

Archived at the Flinders Academic Commons:

<http://dspace.flinders.edu.au/dspace/>

This is the publisher's copyrighted version of this article.

The original can be found at: [http://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/lu_portal/apgads/PDF/BaltuFilologija_XVII\(1-2\)_2008.pdf](http://www.lu.lv/fileadmin/user_upload/lu_portal/apgads/PDF/BaltuFilologija_XVII(1-2)_2008.pdf)

© 2008 by Baltu Filologija. All rights reserved.

Published version of the paper reproduced here in accordance with the copyright policy of the publisher. Personal use of this material is permitted. However, permission to reprint/republish this material for advertising or promotional purposes or for creating new collective works for resale or redistribution to servers or lists, or to reuse any copyrighted component of this work in other works must be obtained from the publisher.

**RECURRING ODDITIES
IN THE LATVIAN-GERMAN DICTIONARY
OF LIBORIUS DEPKIN**

Trevor G. FENNELL
Flinders University of South Australia

The Baltic German pastor and lexicographer Liborius Depkin (1652–1708) is the author of a very substantial Latvian-German dictionary manuscript (c. 3000 pages), of which only the first third has to date been published (Fennell 2005, 2006). The compilation of such a major work would certainly have occupied the author for a number of years, given his other professional duties, and we remain sceptical of Zemzare's claim (1961, 107) that the work was compiled in the years 1703 and 1704, particularly since the manuscript was almost certainly still incomplete at the time of Depkin's death in 1708. A hitherto unnoticed indicator in this respect is that there are a number of references to (seemingly) non-existent pages: thus, in a section of the dictionary where the pagination stops with p. 1911, p. 1754 twice refers to p. 1912, p. 1793 refers to p. 1913, p. 1758 refers to p. 1917, pp. 1815 and 1824 both refer to p. 1918, p. 1829 refers to p. 1922 and p. 1907 refers to p. 1923. It must therefore be concluded that Depkin had in mind at least 12 further pages, which, it seems, were never written. A more reasonable view would be that he continued to add new material in the series of Appendices attached at the end of the work, and that he had not even begun the editorial phase, in which the entries (incorporating those of the Appendices) would have been properly ordered and the immense number of examples would have been reduced to manageable proportions.

Such an editorial phase would also have allowed the elimination of careless errors, slips of the pen and the like, as well as an opportunity to standardise a number of discrepancies in spelling, morphology and syntax. A modern commentator would therefore be well-advised to proceed with caution, since certain oddities might well have been removed in the preparation of a final version. Certainly, Depkin not infrequently expresses reservations over some of his citations from other writers, sometimes openly labelling them as inaccurate or as requiring improvement. On the other hand, he is not altogether consistent in his objections, and a degree of carelessness (or licence) in his transcriptions and translations might lead one to suspect that the final editing process could have turned out to be somewhat less rigorous than modern practice would require. The following comments should therefore be viewed as tentative rather than definitive.

There are very few entries in Depkin which are of interest from a purely phonetic point of view. Nonetheless, attention may be drawn to a few forms

which to the best of our knowledge have not been specifically addressed in the literature.

Thus, alongside the usual *widdu* ('in the middle'), Depkin refers to a variant *uddu* (LD 1386, 1802); alongside *widsemneeks* ('an inhabitant of Liefland') we find the variant *udsemneeks* (LD 1386, 1802) and, with a lengthened vowel also *uhd=semneeks* (LD 1386); alongside *wirsu* ('on top') Depkin gives also *ursu* (LD 1386, 1395). The forms *uddu*, *udsemneeks*, *uhdsemneeks* and *ursu* are not cited by ME, EH or Ulmann, but in the case of Depkin's *wulks* and *ulks* alongside *wilks* (LD 1807, 1823) there are entries in ME (IV, 298) and EH (II, 712). Ulmann (I, 320) has *ulks*, but not *wulks*. Examples of the loss of a labiodental before a back vowel have long been recognised – cf. *uormanis* (ME IV, 420) alongside Mancelius' *Wohrmans* and *Ohr=mans* (Lettus, 66) for German *Fuhrmann* ('driver') and the parallel *Woders* and *Ohders* (Lettus, 68) for German *Futter* ('fodder'). Hence, a transition from *wulks* to *ulks* is non-problematical, but the cases of *widdu*, *widsemneeks* and *wirsu* are more awkward in that there would seem to be no attestations for **wuddu*, **wudsemneeks* or **wursu*. One may suspect that initial [vi] may have passed dialectically to [*vu] through the influence of the preceding labiodental, and one may note certain other pairs such as *zivs/zuvs* ('fish') and *sivēns/suvēns* ('piglet'), but one must still confront the difference between instances where the [v] precedes the [i], as in *widdu*, and instances where the [v] follows the [i], as in *zivs*. Endzelīns (1951) does not address this issue, but it may be that others will be able to shed light on the question.

Turning to matters of morphology, or more precisely analogical morphology, we find in Depkin the infinitive *plohkt* ('to decrease, to fall': LD 1086, 1538), which occurs alongside the more recognised form *plakt* (LD 1066, 1086). ME (III, 364) lists the form *pluokt*, marking it as dubious and referring the reader to *plakt*. Adolphi (1685: 136, 171-72) lists *plokt* alongside *plakt*. Dreszell (1685: 48) gives only *plohkt*. More recently, Ulmann gives both *plakt* (I, 203) and *plohkt* (I, 207), writing of *plohkt*: "ist ein minder gute Nebenform zu *plakt*" ('is a less desirable variant of *plakt*'). The shared doubts of Endzelīns and Ulmann suggest that we are here dealing with an infinitive analogically remodelled on the basis of the present tense *plohku*. This view would be strengthened if further analogical infinitives were found, lending some semblance of normality to the proposed analogical process. Depkin provides a goodly number of confirmations, as can be seen from the Table.

| NORMAL INFINITIVE | NORMAL PRESENT | DEPKIN'S INFINITIVE |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>aismigst</i> | <i>aismeegu</i> | <i>aismeegt</i> (LD 923) |
| <i>apkust</i> | <i>apkuhstu</i> | <i>apkuhst</i> (LD 750) |

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|--|
| <i>apnikt</i> | <i>apnihku</i> | <i>apnihkt</i> (LD 997) |
| <i>drupt</i> | <i>druhpu</i> | <i>druhpt</i> (LD 327) |
| <i>eewilktees</i> | <i>eewelkohs</i> | <i>eewelktees</i> (LD 1763) |
| <i>iskust</i> | <i>iskuhstu</i> | <i>iskuhst</i> (LD 744, 751) |
| <i>just</i> | <i>juhtu</i> | <i>juhst</i> (LD 521†) |
| <i>klupt</i> | <i>kluhpu</i> | <i>kluhpt</i> (LD 661, 662†) |
| <i>krimst</i> | <i>kremtu</i> | <i>kremst</i> (LD 694 x 2) |
| <i>kust</i> | <i>kuhstu</i> | <i>kuhst</i> (LD 601, 704 x 2, 750, 751) |
| <i>(no)tiht</i> | <i>(no)teeku</i> | <i>(no)teekt</i> (LD 1293) |
| <i>pahrwilkt</i> | <i>pahrwelku</i> | <i>pahrwelkt</i> (LD 1807) |
| <i>patikt</i> | <i>patihku</i> | <i>patihkt</i> (LD 1030, 1267 x 2, 1338) |
| <i>(pa)tiht</i> | <i>(pa)tihku</i> | <i>(pa)tiht</i> (LD 1267, 1306) |
| <i>peekust</i> | <i>peekuhstu</i> | <i>peekuhst</i> (LD 750 x 5, 1593) |
| <i>peetikt</i> | <i>peeteeku</i> | <i>peeteekt</i> (LD 1296) |
| <i>(pee)tiht</i> | <i>(pee)teeku</i> | <i>(pee)teekt</i> (LD 1277) |
| <i>puht</i> | <i>puhstu</i> | <i>puhst</i> (LD 1579) |
| <i>(sa)tiht</i> | <i>(sa)teeku</i> | <i>(sa)teekt</i> (LD 1296) |
| <i>strigt</i> | <i>streegu</i> | <i>streegt</i> (LD 1677, 1680) |
| <i>sprukt</i> | <i>spruhku</i> | <i>spruhkt</i> (LD 1740) |
| <i>ustuhkt</i> | <i>ustuhkstu</i> | <i>ustuhst</i> †† (LD 1731) |
| <i>zinstees</i> | <i>zinstchohs</i> | <i>zinstchees</i> (Vortrag, list at end) |

† Depkin here disapproves of the form.

†† Presumably for *ustuhkst*.

The foregoing examples provide ample evidence of a tendency to remodel infinitives through an analogical process based on the form of the present. Although examples can be found elsewhere, this tendency is a good deal more common in Depkin, even if he does occasionally express his disapproval of it (as under *just* and *klupt*).

Another morphological oddity is the suppression of final -s in the nominative singular of *a*-stem nouns. While the loss of a final (short) vowel accords with the well-known habit of "swallowing" one's endings, the loss of a final consonant is a case apart, even if the widespread change in the dative plural from *-eems* to *-eem* shows that such losses can and do occur. No parallel is claimed here between the dative plural and the nominative singular, and we shall deal with the latter as an independent phenomenon, which must surely have sounded as strange to early 18th-century ears as would the use of **mum* and **jum* (instead of *mums* and *jums*) to modern ears.

There is one group of words which should here be viewed as an entity separate from other examples, viz. Biblical proper nouns. These stand apart

by virtue of their foreignness, and in some respects they might be viewed as leaning towards the status of (optionally) indeclinable nouns. Among other examples we may cite: *Abraham un Sara* ('Abraham and Sarah' LD 1391), *Adam atsinne šawu Seewu* ('Adam knew his wife' LD 110), *david šwehle to Goliath* ('David smote Goliath' LD 1697), *Jacob nomiseja to Baltumu no tahn Rihk-stehm* ('Jacob stripped away the white layer from the rods' LD 855), *Sluddinatajs Salomon* ('the preacher Solomon' LD 1603). It should be noted, however, that such biblical proper nouns also occur with the ending intact, e.g. *Dauids gahje* ('David went away' LD 52).

Beyond examples such as these, however, there are other, fully declinable nouns which occasionally occur without the final -s of the nominative singular. Among these may be cited: *Zepļa karstum* ('the heat of the oven' LD 1852), *kung par wisseem* ('lord of all' LD 1742), *Lipst* ('Philip' LD 1810), *Pawahrd* ('cognomen' LD 1755), *plihntneek* ('drunkard' LD 1813, 1828), *Steepatt* ('a kind of fish, perhaps *chub* or *ide*' LD 1669 – see Laumane 1973, 79), *Strausu Tehwain* ('a male ostrich' LD 1677), *Weltigs Wahrd* ('an idle word' LD 1774), *Walgun* ('a mooring-place??' LD 1794). To these may be added an adjectival example: *labb [Wihns]* ('good [wine]' LD 1813).

These occurrences cannot be explained by evoking potential indeclinable status, and they occur frequently enough to make mere slips of the pen unlikely. Nor are they words which would have been considered strange or foreign. They are not even vocatives, in which the loss of -s would not be surprising.

Parts of the declension, viz. the genitive and accusative singular and the nominative and genitive plural (*karstuma*, *karstumu* / *karstumi*, *karstumu*), could of course have been pronounced without the final short vowel, and this pronunciation could have been transferred to the nominative singular, but in the absence of any supporting evidence this too remains a rather weak hypothesis. Until further useful attestations can be found, the issue will have to be left in abeyance.

The nominative plural of masculine nouns is also at times problematical in Depkin, where the normal ending -i is occasionally replaced by -ee. We currently have over 50 such occurrences, but limit ourselves here to a representative selection.

Kaslens ('kid') has a nominative plural *Kaslenee* (LD 598)

Kahposti ('cabbage') occurs as *Kahpostee* (LD 601)

Lahsts ('curse') has a nominative plural *Lahstee* (LD 785)

Laiweneeks ('boatman') has *Laiweneekee* (LD 787)

Mahli ('clay') occurs as *Mahlee* (LD 879)

Matti ('hair') occurs as *Mattee* (LD 887, 1657)

Milti ('flour') occurs as *Miltee* (LD 912)

Sohbs ('tooth') has *Sohbee* (LD 1020)

Kauls ('bone') has *Kaulee* (LD 1078)
kurwis ('basket') has *kurwjee* (LD 1169)
Reeksts ('nut') has *Reekstee* (LD 1183)
Rihks ('tool') has *Rihkee* (LD 1212, 1214)
Šilkis ('herring') has *Šilkee* (LD 1535)
Wasks ('wax') has *Waskee* (LD 1761)
garree Šwahrki ('the long coat') occurs as *garree Šwahrkee* (LD 1695)

The great majority of nouns affected by this tendency are of the *a*-stem declension, while a few are *ja*-stem words. Consonantal stems and *u*-stems are not represented in our present list of examples.

The ending *-ee* is normally associated with the demonstratives *tee* and *šchee*, or with the definite declension of adjectives, as in *garree* ('long') above. Depkin, however, like his contemporaries, uses the definite form of adjectives hardly at all, and examples in other than the masculine nominative singular are extremely rare: cf. his usual construction *Tas pehdigs darbs* ('the final task' LD 1731), contrasting with the less frequent *tas pir=majs et pehdigajs* ('the first and the last' LD 4). Neither the morphology nor the syntax of definite forms was well understood in Depkin's time, and this may account for the paucity of attestations. On the other hand, the demonstratives *tee* and *šchee* occur quite often, and even the feminine *tahs* is not infrequent: *tahs aššaras* ('those tears' accusative plural, LD 1483).

Adolphi (1685, 35) writes of the definite adjective as follows: „Von solchen Adjectivis, formiren die Letten noch andre die sich auff ein *ajs* enden, und nicht unbillig Adjectiva discretiva oder discretionis genant werden, weil sie derselben sich gebrauchen, wenn sie recht discret einen erheben, oder auch was böses in gradu excellentiori benennen wollen.“

[‘From such (*sc.* ordinary – TGF) adjectives the Latvians also form others, ending in *-ajs*, which are not unreasonably called ‘discrete adjectives’ or ‘distinguishing adjectives’, because they are used when singling somebody out especially, or also when something nasty is to be expressed in rather high degree.’]

As if discussing a completely different phenomenon, Adolphi (1685, 37) writes further: „Da denn sonderlich zumerken, daß beyder Generum Adjectiva, bey den Letten, wenn sie per Euphoniā, in besserm Laut, reden wollen, etliche Casus geändert werden.“

[‘It must be noted particularly that in Latvian, for the sake of euphony, several cases are modified in adjectives of both genders.’]

What this optional procedure amounts to is that in both masculine and feminine the accusative singular and genitive plural can change the regular ending *-u* to *-o*, and the masculine nominative plural can change *-i* to *-ee*, while the accusative can change from *-us* to *-os*.

Stender (1761, 27), after discussing the change from *-i* to *-ee* in the definite declension of adjectives, continues in much the same vein as Adolphi: "Dieses thun die Letten auch so gar in den schlechten Adjectivis, daß sie nemlich das *i* in *ee* verwandeln, wenn sie nach ihrer art galant austhun wollen. Ja einige verwandeln auch das *u* in *o*...."

[‘Latvians do the same even with simple (sc. indefinite – TGF) adjectives, namely change the *i* to *ee*, when they wish, after their own fashion, to sound classy. Some even change *u* to *o*....’]

Depkin, then, would seem to be operating on the assumption that the use of *-ee* instead of *-i* is an option for increased euphony (in Adolphi’s terms) or for a touch of class (in Stender’s terms). The assumption itself must surely stem from an attempt to account for those definite forms which do not include the syllable *-aj-* before the ending, and thus do not fit the simplistic description of definite forms current in the late 17th century. In applying this erroneous assumption to nouns, where others had sought to apply it to adjectives only, Depkin has moved outside the framework of noun and adjective morphology as it was understood in his day, and has thus compounded the initial misunderstanding. In his defence it might be said that he was following the usage for nominalised adjectives (*leelee, masee, wezzee, jaunee*), but we have yet to find any evidence of this and thus contend, at least provisionally, that he simply erred. We note in passing that there are no nominal examples of *-ee* for *-i* in the *Vortrab*, which we assume to have been better edited, but which does present the unusual adjectival option *abbi/abee*.

The foregoing selection of oddities in Depkin is by no means exhaustive, but it provides an inkling of the range of constructions in earlier dictionaries which depart to a greater or lesser extent from both modern and older norms. Depkin stands apart in that he is not averse to criticising the language of his contemporaries and predecessors, thereby giving us a more complete picture of the linguistic debates of the 17th and 18th centuries, and it could even be that we are lucky not to have a final printed version, since these asides might well have been deleted. Whatever the ultimate significance of Depkin’s work may turn out to be, it remains true that his work deserves a great deal more attention than it is at present receiving and we remain hopeful that the publication of his dictionary will help in attracting that attention as well as in easing the burden on those who might be interested in confronting the text.

References

- Adolphi, Heinrich. 1685. *Erster Versuch Einer kurtz=verfassetenAnleitung Zur Lettischen Sprache, überreicht von HENRICO ADOLPHI...* Mitau: Radetzky. (Repr. by Harald Haarmann as *HEINRICH ADOLF Erster Versuch einer kurtz-verfasseten Anleitung zur lettischen Sprache*. Hamburg: Helmut Buske, 1978 and by T.G. Fennell as *Adolphi's Latvian Grammar*. Melbourne: Latvian Tertiary Committee, 1993.)
- Dreszell, Georg. 1685. *Gantz kurtze Anleitung Zur Lettischen Sprache, Ans Tages Licht gegeben von GEORGIO Dreßell...* Riga: Nöller. (Repr. by T.G. Fennell as *Georg Dreszell's Gantz kurtze Anleitung Zur Lettischen Sprache*. Melbourne: Latvian Tertiary Committee, 1984.)
- EH Endzelīns, J., Hauzenberga, E., *Papildinājumi un labojumi K. Mūlenbacha Latviešu valodas vārdnīcai*. Rīgā: Izglītības ministrija, 1934–1946. (Repr. by Čikāgas Baltu Filologu Kopa, Čikāgā: 1956.)
- Endzelīns, Jānis. 1951. *Latviešu valodas gramatika*. Rīgā: Latvijas Valsts Izdevniecība.
- Fennell, Trevor G. 2005. *LIBORIUS DEPKIN Lettisches Wörterbuch* The original manuscript transcribed and annotated by Trevor G. Fennell Vol. 1. Rīga: Latvijas Akadēmiskā Bibliotēka.
- Fennell, Trevor G. 2006. *LIBORIUS DEPKIN Lettisches Wörterbuch* The original manuscript transcribed and annotated by Trevor G. Fennell Vol. 2. Rīga: Latvijas Akadēmiskā Bibliotēka.
- Laumane, Benita. 1973. *Zivju nosaukumi latviešu valodā*. Rīgā: Zinātne.
- LD Liborius Depkin, "lettisches Wörterbuch, mehrentheils aller derer Wörter so in der lett. bibel u. allen andern in der lett. Sprache ausgefertigten büchern befindl. sind u. aus genauer Nachfrage der lett. Sprache kündigen in Cur= u. lieffland." (mss., Latvijas Akadēmiskā Bibliotēka, L. dr. b. 5332, 5333).
- Lettus *LETTUS, Das ist Wortbuch, Sampt angehengtem täglichem Gebrauch der Lettischen Sprache...* verfertigt Durch GEORGIUM MANCELIUM... Riga: Schröder, 1638. (Repr. by August Günther, *Altlettische Sprachdenkmäler in Faksimiledrucken*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1929, vol. II.)
- ME *K. Mūlenbacha Latviešu valodas vārdnīca*. Rediģējis, papildinājis, turpinājis J. Endzelīns. Rīgā: Izglītības ministrija, 1923–1932. (Repr. by Čikāgas Baltu Filologu Kopa, Čikāgā: 1953–1955.)
- Stender, Gotthard F. 1761. *Neue vollständigere Lettische Grammatik, Nebst einem hinlänglichen LEXICO...* verfasst von Gotthard Friederich Stender. Braunschweig: im Fürstl. Großen Waisenhause.
- Ulmann, Carl Chr. 1872-1880. *Lettisches Wörterbuch. Erster Theil. Lettisch=dutsches Wörterbuch* von Bischof Dr. Carl Christian Ulmann. Riga, H. Brutzer, 1872. and *Lettisches Wörterbuch* von Ulmann und Brasche. *Zweiter Theil. Deutsch-lettisches Wörterbuch*. Riga u. Leipzig: Brutzer, 1880.
- Vortrab *Vortrab zu einem längst-gewünschten Lettischen Wörter-Buche*. LIBORIUS Depkin. Riga: Nöller, 1704. (Repr. H. Biezais, Upsalā: Senatne, 1954. and by Trevor G. Fennell in Fennell 2005, q.v.)
- Zemzare, Daina. 1961. *Latviešu vārdnīcas (Līdz 1900. gadam)*. Rīgā: Latvijas PSR Zinātņu Akadēmijas Izdevniecība, 1961.

Trevor G. Fennell
Department of Languages (French)
Flinders University of South Australia
GPO Box 2100, Adelaide, SA 5001, Australia
Trevor.Fennell@flinders.edu.au

KOPSAVILKUMS

Regulārās savādības Liborija Depkina latviešu-vācu vārdnīcā

Trevor G. FENNEL

Liborija Depkina (1652-1708) vārdnīcas manuskriptā „Lettisches Wörterbuch“ ir dažādas fonētiski un morfoloģiski savdabīgas formas. Rakstā aplūkotas dažas no tām, kas visai regulāri atkārtojas. Depkina *ulks*, *ursu* u.c. līdzās *vilks*, *vidu* u.c. varētu būt fonētiska pārveidojuma rezultāts. Depkinam raksturīgas primāro verbu infinitīva formas, kam tag. formu iespaidā pārveidots vokālisms, piemēram, *plohkt* u.c. *plakt* u.c. vietā tag. *plohku* ietekmē. Neizskaidrojama savādība ir vsk. nom. Galotnes *-s* trūkums virknei *a*-celma lietvārdu, ne tikai Bībeles īpašvārdos, piemēram, *Abraham*, bet arī citos, piemēram, *karstum*, *tehwain* u.c. Depkina vārdnīcā fiksēts arī vairāk nekā 50 gadījumu, kad *a*- (retāk *ja*-) celma lietvārdiem dsk. nom. ir galotne *-ee*, piemēram, *kaslenee* u.c., kas acīmredzot ir analogiski darināti pēc noteikto adjektīvu *wezzee* u.c. parauga.