The origin of Latin prōsāpia
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Abstract: it is argued that Latin prōsāpia ‘lineage, stock’ together with sōpiō, -ōnis ‘penis’ (§ 1) goes back to the verbal root found in Vedic sāpāyati ‘to strike’ (§ 2), Ossetic safyn (I.), isaīun (D.) ‘to destroy’ (§ 3), Hittite šap(p)- ‘to hit’ (§ 4) and Greek ἵαπτεηλ ‘to hurt’ (§ 5). The root can be reconstructed as *seh₂p- (aor. *seh₂p- > Hittite šapp-, pres. *se-se₂p- > Greek ἵαπτσ). This root with the basic meaning ‘to hit, to strike’ was also employed metaphorically in the meaning ‘to have sexual intercourse’ which survives in Latin and Iranian (e.g. Balochi šāpag ‘to mount ewe’).

1. Latin prōsāpia denotes a group of persons related by blood, together with their ancestors, and is usually translated as ‘lineage’, ‘kin’, or ‘family’. No etymology for this word is on the books; in fact, prōsāpia is not even listed in the most recent Latin etymological dictionary. In this paper I will discuss the semantic and morphological history of this word and then attempt to trace its origin to a hitherto unrecognized PIE verbal root evidence for which is found in four different Indo-European languages.

1.1 Prōsāpia is an archaic Latin word that had become obsolete by Cicero’s time (Cic. Tim. 39: “ut utamur veteri verbo…”)[2] and was censured by Quintilian who deprecated it as tasteless and antiquated.[3] The meaning ‘parentage’ is clear from the two passages in which prōsāpia is used by Plautus:[4]

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[4] Havet (1901: 298) conjectured a form of prōsāpia at Ter. Phorm. 395 where the mss. have progeniem vosstram usque ab avo atque atavo preferens (so printed in the OCT text by Kauer–Lindsay–Skutsch); Havet pointed out that prōgeniēs is unlikely to be used in the meaning ‘descent, ancestry’ (as opposed to ‘offspring, progeny’), but his concern is perhaps unwarranted in view of Lucil. 849–50 (Marx) progeniem antiquam qua est Maximus Quintus and other citations assembled in the OLD s.u. prōgeniēs 2.
Merc. 634

rogitares quis esset aut unde esset, qua prosapia
You should have asked who he was or where he was from, from what family

Curc. 393

de Coculitum prosapia te esse arbitror, nam ei sunt unoculi
Coclitum mss., Varr. Ling. Lat. 7.71.3: Coculitum Lanciotti et de Melo post Ribbeck
I take it you come from the lineage of Cyclopes; they are one-eyed.

In Roman historiography *prōsāpia* is often used in descriptions of distinguished parentage; in particular, the phrase *vetus prosapia*, found already in Cato (*Orig*. 1.29 Peter⁵), seems to have enjoyed certain popularity: it recurs in Sallust (*Iug*. 85.10), who, as was observed already in antiquity, frequently adopted Catonian vocabulary⁶, as well as in Suetonius (*Galba* 2) and Justin (14.6.11). The phrase *mea vetus prosapia* is also found in the prologue of Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses* (1.1.3 Helm), where the identity of the speaker unfortunately remains a much debated question.⁷ Apuleius, with his penchant for archaisms, was in fact so fond of the word *prōsāpia* that he used it on another seven occasions.⁸ Finally, there is one epigraphic attestation

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⁵ The exact quotation as transmitted via Nonius Marcellus (p. 94, 25 Lindsay) is *veteres prosapia* ‘ancient by their lineage’. This wording was accepted by some editors (Chassignet, fr. 27: “vieux par la ligne”), Cugusi, fr. 32: “antichi per stirpe”), while others emended the phrase in different ways, e.g. gen. sg. *veteris prosapiae* (Jordan 1860: 9) or abl. sg. *vetere prosapia* (Schröder 1971: 197), see Scarsi 1978: 246 for a full report. Other changes that have been proposed presuppose a fifth declension *prōsāpiēs*, probably prompted by the fact that in the mss. of Nonius the lemma that contains the fragment from Cato begins with *prosapies generis longitudo*, which, however, Onions plausibly emended into *prosapia est* (printed by Lindsay); it should be noted that the evidence for *prōsāpiēs* is otherwise virtually absent (abl. *prosapie* Prob. app. gramm. iv.194.26), even though an analogical formation triggered by the nearly synonymous *prōgeniēs* could of course have been created at any time. (Till’s work on Cato’s language (1935: 4) is rather unhelpful in regard to *prōsāpia*).

⁶ Quint. 8.3.29. That Sallust imitated Cato specifically in the use of *prōsāpia* is assumed e.g. by Skard 1956: 81.

⁷ This is the only instance of *prōsāpia* referring to place of origin rather than parentage: “Attic Hymettus and the Corinthian Isthmus and Spartan Taenarus are my origin of old”. However, the geographical references here are surely not literal and should probably be understood as the author’s desire to emphasize his literary pedigree and his indebtedness to the Greek writers of the past (see Innes 2001; for an even more figurative reading (the *Metamorphoses* themselves claim an origin in a Greek book) see Harrison 1990).

⁸ Consistently about family background: *Met*. 3.11; 6.23; 8.2; 9.35; 10.18; *De Deo Socr*. 23.23; *Ap*. 18.12. I have found Scobie 1975: 73 and Keulen 2007: 79 to be the most helpful on Apuleius’ use of *prōsāpia*; on Apuleius’ archaizing bent see especially Callebat 1964: 348; 1994: 1643–49 (esp. 1644 n. 153 on *prōsāpia*).
of prōsāpia from near Metaponto in Lucania: Occius hic situs est Mani prosapia Festus (CLE 370 = CIL 10.8089).

1.2 Latinists have long compared prōsāpia to the rare word sōpiō, -ōnis ‘penis’, likewise neglected in the etymological literature.⁹ This word is only known from a few sources and in view of its obscurity it may be helpful to review them all.¹⁰

Our first source is Catullus: in the poem “Salax taberna”, replete with obscene vocabulary¹¹, the lyric hero threatens to mark the bar as a brothel by covering it with obscene phallic drawings¹²:

Cat. 37.9–10 Kroll

_Atqui putate: namque totius vobis Frontem tabernae sopionibus scribam_

Go on — keep thinking it: for I’ll draw up the front of the whole shop with **pricks**

Next, ³rd cent. AD grammarian Marius Sacerdos quotes an anonymous verse containing an insult leveled at Pompey (possibly, from a military song or some other *carmen populare*) and proceeds to explain sōpiō as ‘penis’:¹³

GL 6.461.30–462.3 Keil

_illud de Pompeio, qui coloris erat rubei, sed animi inuerecundi, “quem non pudet et rubet non est homo sed sopio.”_⁻¹⁴

_Sopio autem est aut minium aut piscis robeus aut penis._

This is about Pompey who had red complexion and a shameless character: “who does not feel shame or blush, he is not a person, but a **prick**.”

_Sopio_ means either red pigment or red fish or penis

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⁹ Osthoff apud Schöll 1880: 496.
¹⁰ See also Adams 1982: 62–64; André 1991: 171.
¹¹ _mentulas_ ‘penises’ (v. 3), _confutuere_ ‘have sex’ (v. 5), _irrumare_ ‘perform oral sex’ (v. 7), etc.
¹² For a slightly different interpretation see Syndikus (1984: 1, 210, 213), who argues that Catullus applies the word _taberna_ meaning ‘brothel’ to a private house (Lesbia’s?).
¹³ The best and most complete discussion can be found in Lunelli 1969: 125–42.
¹⁴ The mss. have _ropio_ (the scribal mistake was probably caused by the resemblance of Insular r and s, see Schmeling 2011: 65).
Next come two graffiti from Pompeii that together form an amusing if cryptic semiliterate exchange that is best left untranslated:\(^\text{15}\):

\textit{CIL 4.1700}

diced nobis Sineros et \textit{sopio} \textit{<est\textsuperscript{2} >}

where a second hand has added

\textit{ut merdas edatis qui scripseras sopionis}

Lastly, there is a passage in Petronius where F. Schöll (1880: 488 n.30) conjectured \textit{sopionibus} for \textit{†sopitionibus} of the mss.:

Petron. \textit{Sat. 22 Müller}

\textit{Cum Asyclytos gravatus tot malis in somnum laberetur, illa quae iniuria depulsa fuerat ancilla totam faciem eius fuligine longa perfricuit, et non sentientis labra umerosque sopi\textsuperscript{2}t\textsuperscript{2}onibus pinxit.}

Asyntlos was so worn out with all he had gone through he could not keep his eyes open a moment longer, and the waiting-maid, whom he had scorned and slighted, now proceeded to daub his face all over with streaks of soot, and bepaint his lips and shoulders with \textit{pricks}\(^\text{2}\) as he lay unconscious.

Schöll’s conjecture has been widely accepted, e.g. by K. Müller, and recently by G. Schmeling (2011: 65) who translates \textit{sopionibus} by ‘phallic symbols’.\(^\text{16}\)

This exhausts the evidence for \textit{sōpiō}, -ōnis ‘penis’: each of the three passages above (leaving aside the conjectured reading in Petronius) is beset with philological problems of its own, but it will be hard to sweep all three attestations under the carpet. One is left with the firm impression that the word existed; its meager attestation should be explained solely by its vulgar character.

\textbf{1.3} There is little to suggest that \textit{prōsāpia} was felt relatable to \textit{sōpiō} at some synchronic level,\(^\text{17}\) but it is certainly possible to connect these two words with each other etymologically. H.

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\(^{15}\) The inscription was first signaled by Sonny (1898); see Väänänen 1937: 97.

\(^{16}\) Perhaps some sort of sexual stimulation magic is involved.

\(^{17}\) Two arguments have been advanced in favor of the view that \textit{prōsāpia} was perceived as a vulgar word, but neither is quite compelling. First, E. Kraut (1881: 3) suggested that Sallust’s choice of the word \textit{prōsāpia} (\textit{Iug.} 85.10) was due to the fact that the speaker is the ill-educated Marius; however, this may well be a matter of irony rather than anything else, as already already surmised by Fighiera (1896: 36): Marius is speaking about some other hypothetical candidate, “a man of ancient lineage and many
Osthoff, who was the first to argue that sōpiō is related to prōsāpia, assumed that both words were derived from a root meaning ‘to beget’. Semantic parallels are ubiquitous: for instance, the root *ĝenh₁- (Latin gignere) is ultimately the source of Latin prōgeniēs and English kin, on the one hand, and Class. Sanskrit prajanana- ‘penis’, on the other hand.

But there is another possibility: kinship at Rome being patrilineal, it is easy to conceive of prōsāpia as a term that represented a specifically male-to-male line of descent, the semantics of male semen being central to its meaning. Here, too, parallels are easy to find, e.g. Old Persian ciça- ‘lineage’, Avestan ciθra- ‘origin’, ‘semen’ (from ‘white stuff’) or Italian semenza meaning both ‘seed, semen’ and ‘stock, lineage’. It is therefore plausible to assume that prōsāpia and sōpiō go back to a root the meaning of which was related not to birth, but rather to sexual intercourse, witness Old English fæsl and OHG fasel ‘progeny, offspring’ (Proto-Germanic *fasula-) that eventually continue PIE *pes- ‘futuere’.

1.4 From the formal point of view prōsāpia and sōpiō can be easily collapsed under a common root *sāp- (which in view of the rare ablaut *ā / *ō is best rewritten as *seh₂p-). The likeliest derivational analysis of prōsāpia would be to assume that the word is originally a deverbal abstract, derived from a prefixed verb such as *pro-sāpāre (cf. invidia ‘ill-will’ from ancestral portraits, but no campaigns”, whom the senate might choose instead of him to conduct the war against Jugurtha (Lebek (1970: 311) points out the artful antithesis between veteris prosapiae ac multarum imaginum and nullius stipendi at the end of the description). Secondly, it has recently been suggested by A. Richlin (2005: 102 n. 393) that “from the lineage of Coclites” (viz. Cyclopes) at Pl. Curc. 393 contains a sexual double entendre: Lyco addresses Curculio as “one-eyed” which was one of the Roman ways of describing a penis. (Cf. Mart. 2.33 cur non basio te, Philaeni? Iusca es. / Haec qui basiat, o Philaeni, fellat “why don’t I kiss you, Philaenis? You’re one-eyed. A man who kisses these things, Philaenis, sucks”). This is not implausible, but one would perhaps go too far by assuming that this pun was precisely the reason why Plautus chose prōsāpia over other words for ‘kin, lineage’ such as stirps or genus.

18 Compare Beltrami’s (1998: 17–18) remark on the semantics of prōsāpia: “esso sembra perciò specificamente indicare la stirpe in quanto linea agnatiaria, che si riproduce di generazione in generazione, sempre contraddistinta dal fatto di costituire la materializzazione di un medesimo sangue maschile (cioè, seme) che si perpetua”.

19 E.g. dātarə kuua.ciθra zí hənti iristanəm uruanən “O creator, of what origin then are the souls of the dead?” (Hādoxt Nask = Yt. 22.39), see Hîntze 2009.

20 Cf. Greek λευκόν μένος.

21 Cf. Dante’s famous considerate la vostra semenza (Inf. 26.118).

22 Osthoff had originally compared Gothic frasts ‘child’, but a host of other etymologies is available for this word (see Orel 2003: 112 for references).
invideō ‘feel hostility’)\textsuperscript{23}, where the preverb had the most basic meaning ‘forth’, and the verbal stem meant either ‘gignere’ or ‘futuere’, ‘semen emittere’.

As far as the morphological analysis of sōpiō goes, there are several possibilities\textsuperscript{24}, out of which three main scenarios have to be considered:

1. sōpiō- is a Catō type derivative made from adj. *soh₂pijo- itself derived from an o-stem nomen agentis *soh₂pó-, cf. *pougo- ‘piercer’ → *pougiyo- → pūgiō ‘dagger’.

2. sōpiō- is a possessive denominal derivative with the suffix *-h₁on- (“Hoffmann’s suffix”) *soh₂pi-h₁on-, cf. restiō ‘dealer in rope’ (Plaut. +) from restis ‘rope’\textsuperscript{25}; this analysis presupposes i-stem *soh₂pi- as the starting point of the derivation.\textsuperscript{26}

3. sōpiō- is a concretized verbal abstract\textsuperscript{27} *soh₂pih₁-(o)n-, derived from an adnominal participle-like form *soh₂pih₁, itself originally instr.sg. of subst. verbal abstract *soh₂pi-, cf. regiō, legiō, Umbrian legin- ‘troop’.\textsuperscript{28}

The choice between these options is not easy: in particular, it has to be borne in mind that several other Latin names for body parts show the same n-stem suffix, cf. mentō ‘chin’, tālō

\textsuperscript{23} Other options are less likely: (1) prepositional governing compound, substantivized as a feminine (after familia) would require positing a nominal phrase *prō sāp- ‘in (front of) *sāp-’ which is difficult semantically and morphologically; (2) a deadjectival abstract of the type concordiā ‘harmonious’ is excluded by the absence of pro as an adjectival prefix; (3) a denominational formation (cf. militiā ‘military service’ from mīles ‘soldier’) is possible, but the further analysis of nominal *sāp- is uncertain.

\textsuperscript{24} On this class of nouns see the useful monograph Gaide 1988.

\textsuperscript{25} This option was chosen by Osthoff apud Schöll 1880: 496, citing cūria ‘one of 30 divisions of Roman citizens’ : cūriō ‘priest, presiding over a cūria’.

\textsuperscript{26} This scenario may in theory also involve a thematic stem *soh₂pijo-\textsuperscript{m}, but while there is just as little evidence for an i-stem *soh₂pi-, as there is for *soh₂pijō-, the o-apophony would make a reconstruction of an acrostatic i-stem somewhat likelier.

\textsuperscript{27} There are ample parallels for a scenario under which a word for genitalia is a secondarily concretized verbal abstract made from the root denoting a certain physical (and by extension, sexual) activity, e.g. Vedic *sardi- (in sārdigrdi- lit. ‘vagina-penis’) derived from the root *serd- ‘futuere’ (Hittite šart- ‘rub’, see Melchert 2002) or Latin pēnis, if it continues an abstract *pes-ni- made to the root *pes-, reflected in Hittite peš(š)- ‘to rub’ (so J. Schindler apud Pinault 1979: 32; but see also de Vaan 2008: 458 who views the meaning ‘tail’ (Naev.+) as original and prefers a derivation from *petsni-). In fact, PIE *peses- ‘penis’ (Greek ἴχνος, Vedic pāsas-) may have originally been a verbal noun made from the root of Hittite peš(š)- ‘to rub’ (so Oettinger 1979: 327; for alternative derivations of peš(š)- see Kloekhorst 2008: 669–70).

\textsuperscript{28} Nussbaum 2006, cited by Weiss 2009; see also García Ramón 2007: 291 et passim on Latin cortumiō ‘slice of land’. This type of -iōn-stems would be expected to have feminine gender in Latin, but for the word with the meaning ‘penis’ it is easy to imagine a change of gender (cf. Venus, f., originally a neuter stem).
‘ankle’ and especially testō ‘testicle’ and culiō ‘testicle’. This said, the first option (with an agent noun *soh₂pó- as the starting point) in my opinion provides the most satisfactory explanation.

1.5 However, there is no root *sāp- or *seh₂p- on the books that would provide a suitable meaning (viz. either ‘gignere’ or ‘futuere’). And yet the evidence for precisely such a root is available in no less than four Indo-European languages. The rest of this paper will be concerned with this evidence.

2. The only etymological proposal connecting prōsāpia and sōpiō to material outside Latin is due to H. Osthoff, who compared the Latin words to Sanskrit noun sāpa- ‘penis’ and the verbal stem sāpāyati ‘futuere’. But Osthoff did not re-examine the passage in which the Vedic hapax sāpāyati is attested; it turns out that the gloss ‘futuere’ which Osthoff took over from the St.Petersburg Dictionary is not beyond doubt.

The participle sāpāyan- is attested in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa, in a yājyā to Indra Vaimṛdha, remarkable for featuring one of the few Vedic occurrences of the verb yābhati ‘to have sexual intercourse’:

TB 2.4.6.4.9–5.5 (~ ĀśŚS 2.10.14)

\[
\begin{align*}
10 & \text{sákūtim indra sácyutim} & \text{Bring us, o Indra, a lustful (woman),} \\
& \text{sácyutim jaghánacuyutim} & \text{moving, moving, shaking her butt,} \\
& \text{kanāṭkābhāṃ na ābhara} & \text{shining like gold. Like someone who is} \\
2 & \text{prayapsyāṃ iva sakthyāu} & \text{going to bring the penis (yabh-) into the two thighs,} \\
& \text{vī na indra mṛdho jahi} & \text{smash aside our enemies, o Indra (RV 10.152.4),} \\
4 & \text{kāṇīkhunad iva sāpāyan} & \text{s.-ing as if k.-ing.} \\
& \text{abhī nāḥ siṣṭutim naya} & \text{Lead us to good praise.} \\
6 & \text{prajāpatiḥ strīyām yāśaḥ} & \text{Prajāpati put the penis in the vagina,} \\
& \text{muṣkāyor adadhāt sāpam} & \text{the glory in the women.}
\end{align*}
\]


kāṇīkhunad in line 4 (connected by Sāyaṇa’s commentary with khan- ‘dig’) is a nonce-form. It is usually emended to kāṇīkhudad on the basis of the parallel text in the ĀśŚŚ that has

\footnote{Osthoff was initially approached by his Heidelberg colleague F. Schöll, confronted with the reading sōptōnibus in Catullus 37, who wanted to know if the word could be real. Osthoff’s idea was first published apud Schöll 1880: 496 and then as Osthoff 1895.}

\footnote{lit.: between the two labia.}
canīkhudad yathā sapam\textsuperscript{31}; the form would then be an intensive participle made from the root khud- which means to ‘insert (a penis)’.\textsuperscript{32}

The TB passage, however, is still far from being absolutely clear.\textsuperscript{33} K. Hoffmann restored the original text as kānīkhudad yathā sāpam ‘wie einer, der immer wieder das Glied stößt’, assuming that the entire pāda 4 in TB transmission is corrupt (1976: 572). Note, however, that \textsuperscript{32} sāpam (sapham in the ĀśŚS) is a \textit{lectio facilior}, since sāpa- is mentioned in the lines immediately following those under discussion, and sāpāyant- must have been sufficiently unclear to be exposed to supersession.\textsuperscript{34} It behoves us therefore to try to make some sense of the transmitted TB text \textsuperscript{+}kānīkhudad iva sāpāyan.

The entire passage is replete with sex talk and in particular, the main clause ví na indra mṛdho jahi is preceded by yet another \textit{iva}-phrase (prayapsyānn iva sakthyāu); it is therefore no wonder that the universally accepted meaning of sāpāyant- is ‘futuens’.\textsuperscript{35} This translation has clearly been influenced by the remarkable similarity between sāpāyati and the noun sāpa- ‘penis’. But this interpretation of sāpāyati creates more questions than answers:

- if \textit{iva} is used here as a comparative particle (‘as if, like’), two syntactic approaches are theoretically possible:
  - a complex simile kānīkhudad iva sāpāyan could stand in apposition to ví ... jahi (in this case sāpāyan [\textit{iva}] kānīkhunat would have to be viewed as a sequence of two asyndetically conjoined participles); however, there already is another simile adjoined to the verb in the main clause, namely, prayapsyānn iva sakthyāu;
  - \textsuperscript{34} kānīkhudad iva could be a one-word simile in apposition to sāpāyan — but if kānīkhudat- and sāpāyant- are essentially synonymous, what would be the rationale behind the comparison?

\textsuperscript{31} See Mylius 1972: 132 n. 559, Hoffmann 1976: 572. The form kānīkhudad is of course still not “ideal”: one would expect \textsuperscript{+}cēkāvīkhudad.

\textsuperscript{32} RV 10.101.12ab: kāpṛṇ naraḥ kapṛthām ūd dadhātana / codāyata khudāta vājasātaye ‘The penis, o men, erect the penis, thrust it, insert it for the winning of booty!’ Mark Hale pointed out to me that this root may also be contained in the first member of Avestan kū.nārī- ‘prostitute’ (V. 8.31; 32).

\textsuperscript{33} “unintelligible stuff” (Bloomfield–Edgerton 1930: 150).

\textsuperscript{34} Note also the alliteration between yapsyān and sāpāyan.

\textsuperscript{35} Böhtlingk and Roth list the form under a separate entry sap-\textsubscript{2} (P.W. 7.656); S. Jamison, too, thinks that sāpāyant-, albeit “obscure”, is unrelated to the causative of sap-\textsubscript{1} ‘handle, caress’ (1981: 219 n. 3). Ch. Werba, however, lists sāpāyant- under the forms of the more frequent root sap- (1997: 251–52).
• if īva is used here as an attenuating particle (‘as it were’, ‘in some way’), as commonly in the Brāhmaṇas, we still do not get a satisfactory reading of the passage: assuming that kānīkhudād is not intended to be understood in its strict sense, it is unclear what the purpose would be of putting the form next to its synonym sāpāyan, there being nothing imprecise about the verbal notion conveyed by khud-.

It appears that kānīkhudād īva sāpāyan can hardly be given a satisfactory syntactic and semantic interpretation under the assumption that the participle sāpāyant- means ‘futuere’. But what if it does not?

Let us start with what is certain about the passage. The meaning of prayapsyānn īva sakthyāu and kānīkhudād īva is beyond doubt: both similes are expressly sexual. The main clause ví na indra mfджho jahi “smash aside our enemies, o Indra” is also clear. If sāpāyan is unlikely to convey the same idea as prayapsyān and kānīkhudat, then may be it means the same thing as ví ... jahi? In fact, once this hypothesis is adopted, the structure of the sentence becomes transparent: the verb in the main clause (ví ... jahi ‘smash aside!’) is modified by a participial form with approximately the same meaning (‘striking’? ‘hitting’?), and both verbal forms are provided with sexual similes:

matrix clause: [ví na indra mfджho jahi
  o Indra, smash our enemies,
  [prayapsyānn īva sakthyāu]]
  like someone who is going to yabh- in the two thighs

subordinate clause: [sāpāyan
  striking [them],
  [kānīkhudād īva]]
  like someone who is inserting the penis over and over again

If this interpretation of the intricate poetic syntax is correct, Vedic sāpāya-ī has nothing to do with the noun sāpa- ‘penis’. Separating one from the other may seem to violate the law of parsimony, but in fact a closer look at the attestations of sāpa- reveals the somewhat dubious status of this word: in Vedic mantras, sāpa- is only attested in two adjacent TB stanzas (2.4.6.5.7; 6.1) which happen to be right after the verse where sāpāyant- is used. The remaining attestations are in the Brāhmaṇa-glosses on a mantra used in the Pravargya ceremony: the mantra goes tvāṣṭṛmantas tvā sapema “possessing Tvaṣṭṛ, we wish to dedicate ourselves (sapema) to you” and the Brāhmaṇa “explains” this this as sāpād dhi prajāḥ prājāyante “because from the
penis progeny is produced‖ (MS 3.7.7). The word sápa- is not found in the later language, nor is it continued in any of the Modern Indo-Aryan languages. It seems that sápa- ‘penis’ is an inner-Vedic creation. It could be a product of brahmanic creativity, owing its existence to the erotic meanings of sap-1 ‘handle, caress’; but more likely sápa- is a tabuistic metathesis of *pása- (~ PIE *peses-), as Yāska had thought (Nirukta 5.16).

To sum up, Vedic may provide evidence for a verbal stem sāpáya-īi denoting a violent action of some sort (‘strike, hit, destroy’). The link to Latin prōsāpia and sōpiō can still be maintained: formally, Vedic sāpáya-īi is compatible with the reconstruction *seh₂p-, proposed above for the Latin material. As for the semantics, only one additional step is required, namely, an assumption of a trivial development from ‘hit’, ‘strike’, ‘bang’ to ‘futuere’. However, since the Vedic evidence is limited to a single form found in a very difficult passage, the reconstruction *seh₂p- ‘strike, hit’ remains without sufficient foundation, unless other cognates can be identified.

3. One such cognate is found in Iranian: this is the Ossetic verb safyn (Iron.), isafun (Digor) ‘destroy, ruin, kill; NT ἀπόλλομι’. For this verb Abaev (1979: 10–11) proposed a reconstruction *uī-šāp- which is formally unassailable: (1) Proto-Iranian initial *u is lost in Ossetic before *i; (2) initial *i- is lost in Iron (but not in Digor);38 (3) the root vowel must have been long, since a short *ā before a single consonant would have been reflected as -æ-.39 Abaev further posited a connection to Sanskrit kṣap- ‘destroy’, assuming a “thorn”-type correspondence between the Sanskrit kṣ- and Iranian *š-. This cannot be right: Sanskrit kṣāpāyati is the causative of kṣi- ‘destroy’ with a secondary “hiatus-filling” -p- (cf. dāpāyati ‘makes give’, hāpāyati ‘makes open’, etc.) and thus surely an Indic innovation.

36 Similarly KS 24.4 and KaṭhĀ 2.115: áto hīmāḥ prajāḥ prājāyante: prajānanāya “from here progeny is produced: this serves to produce progeny” (see Oertel 1942: 43; Witzel 2004: lvii).

37 sápa- is connected to sap-1 by Houben 1991: 120 n. 81 and EWAia 699.

38 Compare D. igosun vs. I. qusyn ‘to hear’ < *uī-gauš-.

39 Similar conclusions were independently reached by I. Gershevitch, who in a paper from 1977 reconstructed Proto-Iranian *sap- ‘sweep, wipe’. Central to Gershevitch’s contribution was the idea that the same root was contained in Younger Avestan višāpa-, an epithet (or a name) of a snake in N. 30, known also from Armenian (višap) and Georgian (vešap-), see Gippert 1993: 317–29 with references. Whether or not this epiteth should really be analyzed as ‘wiping away’ (Gershevitch) or ‘smashing aside’ (according to the reconstruction of the root *seh₂p- put forth in the present paper), rather than ‘having venom for water’ (*uīša-āp-), ‘achieving through venom’ (*uīša-āp-) or ‘having venomous sap’ (*uīš-sāp-) is impossible to prove.
Compromised by Abaev’s implausible etymology, Ossetic safyn / isafun has nearly escaped the attention of etymologists.\textsuperscript{40} Now the s- in the Ossetic verb can also go back to *ś-, a reflex of Indo-Iranian *s, “rukified” in the position after *i. Under this hypothesis safyn / isafun ‘destroy, kill’ may continue *ūi-šäpa- or *ūi-šäpaja- made from PIE *seh₂p- ‘to hit’, thus possibly an exact correspondence to Vedic sāpāya-\textsuperscript{ii} ‘strike, slay, hit’ discussed above.\textsuperscript{41}

The only problem spot in this analysis is the root-final -f which cannot go back to Indo-Iranian *p.\textsuperscript{42} However, following Gershevitch (1977: 66), we can explain -f as a result of paradigmatic leveling to the passive-intransitive stem *ūi-šaf-ja- (safyn (I.), isafun (D.) ‘to die, to perish’) where f from preconsonantal *p would be lautgesetzlich. One parallel case of precisely such levelling can be seen in the descendants of Iranian *Hap- (YAvestan apaiia-, pass. āfiia-) that in Ossetic come out as afun (D.), ājafun (I.) ‘reach’.\textsuperscript{43}

Two other Iranian cognates of this verb offer an interesting twist on the present discussion. Gershevitch (1977) has argued that the Ossetic verb was related to Balochi šāpag\textsuperscript{44} ‘to mount a ewe’, and Filippone 2006: 20 added Minābi šāfidan ‘futuere’. These forms indeed look surprisingly similar to the Ossetic material, even though an aphaeresis of *i- is out of the question in this case, and the initial “rukified” š- must have spread to the simplex from the

\textsuperscript{40} The verb is not found in the LIV or EWAia; Cheung 2007: 335 lists safyn / isafun with a question mark as a possible cognate of Chr. Sogdian psyp ‘slander’ and Sanskrit šap- ‘slander’, but the semantic development is hard to substantiate, as Cheung himself concedes.

\textsuperscript{41} I forego the question of the morphological status of *sVh₃p-eje/o- (o-grade iterative? lengthened-grade intensive? an inner-Indic replacement of *sāpati?). Note that the transmitted accent is irrelevant as it could have been retracted at any time: a verb with the meaning ‘futuere’ would have to be transitive and as such would have been attracted by the robust group of -āya- transitives.

\textsuperscript{42} *p would have given -b- > -v- in intervocalic position, cf. tavyn / tavun ‘to warm up’ < *tāpāja-, Avestan ā.tapaiia-.

\textsuperscript{43} Under the reconstruction *seh₂p- the stem *ūi-šaf-ja- would itself need to be secondary. One possible explanation is as follows: passive *(ūi-)šāp-ja- ( > *(ūi-)šāf-ja-) ‘to perish’ was analogically built to inherited *(ūi-)šāp-a(ja)- ‘to destroy’, perhaps matching synonymous *mr-jā- ‘to die’. Later in the history of Iranian the vowel quantity was adjusted through a four-part proportion *mrāja- ‘to kill’ : *marja- ‘to die’ (Ossetic (I.) mryn : melyn) = *(ūi-)šaf-ja- ‘to destroy’ : X, X = *(ūi-)šaf-ja- ‘to perish’. (The -a/- -a- ablaut is highly characteristic of the verbal system of Ossetic and other Modern Iranian languages where the historically short vowel is found in intransitive or passive forms, while -a- from *ā marks transitive verbs; at the origin of this productive system are the Indo-Iranian causatives in *-aža- with a long vowel in the root).

\textsuperscript{44} Eastern Balochi šāfay with fricatives in place of stops may reflect the influence of Modern Persian (see Korn 2005: 250 with references).
compounded form.\textsuperscript{45} As for the semantics of šāpag and šāfidan, it is easy to maintain the etymological relationship between these forms and *seh₂-p- ‘hit’, since the assumption of a semantic development from ‘strike’, etc. to ‘futuere’ comes at no cost.

What makes these forms particularly interesting for our purposes is that they provide a neat parallel to Latin prōsāpia and sōpiō: despite the fact that Vedic sāpāya- does not seem to have been an obscene term after all, other descendants of the root *seh₂-p- provide the necessary aischrological sense.

4. The next ingredient of the proposed reconstruction is the Hittite verb šapzi, šappanzi. The exact meaning of this verb is unclear, and it might be useful to briefly summarize the research situation regarding this verb.

J. Friedrich’s widely accepted translation of šap(p)- is ‘scrape, peel, wash’.\textsuperscript{46} This analysis is based on the Luvianism šappatta which demonstrably means ‘peeled off (the bark)’. While there is no reason to doubt this interpretation of the Luvoid form, it has given rise to conclusions more far-reaching that it can justify: in particular, N. Oettinger has argued that Hittite šap(p)- is likewise a Luvianism with the same meaning ‘scrape’ or ‘peel’ as šappatta.\textsuperscript{47} H. Güterbock, however, argued that šap(p)- rather means ‘hit, slap’.\textsuperscript{48} If Güterbock could be shown to be right, Hittite šapzi, šappanzi ‘hit’ could be compared to Ossetic safyn / isafun ‘destroy’ and Vedic sāpāya-‘strike’.

4.1 In view of the uncertainty of the meaning, a reassessment of the evidence seems in order. To start with the least helpful context, šapp- describes the actions performed by the priest on the king’s hands in the ritual of the festival of Nerik (CTH 645.6):

\textsuperscript{45} J. Cheung’s (2007: 175) ingenious derivation of šāpag from *fra-(H)jab- (PIE *h₂iəb₃-) lacks conviction in view of the phonological problem of -p- in the place of expectable -b-.
\textsuperscript{47} Oettinger 1979: 383.
\textsuperscript{48} Güterbock 1967: 141–42. See the excellent presentation of the evidence in CHD–S 201–3 with ample references (to which Kassian, Korolëv and Sideltsev 2002: 638–39 should now be added). The editors of the CHD have wisely adopted an agnostic position regarding the meaning of the verb.
KUB 25.36 i 12'-13' ( = v 11–13 = 24–25); OH²/MS³

[mân¹ LÚ GUDU₁₂ ma]ldawar
[zinnizzi nu L]UGAL-un QA-TE⁴⁸ MES-ŠU šapzi
when the GUDU-priest finishes reciting,
he šapzi the king’s hands

The translation ‘purifies’ (e.g. Haas 1970: 200) is essentially a fall-back option in the absence of any clues as to the meaning of the verb šap(p)-.⁴⁹

4.2 šapp- also describes the actions of the “Old Woman” in the Hittite-Hurrian Allaiturahḫi ritual (CTH 780):

KUB 27.29 i 9
[(n=an MUNUS ŠU.G)] 50 šapzi
The ‘Old Woman’ šapzi him, and <she goes> to the bathhouse

Here again ‘purifies’⁵¹ is the translation of least resistance since the text is peppered with parkumu- and other such terms (e.g. šuppiyahḫ-). However, insufficient notice seems to have been taken of the fact that the description of the ritual continues with a mention of GIŠ alkištanuš, viz. ‘boughs’ or ‘branches’:

[(MUNUS) ŠU.GI GIŠ alkištanuš ANA ALAM⁴⁸ MES GAM-an dāi
The ‘Old Woman’ puts down branches beside the statues/images

If the GIŠ alkištanuš ‘branches’ are to be understood as the instrument that executes the action described by the verb šapzi, one is reminded of other passages where participants in the ritual are subjected to beating, for instance, in the description of the (h)išuwas-festival:

KBo 15.37 v 1–5 (CTH 628; NH)

Lt[(Ú SANG)]A GIŠ GIDRU.ḪI.A DINGIR-LIM anda ḫūlal[i]yanda=pat dāi
nu LUGAL-uš ANA DINGIR-LIM 3-ŠU UŠKEN
LÚ SANGA=ya=an IŠTU GIŠ GIDRU.ḪI.A DINGIR-LIM iškiša 3-ŠU wallyzi
The priest takes the wrapped-together staffs of the deity.
The king bows three times to the deity.
The priest strikes him on the back with the staffs of the deity three times.⁵²

⁵⁰ šanzi corrected to šapzi by the duplicates: KBo 23.23:56, KUB 27.29, KUB 59.73:6–7 (ed. Haas and Wegner 1988, nr. 2 rev. 74’, nr. 19 i 38 and nr. 20 6’).
⁵¹ ‘reinigt’ (Haas and Thiel 1978: 135).
4.3 This interpretation of \( n=an \) šapzi as an act of ritual beating is supported by another text where the verb šapp- is found construed with the noun meaning ‘stick’, namely, in the ritual for a royal prince (CTH 647.14):

HFAC 49.3’; NH

\[ \ldots \text{DUMU.} \] LUGAL GLŠPA-it šapzi

((s)he) šapzi the [pri]nce with a stick (Güterbock 1967: 141): ‘hits’

4.4 A different use of šapp- is found in the funerary ritual (CTH 450 II 2):

KUB 39.45 obv. 10–11 (= KUB 39.6 i 9–10)

\[ \text{INA UD.9.KAM GA š[appa]nzi makkuy[n]} \] šappuwaš GIŠ-r[u
AŠR]A IŠTU KŪ.BABBAR ḫali[ššiyan]

On the ninth day they šappanzi milk.

The churning vessel and the šappuwaš wood are inlaid in [x] places with silver

As Güterbock has argued, here the verb can, too, be translated as ‘hit, beat’, viz. ‘churn milk’ (šappuwaš tāru thus means ‘churner’). This technical meaning can further be illustrated by the use of the stem šappešk- in the instructions for temple officials (CTH 264; pre NH/NS):

KUB 13.4 iv 41–43 (= KUB 13.17 iv 4′-6′)

\[ \text{našma màn DINIR-LIM-ni kuedani EZEN}_4 \text{GA šēšzi GA kuwapi šappeškanzi} n=an=kan \]
\[ \text{lē šakuwantariyanutteni} n=an=šī iyattin \]

or if for some god there is a milk festival, when they šappeškanzi the milk, do not neglect it (Güterbock 1967: 141: let it be idle), prepare it for him!

Summing up, one can see that the meaning ‘hit, strike’ posited for the verb šap(p)- by Güterbock is essentially unavoidable for the contexts cited under 4.3 and 4.4 above, while it works for the examples in 4.1 and 4.2 at least just as well as Friedrich’s ‘scrape, wash’.

4.5 We can return to the purported Luvian origin of šapp-.\(^{53}\) There is no doubt that šappatta\(^\text{(i)purma}\) , attested in the Hittite version of the epic of Gilgamesh, means ‘peeled

\[^{53}\text{Oettinger 1979: 383: ‘keil.-luw. Prät. Sg. 3 šappatta (Gl.) ‘schälte ab’ zu einem heth. Stamm šapp-‘mi führte’. Despite several dissenting voices (Goetze 1947: 319 n. 71; Melchert 1993: 187), Oettinger’s view seems to have been widely adopted; in particular, it must have been the reason why A. Kloekhorst did not include Hittite šap(p)- (qua Luvianism) in his 2008 Lexicon. In a paper from 1998 Oettinger reiterated the translation ‘schaben’, ‘abschälen’ in a discussion of nouns šap(p)(a)ra- and šipart(a)-, the meaning of which he tentatively defined as ‘knife’ (CHD-S 206–7 prefers ‘(a part of) garment’.)\]
off (the bark). However, there is a morphological difference between the athematic Hittite šapzi and the Luvian form: the -a- in the medial syllable of ššap-pa-at-ta (which must be real) excludes an original athematic inflection. Rather, šappā- is a factitive stem the suffix of which goes back to *-eh₂ (“newahhi-type”). Since the meaning ‘to hit’ is demonstrable for Hittite šap(p) on the ground of Hittite contexts, the Luvian form does not seem to constitute a sufficiently compelling argument in favor of revising the semantics of the Hittite verb to ‘peel, scrub’, as Friedrich had wanted.

Luvian šappā- is not isolated in Anatolian: as C. Melchert has observed (1993: 187), there are two Hittite verbs very similar to šappā- in shape and meaning. One of them is šippai-,

 śuppiwašhar ‘onion’ or ‘garlic’. Hittite šippai- ‘peel’ may go back to a Proto-Anatolian verbal stem *sep̣ija-/e- ‘to peel’ with the development of pretonic *e to -i-. The other verb is šappāizzi found in a medical text (CTH 461) where it is construed with gapanu (part of a tree).

This form is best seen as a Hittite adaptation of either Luvian (*šappatti) (inferable from šappatta) or, less likely, Luvian *šappai(i)ti, identical to Hittite šippe-.

We thus have evidence for two stems with the meaning ‘to peel’, both of which are morphologically and semantically different from the Hittite stem šap(p)-. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that Hittite šap(p)- should be kept separate from šappā-, šippai- and other similar-looking Anatolian forms.

54 KUB 8.50 iii 13’-16’. The Luvian provenance of the form is vouchsafed by both the Glossenkeil and the 3 sg. pret. ending -atta.

55 The unlenited ending seems to exclude an origin in *-eh₂je/lo- (Melchert 1997: 132). The stem šappa-can in theory also continue a plain oxytone thematic stem (with a full grade in the root), but this interpretation does not seem to lead anywhere.

56 KUB 29.7 rev. 30–32.

57 Melchert 1994: 139.

58 KUB 44.63 ii 10’-11’.

59 Proto-Luvic *-eh₂- factitives secondarily adopted mi-conjugation, while Hittite (where these forms follow ḫi-conjugation) has preserved the original situation (see Melchert 2007: 2–3).

60 In Luvian a development of unaccented *e to a remains a possibility, the fate of pretonic short *e being completely uncertain (compare Melchert’s reservations, 1994: 262), thus *šappā(i)- < *sep̣ija-/e-. 

61 On Luvian šapiya- (with a lenis consonant) see Melchert 2003: 149, who argues for a meaning ‘to cleanse’. Palaic ša-pa-ú-i-na-i, ša-pa-á-ma-an were glossed by Carruba 1970: 14, 69 as ‘reinigen, Reinigung’ precisely on the basis of a comparison to Hittite and Luvian forms (see also Wallace 1983:
4.6 A novel etymological proposal for Hittite šap(p)- is therefore not unwarranted, and given the meaning of the verb, nothing stands in the way of comparing it with Ossetic safyn / isafun ‘destroy’ and Vedic sāpāya-‘strike’, and tracing all three verbal stems back to a common root *seh₂p-. ⁶²

It remains to place the findings made in this section in the context of a morphological reconstruction. An athematic verb šapzi in Hittite does not have to continue a PIE present *seh₂p-ti directly, just as tēzzi ‘speaks’ does not need to be traced back to a putative present *d³eh₁-ti, coexisting with familiar reduplicated *d³e-d³eh₁-ti. Rather, the root present šap(p)- was back-formed to the preterit, continuing the root aorist *seh₂p-t (cf. *d³eh₁-t → pres. (transponate) *d³eh₁-ti > tēzzi). Next to a root aorist in Proto-Indo-European one would expect to find a characterized present stem for which, it seems, there is evidence in Greek.

5. There are two verbs ἱάπττω in Greek which are listed separately in the LSJ, but are not always kept distinct in other works of reference. Neither verb has an accepted etymology and opinions are still divided as to whether or not they go back to the same root. One of the verbs is the better known (προ)ίάπττω ‘send forth’, ‘shoot (arrows)’, ‘rush (oneself)’, familiar from the proem of the Iliad: πολλάς δ’ ἰφθάμους ψυχὰς Ἀἰδὶ προϊόμεν ‘hurled strong souls in their multitudes to the house of Hades’ (Il. 1.3). The other verb is less frequent (κατα)ίάπττω ‘hurt’, first attested in the Odyssey. This verb will be the object of our inquiry in this section of the paper.

5.1 (κατα)ίάπττω is found in the Odyssey twice, in a versus iteratum: in book 2 Telemachus speaks to his nurse, Eurycleia, who later retells this conversation to Penelope.

¹⁶⁶ Eichner 2010: 44), but the meaning of these forms remains a matter of guesswork. The lenis consonant makes a comparison to Luvian šapiya- possible (unless an argument can be made that *p was lenited between two unaccented vowels in the precursor of Palaic *şapawai-).

As for the root etymology, it is not unlikely that *sep-eh₂je-o- and *sep-eh₂-e could belong to the root *sep- (Vedic śapati, Greek ἐκαί, Latin sepeliō), the meaning of which Vine (1988: 60–61) established as ‘handle (skillfully), hold (reverently)’. Having carefully distinguished between the different Anatolian forms discussed above, Vine concluded that “the Anatolian data are in fact quite consonantal with […] the meaning of IE *sep-[…]”, although it would be premature to insist on the etymology at this time”. It appears that some abstract physical meaning such as ‘to handle’ may indeed elicit a variety of designations for ritual actions, including ‘purify’ or ‘wash’

⁶² The fortis consonant in the plural stem of the Hittite verb (*sapant‘i, not *sabant‘i < *seh₂p-V-) must be analogical after the singular (*sap-C- < *seh₂p-C-) under the chronology of lenition proposed by Melchert 2007.
Od. 2.376 (~ 4.749)

ἀλλ’ ὁμοσον μὴ μητρὶ φίλη τάδε μυθήσασθαι,
πρὶν γ’ ὃτ’ ἂν ἐνδεκάτη τε δυωδεκάτη τε γένηται,
ἥ αὐτὴν ποθέσαι καὶ ἀφορμηθέντος ἀκούσαι
ὡς ἂν μὴ κλαίουσα κατὰ χρόνα καλὸν ἰάπτη
But swear to not tell these things to my dear mother
at least until the eleventh or the twelfth day comes
or she misses me and hears that I’ve departed
so she (= Penelope) won’t mar her fair flesh with weeping

The ancient commentators understood the verb as ‘hurt, spoil, damage’: thus scholia D provide a
gloss διαφθείρη ‘ruin’ for Od. 2.376 and in schol. min. (P. Mich. 1588) ἰάπτω is glossed as ἡ ἐξεβάλεν ἢ διέφθειρεν; in Hesychius we find ἰάπτειν’ βλάπτειν and ιαφθῆναι· ἀποθάνειν.63

The verb ἰάπτω in the meaning ‘hurt’ is also probably attested in a processional song by
Bacchylides where the verb has ‘heart’ as its direct object, contrasting with earlier ἀπενθή θυμὸν ἐχον ‘having spirit free from grief’.

Bacch. fr. 11.6:

ἐἶς ὅρος, μία βροτοίσιν ἐστὶν εὐτυχίας ὄδός,
θυμὸν εἰ τίς ἐχον ἀπενθῆ δύναται
διατελεῖν βίον· ὃς δὲ μυ-
ρία μὲν ἀμφιπολεῖ φρενί,
τὸ δὲ παρ’ ὁμάρ τε <καὶ> νῦκτα μελλόντων
χάριν αἰὲν ἰάπτεται
κέαρ, ἀκαρπὸν ἐχει πόλον
There is one guideline, one path to happiness for mortals:
to be able to keep an ungrieving spirit throughout life.
The man who busies his mind with a thousand cares,
whose heart is hurt day and night for the sake of the future,
has fruitless toil.

The form (αἰὲν) ἰάπτεται in this passage is Boeckh’s palmary emendation of the meaningless ἀὸντι ἰάπτεται in the mss. of Stobaeus (Flor. 4.44.16). Estienne’s alternative conjecture δάπτεται ‘devours’ is quite elegant, but ἰάπτεται κέαρ commands acceptance in view of a late Alexandrine imitation ἰάπτομαι ἄλγεσιν ἦτορ ([Mosch.] Meg. 39).64

63 The understanding of the Homeric verse current in the late Antiquity is nicely illustrated by Quintus of Smyrna who adapted the Odyssean verse in a martial context, with ἰάπτω referring to piercing by spear: Ἐνθα τότ’ Αἰνείας κατ’ ἀσπίδος ἰγχος ἐρεια / Τεθρος ἐμμελης· τοῦ δ’ οὐ χρόια καλὸν ἰσαν (Q. S. 6.546).
64 The epyllion “Megara” is ascribed by the manuscript tradition to Moschus; while the authorship is
This exhausts the evidence for ἱάπτω2 ‘hurt’ in archaic Greek poetry. The verb is not found until post-classical times when it reemerges in Hellenistic bucolic and epic poetry. For instance, in Apollonius’ Argonautica ἱάπτω refers to hypothetical damage that might be done by an unskilled helmsman:

Ap. Rh. 2.875:

 долг до кай иллол дедро даимоне андреа еасин, 
твон титна прумин эпимбеммен, оу тис ἱάψει 
ναυτιλην.

And so there are here other men of skill, 
of whom none will harm our voyaging, 
whomsoever we set at the helm.

In Nicander ἱάπτω likewise means ‘hurt, strike’: δτε δη κаκов андрас ἱάπτει “this is the time when disaster strikes a man’ (Th. 116); κεйнο ποτον δη γαρ τε καρηματι φοινον ἱάπτει “this drink (viz. hemlock) assuredly looses disaster upon the head” (Al. 187). In its literal meaning, the verb refers to insects’ and snakes’ bites: θουβοσι τυπη ἀλιαστον ἱάπτει “(scorpion) deals an incurable stroke upon the groin” (Th. 784); νοοζον δ’ ἀζαλεν ... τυπησιν ἀμυδροτερησιν ἱάπτει “[the viper] imparts the affliction of thirst with its feeble blows” (Th. 357–58).

uncertain, its author must have been a poeta doctus, steeped in the knowledge of archaic and classical poetry. The poem is replete with Homeric and lyric reminiscences, including, as is the custom of the genre, most obscure and rare words and expressions (for a useful collection see Breitenstein 1966: 70–93).

W. Schulze (1892: 168 n. 3) cited Aesch. Septem 525 πρόσθε πυλαν κεφαλαν ἱάψειν ‘he (= Hippomedon) will ἱάπτειν his head before the gates’ (Sommerstein: ‘lose’) as one more example of ἱάπτω in the meaning ‘to hurt’. But while any increase in the documentation of ἱάπτω would be salutary, Schulze’s suggestion is doubtful, since Aeschylus’ juncture κεφαλαν ἱάςεων is hard to separate from Ι. 11.55 πυλας ιθήμους κεφαλας ἀδιπ προιάψειν “hurl down a multitude of strong heads to the house of Hades”. The Iliadic phrase referring to the slaying of men may have engendered a considerable confusion in the usage of ἱάςεω1 and ἱάςεω2 already in the antiquity; it is entirely possible that Aeschylus reanalyzed the Homeric phrase as applicable to one’s own head. Cf. “ἱάπτεων war schon den Tragikern eine Glosse, die sie für ganz Verschiedenes verwendeten” (Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1907: 35, a propos of [Hes.] fr. 204.118–19 (M.–W.) και πυλας Άδης κεφαλας ἀπο χαλκον ἱψ[ει]ν).

Here one may wonder which of the two verbs ἱάςεω is used, since the meaning ‘to hurl’ would not be altogether unfathomable in the description of a ship thrown off course. However, ναυτιλην means ‘sea voyage’ or ‘seamanship’; in the Argonautica the word is used 16 times in the former meaning and once in the latter, but never in the meaning ‘ship’. Therefore the most likely translation of ἱάςει ναυτιλην is ‘does harm to the sea voyage’ which is in fact how the line was understood in the antiquity: ουδείς διαφερετι των πλοου τ ιανου (Schol. L” Wendel). Cf. Vian–Delage 1974: 218: “compromettera la navigation”; Green 2007: 101 “mess up our voyage”; Matteo 2007: 575: “danneggera”.

On the interpretation of the verse see Gow 1951: 109.

Translations from Nicander follow Gow–Scholfield 1953.
The “Bacchylidean” way of using ἴαπτω with reference to the state of emotional turmoil (ἱάπτεται κέαρ) is also continued in Hellenistic poetry: Theocritus uses the verb twice about being consumed by the fire of love: μοι πορὶ θημὸς ἴαφθη ‘my heart was aflame’ (2.82) and ὦ με κατασμύχων καὶ ἐς ὀστίον ἀχρις ἴαπτει ‘(Eros), who tortures me by burning me up to the very bones’ (3.17).

5.3 As a result of this cursory review of relevant passages, we see that the difference in meaning between (προ)ἵαπτω ‘send forth’ and (κατα)ἵαπτω ‘hurt’ is beyond doubt. The question now becomes whether ἴαπτω₁ and ἴαπτω₂ go back to two different verbal roots or they are the same verb in origin. But while one could imagine how ἴαπτω₁ ‘send forth’ could have developed the meaning ‘kill’ based on such usages as Il. 1.3 (ψυχίς Αἰτὶ προϊσθεν), it is still quite hard to conceive of a further development to ‘hurt the skin’ (Od. 2.376 κατὰ χρόα ἴαπτη) or ‘bite into the groin’ (Nic. Th. 784 βουβῶσι τυπήν ἴαπτει).

Assuming that ἴαπτω ‘hurt’ is indeed distinct from ἴαπτω ‘send forth, hurl’, whatever the etymology of the latter, a new etymological account of the former verb can now be proposed.

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69 The widely held belief is that the verbs continue the same root, e.g. GEW 705; Peters 1980: 101 n. 44; Tichy 1983: 230; St. West 1988: 153; Maehler 1997: 313; Beekes 2010: 574.

70 The use of κατα with verba delendi is well documented, but I cannot agree with Lindblad 1922: 111 that the preverb itself should be held responsible for the meaning ‘to hurt’ in our case (i.e.: it was the addition of κατα-‘zer-‘ to ἴαπτω ‘send forth’ that resulted in the meaning that κατα ἴαπτη has in the Odyssey). The development of κατα- must have been from ‘down, downward’ to ‘completely’; its “destructive” meaning in compounds must have been brought about by its use with verbal roots already denoting violent physical actions (cf. κατατρύχω ‘wear out’, καταδάπτω ‘devour’, καταπρίω ‘bite into pieces’, καταπτίσσω ‘grind to powder’, etc.). I am unable to find any examples of κατα- added to a verbal root whose meaning had nothing to do with any harm whatsoever and the resulting compound denoting some kind of destructive action.

71 The old connection between (προ)ἵαπτω ‘to send forth, to hurl’ and Latin iaciō (e.g. Monro 1891: 46) is excluded by the *h₁ in the root of the latter, clearly related to Greek ἵημι. The only somewhat plausible etymology known to me connects ἴαπτω₁ with the passive aorist ἐάυζη, attested twice in the Iliad in battle scenes, with ἀσπίς ‘shield’ as the subject: Il. 13.543 ~ 14.419 ἐπ’ (ὑτῷ) ἀσπὶ ἐάυζη. The form was obscure already in the antiquity: Aristarchus wrote ἑάυζη, thinking of ἑῆκη, while Herodian recommended a derivation from ἴαπτο; both etymologies can still be found in modern works. H. Ebel (1855: 167) was the first to compare ἐάυζη to ἴαπτο; he was followed by K. Meister (1921: 110 n.2). There have been several ingenious attempts to find a plausible cognate of ἐάυζη outside Greek: thus F. Froehde (1879: 24) proposed Sanskrit vāpati ‘scatter, throw’ as the cognate, and M. Meier-Brügger (1989: 91–92) suggested a comparison with ὤμη ‘song’ and Germanic *sing’an ‘to sing’, assuming that the verb described the clang of weapons. The most plausible etymology, in my opinion, was offered by J. Schmidt (1881: 131; 1895: 63) who compared ἐάυζη and ἴαπτο to Germanic *sink’an ‘to fall’ and Armenian ankanim ‘id.’: PIE *seng* must therefore have had an original meaning ‘to shove down’
ιάπτε/o- is best analyzed as a reduplicated present stem extended with suffix *-je/o-.

Such extended reduplicated present stems are not unknown, e.g. ιάλλω ‘send forth’ (< *si-sl-je/o-), τταίνω ‘stretch’ (< *ti-tj-je/o-), ιάυω ‘spend the night’ (< *hi2-h2us-je/o-), or ( Aeolic) ιλαίμαι ‘long, desire’ (< *li-las-je/o-).

As for the beginning of the root, it is important to note that the absence of a spiritus asper in ιάπτε/o- is not diagnostic for our purposes: as a poetic verb, ιάπτω probably comes from either East Ionic or Aeolian poetic tradition and is therefore likely to show psilosis. The facts fit together as though dovetailed: ιάπτε/o- ‘hurt’ can be traced back to a reduplicated present stem from the root *seh2p- ‘strike, hit’, viz. *se-seh2p- / *se-sh2p-, remade as *si-sh2p-je/o- on the way to Greek.

(trans.), ‘to fall down’ (intr.). (On Ιάπτως see Peters 1980: 101 n. 44).

In fact it was the view of scholars no less than W. Schulze (1892: 168 n. 3) and F. Bechtel (1914: 180) that ιάπτω βίλαπτο is a separate verb, although neither authority ventured an etymology for either of the two verbs ιάπτω.

E. Tichy (1983: 230) surmised that the reduplication in ιάπτω was analogical to “semantisch nicht allzu fernstehende[m] ιάλλο, but the semantic points of contact are between (προιάπτω1 and (προιίλλο (both ‘to send forth’), not between (κατάιάπτω2 and ιίλο.


As an alternative one could set up a stem with a rare verbal suffix *-te/o- (type *pek-te/o- ‘to comb’, *plek-te/o- ‘to weave’), but this reconstruction has much less to recommend itself: so far as can be inferred from extremely scanty data, the suffix *-te/o- does not occur in reduplicated stems and is virtually absent from Greek. The only (highly uncertain) example is ἀνύτο / ἀνῦτο, the Attic equivalent of ἀνύω ‘accomplish’ (Thuc., Pl.); πεκτεό ‘shear’ (Ar. Av. 714; Lys. 685) is almost certainly a denominative. The other thinkable possibility is that the absence of *-d-e/o--, assuming that the expected *iάφθε/o- was reshaped into *iάπτε/o- after other tense allomorphs that had (i)iάτ-; however, all Greek stems in -θε/o- are intransitive (άρθθομα ‘be vexed’, θαλέκω ‘sprout’, πλήθω ‘be full’, φθινόθω ‘wane’, etc.).

All Greek reduplicated present stems have -i- as the reduplication vowel: granted our reduplicated present is old enough, in the protolanguage it could have been reduplicated with an -i- or an -e- (my preference).

There is another form in Greek that may belong with the pres. ιάπτω, namely, the medium tantum ιάτρουμα ‘hurt, strike’ (only fut. ίγε/ο- and aor. ίγα- are actually attested), known from the Iliad onwards. The comparison between ιάπτω and ιάτρουμα is not new: W. Schulze thought that ιάτρουμα was a contraction of ιάτρω (1892: 168 n.3); F. Bechtel, too, compared the two verbs to each other (1914: 179–80), positing for ιάτρουμα a zero grade of a root *jákʷ- (*jékʰʷ-), no further evidence for which is known. Lastly, F. Kuiper (1933: 282) compared the Greek forms to Indo-Iranian *aka- ‘bad’ (Avestan akō, Vedic āka- ‘pain’) from IE *akʷ- (but a root of such adjectival meaning is hardly expected to form a reduplicated present stem). It appears that ιάτρουμα, too, can be derived from the root *seh2p-. Let us suppose that the active reduplicated stem *si-seh2p- (> ιάτρειω coexisted with a middle stem *(si-sh2p-ιόλ/ο-). After the loss of the laryngeal in a heavy consonant cluster, the latter stem would come out as *hi-sp-je/o- fut. *hisp-se/o-, aor. *hisp-sa-, and one could assume a dissimilatory loss of -s-, comparable to the one observed in fut. ἐνίθω < *eni-skʷ-se/o (see Waack-Erdmann 1982: 201). The result is the actually attested fut. ἐγε/ο- and aor. ίγα- with East Ionic / Aeolic psilosis, just as in ιάπτω.
6. It is time to take stock. The evidence from Indo-Iranian, Hittite and Greek discussed on the previous pages makes the reconstruction of a root *seh₂p- ‘strike, hit’ very plausible. The Averbo of this root included a present *se-seh₂p/sh₂p- (⇒ Greek ἱάπτει), a root aorist *seh₂p- (Hittite šap(p)-) and possibly an iterative (?) *soh₂peje/ő-, the source of Vedic sāpāya- ‘strike’ and Ossetic safyn (Iron.), isafun (Digor) ‘destroy’. In Iranian we find reflexes of the root used in the meaning ‘to have sexual intercourse’ (Balochi šāpag ‘to mount ewe’, Minābi šāfidan ‘futuere’). A similar metaphor underlies Latin *(pro)sāpāre ‘futuere’ (whence prōsāpia ‘kin, lineage’) and sōpiō, -ōnis ‘penis’.

References:

The future stem ἱεψ/ο- may also be continued in a “de-desiderative” ā-stem ἱγα- (cf. Greek αὐξάμα ‘increase’ → αὔξη ‘growth’, Vedic jīgīṣa- ‘want to win’ → jīgāśa- ‘desire for victory’), from which an adj. ἁνίψαλο- ‘unhurt’ (or: ‘whom one does not want to hurt’?), quoted from Stesichorus in the grammatical literature (fr. 249 PMGF), was derived as a secondary lo-derivative of the type πέτηλος ‘stretched’.


Sonny A. (1900) “Nachträgliches zu sopio, -onis,” *Archiv für lateinische Lexikographie und*


