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Problems of chronological and social stratification in historical anthroponomastics: The case of "lupine" and "equine" proper names among the Indo-European peoples

Aleksandar Loma[*]

Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade

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Problems of chronological and social stratification in historical anthroponomastics: The case of "lupine" and "equine" proper names among the Indo-European peoples

Abstract: The paper deals with the Indo-European dithematic names containing the elements 'horse' and 'wolf', *$*h_1ék̑ u̯os$* and *$*u̯l̥̑kʷos$* respectively. Whereas "equine" compounds refer to the possession of horses and to their skilful use in combat or in races, the "lupine" ones raise questions of their motivation: as a bloodthirsty, ferocious predator, the wolf was synonymous with the robber, outlaw or enemy.

[*] Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, Čika Ljubina 18–20, 11000 Beograd, loma.aleksandar@gmail.com

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However, wolves have a highly developed social life, and the wolf pack served as a model for the initiation of young warriors. Presumably during their military training, they were called by the new "lupine" names, which some may subsequently have retained for life, while others either reassumed their birth names or preferred to be renamed a second time, e.g. with a more chivalrous, "equine" name.

Keywords: Anthroponymic compounds, Indo-European, horse, wolf.

Problèmes de stratification chronologique et sociale dans l'anthroponymie historique. Le cas des noms de personne « lupins » et « équins » chez les peuples indo européens

Résumé : Cet article traite des noms propres indo-européens dithématiques contenant les éléments *h_1*ék̑ u̯os* 'cheval' et *$u̯l̥̂k^u$*os* 'loup'. Alors que les composés « équins » expriment la possession de chevaux et la maîtrise d'eux au combat ou en courses hippiques, les noms « lupins » soulèvent la question de leur motivation sémantique, étant donné qu'en tant qu'un prédateur sanguinaire et atroce, le loup était synonyme d'un brigand, un hors la loi ou un ennemi. Toutefois, les loups ont une vie sociale très développée, et la meute de loups a servi de modèle à l'initiation de jeunes guerriers. Probablement pendant leur exercice militaire on les désignait sous des noms « lupins » provisoires, que par la suite quelques-uns d'entre eux continuaient à porter, tandis que d'autres récupérèrent leurs vieux noms de naissance ou préférèrent s'approprier un troisième nom, p. ex. un anthroponyme plus chevaleresque, « équin ».

Mots-clés : Anthroponymes composés, indo européen, cheval, loup.

Probleme chronologischer und sozialer Schichtung in der historischen Personennamenkunde. Am Beispiel von 'Pferd' und 'Wolf' in den Personennamen der indogermanischen Völker

Zusammenfassung: Im vorliegenden Aufsatz werden die indogermanischen zweigliedrigen Personennamen erörtert, die die Tiernamen *h_1*ék̑ u̯os* 'Pferd' oder *$u̯l̥̂k^u$*os* 'Wolf' enthalten. Während die mit 'Pferd' zusammengesetzten Namen den Besitz an diesen Tieren sowie deren Beherrschung im Kampf oder Wettrennen ausdrücken, erhebt sich für jene mit 'Wolf' die Frage nach ihrer Motivierung, denn als blutdürstiges, wütendes Raubtier war der Wolf ein Synonym für Räuber, Verbannte oder den Feind. Jedoch haben die Wölfe ein hochentwickeltes Sozialverhalten, und das Wolfsrudel diente als Vorbild bei der Initiation junger Krieger. Während ihrer Militärausbildung wurden sie vermutlich mit vorläufigen „Wolfsnamen" bezeichnet, die danach von Einigen lebenslang beibehalten werden konnten, während die Anderen entweder zu ihren alten Namen zurückgriffen oder es bevorzugten, sich ein zweites mal umzubenennen, z.B. in einen ritterlicher klingenden Namen mit 'Pferd'.

Schlüsselbegriffe: Zusammengesetzte Personennamen, Indogermanisch, Pferd, Wolf.

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Problems of chronological and social stratification in historical anthroponomastics: The case of "lupine" and "equine" proper names among the Indo-European peoples

ALEKSANDAR LOMA

1. Introduction

Some dozen years ago while writing an encyclopaedia article I made an observation that provided the starting point for the present research. It was about the occurrence of zoonyms[1] in Slavic compound names, namely the presence of those with 'wolf' in a limited area and the total absence of those with 'horse'.[2] In the meantime I envisaged a possible connection between the two phenomena, which needed to be considered in a broad comparative context and with an interdisciplinary approach, including, besides linguistic insights, those of other disciplines, such as prehistoric archaeology and cultural anthropology.

1.1. Wolf and horse. The chronology of their domestication

But let us start by recalling some palaeozoological facts. In our human perception, the wolf and the horse have little in common, at least at first glance. The wolf is a wild carnivore and the horse a domesticated herbivore. But the wolf is not impossible to domesticate; in fact, the grey wolf was the very first

[1] The word is used here in the meaning 'the common name for a species of animal' and not 'a proper name of an animal'.

[2] Loma (2007: 679a; the text in square brackets has been omitted in the printed version): "Auch die Namen anderer Tiere kommen als PN vor […] Jedoch stellt *vuk*, aserb. *vlk* einen Sonderfall dar, denn es der einzige Tiername ist, der seit der ältesten Zeit einen Bestandteil der zusammengesetzten Personennamen bildet: Aserb. *Vlkoslav*, *Vlgdrag*, *Dobrovuk*, nserb. *Vukosav*, *Vukdrag*, *Stanivuk* [usw.; innerhalb der slavischen Welt sind solche Namen für die Serben charakteristisch; man wollte in ihnen eine Spur des Totemismus sehen, eher aber wurzeln sie in einer vorfeudalen Kriegerideologie (Wolfsschar als Inbegriff des Männerbundes), ähnlich wie die germ. PN mit Wolf in Beziehung mit dem Wodanskult gebracht werden]. […] Eine soziale Schichtung des Namenschatzes bestand und besteht heutzutage in verschiedenen Kulturen; z.B. waren im klassischen Griechenland die mit *híppos* zusammengesetzten PN ein Zeichen des höheren, Ritterstandes. [In slavischer Personennamengebung fehlt 'Pferd' völlig, nur bei den Serben kommen wenige PN mit *jezditi* 'reiten' vor: *Jezdimir*, *Prijezda*, die bei den anderen Slaven kein Gegenstück finden]".

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animal to be domesticated and transformed into the dog by the hunters-gatherers of the Late Pleistocene, early enough to follow them in the settlement of the Americas. One of the preconditions for the domestication of animal species is the structure of their social life; domesticable mammals live in hierarchically structured groups, which enables the humans to take over the leadership and become their herdsmen.[3] This is a common trait shared by both wolf and horse and it predestined them both to enter the human sphere (conversely this is why the idiomatic expression *herding cats* conveys something impossible). Unlike the wolf, during the Upper Palaeolithic and most of the Neolithic Age the horse remained a game animal for the human race, hunted for food. Its relatively late domestication, which took place in the fourth millennium BC somewhere in the Eurasian steppes was far-reaching in its impact for the incoming epoch, the Bronze Age (EIEC 274 ff.).

1.2. The role of the horse in the Indo-European past

At the end of the third millennium BC within the Sintashta culture of the southern Urals, which is attributed to the Proto-Indo-Iranians, the first archaeological evidence of a light, spoke-wheeled chariot designed to be drawn by a two-horse team has been discovered (EIEC 627 f.; Anthony 2007: 397 ff.). This technical innovation produced a revolutionary change in warfare and quickly spread over the ancient world. To play with words, it was the main vehicle of the early expansion of the Indo-Europeans, which assured the horse a prominent place in their spiritual culture. In the mythology, it was closely associated with the Sun god, as illustrated by the Greek Helios and Vedic Sūrya both of whom cross the sky in their chariots. In ritual, the horse stood at the top of the hierarchy of sacrificial animals, next to human sacrifice or even as a substitute for it.[4]

The prominence of the horse in the world outlook of the early Indo-Europeans did not fail to find its reflection in their language. Not only can a Common Indo-European designation of the animal **h₁ék̑u̯os* be reconstructed, but a number of its collocations in the most archaic texts, such as the Rigveda, Avesta or Homer, are also traceable back to the Proto-Indo-European sacral and epic poetry (Schmitt 1967: 238–244). Some of the compound personal names with **h₁ék̑u̯os* may have arisen from such poetic formulas. The Proto-Indo-European society was predominantly a pastoral one, in which one's chief property consisted of the livestock, especially cattle, and the milch cow played the role of a primitive currency. Thus, the compound names with **gʷou̯-* 'cow' express the wish for their bearers, to be wealthy

[3] Cf., for instance, Zeder (1982: 322).

[4] Hittite legislation prescribed punishments for all kinds of sodomy except with a horse. According to Old Indian and Celtic traditions, such acts may have constituted a part of the Proto-Indo-European enthronement rite. Cf. Puhvel (1970: 159–192).

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persons. The 'horse'-names tell us more than this. They allude not only to the possession of good horses, but also to their skilful use in combat or in racing, and obviously were a symbol of nobility; such a name marked its bearer as belonging to the upper class of warriors fighting in chariots. This connection between social status and name type appears clearly from the earliest records. When in the mid-second millennium BC an Indo-Arian warrior elite imposed itself over the Hurrian population of the kingdom of Mitanni in Upper Mesopotamia, it was by virtue of their skills as charioteers, which is confirmed not only by their hippological terminology, which is Old Indian, but also by the occurrence of names with Old Indian *aśva-* 'horse' and *ratha-* 'chariot' among the kings and noblemen of Mitanni. Later, during the Iron Age, as those primitive 'knights' were transformed into riders going to war as cavalry, the "equine" names remained popular, and especially in the Indo-European branches where the war chariot was emblematic of a heroic past, such the Indo-Iranians, the Greeks and the Celts, who preserved a memory of it in their epic traditions, kept alive in the aristocratic circles. So, we find among them the personal names such as Vedic *Svaśva-*, Avestan *Hwaspa-* 'owning good horses', Greek *Leúkippos* 'owning white horses' (an attribute of aristocracy), *Zeúxippos* 'harnessing horses', *Hippódamos* 'tamer of horses', Gallic *Epomeduos* 'master of horses' (Pinault 2007). In Classical Athens names with *híppos* used to be given among the class of *hippeîs* 'knights', composed of rich men who were able to purchase and maintain a war horse, e.g. *Hippónikos* 'winning by his horses'[5] and *Phílippos*.[6]

1.3. 'Wolf' in Indo-European anthroponomastics

Thus, the case of the horse provides us with a good example of a millennia-long interaction between development in material culture, its ideological articulation and the consequences it had for social stratification, that left deep hoof prints in the anthroponymy. The story of the wolf is even more complicated and no less illuminating. At the end of this paper I will try to make my point by showing that the two stories are complementary to each other in such a way as to permit to drive some conclusions about archaic naming practices, not only those of Indo-European peoples. My curiosity was initially piqued by the phenomenon of Serbian anthroponymic compounds

[5] It was mockingly distorted by Aristophanes into *Hippóbinos* 'Horse-fuck'.

[6] With the end of Greek city-states the original motivation faded so that from the Hellenistic period a *Phíllipos* was thus named not for his fondness of horses, nor to stress his equestrian rank, but after some famous bearer of this name in the past, be it the Macedonian king, father of Alexander the Great, or later, among Christians, one of the twelve apostles. Similarly, among the Zoroastrians the name *Jamasp* is traditionally given to refer to one of the first followers of Zarathushtra's teaching, without any equine connotation (by the way, in its Avestan prototype *J̌āmāspa-* only the second element *aspa-* 'horse' is etymologically clear).

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with *vuk*, Old Serbian *vlk* 'wolf', that I compared to Germanic names with *wolf* as their first or second element (Bach 1943: 193; Förstemann 1900: 1640–1662), both continuing the Proto-Indo-European etymon **u̯l̥̂kʷos*.[7] The comparison reveals some semantic matches, such *Vlьko-mirъ* : *Wolf-fried* both 'wolf + peace',[8] *Vlьko-slavъ* 'wolf' + 'fame': *Rud-olph* 'fame' + 'wolf', *Milo-vuk* : *Leub-olf* both 'dear' + 'wolf'. At first glance, the combinations 'wolf-fame', 'wolf-peace' and 'dear-wolf' make little sense, and the observation that as the second element of the Germanic names 'wolf' since early times has played the role of a meaningless suffix freely combined with any other anthroponymic stem, can be applied to some extent to Slavic compounds as well, but the main question is how the wolf found its way into the human onomasticon at all. A possible answer lies in the fact that among both the Germans and the Slavs the underived zoonym 'wolf' (**Wulfaz* and **Vьlkъ* respectively) has been used as a personal name from time immemorial, and there are good reasons to suppose that such a use of **u̯l̥̂kʷos* goes back to Proto-Indo-European, whereas the formation of compound names with this element only began later and sporadically. This is at least strongly suggested by the Slavic evidence, because only for the simple **Vьlkъ* 'wolf' can a claim be made to a Common-Slavic pedigree, whereas the compounds such as *Vlkoslav* are limited to a part of South-Slavic territory.

2. Tame as human, wild as divine. The horse and the wolf in the worldview of the early Indo-Europeans

There is a sharp contrast between the dithematic personal names with **h₁éḱu̯os* 'horse' and those with **u̯l̥̂kʷos* 'wolf'. The former are directly derivative of the zoonym and basically meaningful, whereas the latter are derived through the intermediary of the anthroponym and often meaningless. The contrast is based on the opposition between 'domestic' and 'wild' that arose as a result of the "Neolithic revolution". For the Palaeolithic hunters the world of animals was one and undivided. Judging by the so-called primitive cultures, they named themselves after the beasts in order to magically assume their qualities, e.g. the strength of a bear, the cunning of a fox, or the swiftness of a wild horse. In the Neolithic, the perception of the animal world changed radically, resulting in its bipartition into the species that remained wild and those that had been domesticated. The latter entered the human sphere and became the property of man, whereas the wild animals were considered to belong to the gods as their livestock. This notion found its expression in some Indo-European languages, where the wild animals are designated as 'divine',

[7] Cf. further Old Indian *vŕ̥kaḥ*, Avestan *vəhrko*, Lithuanian *vìlkas*; a variant **lúkʷos* underlies Greek *lýkos*, Latin *lupus*.

[8] Common Slavic **mirъ* 'peace', only secondarily 'world' (in East Slavic).

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cf. Hittite *siunas ḫuitar* 'wild animals', literally 'animals of gods'; Latvian *dieva vērši* 'God's bulls' (of the aurochses), *dieva zuosis* 'God's geese' of the wild geese, *dieva suns* 'God's dog' of the wolf. In Slavic, the same role is played by **divьjь* 'wild', e.g. **divьji gǫsi* 'wild geese', which is etymologically an adjective of the same Indo-European **deiu̯os* 'heavenly god' > Latvian *dievs* (cf. Gamkrelidze & Ivanov 1984: 488).

2.1. The motivation of lupine names: A magical or a religious one?

The newly established dichotomy of the animals brought about a change in the sacrificial customs. In the Palaeolithic, the hunters sacrificed a part of their prey to the "Lord of animals", who they believed bestowed the game upon them (Maringer 2002: 192 f.). Neolithic man ceased sacrificing wild animals, because it would be illogical to give the gods as a present something that already belonged to them. Consequently, the early farmers began to offer up domestic animals being their own property. From that moment onward giving a newborn child the name of such a sacrificial animal, predestined to be slaughtered and burnt or eaten by the participants in the rite, must have become something ominous to be avoided.[9] For that reason it is hard to imagine that the given name **H₁ék̑u̯os* 'Horse' ever existed among the Indo-European peoples. In the rare case where this word designates a person, such as the Celtic *Epos*, rather than as a genuine anthroponym it can be interpreted as a nickname or as a hypocoristic to a compound name with ** h₁ék̑u̯os*. It is worth noting that these compounds are exclusively exocentric; the Old Indian *Svaśva-*, Greek *Kállippos* describe their bearer as an 'owner of good horses' and not as a 'good horse'; the same is true of wolf's tamed relative, the dog, cf. Old Indian *Ṛjí-śvan-* 'owning swift dogs'. In contrast, the compound personal names with **u̯l̥kos* 'wolf' as their head are endocentric, e.g. Old English *Æþelwulf* 'a noble wolf', Serb *Dobrovuk* 'a good wolf', which is in accordance with Greek evidence to be discussed later. Let us recall that in German and Slavic the simple name 'Wolf' coexists with its anthroponymic compounds and that it probably predates them as a common Indo-European heritage. If the latter is true, one might be inclined to place its origin in an even more remote past, on the presumption that such names as 'Wolf' or 'Bear', are rooted in the animistic-totemistic religions of the Old Stone Age and based on a belief in the identity or a close connection of the man with the eponymous beast. Yet 'Wolf' and 'Bear' would have been appropriate names for Palaeolithic hunters. In later times, as hunting largely lost its crucial importance to the human race, they may have survived because of their apotropaic power. Here we have a *lupus in fabula*, none less than the most famous bearer of the name *Vuk* among the

[9] Exceptions are found mainly in dualistic systems where they are characteristic of perverted cults, such in Zoroastrianism the sacrifice of the wolf to Ahriman, the Evil Spirit.

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Serbs, Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, considered father of both the modern Serbian language and the study of Serbian folklore. Born in 1787 in a village of Western Serbia to a peasant family with a low infant survival rate, something that the common Serbs of that time attributed to the maleficence of witches, he reports that his name was considered protective against witchcraft.[10] This explanation is trustworthy and confirmed by later ethnographic research.[11]

Such a motivation, though old, may not necessarily be the primary one. It has been supposed that the Germanic wolf-names primarily arose in a Pre-Christian sacral context, and precisely, that they expressed devotion to the supreme god Odin, to whom the wolf was sacred (Föstermann 1900: 1639; Bach 1943: 192). In 1941 the Serbian historian of religion Veselin Čajkanović published a study on the supreme god of the heathen Serbs, where he reconstructs, on the basis of folklore data and comparative evidence, a figure endowed with many Odinic traits, including a close connection with wolves. In this regard he drew attention to an intriguing Old Serbian text, where various nations are listed, each of them identified with an animal, and the Serb is said to be a wolf (Čajkanović 1971: 40). Whatever the ultimate source of such a list may have been, at this particular point it must have reflected a concept familiar in the Serbian environment. A negative perception of foreign enemies is often expressed by identifying them with wolves, but the self-identification of an ethnicity, in this case the medieval Serbs, with such an animal might appear odd. Čajkanović put forward the assumption that the wolf was a theriomorphic hypostasis of the Serbian supreme god, believed to be the forefather of the nation. Such a motif occurs in the foundation myths of Indo-European and non-Indo-European peoples; we may mention the she-wolf who nursed Romulus and Remus and the other, named *Asena*, who gave birth to the founding father of the Oguz-Turks, as well as the mythical ancestor of the Ossetians, whose name *Warxaeg* derives from Old Iranian **varka-* 'wolf'. The claim to such an ancestry appears as a remnant of totemism. Thus, there are different ways of interpreting the lupine names: as totemistic, apotropaic and theophoric.

2.2. Complexity of wolfishness

Before putting forward my own interpretation, I would like to offer some insights into the phenomenon that may be called the complexity of wolfishness in the early Indo-European cultures. For a modern human the wolf has mainly negative associations; *wolfish* in the figurative sense is 'fierce, savage, menacing'. However, the Latin proverb *Homo homini lupus est* "a man is a wolf to another man", contrasting wolfish to human behaviour, has largely

[10] Karadžić (1818 s.v. *Vûk*): "A woman whose children don't survive gives to a newborn son the name *Vuk*, so that witches cannot eat him; for that reason I was given such a name".

[11] In the same part of Serbia children suffering from epilepsy used to be renamed, boys into *Vuk*, girls into *Vukosava* (S. M. Tolstaja in SD 2: 412 s.v. *imja*). Cf. Plas (2007).

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been misunderstood, among others, by Sigmund Freud, as if it were pointing to a hostile, predatory relationship between the members of the same society. In fact, it describes the attitude shared by the members of one community towards those of another.[12]

Wolves are said to be among the most gregarious and cooperative animals on the planet. This quality did not escape the attention of primitive man, who could only appreciate it, even, on occasion, taking the wolf pack as a model for his own social organization, especially in hunting or in war. Thus, the wolf must have been perceived from the axiological standpoint as an ambivalent being. This ambivalence is apparent among the early Indo-Europeans. In the hymns of the Rigveda, *vṛ́kaḥ* 'wolf', in those of the Avesta *vəhrka- bizangra-* 'two-footed wolf' is used of a robber, in the ancient legislative texts – Hittite, Old Indian, Old Norse, Greek – the formula 'to make himself / to be a wolf' designates an outlaw, outcast, murderer, cannibal.[13] On the other hand, we have a Hittite text from the 16th century BC, where the king Hattusili I, addressing the assembly (*pankus*) invites his soldiers to be as unanimous as the wolves.[14] Hattusili's words apparently echo the ideology of Indo-European bands of warriors, who had come to Anatolia centuries before, as mercenaries or as conquerors. These bands had their rituals, that included putting on wolf skins and dancing in them, as in the case of the Hittite 'men-wolves' (Sumerogram: LU^{meš} UR.BAR.RA) or of the "Gothic dance" performed at Christmas before the Byzantine emperor by members of his Varangian guard wearing masks and animal skins.[15] In Old Norse sources along with the berserkers the *úlfhéðnar* 'wolf-coats' are attested, said to be Odin's special warriors who fought mad as hounds or wolves, without mail, wearing the pelt of a wolf. In this light, some compounds with 'wolf' in Germanic and Slavic make complete sense, as designations of the wolf-warriors.[16]

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[12] Its full reading in Plautus, *Asinaria* 494 is: "Man is no man, but a wolf, to a stranger", as it was correctly understood and quoted by Thomas Hobbes in the dedication of his book *De Cive* (1642): "To speak impartially, both sayings are very true; That Man to Man is a kind of God; and that Man to Man is an arrant Wolfe. The first is true, if we compare Citizens amongst themselves; and the second, if we compare Cities".

[13] Old Indian Manusmriti, Icelandic customary law, Plato, Republic 565 *lýkōi genésthai*.

[14] Cf. Ivanov (1975). Old Norse *vargr* 'wolf; robber, evil-doer' appears to be a loan from Iranian **varka-* in the same meanings, together with Slavic **vorgъ* 'enemy, devil', Old Prussian *wargs* 'bad, evil', by the way of a Middle Iranian (Sarmatian) form as reflected in Mordvinic *vargas* 'wolf'.

[15] Literally 'furs', γούναϛ., Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *de cerimoniis* II 182; most probably 'wolf or bear skins' are meant.

[16] Cf.: Ivanov (1975) and, of the Germanic PN with 'wolf', the old and sinful compound *Hariulf* with **harja-* 'army' (*Hariulfus*, the name of a Burgundian prince attested as early as the second half of the 4th century AD in a Latin inscription from Trier, Schönfeld 1911: 128), inverted *Wolfhari*, with a parallel in Serbian *Vukovoje* (**vojь* 'warrior'). Old English *hildewulfas* 'battle-wolves', *heoruwulfas* 'sword-wolves' is used to describe armies in the Old Testament (Spears 2017: 133 ff.).

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2.3. Werewolves and bands of warriors

The folklore *werewolves* 'men-wolves', Slavic **vьlkodlaci* 'wolf-haired ones', Lithuanian *vilktãkai* 'running as wolves' might be reminiscent of nocturnal raids practiced by bands of warriors in disguise, acting wolfishly under the influence of some intoxicating substance. These practices among the peoples of North-East Europe are documented for the first time by Herodotus when reporting on *Neuri*, probably a people of Balto-Slavic stock:[17]

> It may be that these people are wizards; for the Scythians, and the Greeks settled in Scythia, say that once a year every one of the Neuri becomes a wolf for a few days and changes back again to his former shape. Those who tell this tale do not convince me; but they tell it nonetheless, and swear to its truth.

Fifteen centuries later in modern north-eastern Germany lived a pagan Slavic tribe called *Wilzi* 'wolves'; in a letter written in 1108 by Adelgot, the archbishop of Magdeburg, they are reported to howl like wolves (*horrendis uocibus ululantes*) while ritually drinking the blood of slain enemies before the altars of their god Pripegala[18] and to make raids by night disguised as dead men. Some thousand years earlier the Germanic tribe of Harii used a similar tactic, as described by Tacitus:[19]

> The Harii, besides being superior in strength to the tribes just enumerated, savage as they are, make the most of their natural ferocity by the help of art and opportunity. Their shields are black, their bodies dyed. They choose dark nights for battle, and, by the dread and gloomy aspect of their death-like host, strike terror into the foe, who can never confront their strange and almost infernal appearance. For in all battles it is the eye which is first vanquished.

The behaviour of the Harii, as well as their name, suggest that they represented an earthly incarnation of the *Einherjar*, Odin's army recruited from warriors who died on the battlefield, a memory of which survives in the folklore motif of the "Wild Hunt". As a war god, Odin was the divine patron of the Germanic bands of warriors (*Männerbünde*), such as the Harii or the later Vikings; his worshippers behaved like wolves in their earthly life in order to achieve a privileged afterlife in Valhalla.[20] In this way he played the roles both of the "Shepherd of wolves" and of the ruler of the dead as they are

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17 IV 105, transl. by A. D. Godley.

18 The name *Pripegala* is best explained as Old Polabian **Pribygalva* 'headhunter' (Loma 2002: 89, 197–199).

19 Germania 43, transl. by A. J. Church and W. J. Brodribb.

20 Already at the end of the 1st century AD, Odin/Woden was the chief god of all Germanic peoples according to Tacitus, who refers to him under the Latinised name *Mercury* (*deorum maxime Mercurium colunt*; in return, Latin *dies Mercurii*, wherefrom French *mercredi* was translated into Germanic as 'Woden's day', thence *Wednesday*).

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ascribed by Čajkanović to his Slavic counterpart, the Serbian supreme god.

The Germanic and Slavic wolf warriors fought on foot, in small troops, preferably by night. Before leaving Tacitus, let us look into the last chapter (46) of his monograph on Germania, where peoples neighbouring of it are described, among them the Venedians (*Venethi*), which is the first historical record of the Slavs, under the name used for them by their Germanic neighbours:[21]

> The Veneti have borrowed largely from the Sarmatian character; in their plundering expeditions they roam over the whole extent of forest and mountain between the Peucini and Fenni. They are however to be rather referred to the German race, for they have fixed habitations, carry shields and delight in strength and fleetness of foot, thus presenting a complete contrast to the Sarmatæ, who live in waggons and on horseback.

Tacitus hesitates here between reckoning the Venedians among the Sarmatians or the Germans but finds their way of life closer to the latter. Thus he, or his source, draws a demarcation line between two ethno-cultural zones in Northeast Europe that divides the Germans and the Slavs as sedentary peoples who travel and make raids primarily on foot from the nomadic horsemen of the European steppe. The opposition between the "pedestrian" and "equestrian" matches here that of the "lupine" and the "equine" proper names, because the former occur among the Germans and the Slavs, whereas the latter are characteristic of the ancient Iranians, including the Sarmatians, with their preference for horses. Swiftness is an attribute of the horse that can be transferred onto a chariot fighter or horseman, but also of the wolf, and the swift-footed robbers, as Tacitus describes the Venedians, are comparable to wolves. The Lithuanian *vilktãkas* 'werewolf' is a compound of *vìlkas* 'wolf' and *tekéti* 'to run', semantically close to the archaic Serbian name *Vukobrz* 'swift as a wolf' and to OInd *Vŕ̥kadvaras-* 'running like a wolf'. The latter occurs in Rigveda II 30, 4, where Brihaspati is invoked to slay the men (*vīrā́ḥ*) of an asura[22] thus named. As said above (2.2), for the Indo-Aryans 'wolf' was synonymous with 'robber, enemy' and given names with *vŕ̥ka-* were uncommon among them; thus in this particular case such a name seems to hint at a band of wolf-warriors hostile to the Vedic community.[23] The 11th century

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21 Cf. English *Wends*, German *Wenden*.

22 Here in the meaning 'demon', which prevailed in the Post-Vedic period.

23 Indicatively enough, the word *ásura-* is used here of a foe, which anticipates its use as 'demon' in the later Sanskrit. In a parallel passage (VII 99, 5) another asura leading enemy forces bears the name *Varcín-*, which is commonly interpreted as 'shining' but could also derive from *vŕ̥ka-* 'wolf', similarly as in the case of *Vr̥cī́vantaḥ*, a clan slain by Indra, a derivation from **vr̥cī́-* 'she-wolf' is nowadays preferred over the traditional one from *varc-* 'to shine'. In the Mahabharata Bhima, one of its main heroes, is given the nickname *Vr̥kodara-*, which is understood as 'wolf-bellied', a compound of *vŕ̥ka-* with *udára-* 'belly' allegedly alluding to Bhima's proverbial gluttony, but in view of the fact that he embodies the type of a brutal

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Russian ruler Vseslav of Polotsk is depicted in the epic tradition as a wizard (*veščij*, *volh*) and a kind of werewolf, who, according to the 12th-century epic "The Tale of Igor's Campaign", assumed a wolf shape to run over huge distances. In Serbian oral epics the adverb *vučki* 'in a wolfish way' is used to describe the fast movement of the so-called *haiduks*, originally a type of peasant irregular infantry in Hungary, whose name in the Ottoman-ruled Balkans designated an amalgam of brigand and guerrilla freedom fighter.

2.4. Initiation rites of young warriors

The picture sketched so far, placing the bearers of the lupine names in the wooded areas and those of the equine names in the steppe belt seems to reflect the cultural-historical reality of the late Iron Age in North Europe, but it is an over-simplification. The distribution of the two anthroponymic types was obviously correlative of the different forms of warfare, yet these forms were not necessarily conditioned by the physical environment alone and may have depended on age cohort. In fact, once upon a time only a mature man was qualified to fight on horseback, whereas fighting on foot was reserved for the adolescents. The best evidence of such a distinction is provided by the initiation rites of young warriors in ancient Greece, as studied by Vidal-Naquet (1968). In EIEC 647, it is summarized as follows:

> The sign of the wolf (or the wolf-pack) is clear enough in Greek age set confraternities such as the Athenian *ἐφηβεία* and the Spartan *κρυπτεία*: the adolescents in these peer-groups prepared for full warriorhood by behaviour that was exactly reversed from the norm: they prowled at night, were hidden and covert in their actions, used trick, trap, stratagem and ambush and all the techniques forbidden to the true adult warrior-hoplite, in his daylight discipline.

We should add that the hoplite as a heavily armed foot soldier fighting in a close formation (*phálanx*) appears only during the Archaic Age, not before the 8th century BC, so that before this the initiation of the adolescents playing light infantry was aimed at promoting them to the mounted knights (*hippeîs*) and still earlier to the chariot fighters of the "Heroic age".[24] The lupine connotation of the *ephebeia* and *krypteia* is obvious, which means that the nocturnal predator wolf and the sunny horse were initially opposed to one another as two successive grades in a military career.

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warrior as opposed to his chivalrous brother Arjuna, some reminiscence of wolfish bands might underlie such a denomination, which is possibly a reinterpretation of Vedic *Vr̥kadvaras-*. Cf. Mayrhofer (II: 571 f., LIV: 131), Hale (1986: 47 f.), Ivanov (1975: 408).

[24] Besides, the English word *infantry* as opposed to *cavalry* (from Latin *caballus* 'horse'), goes back to Latin *infans* 'a little child', via Spanish *infante* meaning both 'child' and 'infantryman'.

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2.5. Equestrian and lupine names in ancient Greece

Whereas the imitation of wolves in the military training might go back to the late Palaeolithic, its opposition to equestrian, more chivalrous warfare arose only after the domestication of the horse and invention of the light chariot, but it must have been a common heritage of all the early Indo-Europeans. That it was preserved among the ancient Greeks is all the more important for us as in Greek both types of compound names coexisted, those with *híppos* 'horse' and those with *lýkos* 'wolf', the latter less productive. Our evidence starts with the Homeric poems, where both names with *híppos* and those with *lýkos* occur. The Homeric names with *híppos* express possession, as in the later Greek and elsewhere, e.g. *Eúippos* 'owner of good horses', *Hippokóōn* 'who looks after horses', whereas among the compounds with *lýkos* there are both exocentric and endocentric instances. *Lykóphrōn*, *Lykomḗdēs* and most probably *Lýkourgos* are attributive compounds having nearly the same meaning 'wolf-minded', pointing to the martial rage of a warrior that is designated in Homer with the noun *lýssa* 'rabies', a derivative of *lýkos*.[25] These words and names seem to represent the violent and untamed aspect of war as personified in the god Ares, which makes understandable one of two Homeric determinative compounds with 'wolf' as their head, *Arēílykos* 'who becomes a wolf through Ares'.

The other one is *Autólykos* 'the wolf itself', a name especially interesting for us because of its initiatory context in the Odyssey. Autolycus was the father of Anticlea, mother of Odysseus. As an adolescent Odysseus paid a visit to Autolycus and went hunting with his sons, killing a boar, but only after the beast had wounded him, leaving a scar on his leg, that marked him for life (Od. XIX 386 ssq.). Boar hunting was in many cultures a test of bravery, and for Odysseus it was his first hunt which obviously meant his initiation into maturity. In his role as a maternal parent who, in conformity to the rules of the avunculate, was in charge of his grandson's initiation, Autolycus may have been designated with a descriptive name, hinting at the wolfish aspect of the rite. True to say, there is a post-Homeric tradition of Autolycus, but due to the huge impact of the Homeric poems on posterior Greek culture, some of the poetic *noms parlants* of the Iliad and the Odyssey were used later as given names or even gave birth to pseudo-historical biographies. The influence the language of the traditional oral poetry had on the anthroponymy I have already mentioned in discussion of the equine names (1.2).

The story of Dolon in the tenth book of the Iliad is still more instructive. Dolon was a Trojan warrior killed by Odysseus and Diomedes as, running by

[25] Cf. also *kýōn lyssētḗr* 'rabid dog', a derogatory description of a bravely fighting enemy (Hector). The name *Lyko-worgos* may also be interpreted as 'wolves maker', a designation of a person initiating into the "wolfish" bands.

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night and wearing a wolf skin, he tried to spy on the Greek ships. Considered a fast runner, he volunteered for this dangerous mission in the hope of getting the horses and bronze chariot of Achilles that Hector promised him as his prize at the end of the war. The so-called "Doloneia" is generally believed to be a late addition to our Iliad, but it seems to be based on a Bronze Age initiatic scenario, with an initiand acting wolfishly in order to become a chariot fighter. In this context, *Dólōn* could well be a *nom parlant* too, given to a young boy during his initiation, for as a common noun deriving from *dólos* 'ruse, trick' the word means a secret weapon (poniard or stiletto) as used by the ephebes. An analogous assumption can be made about 'swift-footed' as a traditional epithet of Achilles, expressing a quality of a wolf warrior. Achilles' status between adolescence and adulthood is rather ambiguous; he is represented a grown-up warrior, the best of all, who fights on his chariot, but psychologically in a way still immature; last but not least, he died unmarried, and adult warriors were, as a rule, married men. In fact, a successful warrior initiation was the precondition for a young man to marry and found a family, so the accomplishment was often marked by marriage.

2.6. The Slavic evidence

For more than twenty years I have repeatedly dealt with the initiatory motifs and themes as reflected in the epic traditions of various Indo-European peoples: the Greeks, the Iranians, the Germans, the Slavs (Loma 2002: 91–96, English summary 330). My research started from the so-called "obstructed marriage", which is one of the favourite subjects of the Serbian epics. It consists of the fulfilment of several tasks by the bridegroom himself or by his (young and unmarried) champion, some of them matching elements of the wedding ceremonies held among the Serbs, such as the case when the bridegroom's courage is tested by a rival wearing a "formidable dress", composed mostly of wolf and bear skins and heads. In these ceremonies the bridegroom is sometimes called 'wolf' or 'mountain wolf' and his peers 'wolves'; on the wedding night, the latter used to assemble around the house of the newly married couple and howl like wolves or make obscene jokes, which possibly hints that once upon a time all the members of the group of adolescents passing together through the initiation laid claim to the brides of their fellows.

This wolfish aspect of Serbian matrimonial rites is probably connected to marriage by rape, surviving in Serbia into the early 19th century. Rather than a crime, this was an archaic custom deeply rooted in the Common Slavic and Indo-European past. It is reported among the heathen Slavic tribes by the Old Russian Primary Chronicle; as a rule, the abduction took place with the prior consent of the girl. In the Old Indian Manu's law the formula *vŕ̥ko hí ṣáḥ* 'he is a wolf' is applied to the bridegroom in the type of marriage called Rākṣasa, when he, with his friends, abducts the bride after having overcome by force her father or relations.

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In Serbian oral epics, the "lupine" names also occur outside the matrimonial context, as suited to a young warrior undergoing initiation. In a poem where the youngest nephew suffers a torture by fire instead of his uncle, which is apparently an initiatory temptation, he seems to be predestined to it by his name *Vukosav*, a compound of *vuk* 'wolf' and *slava* 'glory', as contrasted by the names of his two elder brothers, *Milovan* ('the beloved one') and *Radovan* ('the pleasing one'). In another Serbian poem, an adolescent named *Vuk* comes to learn "bravery" from his uncle (his mother's brother, a further instance of the avunculate) and eventually kills his first enemy, "the Black Arab", in a wolfish way, by biting through his throat. The young hero is identified with a historical figure, Vuk Grgurević, nicknamed *Zmaj ognjeni* 'the Fiery Dragon', who in the second half of the 15th century was the titular despot of Serbia and commander of the Hungarian mercenary Black Army, but his epic legend is, as in the case of the Russian Vseslav of Polotsk, largely unhistorical; moreover, a comparison between these two epic figures, carried out by Roman Jakobson and Gojko Ružičić (1950), led to the conclusion that they both go back to a lycanthropic hero inherited from the Common Slavic epics.

Among Slavic peoples, the dithematic personal names with *vlk*, *vuk* are peculiar to the Serbs. As already said (1.3), they are limited to the South Slavic region, but more precisely, their historical core area largely overlaps with that of the Serbian initial settlement in the Balkans.[26] This is the same area from which the epic poetry and the wolfish matrimonial customs originated. They are all at home among the western, Dinaric Serbs within the historical extent of the late Roman province of Dalmatia, where their ancestors settled in the 7th century AD. Dalmatia's borders encompassed only the western parts of the modern Serbia, so that the 'wolf' names since the liberation from the Ottoman Empire and the restoration of the Serbian state in the 19th century became marked as characteristic of the western Serbs, most of whom remained outside the resurrected Serbia, and in a way iconic of their *hajduk*, outlaw mentality, which was humorously treated in the classic Serbian novel by Stevan Sremac entitled *Vukadin*, a name derived from *vuk* 'wolf', after its hero. Rather than an innovation that took place in the Balkans, the 'wolf' names among the Serbs may be interpreted as a survival from a deep past when, during the warrior initiation, a renaming of the youths undergoing it served to stress their temporary status as "pack members".[27]

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[26] There are some clues to their former spread over a broader West-South-Slavic area, which suggests that the Croats and the Slovenians may also have known this anthroponymic type at an early date and subsequently lost it under the pressure of the Catholic Church, especially after the Council of Trent.

[27] A possible remnant of such an initiatic practice was the custom of changing the names of apprentices when promoted to undermasters among Ukrainian potters (cf. S. M. Tolstaja in SD 2: 412). A potential "wolfish" aspect of the settlement of the Serbs in the Balkans will be discussed in the next issue of *Književna istorija*, Belgrade.

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3. From the steppes to the prairies: A history repeated

And now, at the end of this paper, let us leave Eurasia and cross the Bering strait, which some thirteen thousand years ago was a land bridge to be crossed by the first settlers of the Americas, the ancestors of the Native Americans. As already said (1.1), they brought with them the dog, the domesticated wolf, but also some beliefs about wolves that closely match those we find among the Indo-European and other Eurasian peoples, which suggests that they may be a common heritage of the human population of the Northern hemisphere, traceable back to Late Palaeolithic hunters-gatherers. At this point, I must warn that I am not a specialist in Native American languages nor in their cultures, and I am relying on secondary sources in what I am about to say. However, I hope they are sufficiently reliable to provide some parallels that might be instructive for our topic. So the Navajo are reported to have a word for wolf, *mai-coh*, that also means 'witch', according to the belief that a person could transform if they donned a wolf skin, which strongly resembles the Indo-European concept of the werewolf.[28] Generally, the wolf was regarded as a spiritual animal. The Sioux called it 'a doglike powerful spirit', which is somewhat reminiscent of the Latvian designation of the animal as 'God's dog', *dieva suns*, as cited above (2). The Crow dressed in wolf skins to hunt and the Pawnee were known as the Wolf People.[29]

The meaning 'wolf' occurs in Native American personal names, e.g. there was a famous Nez Perce warrior called *Himíin maqsmáqs* 'Yellow Wolf'. His biographer stresses the polyonymy as widespread among Amerindian warriors,[30] and from White Horse's own words we learn that he was thus named in the age of thirteen as a result of his vision quest, which is, in some Native American cultures, a common *rite de passage* for young, who separate themselves from their families, travel alone in the wilderness and go without eating or drinking for days until they receive a vision of their guardian spirit. The vision-wolf gave him skills suited to a hunter and a young warrior (scout).[31] Previously he bore another name, apparently without a symbolic

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[28] Cf. IE derivatives from the root **u̯eid-* 'to possess (a supernatural) knowledge, clairvoyance' designating the wolf in Hittite (*u̯etna*), Old Norse (*witnir*) and a 'werewolf' in Slavic (Serb. *vjedo-gonja*, Slovn. *vedanec*, Ukr. *viščun*).

[29] On North American Indian totem names related to the wolf see Garfield & Forrest (1948: 44).

[30] "The multiplicity of names borne by certain warriors proved most confusing […] Practically every warrior was known by two names, and many by a half dozen – although some of them were 'pet' or 'fun' nicknames […]" (McWhorter 1940: 20).

[31] "I was a boy of about thirteen snows when my parents sent me away into the hills. It was to find my *Wyakin* […] a Spirit of a wolf […] appeared to me. Yellow-like in colour, it sort of floated in the air. Like a human being it talked to me, and gave me its power […]. That was how I got named Yellow Wolf" (McWhorter 1940: 27 f.); "The Wolf-Power I was given made me a great hunter, a sure scout." (McWhorter 1940: 296). The concept of the 'guardian spirit', which is here called *wyakin*, is common to the Northern American tribes and may be compared with the Old Norse *fylgja*.

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connotation,[32] but subsequently he substituted his initiatic name with a third one, emphasising his virtue in battle as a prominent warrior.[33] And, one more thing worth mentioning, Yellow Wolf and his fellow tribesmen lived and fought on horseback.

At the end of the last ice age the wild horse that hitherto lived in the North America was extirpated, probably due to the impact of the newly arrived human hunters, and only with Spanish conquistadors did the animal return to the continent. From horses brought by the Spaniards descended the free-roaming mustangs that were gradually adopted by the Native Americans, among whom the re-domesticated horse replaced the dog as a pack animal; in their languages it is often described as 'big dog' (e.g. Cree *mistatim*), 'sacred dog' (Lakota *sunka wakan*), 'elk dog' (*Bigfoot* = Siksika *ponokamita*) or simply 'dog' (Janin 2006: 224), which was a pretty strange meeting between the wolf and the horse in human history. By the mid-18th century most Plains Indians possessed horses and had mastered the art of riding. Horses revolutionised life on the Great Plains and soon horse herds came to be regarded as a measure of wealth. Thus, one might say that the process of domestication of horse and its promotion to the most valuable domestic animal that took place some five thousand years ago in the Eurasian steppes was in a way repeated during the Modern Age on the North American prairies, where, too, it gave rise to the equine names. Everybody knows the name Crazy Horse, leader of the Oglala band, in Lakota language *Tȟašúŋke Witkó*, but how is it to be understood? Although he was the third in his male line to bear this name, his own vision of a rider on a dancing horse is alleged, where he identified himself with the horseman, not with the horse, so that, despite the fact that it is written separately, the name has the value of a possessive compound 'owner of a crazy horse', which is sometimes rendered as 'His-Horse-Is-Crazy'. I found also some instances of 'Black Horse' (Comanchi *Tu-ukumah*) and 'White Horse' (Kiowa *Tsen-tainte*, Omaha *Shon-ga-ska*) and cannot say whether they are to be interpreted in the same way as Old Indian *Śvetāśva-* and Greek *Leúkippos*, which are motivated by the possession of white horses, or otherwise. But there is at least one Native American equine name that seems unambiguous, translated as 'Many Horses', borne by a holy man of the Lakota and by a Blackfoot leader.[34] As we are told,

[32] "My name as a boy cannot be translated. Too deep! You cannot write it down […]" (McWhorter 1940: 26).

[33] "The whites call me Yellow Wolf, but I take that as a nickname. My true name is different, and is after the Spirit which gave me promise of its power as a warrior. I am Heinmot Hihhih, which means White Thunder […]" (McWhorter 1940: 25); "The name of thunder is to kill as it strikes and rolls along. My *kopluts* [war club] I made when a boy, by directions of the Spirit that gave me promise of warrior power. It has the same killing strength as thunder" (McWhorter 1940: 28).

[34] Also a daughter of the famous Lakota leader Sitting Bull was named thus. Unfortunately, in neither case the literature available to me gives account of the native name form underlying the English translation.

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at least in the latter case it was due to the unusually large herd of horses its bearer, who died in 1866, acquired in his life.[35] Thus, we have a Native American counterpart to Avestan *Pouru.aspa-* 'with many horses', here and there an anthroponymic means of expressing a high social rank. I will end with this name as the most eloquent testimony of two parallel cultural developments separated by a large distance and a huge chronological gap, which might tell us something about human universals.

4. Conclusion

To conclude, the polyonymy in tribal societies appears to have been connected primarily with the ritual initiations into successive age grades that might include name changes. In view of the fact that among the early Indo-Europeans the peer groups of male initiates into adulthood used to imitate a wolf pack, the names with a "lupine" connotation as occurring in several Indo-European branches most likely arose within the context of such rites of passage, the participants in which presumably used to be given a temporary new name of this type, which some may have retained lifelong, while others either reassumed their birth names or preferred to be renamed a second time with a more chivalrous, "equine" name emphasising their newly achieved status as adults who went to war in the daylight, by chariot or on horseback.

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[35] White (1913), Ewers (1943: 604, 609); he, too, acquired it as a secondary name, being previously named 'Sits in the Middle', 'Dog' or 'Little Dog' (White 1913), 'Heavy Shield' Notably, among the Plain Indians arose the custom of killing horses as grave escorts on the death of important men (Ewers 1943: 604), which was highly characteristic of the early Indo-Europeans.

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