SECTION 7. COMPARATIVE AND TYPOLOGICAL LINGUISTICS

BEZPEKA AS A CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR IN THE ETYMOLOGICAL CONTEXT

БЕЗПЕКА ЯК КОНЦЕПТУАЛЬНА МЕТАФОРА У ЕТИМОЛОГІЧНОМУ КОНТЕКСТІ

Bobyr Y*u*. V.
Candidate of Philosophical Sciences,
Associate Professor,
Deputy Head of Foreign
Languages Department,
Yevgeniy Bereznyak Military Academy
Kyiv, Ukraine

Бобир Ю. В.,
кандидат філософських наук,
доцент,
заступник начальника кафедри
іноземних мов
Воєнна академія імені
Євгенія Березняка
м. Київ, Україна

Security (safety) constitutes a fundamental phenomenon of human existence, the essence of which may be elucidated linguistically through the etymological study of the corresponding concept within comprehensive conceptual analysis. In modern Ukrainian, the word *bezpeka* serves as the key lexeme representing this concept. It is of Proto-Slavic origin, as derivatives with the stem **bezpeč-* / **bezpek-* occur across numerous Slavic languages, primarily within the East and West Slavic branches.

Evidently, lexemes with the stem **bezpeč-* / **bezpek-* arose from a prepositional-nominal construction, since all derivatives with *bez-* conform to the same transformational model: *bez + nominal object/Genitive* [4, p. 61]. This prefix is etymologically related to the preposition *bez* 'in the absence of; not having' [8], which is used to indicate the absence of someone or something [5, p. 393]. The preposition *bez* derives from the Proto-Indo-European root **b(h)e / b(h)eĝh* 'outside, without, except' [12; 16].

It may be assumed that the prepositional-nominal construction, for a long time, was in common Slavic use as a descriptive phrase denoting the absence of danger. From the standpoint of word formation, its earliest lexical derivative could have been either a noun or an adjective, since the most productive derivational patterns with *bez-* generate both nominal and adjectival forms [4]. A survey of modern Slavic dictionaries shows that

an adjective formed by the same prefixal-suffixal pattern first appeared in the northern area of the Slavic linguistic continuum and remains current in the following languages: Czech – *bezpečný*, Slovak – *bezpečný*, Polish – *bezpieczny*, Ukrainian – *безпечний*, Belarusian – *бяспечны*, Russian – *беспечный*, Bulgarian – *безпéчен*. In most of these languages, the corresponding nouns were subsequently derived from the adjectives: Czech *bezpečí*, Slovak *bezpečnosť*, and Polish *bezpieczeństwo*. Apparently, the noun arose directly from the prepositional-nominal construction in Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Slovak, remaining in active use only in Ukrainian (*безпека*) and Belarusian (*бяспека*). In Slovak, the variants *bezpeka, bezpek,* and *bezpech* are regarded as archaic [17].

In the mentioned languages, words derived from the prepositional-nominal construction generally have the stem *bezpeč-*. This feature became the basis for interpreting such lexemes as originating from the combination of the preposition *bez* and the noun *peča* 'care, concern' [1, p. 163]. However, several non-linguistic Ukrainian studies offer an alternative explanation linking the root morpheme to the theonym *Pek* (*Пек*) – the Slavic god of the underworld, war, bloodshed, and calamity [2; 6]. Both nouns are etymologically related to the verb **pekti* 'to cook, to bake, to ache', derived from the Proto-Indo-European root pek^w- *(*k^wek^wh\bar{o})* [12, p. 2304] / *peqṷō, i̯ō* [16, p. 920]. In the first interpretation, the original meaning of the prepositional-nominal phrase would have been 'without care, without concern', while in the second it would signify 'without dangers', personified by *Pek*.

The use of *Pek* as the name of a deity is attested only in Ukrainian sources. This casts doubt on the derivation of *bezpeka* from the theonym *Pek*. Nevertheless, it remains plausible that, during a certain historical period, the hypothetical lexeme **pek*, verbalizing the notion of an 'evil mythical being', served as a conceptual metaphor for forces threatening human existence. Consequently, the construction *negation + *pek* would have denoted the opposite situations, when nothing endangered a person. This assumption is supported by the recurring presence, across Indo-European mythological systems, of deities or spirits whose names are phonetically similar to *Pek* and who embody danger, misfortune, or malevolent power.

For instance, in Lithuanian *piktasis* denotes 'a wicked one, a devil' [15]; in Latvian *pūķis* designates 'a supernatural, usually multi-headed crea-ture' [14]. The *Etymological Dictionary of the Baltic Inherited Lexicon* records *pikulas*, originally the Baltic god of the underworld, whose name is rendered in Prussian chronicles as *Picullus, Pickollos, Pykullis, Pecullis,* and *Pecols* [10]. In Sanskrit, the noun पाक *pāka*, in addition to meanings related to 'burning, cooking', refers to 'the name of a demon'; it figures

in one of Indra's names – पाकशासन *pâka-çâsana* 'chastiser of Pāka' [7, p. 537]. Comparable figures occur in Germanic mythology: Icelandic *púki* 'a little devil with horns and a tail' [11], English *Puck* 'a mischievous spirit in English folklore' (Middle English *pouke*, Old English *pūca*) [18], German *Puk* 'a house spirit; name of a devil' [19], Danish *pokker* 'a milder term for the devil, the evil one, Satan', also used as a less strong swear word to express anger, annoyance, contempt or other emotion [9]. A cognate form is found in Celtic languages, e.g., Irish *púca* 'a hobgoblin' [13]. In Greek mythology, the god *Pan (Παν)* may represent a related figure: though phonetically more distant and less overtly malevolent, his mischievous nature, power to incite panic, and grotesque appearance suggest an earlier association with danger. Similarly, the mythic heroine *Pandora (Πανδώρα)*, whose name is conventionally interpreted as 'all-gifted', could also be read as a 'bringer of calamity'. In Italic mythology, *Picus*, a woodland deity and augur, father of Faunus (the Roman analog of Pan), may also belong to this semantic cluster [3].

Given the recurrence of such figures in Indo-European mythologies and folklore, it is reasonable to hypothesize that the prepositional-nominal construction underlying Slavic **bezpeč- / *bezpek-* lexemes, which verbalize the concept of *security (safety)*, originally functioned as a conceptual metaphor wherein the nominal element denoted a deity personifying danger. From a morphological standpoint, this interpretation is supported by the words *безпека, бяспека, bezpeka, bezpek* in Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Slovak. Moreover, the conceptual pattern in which the lexeme denoting *security* consists morphologically of a root referring to threats or misfortunes and a negative prefix is characteristic of many European languages: Greek *ασφάλεια*, Latin *securitas*, Serbian *безбедност*, and Bulgarian *безопасност*.

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