Slavic form (denoting ‘wind marsh’), representing a full translation of Yatv. *\*Winda-balā* (liter. ‘wind marsh’, cf. Yatv. *winta* ‘wind’ in the so called Zinov’s glossary and Yatv. *\*bala* = Lith. *balà* f. ‘bog, morass, swamp, marsh’), attested by two substratal names *Windobały* and *Windobalska rzeka* (See also a hybrid Yatvingian-Polish formation *Vindebloto* ‘wind marsh’ in the Polish

toponymy of Byelorussia). If this suggestion is acceptable, then the onomastic remnants of Yatvingian origin document the correctness of the Polish-Yatvingian gloss *wiotr – winta* (*PJV* 22) and, at the same time, they strongly confirm the incontestable value of the Polish-Yatvingian vocabulary entitled “Pagan dialects from Narew” (see *Zinkevičius* 1984, 1985, 1992).

## Conclusions

All these examples confirm Būga’s opinion that the translational calques in the Balto-Slavic area are a valuable aid in research of the extinct Baltic languages. The linguistic calques in question permit us:

- (1) to locate the non-identified toponymical objects (as in the first case);
- (2) to confirm the necessity of correcting the Old Prussian gloss *trupeyle* ‘vrosch’ (*EV* 780) into *\*crupeyle* (as in the second case);
- (3) to demonstrate the real existence of a German lexical item in Yatvingian *winta* ‘wiotr / wind’ (as in the third case).

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