



The Nkoya king Mwene Kabulwebulwe at the Kazanga festival, Kaoma district, Zambia, 2003. Note the reed ceremonial architecture.

A reed-and-bee complex?

The Nkoya mythical material turned out to contain several intriguing parallels with *one of the principal Ancient Egyptian royal titles, nsw-bit*, 'The One of the Reed and the Bee', as attested in writing and iconography from earliest dynastic times onward. Thus the apical ancestress of the Nkoya, Libupe, in the mythical account appears as a Queen Bee travelling with her Swarm and landing at the land of Nkoya – which was the name of a deserted forested area at the Kabompo / Zambezi confluence before it became an ethnic designation. The groom's family approaching a bride's village in order to collect her in marriage, in their conventionalised songs still apply the imagery of bees (*mapuka*) to themselves. Without a doubt, the bee-related aspect that is most on the minds of the Nkoya, and especially of men close to court circles, is the fermented drink that is made of honey: *mbote*, 'mead', the possibility of whose consumption overrules literally all other priorities and brings the drinkers into an ecstatic bliss close to paradise. In the Ancient Near East (especially Anatolia) and Ancient Europe, mead was held in similar esteem, as a focal element in cosmology and social interaction. In the Ancient Near East (especially Anatolia), Ancient Europe, South Asia (mead is one of the identifications of *soma*), and on Madagascar, [add refs] mead was held in similar esteem, as a focal element in cosmology and social interaction. There is, incidentally (Crane 1983) a sharp distinction between African and Middle Eastern beehives, whose basic orientation is horizontal and whose basic shape is narrowly cylindrical –, and the 'bee-hive shape' hives, which are vertical, woven from sedge, and which seem to have standing tree trunks as they proto-form. In this respect there is a contradiction: technologically, Old Kingdom Egyptian beehives appear to be continuous with the rest of Africa, but linguistically (*bit* has a convincing Indo-European etymology but not an Afro-Asiatic one), cosmologically and mythically, the Egyptian bee cult rather seem to be continuous with Anatolia and West Asia in general – as so much in Delta culture anyway.

More cogently, the primordial mythical twins of complementary gender, Katete ('Reed Person') and Luhamba ('Royal Going from Branch to Branch, i.e. Travelling in Stages'), to whom the latter-day format of the Nkoya kingship (with its brother-sister complementarity even ritual incest, and the possibility of *male and violent* kings whereas Nkoya myths suggest that before Luhamba all kings were female and implicitly pacifist) is largely attributed, in an aetiological story are associated with, respectively, Reed Mat and Bee Hive

from

**"The continuity of African and Eurasian mythologies
as seen from the perspective of the Nkoya people of Zambia, South Central Africa**

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Photographier pages 107-109 Takacs sur *bee*

Proposer un article avec un encart etymologique global

G.Takacs 2001, 107-109

OK *bj.t* *Biene*, Wb I 434 6-12, *etymology not fully certain and very much disputed*.

If *bj.t* < ***br-t**, Scu ***ba'ra**, *bees*, iraqw : *ba ri*, *bee*.

If *bj.t* < ***bl-t**, copte **ⲉⲃⲣⲱ**, W Ch. Kulere '*a-byál*, honey, E Ch. Lele, *bùlo*, *ruche*.

If *bjt* : N.Omotoc janjero : *bot-ō*, *bee*, *bot-ōō*, *beehive*, Sem. Yemen : *bit*; *hydromel*, Cush. :

saho : *bit-e*, afar : *bét-i*, *honig wasser*, oromo : *bit-ō*, N Omotic : kaffa : *bit-ō*, *honig wasser*,

mocha *bit-ō*, *mead*, mao, *bit-*.

Cf. pour le niger-kongo, O.Pfouma (1986,200.,2010) : mangbetu : *bo*, *honey*, fang : *abè*, *bee*

honey, etc... Egyptien : *bj(t)* = ***bi-** ?

Pour l'Indo-Européen:

X.Delamarre 1984,142 : ***b^hey**, *bee* (cognate declined by I.Diakonoff,1985,127,11)

Mais latin *fucus*, *faux bourdon* < * **bhoikos**, v.irl. *bech*, ags, *béo*, lit. *bit-ê* suggère ***b^he(y<k)-**.

A supposer une origine commune à une racine trans-phylique, elle remonte à un horizon linguistique antérieur à la formation des familles récentes comme le bantu ou l'indo-européen, pbbt moins de 6000 ans, l'égyptien est déjà « formé ».

Celles-ci ont mangé le socle antérieur, celui des récolteurs de miel, dits chasseurs-cueilleurs, ce qui pourrait expliquer les cognats i-e des cush, om, chad. Et réciproquement.

Qq racines de même format nourrissent et supposent l'existence d'un tel horizon linguistique, fait de petites unités relativement mobiles et se mouvant dans des espaces assez larges, des zones de langues en contacts prolongés.

Le nom i-e de la lumière ne renvoie ni au jour, ni au soleil. Delamarre : lux, lumière, luxna, lunaison (1984,) :

. On suppose un horizon linguistique associé à des cultures de calendrier lunaire.

Egyptien : *ḳḥw*, *être lumineux* (Wb), loi de Belova *í = i* ou *a* interconsonnantique et *ḳ = l* < ***l-a-k**. Le mot prend le déterminatif du soleil, et s'inscrit dans la langue d'une culture sédentaire et rurale développant une forte stratification sociale.