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The etymology of *laz*

Praslovanske **lazь*, **lězti*, **loza* in **lěsь* razlagamo kot izpeljanke iz praindoevropskega korena **leg-* 'upogibati, zvijati' s pomočjo analize izvora praslovanskih **lāzь lāza* 'polje, travnik na mestu, kjer je bil posekan gozd' in 'ozek prehod, odprtina v ograji'.

Proto-Slavic **lazь*, **lězti*, **loza*, and **lěsь* are explained as derived from the Proto-Indo-European root **leg-* 'wind, bend' through a closer look at the two origins of Proto-Slavic **lazь* and **lazь* '(fallow) field or meadow created in place of a cut or burned forest' and 'narrow passage', 'opening, gate in a fence'.

The following correspondences can be observed in Slovene:

- a) *lāz lāza* m. 'cleared area in a forest or next to one, covered with grass, usually with a field' (SSKJ 2014: 1, 702);
- b) *lāz* m. 'treeless area in a forest, cleared land, new field, new pasture (usually fenced)'; 'empty area in a vineyard or field' (Pleteršnik 1894–95: 1, 498);
- c) *lāz lazī* f. 'gate in a fence' (Pleteršnik 1894–95: 1, 499);
- d) *lāz lāza* m. 'pole in a haystack or hayrack', 'log (board), used for stepping on when working in a hayrack' (Pleteršnik 1894–95: 1, 498);
- e) perhaps also *lās lasī* 'long log (board) used by roofers for standing on' (Pleteršnik 1894–95: 1, 496).

These words are known in all Slavic languages and can be semantically divided into the following two groups:

- 1) 'narrow passage', 'opening, gate in a fence', 'narrow path', 'forest trail made by wild animals', 'type of ladder', etc.: Slovene *lāz lazī* f. 'gate in a fence' (Pleteršnik 1894–95: 1, 499), *lāz lāza* m. 'pole in a haystack or hayrack', 'log used for stepping on when working in a hayrack' (Pleteršnik 1894–95: 1, 498); compare *lāza* f. 'type of ladder' (Pleteršnik 1894–95: 1, 499); Croatian *lāz* m. 'opening through which one enters a certain space; passage', 'pathway in a thicket created by trudging' (HER 2003: 662); Čakavian *lāz lāzi* and with shift to the *a*-declension *lāza* f. 'opening in a fence, passage'; Serbian *lāz* and *lāz* 'narrow mountain pass, gorge; narrow pathway and the like' (RSJ 2007: 624), 'narrow path,

- passage, opening in a fence' (RSKJ 1967–1976: 3, 155); Polish *laz* m. 'narrow footpath on a mountain slope' (Sławski 1975–83: 5, 59); Old Russian *lazъ* 'footpath in a forest' (ESSJ 1974–: 14, 74), Russian *laz* m., 'narrow, small opening, through which one can go or something can penetrate; passage' (BTS); Belarusian *laz* m. 'gap in a wall, hedge, etc.' (ESSJ 1974–: 14, 74); Ukrainian *laz laz* m. 'narrow opening through which one can go somewhere; passage', 'footpath in a dense thicket, mostly used by animals' (SUM 1970–80: 4, 436).
- 2) '(fallow) field or meadow created in the place of a cut or burned forest' (hence 'field, meadow, pasture'), 'slope, hillside', 'hillside settlement': Slovene *láz láza* m. 'cleared area in a forest or near one, covered with grass, usually with a field' (SSKJ 2014), *lâz* m. 'treeless area in a forest, cleared land, new field, new pasture (usually fenced)'; 'empty area in a vineyard or field' (Pleteršnik 1894–95: 1, 498), Resian *las* 'clearing' (ESSJ 1974–: 14, 73 after Kronsteiner, *Die Toponymie des Resia-Tales* 129), *laze* f. pl. (ESSJ 1974–: 14, 73); Croatian *lâz* m. 'part of a mountain slope feasible for passing; passage' and 'field obtained through clearing forest; cleared land' (HER 2003: 662); Serbian *lâz* and *lâz* m. (RSJ 2007: 624: 'field, meadow, and similar created by clearing forest; forest that is being cleared' and 'small area of cultivable land on inaccessible land, rocky landscape, moors, etc.' (RSKJ 1967–76: 3, 155; according to ESSJ 1974– also feminine); Bulgarian dial. *las* m., 'fields created at the site of previously cut or burned forest' (ESSJ 1974–: 14, 72); Macedonian *laz* m. (= *lazište*) 'dug up part of a forest' (RMJ 1986: 378); Old Czech *laz* m. and *láz* m. '(fallow) field' (Gebauer 1916: 2, 210, cited in ESSJ 1974–: 14, 73), Czech *láz* m. 'cleared, but not cultivated land, covered with wild plants' and *laz* m. 'unplowed part of a furrow' (Jungmann 1834–1839: 2, 275, cited in ESSJ 1974–: 14, 73); Slovak *laz* m. 'area of land created by cutting forest' (HSSJ II: 200), *lazy* pl. 'groups of houses scattered on slopes, mountain settlement with scattered houses' (HSSJ 1991–2008: 2, 200–201); Polish dial. *laz laz* m. 'area of burned or cut forest meant for cultivation or pasture', 'low swampy area overgrown with bushes' (SJP 1958–69: 4, 284) and Old Polish 'block, obstacle, barrier; e.g., on a river' (Sławski 1975–82: 5, 59); Lower Sorbian *laz* m., often plural *łazy* 'pasture', found in toponymy and hydronymy (cited in ESSJ 1974–: 14, 74); Old Russian *lazъ* 'cleared area in a forest meant for use' (cited in ESSJ 1974–: 14, 74); Ukrainian dial. *laz laz* m. 'meadow' (SUM 1970–80: 4, 436).

These two semantic groups cover roughly all of the meanings found in Slavic languages. Reflexes of Proto-Slavic **lazъ* or **lazь* can also mean '(slow) walk', 'slowly moving person', clearly a deverbal noun from **lězti*, **láziti* 'crawl, creep, climb'.

Etymological dictionaries offer the reconstructed form **lazъ laza* m., explained as a deverbal noun from **lěsti*, **láziti* for both semantic groups. This view was expressed in RHISJ (1898–1903: 5, 930): "Although the two meanings are rather

different, I believe that it is the same word nevertheless, the oldest meaning of which is one of the two meanings that gave rise to the others: the first meaning must have been a passage (a) or entrance (b)” and is still accepted today, see ESSJ (1974–: 14, 75), agreeing with the etymologies in Berneker (1908–1913: 1, 696–697), Vasmer (1950–58: 2, 278), Skok (1971: 2, 278), Bezlaj (1976–2007: 2, 128), Schuster-Šewc (1980–89: 10, 767), and Snoj (2003: 347).

Nevertheless, the picture appears to be more complex, albeit not very clear. Analysis of the reflexes and meanings shows that there are two different semantic fields, two declension patterns (*ǫ*-stems and *ǐ*-stems), and two different intonations: reflexes indicate the old acute as well as circumflex for the original form. Although it is commonly accepted that ‘narrow passage’, meaning ‘where one has to crawl’, came to mean something less narrow and eventually ‘field’ in Slavic (see ESSJ 1974–: 14, 66–67), I believe it is convincing that the layer meaning ‘field or meadow created in place of a cut or burned forest, often covered with wild plants’ might be of different origin than the Slavic deverbial noun from **lǎziti*, which yielded the meaning ‘narrow passage’ as well as ‘(slow) walk’, ‘slowly moving person’, the latter possibly coming into existence independently in some of the languages.

According to ESSJ (1974–: 14, 75), Proto-Slavic **lǎziti* has two meanings,

- a) ‘crawl, creep, climb’, as in Slovene *lésti*, *lazíti*, *láziti*; and
- b) ‘cut out, cut down, clear’, seen in Macedonian dial. *lazet* ‘to clear a spot in a forest for sowing’ (K. Peev. MJ 27, 1976: 126–127, cited in ESSJ 1974–: 14, 75; cf. ESSJ 1974–: 14, 66–67).

Another possible explanation that I wish to present here and that also explains the other meaning of **lǎziti* is based on the observation that—in cases where this can be established—‘narrow passage’ is more often connected with the *ǐ*-declension and circumflex, and with the meaning ‘field or meadow where there used to be forest’ there seem to be more cases of *ǫ*-declension as well as the old acute.

According to Vaillant 1974, the type **lǎziti* mainly forms deverbial nouns with circumflex intonation except when prefixed (**tǐrati* : **tǐrbǐ*). A deverbial noun with a prefix would be expected to have acute intonation: Slovene *utǫr*, *-óra*, *prelǎz*, *lǎza*. Vaillant gives some examples of acute intonation in this type (**gǎditi* : **gǎdbǐ*), but they are not necessarily interpreted as deverbial nouns; it is more likely that **gǎdbǐ* is an example of an old nomen actionis. Some of the deverbial nouns with old acute intonation (according to Vaillant) are represented by *ščít* ‘shield’, *lek* ‘remedy’, and *rob* ‘slave’. According to SSKJ (2014), however, they are all circumflexed.

The type **lǎziti* therefore seems to form deverbial nouns with circumflexes. Some of the Slavic words pointing to Proto-Slavic **lazbǐ* or **lazbǐ* seem to indicate the old circumflex, but not all of them. I believe that there must have been contamination of two words with meanings that could be merged to some extent, but of different origin:

- 1) Proto-Slavic **lāzъ lazí* m. ‘narrow passage (where one has to crawl)’: deverbal noun from **lāziti* of the same type as **žâlъ* from **žālití*;
- 2) Older Proto-Slavic **lāzъ lāza* m. ‘field or meadow created where there used to be forest’ < Proto-Indo-European **log’-ós*, *o*-grade form of **leg’-* with Balto-Slavic lengthening according to Winter’s law.

In Slavic there is a lengthening following Winter’s law, whereby Baltic and Slavic short vowels undergo lengthening before unaspirated voiced stops, and that syllable gains a rising, acute accent (Winter 1978). Winter’s law states: “In Baltic and Slavic languages, the Proto-Indo-European sequence of short vowel plus voiced stop was reflected by lengthened vowel plus voiced stop, while short vowel plus aspirate developed into short vowel plus voiced stop” (Winter 1978: 439). Kortland (1988) observed that the lengthened vowel gains rising (acute) intonation and Rasmussen (1992) observed that the lengthening operated only in the syllable immediately preceding the stress. Matasović (1995a, 1995b) proposed limiting the operation of this law to closed syllables. This view was rejected by Derksen (2002).

Proto-Indo-European **log’-* ‘stick, rod, branch’ is reconstructed in Pokorny (1959: 691) on the basis of Old Greek *ológinon* ‘myrtle’ and Old Church Slavic *loza*, Russian *lozá*. As for the existence of Proto-Indo-European **log’-*, Sławski (1975–82: 5, 58) and Vasmer (1950–58: 2, 449) draw attention to Avestan *razura-* m., *razurā* f. ‘forest, grove’, in his interpretation from **log’^h-u-ro-*, whereas **lōg’^ho-* would have yielded Proto-Slavic **lazъ*. Mallory and Adams (2006: 157) agree to some extent, but their (more acceptable) reconstruction indicates the unaspirated form: **_hlog’-* ‘branch’ and ‘vine, tendril’, with reflexes in Russian *lozá* ‘vine’, Old Greek *ológinos* ‘branch’, Avestan *rázura* ‘forest, thicket’, Hittite *alkista(n)* ‘branch’ (see Čop’s explanation below). No language seems to support aspirated **g’*.

For Pokorny (1959: 2, 660), the connection between the Proto-Indo-European root that he reconstructs as **lēg’^(h)-* : **lǝg’^(h)-* ‘twig’, ‘hazel’ and Proto-Slavic **loza* is uncertain. His reconstruction of **lēg’^(h)-* is based on Albanian *lethí*, *laithí* (**lǝg’-*) ‘hazel’, Lithuanian *lazdà* ‘stick, hazel’, Latvian *lazda* and *lagzda* ‘hazel’, (**laz-g-da*), and Old Prussian *laxde* ‘hazel, spear’, but also Proto-Slavic **lēska* f. ‘hazel’. According to Snoj (1993: 165), Albanian *lajthí* cannot be linked to Slavic for phonetic reasons. I believe that a Proto-Indo-European **leg’-/*log’-* root explains Proto-Slavic **loza* (**lg’-*), *lězti* (**lēg’-*), *les* (**leg’-*), and *laz* (**log’-*). A connection was already suggested by Vasmer (1950–58: 2, 54) under *loza*: “On the other hand, this should raise the question of the relationship of *lozá* with *laz*, *lézy*; i.e., creeping, climbing plant” and was discussed in Toporov (1990: 47–52) in connection with Pokorny’s Proto-Indo-European **lēg’^(h)-*. For **lēg’*, compare Persian *rāz* ‘vine’ (Sławski 1975–82: 5, 240).

Proto-Slavic **loza* is retained throughout the Slavic world (see ESSJ 1974–: 16, 118–120): 1) ‘rod, branch’: Slovene (*lōza*, *lōza*), Croatian, Serbian (*lōza*), Bulgarian (*lozá*), Macedonian, Slovak (*loza*), Polish (*loza*), Russian (*lozá*), and Ukrainian (*lozá*); 2) ‘vine’: Slovene (*lōza*, *lōza*), Old Church Slavic, Bulgarian (*lozá*),

Macedonian, Serbian, Croatian (*lòza*; dial. *lozà*), Czech dial. (*loza*), Slovak (*loza*), Polish (*loza*); 3) ‘willow’: Polish (*loza*), Russian (*lozá*), Ukrainian (*lozá*); 4) ‘forest’ or ‘shrubs, bushes’: Slovene (*lòza*, *lòza*) (also ‘grove’, ‘forest undergrowth, copse’), Serbian, Croatian (*lòza*), Russian (*lozá*), Ukrainian (*lozá*). In Proto-Slavic **loza* one could trace the old zero-grade form of the same *e*-grade root: **leg’* : **lg’-dǫ-* ‘one that gives rods’ according to the rule that Proto-Slavic **zd* yields *z* if the preceding vowel did not carry the stress (compare Proto-Slavic **grězǫti* versus Lithuanian **gramzdýti*; see Snoj 1993: 165ff.). Baltic languages support this reconstruction: Lithuanian *lazdà* ‘stick, hazel’, Latvian *lazda*, *lagzda* ‘hazel’, Old Prussian *laxde* ‘hazel’ (Toporov 1990: 47–52). In Balto-Slavic a secondary schwa could have developed within clusters of a syllabic liquid between two consonants (see Rasmussen 1992: 71: “/a/ as zero-grade substitute”). This explains the suggested development **lg’-dǫ-* > **lǝg’-dǫ-* > Balto-Slavic **lazdō*. On the other hand, I am unable to explain why Winter’s law does not apply in this case. Čop (1971: 31) explained *alk* in Hittite *alkista(n)* as a development from zero-grade **lg’*.

Proto-Slavic **lěsъ* *lěsa* a) ‘wood’ and b) ‘forest’ (“etymologically unclear” according to ESSJ 1974–: 14, 250) can be explained as a lengthened form of the *e*-grade stem according to Winter’s law (Proto-Slavic **lěsъ* < Proto-Indo-European **lěg’-só-*). After the lengthening, retraction from the final falling tone onto the first rising tone took place. The circumflex intonation that I reconstruct for Proto-Slavic **lěsъ* means that this is the mobile type with the acute root syllable, which according to Stang (1957: 9–11) merged with accent paradigm *c* to become circumflexed. Sławski’s opinion (1975–82: 5, 55) that in **lěsъ* there is the reflex of a Proto-Indo-European short diphthong is therefore not necessarily valid. Parallel development can be postulated for **lǎzъ* < **log’-ós*, except that it did not belong to the mobile type and thus retained the rising tone.

The lengthened grade of **leg’* is **lēg’* ‘crawl, creep’ (Latvian *lēzēt*, *ležāt*, *lezuôt* ‘slide, slip’, Old Prussian *līse* ‘crawls’ and Proto-Slavic **lězti*, *lǎziti*, which yielded **lazъ*). ESSJ (1974–: 16, 119) sees a connection between Proto-Slavic **loza* and **lězti* following Štrekelj (AfsIph 27, 1905: 52), but derives **lězti* from Proto-Indo-European **lēg’^h*- following Pokorny (1959: 1, 660) or **leg’^h*- following Pokorny (1959: 1, 658–659; ESSJ 1974–: 15, 37).

On the basis of a formal and semantic connection to **lēg’* ‘crawl, creep’, the full-grade root **leg’* would have meant ‘that which winds, bends’ > ‘rod, branch’, which developed the meanings ‘hazel’, ‘myrtle’, ‘vine’ and further (extended with suffixes) ‘where (hazel) rods grow; field where plants grow’ (**lǎzъ*), ‘site where rods can be obtained; place that gives rods’ (**lozá*), ‘vegetation, wood’ > ‘site where wood grows’ (**lěsъ*).

Proto-Slavic **lězti*, **lazъ*, **loza*, and **lěsъ* seem to be etymologically related. As for Proto-Slavic **lěska* ‘hazel’ (Slovene *lěska*, Croatian *lijěska*, Serbian *lěska*, Czech *líská*), which Miklosich already explained in connection with these words (cited in ESSJ 1974–: 14, 240): Proto-Slavic **lěska* could be reconstructed as **lēg’-kǫ-* or **lēg’-só-* (cf. Proto-Slavic **lěsa* > Old Czech *lěsa*, Russian *lesá*, Slovene *lěsa*,

Croatian *ljěsa*). The trouble is that in this case one cannot postulate retraction of stress to a pretonic vowel according to Hirt's law (except as a possible analogy to **lěsъ*).

As for Slavic occurrences of both groups of words **lazъ/*lazь* ('narrow passage' and 'field or meadow created in place of a cut or burned forest'), it seems that a distinction should be made between the two different proveniences. Etymological explanations, which favor the explanation that **lazь* is a deverbal noun from **lězti*, are connected to the latter development, and etymologies that link it to Proto-Slavic **loza* are connected to the former development. Proto-Slavic inherited **lázъ* from Proto-Indo-European. Proto-Slavic **lāzъ* from **lāziti* (originally from the lengthened grade of the same Proto-Indo-European root that yielded Proto-Slavic **lázъ*) was formed later. It seems that, due to contamination with the new, semantically somewhat similar word, in some places the old word adopted the intonation and seems to be fading as an autonomous word of distinct provenience.

Ablaut grades of Proto-Indo-European **lęg'-* 'wind, bend':

- a) full grade: **lęg'-* 'wind, bend' > 'which winds, bends' > 'rod, branch'; 'hazel', 'myrtle', 'vine': **leg'-só-* > Proto-Slavic **lěsъ*, **leg'-só-* > Proto-Slavic **lěsa* (?), **leg'-kô-* > Proto-Slavic **lěska*;
- b) *o*-grade: **lōg'* 'branch, rod': Old Greek *ológinon*, Avestan *razura-* m., *razurā*, **lōg'-ós* > Proto-Slavic **lazъ*;
- c) zero-grade: **lg'-* 'branch': Hittite *alkista(n)*, **lg'-dô-* > Balto-Slavic **lazdā* > Lithuanian *lazdà*, Proto-Slavic **loza*;
- d) lengthened *e*-grade: **lēg'-* 'crawl, creep': Latvian *lēzēt*, *ležât*, *lezuôt*, Old Prussian *līse*, Proto-Slavic **lězti*, **lāziti* > **lazъ*.

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K etimologiji *laza*

Praslovansko **lǎzъ lǎza* m. 'polje, travnik na mestu, kjer je bil posekan gozd' se razloži iz praindoevropskega **log'-ós*, *o*-jevske stopnje korena **leg'*- s podaljšanjem po Winterjevem zakonu. Iz korena **leg'*- 'upogibati, zvižati' je morda tudi psl. **lězti*, **loza* in **lěsъ*.

The etymology of *laz*

Proto-Slavic **lǎzъ lǎza* m. '(fallow) field or meadow created where there used to be forest' is explained as derived from Proto-Indo-European **log'-ós*, the *o*-grade form of **leg'*- with Balto-Slavic lengthening according to Winter's law. The Proto-Indo-European root **leg'*- 'wind, bend' might have also developed into Proto-Slavic **lězti*, **loza*, and **lěsъ*.