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**ONOMASIOLOGICAL AND SEMASIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF
THE NAMES FOR TREES AND THEIR FRUITS
IN THE GERMANIC LANGUAGES**

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1. PRELIMINARY REMARKS

Tree names are paradoxical. On the one hand, they are basic in a psychological and individual developmental sense – semantic primitives, if you will. On the other hand, tree names, because of their referents, are sensitive to ecological change or the migration of the speech community into a new region.¹

Trees are large plants whose parts are chiefly ligneous. Due to these special characteristics and their relatively large portion in the world of plants, they are, according to Witkowski, the first botanical life-form class to be lexically encoded.² Their greatness, sublimity, and a certain intimidation have always deeply impressed human beings. But next to this "dark" side, there has also existed a "convenient" one, which is seen in a close bond, a daily intimate contact between mankind and trees. Already in Proto-Indo-European times people knew and used many trees and were keenly aware of their properties, a fact that Friedrich calls "arboreal orientation."³ Trees were and still are used for making tools and weapons, spears and ships, they also bear food and serve for recreational purposes. Among northern populations, they played an important role in religious culture, as well. In their mythology, trees were not only considered as homes of the immortal gods, especially of the highest one, but were also personified, since a certain similarity is attested between men and trees. Like humans, who, in some mythologies, are said to descend from trees, they have souls, furthermore, they grow, bear fruits, wither, and die again. Even in our Christian society, trees appear in works such as the Bible, known as the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden of Eden* or the *Tree of Life*. Furthermore, trees were applied in the determination the very homeland of the Indo-European tribes, before their dispersal, since their lexical meaning is assumed to be significantly related to natural habitat and human culture.⁴

The approach of the study at hand is mainly onomasiological as it tries to describe the terms of tree names in several Germanic languages, starting from the respective concept or image. Proto-Germanic (PG), a dialect of Indo-European and the parent language from which the three main branches or groups of dialects, namely East Germanic, North Germanic, and West Germanic, are descended, can be reconstructed to quite a considerable extent by comparing the various daughter languages – English, German, Dutch, Frisian, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Icelandic etc. – with each other and, sometimes additionally, with forms found in other branches of Indo-European. Examination of these languages can either show regular correspondences between their

1 Friedrich 1970: 152.

2 Witkowski 1981: 1.

3 Friedrich 1970: 16.

4 Friedrich 1970: 3.

sound systems and thus confirm relationship or, in contrast, it can show differences and complications which have to be dealt with in more detail. On the basis of linguistic atlases, which serve to illustrate all etymological entities and names ascertained in several countries and areas, it will be attempted to take as many terms as possible into account. Additionally, it will be tried to explain the underlying motives of formation as far as etymological and dialect dictionaries help to make them transparent. One problem regarding the atlases is that only the birch, the oak, and the pine have been thoroughly analyzed, whereas the history of the various expressions for the other trees can only be accessed with difficulty. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that theoretical discussions seldom take account of more than the beech, the birch, and the oak.

As far as the lexicon of trees is concerned, merely vocabulary that has long been existent is obtained. The standard expressions for tree names in Germanic and other Indo-European languages are listed and commented on in Buck (1949: 528f.). The following sections will deal with both the standard and some dialect terms and the underlying motives of their formation.

2. THE 'OAK'

2.1. Cultural Background

"The oak was one of the underlying themes in PIE culture, a basic life symbol [...], and a root of myth and of sacrament. The oak was a nexus of symbolic articulation between the semantic system of the tree names and the cultural system of religious beliefs and ritual concerning the supernatural."⁵ The early importance of the oak – the so-called "tree par excellence", as stated in Buck (1949: 529), – is due to the primacy, prototypicality, and thus salience of this tree, which was connected with an early usage. Its timber, hard and firm, with enduring qualities and lasting in water was important for all sorts of construction, reaching from ships to barrels. Furthermore, the tree had its significant place in the cultural system of religion, where it was seen as the tree of Zeus, of the Roman and Celtic Jupiter, or of the Germanic Donar. With it, the notion of morality was being spread. Later on, the culture was even expanded to worship the famous "Marien-Eichen" 'oaks to worship Mother Mary' among Christians, and the tree's special symbolism is still seen on coins in Germany, unfortunately ending with the introduction of the Euro on January 1st, 2002, though.⁶

5 Friedrich 1970: 139f.

6 RGA 6 (1986): 530.

2.2. Expressions

Terms for the oak are documented in all Germanic languages except Gothic, where no sources can be found.⁷

2.2.1. Iconym: "oak"

a) The underlying IE expression **aig-* 'oak'⁸ and its dialect form PG **aiks*⁹ are widely reflected in the Germanic languages:

ON *eik*¹⁰, N *eik*, *ek*¹¹, S *ek*¹², Dan *eeg*, *eg*¹³

OE *āc*, pl. *ác*¹⁴, ModE *oak*

OFris *ēk*¹⁵, Fris *iik*, *EEK*

ODu *eik*, MDu *eike*, *ēk*, MLG *ek*, *eke*, Flem *eeke*, Du *eik*¹⁶

OHG *eih*, *eiha*, MHG *eich*, NHG *eiche*¹⁷

The Germanic term is possibly cognate to Lat. *aesculus* 'species of oak sacred to Jupiter' and Gr. *αιγίλωψ* 'a sort of oak-tree', but ulterior connexions are unknown. Another Greek derivation might be connected to the IE verb **aig-* 'to move fiercely, to swing, to vibrate.'¹⁸

However, the exact motivation of formation of the Indo-European word is unknown and lacks an explanation.

A dialect variant of *oak* is ModE *yak*.¹⁹

b) Another IE name for the oak is **dreu-*,²⁰ *derwo-*, *dru-*,²¹ which yields Goth. *triu* 'wood, tree', ON *trē* 'tree, wood', OE *trēo*, ModE *tree*.

Motivation of formation: The underlying expression might be connected to the adjective **dōru* 'a hard object', referring to enduring qualities of the stem or wood of the tree.

7 RGA 6 (1986): 532; ODEE 1976: 619.

8 IEW 1959: 13.

9 Kluge/Seebold 1995: 207.

10 De Vries 1977: 96.

11 Falk/Torp 1960: 182; De Vries 1977: 96.

12 Hellquist 1980: 115.

13 Falk/Torp 1960: 182.

14 Holthausen 1934a: 2.

15 Holthausen 1934a: 2.

16 De Vries 1971: 153.

17 Kluge/Seebold 1995: 207.

18 IEW 1959: 13; Buck 1949: 529.

19 The form is attested in the OED 1989: 626, as well as in the SED No. IV 10.2 (to be found in the second part of Vol. I, Northern Counties + Isle of Man) 1970: 438. Brozović (1988: 119) terms it "irregular phonetic development of 'oak'".

20 IEW 1959: 215.

21 Buck 1949: 528.

c) A third term is IE **perk^u-s* 'oak'.²² It is reflected in Lat. *quercus* and PG **ferh-*, **ferhw-* and can, in its original meaning, only be found in OHG *fereheih*, NHG *ferch*, and Langob. *fereha*.²³

d) Furthermore, Hoops mentions Gmc. **hargus* 'oak', which derived from Pre-Gmc. **karqús* 'grove, priest, idol' and gave OE *hearg*, ON *hǫrgr*, and OHG *harug* 'grove, idol'.²⁴

Motivation of formation: The formation might very well attest the religious worship of holy oaks and oak groves during Indo-Germanic times, thus emphasizing the salience of the oak.

2.2.2. Iconym: "oak" + "tree"

ModE *oak-tree*,

NHG *Eichenbaum*, Du *eikeboom*, EastFris. *ēkenen boom*, NorthFris. *iikebuum*, WestFris. *ekenboom*, *ekenbaim*²⁵

Motivation of formation: The composition of the first element, the determinant 'oak', and the second element, the determinatum 'tree', serves to denote a special kind of tree, namely the 'oak-tree'. According to Friedrich, "the tendency in German and probably other Germanic languages to label trees by *-baum* compounds singularly distinguish its arboreal gender system and is probably another source of Freudian masculinity symbolism."²⁶ NHG *baum* and Du *boom* go back to Gmc. **baw-ma*, **baum-ma* and ultimately to IE **bhewə-* 'to grow'.²⁷ The motivation of the expression is therefore the reference to the growth of a tree. An alternation of name with and without element 'tree' such as NHG *eiche – eichbaum*, Du *eik – eikeboom*, and ModE *oak – oak-tree* can only be found in the West Germanic and not in the North Germanic languages.²⁸

2.2.3. Iconym: "acorn"

NHG *eichel* 'oak'²⁹

Motivation of formation: In this particular case, the tree name and the fruit name are identical. The phenomenon, called synecdoche or *pars pro toto*, occurs when a part of an object, here 'acorn', replaces the term for the whole, here 'oak'. This sort of metonymy is based on contiguity within the same frame. Firstly, a certain name for the tree existed, namely *eiche*. Then, on the basis of this name, the expression for the fruit, namely *eichel*, was formed (see more detailed in section 2.4.1),

²² IEW 1959: 822.

²³ RGA 6 (1986): 532; Buck 1949: 529; IEW 1959: 822.

²⁴ Hoops 1905: 120.

²⁵ All items are taken from: ALE "carte I.36, *Chêne*", *Légende* (list of contents).

²⁶ Friedrich 1970: 157.

²⁷ Kluge/Seebold 1995: 86. The IEW (1959: 149) states it as **bhou(ə)mo-*.

²⁸ Brozović 1988: 132.

²⁹ Brozović 1988: 116.

and, in a later step, the word *eichel* replaced the original expression for 'oak'. The cause for this might have been that the fruit is an important, thus salient object in this area or region.

2.2.4. Iconym: "acorn" + "tree"

ModE *acorn-tree*³⁰

NHG *eichelbaum*, Du *eikel(en) boom*³¹

Motivation: Here again, we deal with a composition. The name of the fruit functions as the determinant and the element 'tree' as the determinatum.

2.3. Semasiological Aspects

2.3.1. Shift of meaning from 'oak' to 'tree'

In Pokorny's opinion, the original meaning of *IE *derwo-*, *dru-* was 'oak', denoting a particular kind of tree, high in salience, and probably the prototype of the species 'tree'. By undergoing a broadening or generalization of meaning from a specific to a generic term, and thus gradually changing its vertical position in taxonomy, its meaning shifted to 'tree' via a possible stage of 'wood, tree' polysemy in Old and Middle English.³²

A similar process took place in Icelandic, where *eik* shifted from 'oak' to the generic meaning 'tree', oaks being virtually absent in that country.³³

2.3.2. Shift from 'oak' to 'pine'

Although descending from IE **perk^u-s* 'oak', the ablaut-formations OHG *forha*, OE *furh*, Olcel *fura*, *fyri* underwent a shift of meaning from 'oak' to 'pine'. This probably happened due to the migration of the Germanic tribes from their old 'oak'-homeland to an area with the pine as the prototypical representative of the category "tree".

2.3.3. Shift from 'oak' to 'mountain, rock-topped heights'

With other reflexes of IE **perk^u-s* 'oak', a change of meaning is seen in the semantic "shift from a tree name to the name of a forest or mountain where the tree predominates, and so on to "forest" or "mountain" in general, as in the Old English formations with *firgen* (*firgenholt* "mountain wood," *firgenstrēam*, "mountain stream"). This pattern of shift is illustrated by Modern

30 Brozović 1988: 117; SED No. IV.10.3 (to be found in the second part of Vol. III) 1970: 536.

31 Brozović 1988: 135.

32 In contrast, Friedrich (1970: 143) only assumes an original meaning 'tree or wood or both ("tree-wood")' with the exact meaning determined by the context. According to Schrader (1980: 171), this term even had three different meanings: 'oak', 'tree', and 'pine'.

33 Jóhannesson 1956: 4; De Vries 1977: 96; Buck 1949: 529; RGA 6 (1986): 532.

German, as in *das Eich*, and in the Celtic of Julius Caesar's time, where the adjectival form *Hercynia*, from *Hercynia silua*, ended up being used for the forest in question. Similarly, Gothic *fairguni*, "mountain chain" (*Gebirge*), might go back to "oak forest," and then to "oak" (both *fairguni* and *Hercynia* contain adjectival, suffixal elements).³⁴ The expression 'das Eich' shows semantic shift from 'oak' to 'forest', as well as gender alternation from a feminine to a neuter term.

2.3.4. Shift from 'oak' > 'deities of oak and thunder' or 'man, life, world'

"The oak and its connotations motivated diverse extensions of meaning within the Germanic stock [...] and seems to have been intimately reticulated with mythology and metaphysics."³⁵ Thus, semantically different reflexes of IE **perk^u-s* 'oak' can be found, such as ON/Oicel *fforr* 'tree, man' and names like *Fjörgynn* 'thunder god' or *Fjörgyn* 'mother of Thor'.

2.3.5. Secondary meaning

Although the primary denotation of the word is 'oak', a secondary, metonymical extension meaning 'ship' is attested, as well. This is due to that fact, that the name of the material, 'oak' was replaced by the semantically related product, 'ship', which used to be made out of oak-wood.³⁶

2.4. Etymological Relations Between the Names for 'Oak' and Its Fruits

The fruits of the oak contain starch, glucose, and oil. Therefore, they do not only serve for the food of humans, but are also used in hog-raising.

2.4.1. Names with morphological dependence on tree name

MHG/NHG *eichel*³⁷, OHG *eihhila*; MDu/Du *eikel*³⁸

Motivation of formation: These derivations or diminutive forms are only found in German and Dutch, originally meaning 'the youngster of the oak, little oak'.³⁹ Since the fruit name is based on the tree name, they "express the transition from one concept to a contiguous concept within the same frame. This morpho-lexical derivational pattern is called *Ausgriff* by Gauger."⁴⁰

A similar process of word formation can be found in ModE *yakkers*, a diminutive form to *yak* 'oak' in southern English dialects.⁴¹

34 Friedrich 1970:137; also mentioned by IEW 1959: 822.

35 Friedrich 1970: 137.

36 Kluge/Seebold 1995: 207. The RGA 6 (1986: 532) terms it as "Übertragung vom Material auf das Produkt."

37 Kluge/Seebold 1995: 207.

38 De Vries 1971: 153.

39 Marzell 1977: 1209.

40 Koch 1999: 335.

41 SED No IV.10.3 (Vol. IV) 1970: 486. The OEDD (1889-1905: 563) calls it 'a dialect form of 'acorn'.

S ekollon

Motivation of formation: Here, we are concerned with "compositions that by their modifier express the relation to a contiguous concept within the same frame and that by their head express a taxonomical relation to a superordinate concept [...]. We can call this morpho-lexical pattern 'hyponymical contiguity composition'.⁴² The compound consists of the determinant *ek* 'oak' and the determinatum *ollon* 'mast, acorn'.⁴³ The latter goes back to the basis of ON *aldin* 'fruit of trees', from the root of ON *ala* 'to bear, feet' and might be related to Lat. *alere* 'to nourish'. Again, the whole expression denotes a special kind of mast, the mast of the oak.

NHG *eichelnuss*

Motivation of formation: Owing to a metaphor, the second element of the formation is based on the similarity between the fruit's shape and the one of nuts.

NHG *eichenecker*

Motivation of formation: The name was formed in analogy to the fruit of the beech, NHG *buchecker*.⁴⁴

2.4.2. Names without morphological dependence on the tree name

ModE *acorn*

Motivation of formation: The original meaning of this term was 'the fruit of the field or wild growing trees' and derives from OE *æcern*, *æcren*,⁴⁵ which itself is a reduced form of IE **ōg-*, **ag-* 'to grow; fruit, berry'.⁴⁶ The term is cognate with

Got *akran* 'fruit of the field, harvest, produce'⁴⁷

ON *akarn* 'fruit of wild trees, mast'⁴⁸

Dan *agern*, N *aakorn*⁴⁹

Du *aker* 'acorn'⁵⁰

42 Koch 1999: 336.

43 Hellquist 1980: 545.

44 Marzell 1977: 1209.

45 Holthausen 1934a: 9.

46 IEW 1959: 773.

47 Holthausen 1934b: 5.

48 De Vries 1977: 4.

49 Falk/Torp 1960: 16.

50 De Vries 1971: 11.

The name is also connected to Goth *akr-s*, ON *akr*, and OE *æcer*, all denoting 'land' as if meaning 'produce of uncultivated land', 'wild fruit', 'fruit of the open un-enclosed land, natural produce of the forest, mast of oak, beech etc.'.

It must be noted, though, that the regular ModE form of OE *æcern* would be *akern*, *akren* or *atchern*, whereas the actual form *acorn* is due to the 16th century idea that the word *corn* formed part of the name.⁵¹ This motivation is based on folk-etymology, an attempt to secondarily motivate an unmotivated sign in order to make incomprehensible words transparent again. The meaning of an archaic, foreign word is therefore reinterpreted and reformed on the basis of a similar sounding known word with a similar meaning.⁵²

2.4.3. Other terms:

ModE *mass*, *pigs'-nuts*⁵³

Motivation of formation: The first form is only a dialect variant of ModE *mast*, whereas the latter came in existence due to the fact that acorns are an important feature in pig-raising and, concerning the second element, the fruit's shape is metaphorically compared with that of a nut.

ModE *bob*⁵⁴ is, according to the OED, "the fruit or seed of the oak-tree; an oval nut growing in a shallow woody cup or cupule", and is attested in the ODEE as a term first recorded from northern texts in the sense 'bunch or cluster of flowers, fruit, etc.', which survives in northern dialects; later on, it was generally used for various roundish objects.⁵⁵

3. THE 'BIRCH'

3.1. Cultural background

On account of its apparent characteristics – the white color of the bark and the slender branches –, the birch is easily distinguished from other trees. Next to the importance of its bark for various purposes, it also has had and still has a certain poetic and religious connotation in the ritual and folklore of northern Europe. The term for the birch is inherited as well and thus common to all Germanic, Slavic, and Indian languages.

51 OED 1989: 111.

52 Bussmann 1996: 168.

53 SED Vol. 4, part 2, 1970: 486.

54 SED Vol. 2, part 2, 1970: 435; however, not mentioned by Wright (1898-1905)

55 ODEE 1970: 103.

3.2. Expressions/Names

3.2.1. Iconym: "birch" / "white tree"

The underlying term IE **bherǵ̑*, *bhrēǵ̑*⁵⁶ is reflected in the Germanic form **berkō* which gave OE *be(o)rc*⁵⁷

ON/OIcel/Icel *björk*⁵⁸, S *björk*⁵⁹

N *bjerk*, Dan *birk*⁶⁰

The originally Germanic *o*-stem was also extended with a *jōn*-suffix – as it often occurs with tree names (cf. *bōc* – *bēce*)⁶¹ – and thus resulted in Gmc. **birkjōn*, which is reflected in

OE *birce*, *bierce*,⁶² ModE *birch*

northern English (particularly Scots) *birk*⁶³

OHG *bir(i)hha*, *birka*, NHG *birke*⁶⁴

Du *berk*⁶⁵

Motivation: The formation is based on the reference to the white color. An apparent parallelism between the birch name and the phonetically similar verbal form IE **bherǵ̑* 'to shine, shimmer, gleam, glitter, become white'⁶⁶ can be noticed. Best evidence for this assumption comes from Germanic, where Goth. *bairhts* 'bright, shining', OHG *beraht* 'shine', and ON *bjartr* 'bright' are attested.⁶⁷

Among some scholars, the IE expression is even seen as an extension to the IE root **bher-* 'bright, brown', which is again a motive referring to the color.⁶⁸

Kluge/Seebold also considers it being an old loan word, but does not give any further details for this assumption.⁶⁹

56 IEW 1959: 139.

57 Holthausen 1934a: 20.

58 De Vries 1977: 41.

59 Hellquist 1980: 45.

60 Falk/Torp 1960: 74. The vowel *-i-* is due to the collective ON *birki* 'birch grove'. Cf. Marzell 1977: 525; Szymczak 1986: 91.

61 Hoops 1889: 77; Jóhannesson 1956: 623.

62 Holthausen 1934a: 23. Hoops (1889: 78) says that "Durch das folgende j wurde das stammhafte e zu i, dieses müsste vor rc eigentlich zu io gebrochen sein, aber das folgende j bewirkte auch sofort wieder Umlaut des io zu y, i; so erklärt sich der Mangel der Brechung in *birce*, *byrce*, an das sich das später auftretende *birc* aus *beorc* wohl angeglichen hat."

63 According to Szymczak (1986: 91), this term either derives from OE *be(o)rc*, *birc* or is, more likely, a Scandinavian loan or result of such influence.

64 Kluge/Seebold 1995: 112.

65 De Vries 1971: 46. According to Szymczak (1986: 91), WGmc. *-i-* becomes (M)Du. *-e-* before *-r-* consonant.

66 IEW 1959: 139.

67 IEW 1959: 139; RGA 3 (1978): 28; Marzell 1943: 596.

68 IEW 1959: 140; Krogmann 1957: 16.

69 Kluge/Seebold 1995: 112.

3.2.2. Iconym: "birch" + "tree"

ModE *birch-tree*,

Du *berke(n)boom*, WFrís *birkebaim*⁷⁰

Motivation of formation: Compounds consisting of the respective tree as first element and the expression 'tree' as the second element are explained in 2.2.2.

3.2.3. Other terms

ModE *wych*⁷¹

Motivation of formation: Might be explained by a cohyponymic transfer of the terms 'birch' and the expressions *witch* 'young elm' and *wychen/witchen* 'mountain ash' due to their resemblance.⁷²

ModE *lady-tree*⁷³, NHG *frauenbirke*⁷⁴

Motivation of formation: "The birch has been a female-virgin symbol for many Indo-Europeans for over five thousand years. The particular question of physical brightness is highlighted by the obvious white, creamy, or silvery bark of most birch species."⁷⁵ On account of this metaphor, which is based on the similarity of both things, the compounds' first elements denote 'lady, woman' and the second element either the respective tree 'birch' or just 'tree'.

NHG *rabenblutbaum*⁷⁶

Motivation of formation: In this case, we are concerned with the metaphor of the leaves' black oil looking like the blood of ravens. The compound is thus determined by this element.

EastFris (*en*) *riezenen boom*

Motivation of formation: Due to the fact that the birch is "the tree from which one gets *ries* "twigs", to make brooms or besoms"⁷⁷, the first element of the compound denotes the most important and therefore most salient part of this tree in this area, namely 'twigs'. This *pars pro toto* or synecdoche determines the second element of the compound, the element 'tree', and the whole expression denotes a special feature of the birch.

70 All items can be found in: Szymczak 1986: 95.

71 SED No. IV.10.1 (Vol.II) 1970: 434. Wright (6: 559) mentions this expression, but points out the dialect form *witchen*.

72 Wright 6 (1898-1905): 521.

73 SED No. IV.10.1. (Vol.I) 1970: 437.

74 Marzell 1943: 598.

75 Friedrich 1970: 27.

76 Marzell 1943: 598.

77 Szymczak 1986: 93.

4. THE 'BEECH'

4.1. Cultural Background

In the past, the beech has been much debated and reviewed by various scholars. The beech-name and the distribution of the tree itself play an important role in the so-called beech argument, the determination of the homeland of the Indo-Germanic tribes before their dispersal. However, due to an insufficient explanation of the etymology, the exact interpretation of the former area failed.⁷⁸ As far as the usage of the beech is concerned, the bark was an important feature for writing and the edible beechnuts served as food for humans and animals. A religious connotation of the tree is attested, as well.

4.2. Expressions/Names

4.2.1. Iconym: "beech"

A wide distribution of the cognates serves as evidence for the antiquity of the PIE term. The underlying name is IE **bhāgo-s*⁷⁹, *bhāgs*⁸⁰ 'beech' and is reflected in PG **bōka* (itself cognate with Lat *fāgus* and Gr *φηγός* 'esculent oak', originally meaning 'tree with eatable fruit'), which gave

OE *bōc*⁸¹

ON/OIcel *bōk*⁸², Icel *beyki*⁸³

OHG *buohha*, MHG *buoche* NHG *buche*⁸⁴

MDu *boeke*, Du *beuk*⁸⁵

S *bok*⁸⁶

Dan *bøg*, N *bōk*⁸⁷

A derivative in a *-jō-* stem is PG **bōkjōn*, which is reflected in

OE *bōece*, *bēce*,⁸⁸ ModE *beech*

78 Kluge/Seebold 1995: 141; RGA 4 (1981): 56. See the latter for more detailed information.

79 IEW 1959: 107; Buck 1949: 529.

80 Marzell 1972: 413; RGA 4 (1981): 56.

81 Holthausen 1934: 28. The OED (1989: 55) also mentions that this form is not found after the 12th century except in expressions like *buck-mast*, *buck-wheat*, and *buck*.

82 De Vries 1977: 47.

83 IEW 1959: 107; Krogmann 1955: 9. The form denoting 'beech-forest' is a variant of **bōki*, a later collective form of *bōk*.

84 All three forms listed in Kluge/Seebold 1995: 141.

85 De Vries 1971: 50. Krogmann (1995: 10) says that "Nnl. *beuk* schließlich, das zuerst in niederländischen Quellen des 16. Jahrhunderts auftritt, ist [...] aus dem sächsischen Teil der Niederlande in die Schriftsprache aufgenommen worden und enthält *eu* = mnd. *ō*."

86 Hellquist 1980: 54.

87 Falk/Torp 1960: 126. The *-ø* is due to the collective **bōki-*, like in ON *bókiskógr* 'beech-grove, beech-forest' and not due to an old plural form *bókr*. The latter is only used when denoting the plural of books.

88 Holthausen 1934: 28.

Motivation of formation: Some scholars, among them Krogmann, assume a derivation from the IE verbal root **bhā-* 'to shine, gleam', on account of the glimmering, smooth bark of the tree.⁸⁹ This, however, is strictly rejected by Friedrich.

4.2.2. Iconym: "beech" + "tree"

Du *beukeboom*, Dan *bøg(etrae)*, N *bøc(etre)*, ModE *beech-tree*⁹⁰

Motivation: cf. 2.2.2.

4.2.3. Iconym: "beech-nut" + "tree"

Du *boekenoteboom*, NHG *eckerbaum*⁹¹

Motivation of formation: Here again, we deal with compositions. The name of the fruit functions as the determinant and the element 'tree' as the determinatum. The German name, however, does not show the morphological relationship to the tree name, since the tree itself is not mentioned.

4.2.4. Iconym: "beech-nut" + "beech"

Dan *oldenbøg, oljenbøg*⁹²

Motivation of formation: The compounds consist of the first element *olden*, which is explained in 4.4.2., or a phonetic variant of it. The second element is the respective tree 'beech'.

4.2.5. Other expressions⁹³

NHG *mastbuche*

Motivation of formation: Based on the fact that the fruits of the tree are used in hog-raising, the word *mast* denoting 'feeding' is used as the first element and the name of the tree is used as the second element of the compound.

NHG *heister*

Motivation of formation: This Frankish/Franconian dialect form denotes a 'young beech'. It derives from MLG *hēster* 'young (birch-)stem', which goes back to Gmc. **haistra* 'young (birch-)tree', an older combination of **hais* and the suffix *tru-* 'tree'. The word was borrowed from MLG into French *hêtre* 'beech'.⁹⁴

89 Krogmann 1957: 19f.

90 All items are found in Koch 1999: 337.

91 Marzell 1972: 416f.

92 Marzell 1972: 416f.

93 These expressions are only a selection of the ones mentioned by Marzell 1972: 417f.

94 Kluge/Seebold 1995: 367; Buck 1949: 529; Marzell 1972: 417.

NHG *liechtbaum*

Motivation of formation: This expression is again a compound based on the characteristics of the tree. The determinant is the element 'light', referring to the former usage as light spears and torches. Thus, the tree received the name on account of its special usage.

NHG *esslaab*

Motivation: The formation is based on the fact that humans used to eat the young leaves of the beech. We are therefore concerned with a compound consisting of the first element meaning 'edible, to eat' and a second element meaning 'leaves', *laab* being a dialect form of NHG *Laub* 'leaves'. Using the latter as a part for the whole, namely 'tree', the expression is a synecdoche.

NHG *kille, killbuche*

Motivation of formation: The name denotes a 'young forest tree', especially a 'young beech', which is only as heavy as one single man can carry.⁹⁵ Since a separate term for a young plant of this sort exists, we can assume a special importance of it, thus its salience.

4.3. Semasiological Aspects

The original IE **bhāgo-s* 'beech' underwent a semantic shift in Icel *beyki, bæki, beykiskógur* from 'beech' to 'tree'. Due to the fact that there are no beeches in that country, the meaning was broadened or generalized from the specific to the generic term.⁹⁶

Secondary formations often denote 'book' or 'letter', which is the result of the usage of the beech in order to scratch letters in its bark. In that case, the material gave the product its name.

4.4. Names for the Fruits

Already in former times, the nuts, which contain oil, served as food. However, compared to the relatively low importance concerning humans, the nuts and seeds were far more used in hog-raising.

4.4.1. Fruit names with morphological relation to the tree name

NHG *buchel, Du boeke*⁹⁷

Motivation of formation: Not only do these names express the diminutive of the respective tree name, but show also analogy to the formation NHG *eiche – eichel*.

⁹⁵ Müller 1938: 466.

⁹⁶ Marzell 1972: 414.

⁹⁷ Marzell 1972: 418.

NHG *buchecker*, Du *beukeeker*⁹⁸

Motivation of formation: The compounds consist of a first element denoting the tree name and a second element referring to the fruit. The latter goes back to Gmc **akrana-* 'wild fruit'⁹⁹, which itself is a reduced form of IE **ōg-*, *əg-* 'to grow; fruit, berry'¹⁰⁰. This expression shows reflexes in Go *akran*, ON *akarn*, Dan *agern*, N *aakorn* (cf. 2.4.2.) and also in

MDu/Du *aker* 'acorn'¹⁰¹

OHG *ackeran*, MHG *ackeran*, *ecker(n)* 'fruit of the oak or beech'

MLG *āckeren*, *ackeren*, *ēkeren*, *eckeren* 'acorn, acorn-mast', from which the NHG form *ecker* is derived.¹⁰²

According to Kluge/Seebold, the simplex form is hardly used any longer, instead, the compound *Buchecker* is found since the 15th century.

NHG *buchnuss*, ModE *beech-nut*, Du *beukenootje*, N *bøkenøtt*¹⁰³

Dan *bognøg*, S *bokenötter*¹⁰⁴

Motivation of formation: The compounds consist of the determinant denoting the respective tree and of a determinatum meaning 'nut', which metaphorically refers to the similarity of the fruit's shape to that of a nut.

S *bokollon*¹⁰⁵

Motivation: cf. 2.4.3.

ModE *beech-mast*, *buck-mast*

Motivation: The formation arose on account of the beech being used in hog-raising. The determinant of the second tree name goes back to the form OE *bōk* 'beech', which is not longer used (cf. Footnote 81).

MLG *bok*, NLG *buch*, Du *book*, *beuf*, S *bök*, *bög*

Dan *bog*¹⁰⁶

98 Marzell 1972: 419.

99 Kluge/Seebold 1995: 259.

100IEW 1959: 773.

101De Vries 1971: 11.

102Kluge/Seebold 1995: 259; Marzell 1972: 419.

103All expressions are listed by Koch 1999: 337. Marzell (1972: 419) mentions all except for the Norwegian name.

104Marzell 1972: 419.

105Koch 1999: 337.

106Falk/Torp (1960: 70) lists it as a loan from MLG.

Motivation of formation: Here, we are dealing with gender alternation, which is based on contiguity. The fruit name and the tree name are more or less etymologically identical, but show different gender. The formation can be explained by analogy to the relation between Lat. *malum* 'apple', neuter form, and the masculine form *malus* 'apple-tree'.¹⁰⁷

4.4.2. Fruit names without morphological dependence on the tree name

Dan *olden*¹⁰⁸

Motivation of formation: The expression goes back to the basis of ON *aldin* 'fruit of trees', from the root of ON *ala* 'to bear, feet' and might be related to Lat *alere* 'to nourish'.

4.4.3. Other names

NHG *kantnüsschen*, NHG *kerkes*¹⁰⁹

Motivation: The formation is based on the characteristics of the tree. The first term refers to the triquetrous nuts, thus *kante* meaning 'edge'. The latter is the expression 'kernel' in child-language. Furthermore, both diminutives very well express that the fruits are small.

5. THE 'MAPLE'

5.1. General Information

As far as its usage is concerned, the maple is not that important. However, its fruits are very common and popular among children, who like to use them in games. Worth mentioning is the fact that various inherited expressions exist due to many physically distinct referents, whose distribution areas overlap.

5.2. Expressions/Names

5.2.1. Iconym: "maple"

5.2.1.1. Iconym "maple" < 'meal'

a) The underlying WG **matuldra* is reflected in

OHG *ma33altra*, *ma33oltra*, MHG *ma33alter*, *ma33olter*, NHG *maßholder*¹¹⁰

Motivation of formation: The expression could be the result of a combination of the WG **matlu-* 'meal' and the "tree-termining suffix -tra"¹¹¹, denoting a 'meal-tree', which refers to the young leaves which served as food for humans.

¹⁰⁷Marzell 1972: 418.

¹⁰⁸Falk/Torp 1960: 789; Koch 1999: 337.

¹⁰⁹Names and explanation of motivation cf. Marzell 1972: 420.

¹¹⁰Kluge/Seebold 1995: 543f.

¹¹¹Braun 1942: 9.

b) OE *mapulder*, *mapul-trēo*¹¹², ModE *maple-tree*, *maple*¹¹³

Motivation of formation: The name was formed either by combining WG **matlu-* 'meal' and WG **apuldra* 'apple-tree' or in analogy to OE *apuldor* 'apple-tree'.¹¹⁴

A variant of the English expression could be ON/OIcel *mǫpur-r*¹¹⁵, whose etymology is uncertain.

5.2.1.2. Iconym "**maple**" < 'sharp'

a) The underlying expression is an extension of the root IE **ak-* 'sharp, pointed'¹¹⁶. The latter is cognate with Lat. *acer* 'sharp, pointed' and Lat. *acernus* 'made of maple wood'. The reflexes are found in Gmc **ahira*, **ahur-(na)* which gave

ODan/Dan-Norwegian *ær*¹¹⁷

OHG/MHG/NHG *ahorn*¹¹⁸

Motivation of formation: The original expression was formed on reference to the relatively sharp or pointed quality of the leaves.

The fact that the vowel *-o-* in the second syllable of the German word remained a full vowel was due to a folk-etymological reinterpretation on the basis of *-horn* 'horn'.¹¹⁹

b) A second term is IE **kleno-* 'maple'¹²⁰, which continues, on the one hand, in PG **hluni-z*, the precursor of

OIcel/ON *hlynr* (*hlunr*)¹²¹

Dan *løn*¹²², S *lönn*¹²³

MLG *lönenholt* 'maple-wood', LG *löne*, *läne* 'maple'

and, on the other hand, in Gmc. **hlīn-*, which is reflected in

OHG/MHG *līn-*, *līm-boum*, NHG *lein-*, *leim-baum*, *-ahorn*

also probably OE *hlīn*, *hlyne*¹²⁴.

112Holthausen 1934a: 215.

113According to the ODEE (1976: 554), the simplex form is recorded in the 14th century for the first time.

114Bierbaumer 1975: 100f.; RGA 1 (1973): 115.

115De Vries 1977: 401; OED 1989: 350. In Marzell's opinion (1943: 67), *mǫpur-r* is loaned from ME *mapul* 'maple' and then formed in analogy of *mǫsur-r* 'maple', which is derived from Gmc. **masura* denoting the grain of the wood or tree.

116IEW 1959: 18.

117Falk/Torp 1960: 1412. It is, however, mentioned that this form is almost forgotten and only to be found in archaic phrases. The expression was replaced by *ahorn*, a German loan word, cf. 17.

118Kluge/Seebold 1995: 20f.

119Braun 1942: 9; Marzell 1943: 62f.

120IEW 1959: 603; Braun 1942: 11.

121De Vries 1977: 240.

122Falk/Torp 1960: 681.

123Hellquist 1980: 444.

124Holthausen 1934a: 165. Hoops (1905: 262) mentions that this expression fell into oblivion, but is still used as poetic

Friedrich thinks "... that the maple was relatively unimportant to the PIE, and that the two established forms, *akVrno- and *klen-, go back to a single root. The *klen- would reflect a zero grade of the first vowel, and a full grade of the *n*-extension; the *akVrno- would reflect a prothetic *a*-, and a zero grade the *n*-extension. Both forms would go back to a (PRE?)-PIE *kL-n- (using L to symbolize a liquid sonant)."¹²⁵

5.2.2. Iconym: "what you can do with the fruit of the maple-tree" + "tree"

NHG *nasenbaum, propellerbaum*

Motivation of formation: Here, we are concerned with a secondary tree name, which is based on the thing you can do with the fruit given by popular terminology (cf. 5.4. for more details). The original tree name was then replaced by this new name.

5.2.3. Other expressions

NHG *flader*¹²⁶

Motivation of formation: This dialect form goes back to late MHG *vlader* 'grain' and points to the characteristic texture of the wood.¹²⁷ It is probably connected with Gr. *platanos* 'plane'¹²⁸, as well.

NHG *hartriegel, weißholz*¹²⁹

Motivation of formation: Both expressions are based on the characteristics of the tree. The first one emphasizes its enduring qualities, whereas the second one denotes its extremely white wood. Thus, the compound, referring to a special kind of wood, consists of the determinant 'white' and the determinatum 'wood' and is some sort of metonymy.

NHG *geigenholz, löffelbaum*¹³⁰

Motivation: The underlying reason for the formations was the usage of the wood for making violins and spoons. The first term is a synecdoche, showing the transfer of the end-product to the tree. With the second term, only the determinant is denoting the product.

synonym for *maple*, since the respective tree does not grow in Great Britain.

¹²⁵Friedrich 1970: 69.

¹²⁶RGA 1 (1973): 115.

¹²⁷Kluge/Seebold 1995: 269; Marzell 1943: 69.

¹²⁸RGA 1 (1973): 115.

¹²⁹Braun 1942: 13; Marzell 1943: 69.

¹³⁰Braun 1942: 13f; Marzell 1943: 64.

5.3. Semasiological Aspects

Often, we find a transfer of the primary meaning of the German 'maple' to other species of trees: NHG *Akazie* 'acacia', *Espe* 'aspen', *Hartriegel* 'cornus', *Platane* 'plane', *Spitzeiche* 'oak', *Ulme* 'elm', *Erle* 'alder', etc. This cohyponymic transfer can be explained by the resemblance between the maple's shape, wood, and usage and those of the other trees.

5.4. Fruit names¹³¹

NHG *nasenzwicker*, *propeller*

Motivation of formation: A lot of expressions and synonyms can be found, which is the result of a high salience of the tree and, particularly, its fruits, especially among children. For them, these fruits are important in games and therefore result in a good deal of imagination. With all names, a sort of metaphor is connected: the first name is due to comparing the fruit put on the child's nose with glasses, namely *zwicker*, which squeeze the back of the nose. The basis for the second name is the observation that, when the fruit is thrown into the air and, while flying down, it turns like a *propeller* of an airplane.

NHG *vögelchen*, *Du vogltje*

Motivation of formation: The preceding observation is also the reason for comparing these objects with 'little birds'. Diminutives are used in order to emphasize that the fruits are rather small in contrast to "real" birds.

ModE *key(s)*¹³²

Motivation of formation: This expression of popular language is again based on metaphor and the result of the similarity between one half of the fruit and a little key.

6. THE CONIFERS

6.1. General Introduction

In general, conifers did not and do not have as an important role in culture and religion as the aforementioned deciduous trees. However, some are sources of resin, tar, and similar products, and were therefore used for light spears in remote times. As far as their classification and naming are concerned, we are confronted with a great deal of cross-referencing and terminology overlap, thus resulting in confusion. Most of the names are used by people to denote all of the

¹³¹All items are listed by Marzell 1943: 64f. It is to be noticed, however, that only a part of the expressions can be dealt with in this paper. An analysis of all of the names would be far to much.

¹³²OED 1989: 350; Marzell 1943: 66.

conifers in the individual languages, a phenomenon called *cohyponymic transfer*. The reason for this might be that speakers have difficulties in differentiating not only between certain concepts on account of their similarity, but also between the correct names. Next to the problem of mixing up the principal genera *fir*, *pine*, and *spruce* as such, there are also those regarding regional synonyms. In order to lessen these difficulties, a comparison with the actual distribution area of the tree and the appearance in literature is often helpful. But still, our knowledge of the original meaning and the position among etymologically related terms often remains uncertain and opaque, since application varies according to different periods and regions. On account of this fact, it will be necessary to list the tree names by the respective etymons, instead of the iconyms, which is supposed to avoid chaos in the reader's mind.

6.2. Etymons

6.2.1. Gmc **furhjōn*, **furhā*, **forhā* 'pine' and its meaning in the daughter languages

The underlying term has several reflexes in

ON *fyrī*¹³³

ON/N/Sw/Icel *fura*¹³⁴

OE *furh-wudu*¹³⁵

OHG *forha*, MHG *vorhe*, NHG *föhre*¹³⁶

perhaps representing OE **fyre*¹³⁷, ME *fyrre*, *firr* 'pine'¹³⁸

Dan *fyr*¹³⁹

In contrast to the names just mentioned – all denoting 'pine' –, the etymologically related ModE *fir* has a different meaning, even if it is supposed to be a loan word of Dan *fyr*.¹⁴⁰

Despite all lexical differences nowadays, all expressions go back to IE **perkʷu-s* 'oak' as demonstrated in 2.3.2..

Next to the simplex, compound and complex terms also serve to denote either generic or specific trees of that kind:¹⁴¹

NHG *föhrenbaum*, Dan *fyrretræ*, ModE *fir-tree*

Motivation: cf. 2.2.2.

133De Vries 1977: 148. The expression is particularly found in the combination *fyriskōkr* 'fir-wood'.

134De Vries 1977: 147; Jóhannesson 1976: 554.

135Holthausen 1934a: 119.

136Kluge/Seebold 1995: 277.

137OED 1989: 941.

138Buck 1949: 530.

139Falk/Torp 1966: 285.

140Falk/Torp 1966: 285.

141ALE, "carte I.38, *Pin*", Légende (list of contents).

NHG *stachelföhre*

Motivation of formation: This expression is again a compound, based on the characteristics of the tree. The determinant is the element *stachel* 'spine, prick', referring to the sharp, pointed needles of the tree. Thus, the expression emphasizes the most salient part of the pine.

ModE *Scotch fir*

Motivation of formation: Based on the fact that the tree denoting 'pine' is an endemic tree in Scotland, the name only refers to this native sort of tree.¹⁴²

6.2.2. ModE *spruce*¹⁴³

This name is in so far connected to the preceding etymon as it is the shortened form of ModE *spruce fir*, originally *Prussian fir*. *Spruce* is an alternation of *Pruce* 'Prussia'.

Motivation of formation: The act of shortening, called ellipsis, might have occurred due to the laziness of people when talking. Linguistic elements that are not important and not required in a word or sentence are reduced and skipped. The more salient an expression is, the higher the tendency that it shortened. The earliest shortened expression recorded dates from 1670.

6.2.3. OHG *kien* 'pine' and its derivations

Next to the preceding names of 'pine', the expression NHG *kien(e)*¹⁴⁴ is found. WG **kēno* 'light spears, torch' is the precursor of *kien* (also found as *chien, kin*) 'pine, resinous wood, torch'.

Motivation of formation: The tree was named after its usage as light spears. In Marzell's opinion, however, the name for the tree is only secondary, based on metonymy, since the etymologically related OE **cēn* only denoted 'torch' (next to 'c-rune'), not 'pine'.¹⁴⁵

From the 11th century onwards, the compound *chienboum*, NHG *Kienbaum* is used as well.

6.2.4. OHG *kienfor(a)ha*

Another German expression – according to Buck a dialect form of NHG *föhre*, – is

NHG *kiefer*¹⁴⁶

This form is documented from the 15th century onwards, when it was spread by the Lutheran Bible. It goes back to early NHG *kienfer*, MHG **kienvore* (in MHG *kienvorhîn* 'made of pine-wood'), and

¹⁴²Buck 1949: 530.

¹⁴³Buck 1949: 531; OED 1989: 365.

¹⁴⁴ALE, "carte I.38, *Pin*", Légende (list of contents)

¹⁴⁵Marzell 1977: 786; Hoops 1905: 272.

¹⁴⁶Marzell 1977: 784; RGA 16 (2000): 478; Kluge/Seebold 1995: 440.

ultimately to the meanwhile opaque compound OHG *kienfor(a)ha*, whose elements are explained in the preceding sections 6.2.1. and 6.2.3.

Next to the simplex form, the compound NHG *kieferbaum* is also found.¹⁴⁷

6.2.5. Lat. *pīnus* 'pine, spruce'

The Latin name was borrowed into

OE *pīn bēam/trēo*¹⁴⁸

ME *pine*, when it coalesced with the adoption of OF *pin*

ModE *pine-(tree)*

OHG *pīn-boum*¹⁴⁹, Du *pijn (-boum)*¹⁵⁰

Motivation of formation: The original formation is unclear, but may go back to **pit-s-nu-s*, which is somehow connected with the base **pīt-* 'resin' and Lat. *pix* 'pitch, tar'. Why the expression was borrowed is not stated in any of the reference books. The growing economic importance of the tree and with it, its increasing appearance in trade, could be a possible reason.

A compound belonging to the field of this etymon is ModE *pitch pine*

Motivation of formation: The determinant of the composition emphasizes once more the characteristic feature of the respective tree. In this case, we are concerned with a metaphor based on the similarity between the black color and viscosity of the needles' sap or resin and the one of pitch.

6.2.6. OE *sæppe*¹⁵¹

Motivation of formation: This expression might be connected to the preceding etymon in so far as it reflects an opaque compound of OE *sæp* 'sap' and the tree name *pīnus*. Additionally, the loan of Lat. *sappīus* 'sort of pine or fir' formed from **sapo-* 'sap' with suffix *-īno-* 'made of, full of' is taken into account. With both possibilities, the first element always refers to the juicy characteristics of the tree.

6.2.6. Pre-German **feucht(j)ōn*

OHG *fiōhta*, MHG *viehte*, NHG *fichte* 'spruce'¹⁵²

147ALE, "carte I.38, *Pin*", Légende.

148Holthausen 1934a: 246.

149RGA 16 (2000): 478.

150De Vries 1971: 519.

151Holthausen 1934a: 268; Buck 1949: 531.

152Kluge/Seebold 1995: 263. Friedrich (1970: 35) notice the lack of these Germanic reflexes in the (pen)insular languages and concludes that from an absence or relatively late arrival of the tree in these areas. RGA 8 (1994: 610)

Motivation of formation: On account of the needles, it might go back to IE **peuk*, *puk* 'spruce, the stinging one, the one with needles.'¹⁵³

6.2.7. IE **dhanu-* 'tree name'(?)¹⁵⁴

The Germanic variants **danniō* ~ **danwō* 'sort of tree' are the precursor of

OHG *tanna*, MHG/NHG *tanne* 'fir'¹⁵⁵

MLG *den(ne)*, *dan(ne)*, Du *den*¹⁵⁶, *denne* 'pine'¹⁵⁷

Motivation of formation: The exact etymology, however, is unclear. For the German language, Kluge/Seebold consider it being a formation related to MHG *tann* 'forest', thus denoting 'the tree in the forest', 'fir-forest'.

The compound is attested, as well:

Du *denneboom*, Fris *Dānebūm*, NHG *tannenbaum*

Motivation: cf. 2.2.2.

Other compounds which are not as transparent as the ones just mentioned, and therefore more interesting, are

NHG *piquet dänn*, *katzegen tannenboom*, Du *grove den*¹⁵⁸

Motivation of formation: Whereas the second element of this "contiguity composition" is analysable, the first elements are opaque. As far as the first tree name is concerned, the determinant represents the French loanword *piquet* 'pole', thus referring to the similarity between the tree and a pole. The second determinant is the term *katzeg(l)* 'unpleasant, disgusting' and the last one *grof* 'big, coarse', both giving the tree name a slightly negative connotation.

6.2.8. ON *grǫn* 'fir'¹⁵⁹ yields

Dan/N *gran*¹⁶⁰

S *gran*¹⁶¹

Additionally, an ablaut-formation is found in ON *greni* 'spruce, fir', Icel *greni*, and N *grene*, both

rather considers this fact as a result of a late economical importance of the tree.

153IEW 1959: 828.

154IEW 1959: 234.

155Kluge/Seebold 1995: 815.

156De Vries 1971:111.

157Itkonen 1990: 36.

158Items are taken from the ALE, "carte I.38, *Pin*", Légende. The respective explanation of their formation is found in:

Itkonen 1990: 37.

159De Vries 1977: 193.

160Falk/Torp 1960: 340.

161Hellquist 1980: 198.

meaning 'fir-wood'.¹⁶²

Motivation of formation: The expression is homonymous with the term denoting 'mustache, beard', a fact that emphasizes the similarity between the needles of the tree and 'mustache'. Both have a notion of 'pointed', appropriate to any of the conifers. IE **gher-* 'to point, **ghrē* 'to grow'¹⁶³, the precursor of Gmc. **gran-*, is considered to be the underlying root.

6.2.9. ON *þoll* 'tree, beam'¹⁶⁴

N *tall, toll*,¹⁶⁵ S *tall*¹⁶⁶ 'young pine'

S dial. *tälla*, Icel *þella*, N *tella* 'young fir or pine'¹⁶⁷

Motivation of formation: The etymology is unclear. On the one hand, scholars consider a derivation of IE **tolnā*¹⁶⁸ or **tuel-*, **tul-no, -so*¹⁶⁹, continuing in Gmc. **pulna*. On the other hand, it is said to be formed due to the influence of Lat. *tollere* 'to raise', emphasizing the growth of a tree.

Due to the fact that the young tree had a name of its own, it must have been an important one, and therewith high in salience. This is attested, on the basis of literature, for Sweden and Norway in the Middle Ages.¹⁷⁰

6.2.10. IE **bharu-* 'conifer, tree, forest'¹⁷¹

ON *bqrr* 'conifer',¹⁷² OE *bearu* 'forest'

Motivation: The formation was perhaps due to the influence of IE **bher-* in words for 'pointed'.

6.2.11. OE *gyr(r)*, *gyr-trēo* 'conifer, spruce'¹⁷³

Motivation of formation: The name might derive from the IE root **gher-* 'to point forward, **ghrē* 'to grow', which we have already come across when analyzing the Scandinavian tree name *gran*. This root is also found in Lat. *horrēre* 'bristle'. Thus, the motivation is again based on the pointing needles, the salient characteristics of the various conifers.

The expression, however, is only attested for Old English. Other synonyms must have found better acceptance, while this term quietly and subconsciously passed out of use.

162De Vries 1977: 187.

163IEW 1959: 440.

164De Vries 1977: 615.

165Falk/Torp 1960: 1244.

166Hellquist 1980: 950.

167Itkonen 1990: 36.

168Itkonen 1990: 36.

169IEW 1959: 1081.

170RGA 1995: 302.

171IEW 1959: 109.

172De Vries 1977: 70.

173Holthausen 1934a: 141; Buck 1949: 531; Hoops 1905: 365.

6.2.12. NHG *Mantel*¹⁷⁴

In this case, we are concerned with another German dialect form of 'pine', particularly a Bavarian variant.

Motivation: The etymology of this formation is unknown, even if some scholars consider a derivation from OHG *mantala* or the adjectival form *mantalīn* 'consisting/made of pine-wood' and MHG *mantel*. Both terms, however, are not verified, but only transferred from Bavarian village names, namely *Mantalahi* and *Mantalaha*.¹⁷⁵

6.2.13. List of other names

Since it would be too much to analyse all etymons of the following, more or less scarcely used terms in detail, I decided to simply list them, as they are represented in the list of contents of the ALE map 'pine'.¹⁷⁶

Du *mast* 'pine'

Motivation: The formation is based on metonymy, namely the contiguity between the material and the product: *mast*, originally denoting 'pole'.

Du *sparre*, *sparreboom*

Motivation of formation: Again, based on the similarity between *spar* 'beam' and the respective tree. The term *sparre* is also suggested to be formed by ellipsis of *sparreboom*.

ModE *conifer*, *christmas tree* 'pine'

Motivation of formation: Whether both terms really denote 'pine' is not clarified, because of the names' occurrence in areas where the 'pine' is not endemic. *Conifer* usually denotes the genus 'conifer' itself, whereas the second term might have received its name due to its special usage as Christmas tree.

¹⁷⁴Marzell 1977: 784f. This name, however, is not mentioned in the respective map 'pine' of the ALE.

¹⁷⁵RGGA 16 (2000): 479.

¹⁷⁶Explanation of the respective terms are found in: Itkonen 1990: 36.

6.3. Semasiological Aspects

6.3.1. Shift of meaning from 'pine' to 'fir'

The meaning of ModE *fir* shifted from 'pine' to 'fir'. The exact motive of the "semantic split" between the etymologically related terms is, however, not clear. It is suggested that, to begin with, it might have been due to the fact that the speakers were not able to distinguish between the concepts of 'pine' and 'fir' on account of their similarity. Owing to the fact that the 'pine' is not an endemic tree on the British Isles – except Scotland, where the term did not change its original meaning – people might not be aware of the differences in their shape or appearance. Secondly, there is also the possibility that the speakers might have known their underlying concepts very well, but mixed up their names. In Blank's terminology, these motives are referred to as "conceptional or referential fuzziness." Another problem contributing to the difficult decision of the historical motive is the unknown original meaning of the Indo-European root. All these reasons result in mis-using and mixing up *fir*, *pine*, and *spruce*, which is called *cohyponymic transfer*.

There is also a "semantic split" between NHG *tanne* 'fir' and its morphological variant LG *den(ne)* 'pine'. Itkonen, who mentions the difference, lacks an explanation, though. We are confronted with the same problem just analyzed, particularly because of the unknown or uncertain meaning of the underlying IE root.

6.3.2. Shift from 'fir' to 'tree'

The meaning of Icel *pollr* shifted from 'fir' to 'tree', thus from a specific to a general term. The expression underwent a broadening of meaning.

6.3.3. Shift from 'fir' to 'spruce'

Marzell states that in North-Eastern Germany, the name *fichte* 'spruce' is used for *föhre* 'pine', since the spruce is not endemic in these areas.¹⁷⁷

6.4. Names for the Fruits

Regarding the names of the fruits of conifers, a certain amount of popular terminology can be noticed. Many of these expressions descend from child-language, since these fruits are objects children like to play with. Then, a distinction between the respective cones is not made; they are often termed the same, even if they belong to the different genera of trees. We are therefore again confronted with cohyponymic transfer.

¹⁷⁷Marzell 1977: 725.

6.4.1. Fruit names with morphological relationship to the tree name

The most often used expressions are compounds with the following elements:

ModE *-cone*: *pine-cone*, *fir-cone*

NHG *-zapfen*: *tannenzapfen*, *fichtenzapfen*, *kiefernzapfen*

Motivation: *Cone* is a loan word of either Fr. *cône* or Lat. *cōnus*, both going back to Gr. *κόνος*.¹⁷⁸ NHG *zapfen*, with the *-n* as oblique case of the weak inflection of the substantive, goes back to MHG *zapfe*, and OHG *zapfo*, and ultimately to Gmc. **tappan*, WG **tappōn*. However, the exact etymology is unclear.¹⁷⁹

Next to the preceding names, the following compounds exist as well:

ModE *fir-apple*¹⁸⁰

Du *pijnappel* 'fir-cone'¹⁸¹

ModE *fir-ball*, *fir-bob* 'fir-apple'¹⁸²

Motivation: Due to the similarity between the cones and fruits, nuts or bobs (cf. 2.4.3.), and little objects like balls, metaphor is the underlying factor in the formation of these names.

6.4.2. Names without morphological relationship to the tree name¹⁸³

ModE *sheeps*, *lammies*

NHG *schäfle*, *lämmle*,

Motivation: In these cases, the transfers from child-language is apparent. Cones are metaphorically compared with the body of animals and, because cones are smaller than the real creatures, terms of endearment, or diminutives, are used.

Marzell mentions a whole list of expressions, most of them based on the comparison with domestic animals such as cows, goats, pigs, cats, chicken, roaster, birds.

178OED 1989: 695; ODEE 1976: 202.

179Kluge/Seebold 1995: 903; Pfeifer 1993: 1591.

180OED1989: 942.

181Marzell 1977: 739. The etymologically related expression ModE *pineapple* used to denote 'fruit of the pine tree, a pine cone, but underwent a shift of meaning from 'pine-cone' to 'pineapple', denoting the tropical fruit of the ananas, cf. OED 1989: 861.

182both listed as 'special combination' of *fir* in OED 1989: 942.

183Marzell 1977: 732.

7. FINAL REMARKS

The aim of the study at hand was to present the lexical items for the concepts of certain trees in the Germanic languages, where they come from, and which mechanisms are used to introduce the various words for the same referent into the vocabulary of a language.

As analyzed in the course of the paper, most of the standard expressions for trees are inherited from Indo-European and lexically constant. Important trees, such as the oak, had and have various synonyms and the choice to coin a lexical item as a name for a particular referent is determined both by semasiological and onomasiological salience. However, we are confronted with a huge portion of unclear etymologies. The reason for that is based on our unclear and fuzzy knowledge of the exact meaning of the underlying word. Furthermore, it can also be noticed that the names of the deciduous trees are far more clear than the ones of the conifers, owing to the fact the similarity of the latter contributes to cohyponymic transfer.

In contrast, the dialect expressions for the given concepts in the individual languages usually do not go back that far. This might be one reason why most of the expressions in popular language can be analyzed and traced back very well. A lot of them are formed by metaphor and metonymy, referring to the trees' characteristics or special usage.

Since this paper is only a minor contribution to the field of onomasiology, not all aspects and questions worth studying can be mentioned. It will, therefore, be necessary to keep on analyzing and discussing further assumptions in order to approach still unsolved etymological problems.

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