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## VARIA ETYMOLOGICA HUNGARO-SLAVICA

The present paper aims to revisit the etymologies of two Hungarian words, *gazda* and *korcsolya*, the origins of which have not yet been wholly and indubitably explained. In both cases the opinions presented in the foregoing articles are compared here with Helimski's brief remarks on these words. We have also tried to add some details to their word-history.

### Hung. *gazda* ‘householder’

The origin of Hung. *gazda* (after 1372 / around 1448) ‘householder, master of the house’ has usually been described as *uncertain* and, in the overwhelming majority of works dealing with its history, has been connected to the Slavic cognates of Proto-Slavic \**gospoda* ‘rulers; members of a higher social order, establishment; householders’ (cf. e.g. SłPrasł VIII 137). This short explanation is the “official” commentary which can also be found in such major Hungarian etymological dictionaries as e.g. Bárczi 1941: 92, TESz II 1037-1038, EWU 450-451 and even in the most recent Zaicz 2006: 247.

As the meaning of Slavic *gospoda* (for attested forms cf. e.g. SłPrasł loc. cit.) fits in well within the semantic field of Hung. *gazda*, the above mentioned uncertainties are most prominent in the detailed description of the phonetic adaptation of the word.<sup>1</sup> To be more specific: these uncertainties have arisen from the fact that the structure of the Slavic word is three-syllabic, while in Hungarian only the well-known two-syllabic form *gazda* appears, *nota bene* for the first time it is attested as early as Jókai-Kódex (cf. Balázs 1981: 72, 74: ⟨gaʒda⟩; for further information concerning the use of the word see also Jakab 2002: 118). Given the fact that consulting Kniezsa 1955: 641 one can find a concise but detailed overview of the attempts made to explain the word, we would

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<sup>1</sup> The Slavic word itself is a collective form derived from Slav. \**gospodъ* ‘sir; lord’, see e.g. Sławski I 1974: 60.

like to present briefly the most important ones<sup>2</sup> and augment its etymology with some – in our opinion – valuable data.

Horger 1911: 324, and after him Schubert 1982: 328-329, assume a metathetical change here with a subsequent shortening of the word form due to frequent use when addressing people; in other words: Slav. *gospoda* > OHung. \**gozdapa* > \**gozda* > *gazda*. This scenario, however, is not convincing, as there are no clear phonetic reasons for such a metathesis. The consonant clusters like -sp- or, to be more precise, the consonant clusters consisting of a fricative and an occlusive consonant in an inner position are not usually reduced in Hungarian, a good illustration being e.g. the word *Veszprém* ‘a town in Hungary’ attested as early as the 11<sup>th</sup> century as ⟨βεσπρέμ⟩ [besprém] in *Veszprémvölgyi apácák adománylevele* (before 1002 / 1109). This is a good example, all the more so because we know that it is – similarly to *gazda* – also a Slavic loan (FNESz II 758), its etymological equivalent being e.g. OPol. *bezbřem* (1031) ‘personal name’ (SSNO I 129: ⟨Bezbriem⟩, today known as Pol. *Bezprzem* ~ *Bezprzym*). For other, similar examples of such preserved segments cf. e.g. OHung. *našpol'a* (around 1395) ‘medlar’ (EWU 1016: ⟨naspol'ya⟩, s.v. *naspolya*), OHung. *jášpiš* (after 1372 / around 1448) ‘a kind of venomous snake’ (EWU 53: ⟨yaſpiſ[...], s.v. áspis⟩).

Melich in EtSz II 1134 proposes an explanation based upon haplology, according to which Slav. *gospoda* > OHung. \**gosda* > *gazda*. It is doubtful, however, whether the syllables -po- and -da are auditively similar enough to each other to fulfil the essential phonetic conditions for such a change. Consequently, such an interpretation must remain merely speculative – as is generally the case for those etymologies that are tied to irregular phonetic changes.

In the present paper we would like to revisit the so called *tendency of two open syllables* (known also as Horger’s Law), which has been rejected as an explanation in the majority of articles dealing with Hung. *gazda* written by Hungarian etymologists. The tendency has usually been considered as a possible solution since it is the only more or less regular process which changes the syllabic structure of Slavic (as well as other) loanwords in Hungarian by reducing their number. The crux of the tendency is that in words with three or more syllables, where two or more consecutive open syllables are to be found (not counting the final one), the vowel of the second (or, respectively, the third and so on) open syllable may be dropped, e.g. Slav. \**sluga* ‘the one who serves, servant’ (see e.g. Miklosich 1886: 308) > OHung. *sulugā* (1222) id. ~ *sulgā*

<sup>2</sup> Other attempts, not discussed here, on etymologising the word from Russ. *государь* ‘ruler’, Slav. *gospodar* id. or Slav. *gospodъ* ‘lord, ruler’ (for these three word forms cf. e.g. SiPrasł VIII 138-140) face insurmountable phonetic problems, mainly concerning the word-final segments, which has already been pointed out in Kniezsa 1955: 641.

(1223) id. > Hung. *szolga* id. (see e.g. EWU 1446: ⟨Zuluga⟩, ⟨Sculga⟩ respectively).

There might, at first glance, be certain difficulties in justifying this assumption in the case of *gazda*. Namely, as we can see, the Slavic word \**gos.po.da* with the first syllable being closed does not have the syllabic structure the tendency, in the vast majority of cases, covers. Nevertheless, the answer may be quite simple: we can also find several words showing that the open syllable vowel could have been dropped in a syllable following a *closed* one as well, there being a few undisputed examples like: Slav. \**lędava* ‘name of a river, a right side tributary of Kerka’ > OHung. \**lendava* > Hung. *Lendva* id. (cf. FNESz II 26), Lat. *Stephanus* ‘Stephen’ > OHung. *estefān* (1350) > *eštfán* (1331) ~ *ištván* (1415) id. (see, e.g. OklSz 418: ⟨Estephan[...], Estfan[...], istwan⟩ respectively, Kázmér 1993: 500). We do not agree with Kniezsa (1955) saying that the Hungarian word cannot be explained by Slav. *gospoda* since we have no examples for vowel loss in a *closed syllable*.<sup>3</sup> We cannot agree for the simple reason that the syllable in question (-*po-*) is *open!* This has also been pointed out by Helimski: “< slaw. *gospoda* [...]. Kn. [= Kniezsa 1955] сомневается, не замечая, что в *gospoda* 2-й слог открытый” (cf. Stachowski 2009: 57 [in the present volume]).

A similar explanation has been proposed by Skok (1971: 594), however the examples he provides are not relevant and therefore the etymology itself is not free from certain inaccuracies. Namely, Skok assumes that Slav. *gospoda* has been adopted by Hungarian as *gazda* after a vowel loss “according to the *vojvoda* > *vajda, pojata* > *pajta* pattern”, whereas in the case of both words the Slavic etymons and the first Hungarian attested forms have purely open syllables. On the one hand this can be seen at first glance on SSlav. *pojata* ‘hut; shed, barn’ > OHung. *pajata* (1363) attested in the place name ⟨Payatasfeye⟩ [pajatášeje] (EWU 1097), which was later developed into (M)Hung. *pajta* ‘shed, barn’; and on the other hand, we can see it in the case of Hung. *vajda* ‘voivod’ as well, as the etymon of the word is rather Slav. *vojevoda* id. (see e.g. Borys 2005: 706) than SSlav. *vojvoda* id. The latter statement can be corroborated by the first certain attestation in Hungarian as ⟨voieuoda⟩ [vojeβodá] (1199) ‘prince; war lord; the highest office-holder of a province’ (cf. EWU 1597 for further similar examples).

In the final analysis, we believe that Slav. *gospoda* has been loaned into Hungarian as \**gospoda* and this has yielded \**gozda* after the syncope of -*o-* argued above, reducing the consonant cluster -*spd-* > -*sd-* and regular progressive assimilative voicing of -*s-* > -*z-*. Finally, the *o* > å opening process is widely attested in the 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century Old Hungarian. As such, we believe that the

<sup>3</sup> See Kniezsa 1955: 641: “[...] egy gospodá-ból a \**gozda* > *gazda* nem magyarázható, mert a szóbelseji magánhangzók ellíziója [...] csak nyílt szótagban törtéhetett [...]”.

lack of OHung. *\*gospoda* – as TESz II 1038 argues – does not fundamentally weaken this explanation.

### **Hung. *korcsolya* ‘skate’**

It was Bárczi (1941: 171) who – to the best of our knowledge – first pointed out that Hung. *korcsolya* might be connected to Slk. “*krčula* (?) ~ *krčuľa* ~ *korčuľa*”. In the same place, however, Bárczi also remarked that the relation of the Slovak words to the Hungarian one remains uncertain. Later on, TESz II 571-572 qualified Hung. *korcsolya*, which was already considered to be a word of unknown provenance, definitely rejecting the Slavic explanation and argued that the Italian origin proposed before had not yet been convincingly proved (for further reading see TESz loc. cit.). This Italian origin has been positively revised and richly supported by linguistic data in Hadrovics 1975: 82-86. Consequently, the following etymological dictionaries, EWU 797 and Zaicz 2006: 433-434, treated the Italian etymology as being probable and refuted the Slavic etymology. The last authority who dealt with the word was Helimski (2000a: 427 [= 1988, cf. references] and 2000b: 454) making an attempt, once again, to explain the word on Slavic grounds. Considering that some additional Slavic linguistic data has come to light since Hadrovics’s article appeared, let us compare below the enumerated etymologies and add, where it is possible, further details to the discussion.

First of all let us present the semantic field of the discussed Hungarian word. In present-day literary language *korcsolya* means ‘skate’, but when set against the meanings recorded in Old Hungarian sources, one can see that the semantic development of the word is far from being simple. Although the first reliable record to confirm the primeval meaning ‘a wooden construction used for rolling barrels’ appears around 1510 (see OklSz 520: <Ad celarium pro korcyola>), the history of the word can be traced back to 1339 as we have its -s derivative attested, namely Hung. *korcsolyás* ‘a person dealing with loading and unloading barrels and other weights’, see Hadrovics 1975: 83: <Korcholyas>. In the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries the word has been attested as ‘sledge’ (1758) and, finally, in the modern meaning: ‘blade attached to the sole, used for skating on ice’ (before 1781). It is also worth mentioning that the verb *korcsolyázik* ‘to skate’ (a verbal derivative from *korcsolya*), attested as early as 1708 (see TESz loc. cit.), shows that the latter meaning had developed far before 1781. The first and second meanings are still present in Hungarian dialects (see ÚMTsz II 486).

What makes Hadrovics’s article indispensable here is the detailed description of *korcsolya*’s usage, which is based upon Old and Middle Hungarian written sources (Hadrovics 1975: 82-85). In the light of these we can say that

*korcsolya* used to be a ladder-like instrument consisting of two rods and cross-bars used for transporting barrels and other weights. With this construction and a special rope the workers loaded and uploaded barrels onto and off carts, delivering them to cellars and pulling them out from there. Additionally we know that the barrels and weights were lowered and pulled up by means of a pulley. A good source of information for this is, among others, a 18<sup>th</sup> century Latin-Hungarian dictionary where Lat. *vectiārius* ‘porter; the one who operates a lever to move loads’ (cf. LLP II 928) has been explained as (1767) ⟨Kortsolyás, tsigán valamit tekerő⟩ [= *Korcsolyás*: the one who is winding something on a pulley] (see Hadrovics 1975: 85 for further references).

Based on the latter, namely that the primeval *korcsolya* consisted of pulley as well, Hadrovics and after him the authors of the latter two etymological dictionaries *una voce* claimed that the etymon of the Hungarian word is in all probability Ital. (arch.) *chiocciola* ‘shell; snail’ (or such dialectal forms as *còcciula* ~ *cociola* id.) as it has a whole range of other, technical-related meanings – examples being: (12<sup>th</sup> cent.) ‘female screw’; (14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> cent.) ‘screw-stairs’; (16<sup>th</sup> cent.) ‘water-wheel’ (see Hadrovics 1975: 86, EWU loc. cit. and also: DEI II 903, 905, DELI I 233). The *tertium comparationis* of such etymology is – as they argue – the similarity of a snail shell to a pulley as a part of the primeval *korcsolya*. Let us add that Hung. *csiga* – recorded in the entry of the Latin-Hungarian dictionary we mentioned above – has exactly these two meanings, namely 1. (around 1395) ‘snail’ (RMG 145: ⟨chýga⟩) and 2. (1493) ‘pulley’ (OkSz 127: ⟨chyga⟩). This is a good example which demonstrates that the visual similarity between a snail shell and a pulley could have led to such a semantic shift. Consequently, Hadrovics concludes that Hung. *korcsolya* originally has been used to denote ‘pulley’ and the ‘ladder-like instrument’ *as a whole* and only later started to mean solely the ladder-like construction. The latter meaning is displayed by the modern Hungarian and Slovak dialectal forms, namely ‘an instrument consisting of two rods and a bottom used for loading and unloading barrels, e.g. on and from carts’ (see ÚMTsz II 486, SSN I 827 respectively), but we will take a more detailed look at the Hungarian dialectal data a bit later.

The question remains how the development of the meaning ‘sledge’, ‘skate’ should be explained. As we can see, the Italian forms themselves fail to explain the semantic field of the word which has been used from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards. EWU argues that it has been developed as a result of back-formation from *korcsolyázik* ‘to skate’, but this cannot be treated as a serious explanation – how then can we explain the occurrence of the verb *korcsolyázik*? We have to reject for a similar reason Zaicz’s interpretation that “the secondary meaning ‘to slide on ice’ [...] has been developed from ‘to roll barrels’ [...]” (Zaicz 2006 loc. cit.). Such semantic shift seems to be rather implausible or, at least, not clear enough.

We believe that Hadrovics 1975: 84 already mentioned a possible explanation, albeit not as an answer to our question, but on the margin of his argumentation. Namely, while describing how the barrels have been pulled he assumes that on the ladder-like construction a sledge kind of instrument had been (or could have been) moved carrying the transported weights. This, and the similarity of *korcsolya*'s two rods to the skids of a sledge could have been the basis for such a semantic shift. Additionally, the fact that both constructions have been used for transporting weights could have reinforced this change. Finally, we believe that the 'sledge' → 'skate' shift is highly plausible and needs no detailed explanation.

The only point of this etymology which seems to contain some uncertainties is the phonetic development of the word as presented in these works; Hadrovics assumes a -čč- > -rč- dissimilative change for which we do not have similar examples, and he provides examples only for -šš- > -rš-. This, along with the supportive examples, has been repeated in EWU. Moreover, we do not have OHung. \**koččola* recorded.

By contrast with the Italian etymology, Helimski's proposition mentioned above is based on the adaptation process of a small group of Slavic words in Hungarian, having the same word-final segment as Hung. *korcsolya*, namely: Slav. \**močidlo* 'a place where something is soaked' (ÉSSJa XIX 78-80) > Hung. (dial.) *mocsolya* (1138 / 1329) 'puddle; a place where flax or hemp is soaked' (OklSz 662, TESz II 939: ⟨Machala⟩), Slav. \**nosidlo* 'strecher, an instrument used for transporting people, goods &c.' (ÉSSJa XXV 202-204) > Hung. *nyoszolya* (1452) 1. 'stretcher'; 2. 'bed' (OklSz 701, TESz II 1053; first attested probably as a proper name (-s suffix form) in 1215, see EWU 1046: ⟨Nazalas⟩), see Helimski 2000: 427, 2000b: 454.<sup>4</sup> Basing his proposition on this philological evidence Helimski reconstructs Slav. \**kvrčidlo* 'sledge; skid' (ÉSSJa does not note such a form), a derivative from \**kvrčiti* 1. 'to bend; to bow'; 2. 'to stump, to grub' (see ÉSSJa XIII 209-210), as an etymon of the OHung. *korčola*. This form, due to the regular -l- > -l' > -ly- [-j-] palatalisation process, could have yielded *korčola* and finally *korcsolya*.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> For cognates corroborating the reconstructed Slavic forms cf. (1) for \**močidlo* e.g. SCr. *močilo* 'a deep part of a stream used for soaking flax', OCz. *močidlo* 'puddle', ORuss. *мочило* 'a flooded dip, pond'; (2) for \**nosidlo* e.g. SCr. *nosila* 'strecher', Cz. *nosidlo* 'a vessel, a basket (or the like) used for transporting goods', ORuss. *носило* 'strecher'. For further materials, concerning nearly all Slavic languages, see ÉSSJa XIX 78-80 and ÉSSJa XXV 202-204 respectively.

<sup>5</sup> This l > l' > j change demonstrates that the Slk. *korčula* is in all probability a borrowing from Hungarian. The word, *nota bene*, means 'skate' in Slovak as well, see SSJ I 745, SSN I 827. We could not find the rest of the Slovak forms enumerated by Bárczi 1941: 171, namely "krčula (?) and krčul'a". They are missing from all the major dictionaries of Slovak and its dialects, see SSJ, HSSJ, SSN, SV, GN. What the

The notion Helimski presents is attractive; however, trying to explain the original meaning of *korcsolya* by the reconstructed Slav. *\*kъrčidlo* ‘sledge; skid’ is problematic. Moreover, the semantic shift ‘to bend; to bow’ → ‘sledge; skid’, as a result of the derivation process, is not completely clear to us as well. A few corrections, however, added to Helimski’s idea would make it more probable and would allow us to explain the whole semantic field of the Hungarian word. These *addenda* are as follows:

As mentioned above, the meaning ‘sledge’, ‘skate’ appeared in Hungarian around 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century, so we cannot claim that Slav. *\*kъrčidlo* has been loaned into Hungarian when it comes to that particular meaning. If we assume, however, that the Slavic verbal stem (*\*kъrčiti*) had a secondary meaning ‘to twist; to roll’ – besides the semantically similar ‘to bend; to bow’ – then we could accordingly reconstruct the meaning of *\*kъrčidlo* as *\*‘a construction on which something is rolled’* – analogically to *\*nosidlo* ‘an instrument on which something is carried’ and *\*močidlo* ‘a place where something is soaked’. Such a meaning corresponds with the first attested one in Hungarian.

The following question needs to be answered: in which language and in what way has the meaning ‘sledge, skate’ developed? Let us start with two dialectal forms used in the neighbouring Slavic languages: Ukr. dial. (Hutsul) *korčjuhy* ~ *korčuha* ~ *korčuhы* ‘short but robust sledge used for transporting long pieces of wood or logs out of the forest’ (Janów 2001: 102) and Pol. dial. *korczuha* ‘a sledge used for transporting wood from the forest’ (KarSGP II 432). At first glance, in the light of the semantic field and the phonetic shape of the words, they seem to be obvious derivatives from Slav. *\*kъrčь* ‘stump with roots, left after cutting down a tree’ (ÈSSJa XIII 210-211) – to be more precise from Ukr. *korč* ‘trunk, stump; shrub; dial. log’ (SUM IV 302). The Polish dialectal word – in the light of the *-o-* in the first and *-h-* in the third syllable – is a borrowing from Ukrainian. This allows us to treat Ukr. dial. *korčuha* as an *-uha* augmentative derivative and, in this case, to assume that analogically an *-ula* diminutive derivative could have existed in the Eastern Slavic dialects. The latter, loaned into Hungarian, could have yielded MHung. *\*korčula* ‘(a small) sledge’, cf. Hung. dial. *korcsula* (ÚMTsz II 485). This borrowing should have been – obviously – unrelated to the first one, i.e. we have to assume on the one hand (1) Slav. *\*kъrčidlo* > OHung. *\*korčola* and, on the other hand (2) ESlav.<sup>6</sup> *\*korčula* > MHung. *\*korčula* (reconstructed but highly probable, cf. the Hungarian dia-

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question mark stands for in Bárczi’s entry must remain speculative. Moreover, another important detail to be mentioned here is the article of Polák, who claims that Hung. *korcsolya* has been borrowed from Slk. *korčul'a* (Polák 1951: 188) but, again, this assumption fails to explain the palatal */l/* in the Slovak form.

<sup>6</sup> We use the term “Eastern Slavic” here in the geographic sense, not as a period in the history of Slavic languages.

lectal form). The ‘sledge’ → ‘skate’ semantic shift, as mentioned above, could have taken place on Hungarian ground and eventually only this meaning entered the literary language.

We are, however, aware of the weakness of such an etymology in respect of the lack of attested *\*korčula* in any of the Eastern Slavic languages and the hypothetic meaning of Slav. *\*kъrčiti*. What is more, Hungarian dialectal data cast doubt on such a scenario as well. Namely, in the meaning ‘a small sledge used for carrying loads or as a toy’ ÚMTsz II 486 notes the word in the overwhelming majority for Székely dialects spoken in the South-Eastern part of Transylvania (cf. also EMSzT VII 238-239) with the sole exception of two occurrences in Andrásfalva (Bukovina region) and Felsővisó (Maramureş region). If the word in this meaning was of Eastern Slavic origin we would expect this kind of attestations to be found within the Ukrainian-Hungarian borderland, but the word in the above mentioned meaning appears in an area where Hungarian-Eastern Slavic contacts did not take place on a large scale. Even the data collected in Bukovina fail to be representative since we know that Andrásfalva was founded in 1785/1786 by Székely settlers (see e.g. Szádeczky 1927: 343-344).

In the light of what we have said above it seems to be highly probable that Ukr. *korčuha* should be explained rather as a derivative based on such Hungarian forms as e.g. *korcsula* (cf. ÚMTsz loc. cit.), in which the morphological boundaries have been reinterpreted as *korč + ula*. Consequently, the word ending, matching the diminutive suffix *-ula*, could have been replaced by the augmentative *-uha*. If so, we have failed to give a possible explanation for the \*‘a construction on which something is rolled’ → ‘sledge’ semantic shift.

One is forced to conclude that Helimski’s parallels for a similar phonetic evolution of the word – *nyoszolya* and *mocsolya* – do not have enough support in order to allow us to discard the Italian provenience of Hung. *korcsolya* and prove the Slavic one. The Italian origin, *nota bene*, seems to be more probable, not least because the word attested in Hungarian in 1594 as *korchiolina* ‘an instrument used for transporting barrels of wine’ (see Hadrovics 1975: 83, 86) exhibits an Italian diminutive form, cf. Ital. *chiocciolino* ‘a small shell’ (Prati 1969: 270).

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### A b b r e v i a t i o n s

**arch.** = archaic; **Cz.** = Czech; **dial.** = dialectal; **ESlav.** = Eastern Slavic; **Hung.** = Hungarian; **Ital.** = Italian; **Lat.** = Latin; **MHung.** = Middle Hungarian; **OCz.** = Old Czech; **OHung.** = Old Hungarian; **OPol.** = Old Polish; **ORuss.** = Old Russian; **Pol.** = Polish; **Russ.** = Russian; **SCr.** = Serbo-Croatian; **Slav.** = Slavic; **Slk.** = Slovak; **Slv.** = Slovene; **SSlav.** = South Slavic; **Ukr.** = Ukrainian

### S y m b o l s

>< borrowing  
 \* reconstructed form; not existing form

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