

ERIC P. HAMP

## ALBANIAN VIÇ 'CALF', VIT 'YEAR'

All authorities agree that Albanian *viç* is formally related to *vit*, and that the semantic relation is that expressed, in English 'yearling'. The relation of the two words and their Indo-European background is therefore beyond question. The problematic areas that have stubbornly remained are the following: 1.) The vocalism  $i < *e$  in *vit* is not easily explained; in fact, on the face of it, in such a simple form it is clearly counter to our expectations. 2.) The exact relation of *vit* to its plural *vjet* has never been explained. Wilfried Fiedler, in his excellent dissertation *Untersuchungen zur Pluralbildung im Albanischen* (Humboldt-Universität, Berlin) 1961 (mimeographed) has summarized the difficulties in this respect (45—7) and has adduced a rich survey of material which I have from conservative dialects of Greece and Italy, that the earlier and more informative plural of *vit* is *vjet(ë)*. To assume otherwise would be to assume as basic some other form which is readily explained as analogical while leaving no opportunity for an explanation of a simple but thoroughly anomalous form. 3.) Less well known are some interesting anomalous plurals to *viç* attested in North Geg dialects, which can be unified as *vjeta*, and which are clearly marshalled by Fiedler (380).

All these problems can, I think, be solved in principle; and all must be solved together.

First, we must recognize more clearly than has been done in the past the nature of the relation of *viç* to *vit*. Sanskrit gives us an attractive cognate *vatsá* — 'calf', which cannot be completely unrelated, as earlier scholars have seen. However, the relation cannot be one of direct cognacy, since (as I have remarked elsewhere)\* *-ts-* gives Albanian *-š-* (orthographic *sh*); thus, *\*uetso-* would yield *\*\*vjesh* (cf. *mosh : mot*). Our form *viç* must therefore represent *vitš* < *\*uVtVs-*. It is noteworthy, too, that in Sanskrit stressed thematic derivatives in *-a-* for *s-* stems in Schwundstufe were not productive; it was clearly a formation that was dying off in late Indo-European times. The presence in Sanskrit of such old important words as *ruksá-* 'shining', *ghramsá-* 'heat (of the sun)', *yaksá-* 'supernatural being', *susá-* 'strong', with this formation, shows that the formation was old and established

for a significant period, and not an ephemeral Sanskrit creation. The ablaut relations of some of these attest to their early status.

We must therefore regard Sanskrit *vatsá-* as representing an older form than the Albanian. In fact, it in turn may be refashioned in the first syllable, when we consider the ablaut of some of the forms of some of the forms of this class, and when we recall Skt. *par-út*, Gk. (*Πέπ-vo-i* (and their cognates), 'last year'). The earlier form might have been *\*utsó-*, which would have clashed with *útsa-* 'spring' (but for the accent); unless the latter is actually related in the root, and not derived from a root for 'wetness'. This means that in explaining Albanian *\*uVtVs-* we must search among productive formations in late Indo-European.

Now, what is this *\*-Vs-* that terminates our schematic form? Çabej, *Lingua Posnaniensis* 7.172, 1958, has argued that *viç* is an adjective derived from the ablative suffix *-sh* on the noun *vit*. There are at least two unacceptable aspects to this suggestion: It still leaves *vit* (and, as we shall see, all the other forms) unclarified. It treats *vit* (or *\*uVt-*) as the stem on an old level and employs an unmotivated relation to the ablative (plural) *-sh*; we pass over, for the present, the question whether it is likely that an old adjective (already frozen as a basic noun) would be formed by simple thematization of a late shape of a „middle” case-ending (which took external sandhi in Indo-Iranian, and hence in Indo-European). If the interests of economy of explanation, when the stem of Greek (F)ÉTOS and its cognates is clearly *\*uete/os-*, the pre-form of *viç = vitš < \*uVtVs-* must be this self-same stem-though no doubt derived by some mechanism from the simple noun underlying *vit*. No additional suffix or case-ending is necessary to account for the presence of *-š*. In fact, we may wonder, rather, why *-š* is lacking on some of the other paradigmatically related forms.

In short, *vit* must be related to *viç* somehow as *\*uétos* is to *\*uetesV*. On the other hand, from the semantics it is clear that this relation cannot be that of nominative-accusative to oblique case (i. e. of the singular), or of singular to plural. In other words, *viç* cannot be some frozen old case-form, or a petrified plural. It must be a derivative, i. e. *year-ling* in some sense.

There is another, more subtle, formal argument against *\*viç* as a correct plural form (even if we wished to make it so). Fiedler has shown neatly (46—7) that although *vit* has plural forms in some dialects with a vocalism *i* (*vite*, *vitëre*), such forms never occur after numerals and equivalent quantitative words (*disa*, *ca* 'some', *shumë* 'many', etc.). Here we find only the vocalism *vjet-*. Hence, we must take as a point of departure a pan-Albanian (or nearly so) singular *vit-*, plural *vjet-*, derivative *Vitš-*. To this last, because the anomaly requires that we regard it as old, we attribute a plural *vjet-a*.

There is evidence within Albanian, which Pedersen has already adduced (KZ 34.283—91, 1897), that *vit* is an old neuter, which survi-

ves marginally in some dialect usage as a gender-shifting noun. We are therefore justified in seeking the Indo-European class membership of the ancestor of *vit* among old neuters, and that of *viç* among old masculines, in terms of IE grammar.

The source noun classes are now perfectly clear: Expressed in Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit forms, they must be

neuter: γένος, γένεος, etc. ≠ masc. fem. εὐμενίς, pl. εὐμενέες, -δες, etc.	
μέυος, μέυεος	<i>sumanāh, sumanasah</i>
<i>genus, generis</i>	
ψεύδος	ψευδίς

We must therefore start from

'yer' \**uēt*os, pl. \**uētesā* = 'calf' \**uētēs*, pl. \**uētéses*

If these had developed undisturbed, we might expect:

sg. \*\**vjet*, pl. *viç(ë)* ≠ sg. \*\**vjetë*, pl. *viç*.

I assume here that *i* is the normal reflex of \**e* before a *nego*-cluster of two consonants.

Let us now move a few stages back in time. \**uetes*, *uētés-* must have come to be an infrequent and moribund class in Albanian, or pre-Albanian, even though it was clearly alive in late Indo-European. As a masculine, it would have been reshaped to a form apparently deriving from \**uetesos*, pl. *uetesi*. Pedersen (KZ 36.290), in fact, took \**uet-es-o-* as the starting point for this noun; and Jokl (LKU 34) assumed with even less motivation a gratuitous \**uet-es-io-*. But neither of these scholars took the full paradigmatic relations of these nouns into account.

On this revised basis, we would naturally arrive at

\**uēt*os, *uētesa* > \**viet-*, *vietěš-*  
 \**uetesos*, *uetesi* > \**vietěš-*, *vietěš-*

At this point, assuming the reverse of Çabej's argument, plural \**vietěš* was taken as an 'ablativ' (or its precursor), and a fresh simplex \**viet* extracted. This is supported by the frequency of a frozen *vjeç* found in present-day dialects in such locutions as *sa vjeç ke* 'how old are you?', where otherwise the 'ablativ' -š is rare or scarcely used. The resulting forms then develop normally as

* <i>viet(V)</i> ,	pl. <i>viet(V)</i>	>	* <i>vjet</i> ,	pl. <i>vjet</i>	'year'
* <i>vietěš(V)</i> ,	<i>viet(V)</i>	>	* <i>vjetš</i> ,	<i>vjet(a)</i>	'calf, yearling'

Finally, to maximize the distinction of number and to regularize the paradigm which was still recognized, in a large part of the Albanian speech area sg. \**viet* was replaced by \**vjet* or by now (after monophthongization) by *vit*. Thus we arrive at the observed forms.

Note that the old oblique form *vjet/viet* 'last year', which was not in a paradigmatic relation with these nouns any longer, was not similarly levelled to *vit*.<sup>1</sup>

In point of fact, the earlier predicted forms for 'yar' are actually still found dialectally in North Geg. From Peje I have noted *vjet* for singular and plural, and from Rugovo I have *viet* (masc.) for both numbers, with a more archaic quality of the diphthong such as this dialect area shows. In Dushmani Cimochoowski (p. 58) records *viet*, -a (fem.), ps. *viēt*, with long nowel in both numbers. But from Arbanasi (Zadar) I have what must be an older state of affairs, with *vjet* (close *é*), -a (fem.), pl. *vjet* (open *è*), def. *vjetët*. The pre-forms for these would be \**vjet*, -a, pl. *vjet*, *vjetët* < *vietë*, -a *viet*, -*ëtë*. (At that level the stem relation would resemble that of *ditë* and *natë*.) The fem. gender is easily explained as a divergent development of the gender-shifted plural resulting from the original neuter gender.

We may then summarize the fuller history of the two nouns as follows:

neuter: <i>uēt</i> <sub>o</sub> s, pl. <i>uētesā</i> ≠ masc.	<i>utsó</i> -s, pl. <i>utsó</i> -es?
<i>viēt</i> -	<i>uētsó</i> -s
<i>viet</i>	<i>uētēs</i>
~ <i>viēt</i>	<i>uētēs</i> os
	<i>viētēs</i> -
	<i>viētš</i>
<i>vit</i> ~ <i>vjet(ë)</i> <i>vjet</i>	<i>viç</i>
~ <i>vjet-sh</i>	<i>vjeta</i>

<sup>1</sup> As a distributional fact of Indo-European, it is interesting to note that old adverb \**per-ut(-i)* (a frozen locative, with and without suffix) is attested in Indo-Iranian (*parut*), Armenian (*heru*), Greek (*Πέρυοι V*) Keltic (Old Irish *ónn-urid* 'ab anno priore') and Germanic (Old Norse *i fjord*, Middle High German *vert*); but it is lacking in Baltic, Slavic, and Albanian. This shared loss, though impossible of conclusive proof, may be significant. Lithuanian *pėrnai* and Germanic (Middle High German *vern*), both meaning 'in the preceding year', preserve the first element of the old compound, but in a new derivation. Slavic has replaced the expression with another derivative in -n: *lani*.

Albanian has made a replacement in a further context, no doubt of Balkan Latin. *vjet* exactly matches Roumanian *an*, which has long been recognized as a continuation of the adverbial ablative *annō* seen as early as Plautus. Thus, even if the Baltic, Slavic, and Albanian loss of the old IE word is a shared one, its replacement in Albanian, at least, is a separate event.

ERIC P. HAMP

## „VIÇI” dhe „VITI” NË SHQIPET

Në studimin e tij „*Viçi dhe viti në shqipet*”, profesori Eric P. Hamp konstaton se fjala „viç” ka të bejë me fjalën „vit”. Ai pohon poashtu se këto dy fjalë kanë prejardhje indoevropiane. Më tutje, i hyn shqyrtimit të çështjeve problematike të prejardhjes së tyre, të cilat, sipas mendimit të tij janë: vokalizmi i „i”-së në „vit”; vështirësia në të spjeguarit e përpikët të shndërrimit të trajtës „vit” në „vjet”; dhe, disa plurale anomalike të shumësit të fjalës „viç” në dialektin gegë („vjeta”) të cilën gjë e paska shtjelluar mirëfillit Wilfrid Fidler në disertacionin e tij. Të gjitha këto çështje, sipas Eric P. Hamp mund të zgjidhen së bashku dhe parimisht.

Paskëtaj, Eric P. Hamp fillon ta krahasojë origjinën e këtyre fjalëve me indishten e vjetër dhe indoneuropianishten. Ai gjithashtu nuk pajtohet me konstatimin e E. Çabejt, sipas të cilit emri „viç” e paska zanafillën nga ablativi i emrit „vit” me sufiksin „sh” dhe shton se fjala „vit” duhet të jetë vetëm një derivat. Zanafilla e kësaj fjale, përfundon ai, lypset kërkuar mes neutrave të vjetra indoevropiane, gjersa origjina e fjalës „viç” duhet kërkuar midis emrave mashkullorë në gramatikën indoevropiane. Pasonjë format neutre të fjalëve të njëjtë në greqishte, latinishte dhe sanskritishte ku del në shesh se çfarë trajtash morën ato në shqipen e vjetër. Me këtë rast autori e citon Joklin e Pedersenin. Lidhur me trajtat e fjalës „vit”, Eric P. Hamp merr shembuj nga Peja, Rugova e Zara, dhe më në fund jep historiatin e shkurtër të fjalëve të përmendura në një tabelëz duke dhënë disa shkoqitje të tjera lidhur me prejardhjen e tyre.

