

The origin of Lat. *aqua*, and of **teutā* 'people'

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It is argued that Lat. *aqua* etc. and **teutā* are non-Indo-European and belong to Krahe's Old European substratum.

Lat. *aqua* etc.

1. Lat. *aqua* has cognates in Germanic, Goth. *ahwa*, etc. (Pok. 23). Other forms are too uncertain. Thus Oic. *ágnr*, though hesitantly accepted by Darms, 1978, 25-32, is for Lloyd-Springer, *Etym. Wörterb. des Althochdeutschen* 1988 s.v. *aha* "höchst zweifelhaft". The same holds for Latv. *aka* 'fountain' and Lithuanian forms like the river name *Akėlė*: "heute meist abgelehnt", Lloyd-Springer. The comparison with Hitt. *eku-* and Toch. *yok-* 'to drink' is now also mostly rejected (Puhvel, *Hitt. etym. Dict.* 1984 s.v.). Completely unreliable is the plant name *κοαδαμα*.

This means that only the Latin and Germanic words continuing **akwā* remain. These words are isolated in Indo-European. Therefore, though we may 'transliterate' this form into a 'modern' PIE **h₂ekw-eh₂*, one might well ask whether this word really is Indo-European.

2. In Germanic the word only means 'river', the word for 'water' being the thoroughly Indo-European word Goth. *wato* etc.

Now the word has also been assumed in the Russian river name *Oká*; it is the one name about which Lloyd-Springer is not sceptical. This name is claimed by Krahe for the Old European river names. Personally I am rather sceptical about this name and closely related forms. What is striking, however, is that many elements ('roots') of these river names have the shape (**aC(a)-*, just like *aqua*. Krahe himself is most explicit about this: "Namen wie *Aga-*, *Ala-*, *Ara-*, *Ava-* u. dgl. haben dabei ein Aussehen, welches sich unmittelbar mit dem lat. *aqua* und seinem germanischen Gegenstück got. *ahwa*,... 'Wasser, Flusslauf' vergleicht ..." (Krahe 1962, 294).

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Further, there is better evidence for river names which are typical of the system discovered by Krahe. In the same article (1962, 314) he gives **Aquantia* (now the *Echaz*), and **Aquara* (now the *Acher*), which have suffixes typical of these river names. Further names like *Aquila* (now *Eichel*), and certainly place names like *Aquileia*, seem to me less reliable. See also Schmid 1985.

The conclusion is that both the structure of the word *aqua*, and the fact that it is used in Krahe's river names, combined with its isolated occurrence in Latin and Germanic, prove that the word belongs to the language of the Old European river names, and is not Indo-European.¹ For Krahe, of course, the whole system was Indo-European, so he saw nothing remarkable. Then, the discovery of the Hittite and Tocharian forms for 'to drink' seemed to reinforce the idea that *aqua* was Indo-European. And in general scholars do not easily accept that words that were always considered Indo-European, appear not to be so.²

3. It should be pointed out that this substratum may have had labio-velars. These sounds are not typical of Indo-European. Thus, Greek substratum words point to such sounds, as in *βασιλεύς*, Myc. *qasireu*; for a survey see Beekes 1995/96, 12f. It is also possible that we simply have a sequence *-ku-*: both Latin and Germanic allow this form.

As to *-apa*, which could be considered as a variant of *aqua* in a dialect or closely cognate language, Kuiper (1995, 75) argued that it is probably only a suffix, not a noun, as "not the slightest trace of nominal composition can be detected" in these river names.

Note that in this way the existence of two words for 'water' in Indo-European disappears. Like the two words for 'fire', much has been speculated about them, e.g. Lehmann 1996, 92 and 216. It was in fact this discussion that aroused my doubts about *aqua*.

¹I will not go into the non-IE character of Old European here. I refer to Vennemann 1994, 232ff.

²I first proposed this interpretation of *aqua* in a lecture at the Royal Dutch Academy of Arts and Sciences (Amsterdam, Sept. 1997), where I announced that the Leiden department of Indo-European is preparing a new Indo-European etymological dictionary (forthc.).

4. Not many nouns have been identified up to now as belonging to the language of the Old European river names. Vennemann is now working on this issue, on the assumption that this language was related to Basque (Vennemann 1994 and 1995). Apart from this approach, I only know that Kuiper (1995, 74f) proposed that Gr. *ἀμάρᾱ* 'trench, conduit, channel (for watering meadows)' belonged here, because of its structure **ama-ra*, and because of river names with **amar-*. The comparison dates from Krahe himself (e.g. 1954, 49). Much less certain is the comparison with Alb. *amë* 'Flussbett, Quelle' (Demiraj 1997 s.v. derives it from **abhñā*, comparing Lat. *amnis*). The agreement with Hitt. *amiyara-* 'channel' (Neumann in Friedrich, *Hethitisches Wörterbuch* s.v.) seems less exact.

**teutā* 'people'

1. In 1996 I have discussed a few words occurring in several IE languages which were probable loanwords from a substratum language. This conclusion was based on formal characteristics which rendered IE origin improbable. Now many such loanwords may have shown no formal characteristics that caused difficulties for IE languages; or else, substratum words may have been so well adapted that their foreign origin cannot be seen anymore. I think that **teutā* is such a word.

2. The forms are well known (Pok. 1084) so that I give only a representative of each group: Goth. *þiuda*, OIr. *tíath*, Lith. *tautà* (probably a loanword from Germanic is OCS *(*s/š*)*tuždb*, Russ. *čuzoj* 'foreigner'), Osc. *touto*, and names Illyr. *Teutana*, Thrac. *Tautomedes*, Mac.(?) *Τεύταμος* (a Macedonian general), Hom. *Τευταμίδης* (son of **Teutamios*) etc. (The father and the son of Bias of Priene were called *Τευτάμος*.) Note that these names do not imply that Greek knew the noun. The names are generally regarded as Illyrian. The Homeric **Τεύταμος* is a Pelasgian. (The Pelasgians probably did not speak Greek or Indo-European, but they may have taken over names from other languages. Note that *-αμ-* is considered a non-IE suffix.)

Two further forms are problematic. (Cf. the survey by Polomé in the *Encycl.* s.v. *people*.)

3. Hitt. *tuzzi* 'Heer, Heerlager' is now considered by most scholars unrelated; see Tischler's etymological dictionary.

The other form is NP *toda* 'heap, stack, hillock' (also found in Sogdian). Watkins objected (1966, 46 n. 39) that the word

had no sociological meaning and is therefore irrelevant. Szemerényi 1977, 100 - 108 argued that the Persian word had retained the original, concrete meaning. This would mean that the sociological meaning had not developed in Indo-Iranian. It seems to me improbable that this word continues an old IE word of which there is no trace in old Indo-Iranian or Indic..

4. The Baltic *-au-* (Latv. *tauta/ tàuta*, OPr. *tauto*; we expect *'au*, OPr. *eu*) presents a problem, though a problem that is found in other words too. Endzelins' solution (see Stang 1966, 73f) is not attractive (i.e. *'au* only before front vowel). (Even more improbable is Schmalstieg, in Endzelin 1971, 35: *eu* > *au* regularly, *'au* only from recent *eu*.) I wonder whether the Baltic word is a loanword (just like Slavic *tuždb* 'foreigner'), but then from a language that had *eu* > *ou*. The nearest such form seems Thrac. *Tautomedes*. This form is itself also not unproblematic, as Thracian seems to preserve *eu*. It reminds me of **tauros* (no doubt a loanword, hardly from Semitic), beside which we have **(s)teuros* in Germanic. This might point to an interchange *eu/au*. One might also invoke secondary ablaut, for which cf. Kuiper 1995, 71f.

5. It has been proposed that the word is cognate with Lat. *tōtus*. This gives a problem with the *-ō-* (one expects *-ū-* from *-eu-*), so it would have to be a dialectal form. Benveniste (1969 I, 366) considers the possibility that the adjective was derived from the word for 'people'. The other way round seems much more probable, as was proposed by Meid 1965, 293, who assumes a basic meaning 'Ganzheit'. As this etymology of *tōtus* is uncertain, as the adjective is found only in Latin, and as there is an alternative etymology (from **teuH-* > **tous-*, Pok. 1080), I think we should give up the connection, as did most scholars.

6. As far as I see it is generally accepted that **teutā* is derived from the root **teuH-* 'to swell'; e.g. Szemerényi 1977, 107. Pokorny (1080 - 1085) gives an enormous collection of heterogeneous words and most dubious connections under this root. Most forms are supposed to derive from enlarged forms of the shape **t(e)uC-*; these forms are not relevant here. (Note that the forms in *-r*, *-l*, *-m*, *-n* cannot be roots, unless one starts from shapes like **tuel-*, as Pokorny does in a very few, and most dubious instances.) For a sequence **teut-* the only evidence is **teutā*, so that is of no help for us. The 'unenlarged' form in

Pokorny's presentation is that seen in Skt. *taviti* etc. I agree with Szemerényi that this is the only form we can use in this discussion. However, this form has a final laryngeal. There is no certain evidence for a form without a laryngeal. (Of course, in earlier days one was very permissive in assuming variant anit-forms.) The laryngeal is no problem for Germanic, but in Baltic it would have given an acute (the root is circumflex, *taūt-*) and in Italic and Celtic would have given **teua-*. This form is contradicted by the Gaulish names with *Teut-*, *Tout-*. Therefore this etymology must be given up.

Also, the etymology did not give a satisfactory meaning. Meid (1965, 293) frankly stated: "Der eigentliche Sinn von **teutā* ist unklar;" (and then proposed 'Ganzheit', see section 5). Benveniste (1966 I, 366) stated that *tāvas-* etc. means 'strength', and that therefore ("done") the basic meaning was 'plénitude'; the logic escapes me. Szemerényi is straightforward in assuming a basic meaning 'power', but this is not a very probable starting point for 'people'. De Vries (1962, 613a) objected "Ein Volk ist doch nicht nur etwas kräftiges." Note also that Szemerényi's interpretation contradicts his own view that NP *toda* retained the original meaning, so that one should start from 'heap' or the like. (Szemerényi's comparison with OP *taumā* 'race, family' is not to the point, as the basic meaning here is quite different, cf. Skt. *tókman-* 'Schössling', Av. *taoxman-* 'Same, Keim'.) - Note that Pokorny apparently started from a root **teut-*.

I conclude that the connection with the root **teuH-* is semantically problematic and formally impossible. This means that **teutā* is isolated, unmotivated.

7. There is no (other) term of PIE date that might have indicated a larger social group than **uik-*. Thus Avestan has four groups: *dam-*, *dāmāna-*; *vīs-*; *zantu-*; *dahyu-* (see e.g. Szemerényi 1977, 100), but the last two terms are not used in the same way even in Indic. The only exception may have been a word for the people as a military force. The most probable is **koro-* (OP *kāra-*, with Brugmann's law, not a vrddhi-derivation), **korio-* (Goth. *harjis*). (Mallory 1989, 124 gives **teutā* in this function, but I see no evidence for a military association of this word. See now the *Encycl.* s.v. *people*.)

Words for 'people' and the like are often loanwords, e.g. Lat. *populus*, *vulgus*, *folk*, ἔθνος.

8. For the origin of the word I see the following possibilities.

- 1) The word is an old PIE word, which was lost in a number of languages. This is possible. It is most probable that Latin lost the word. The development *eu* > *ou* seen in Osco-Umbrian is of Proto-Italic date, so that Latin must have had the word. (Earlier, there was the idea that Osco-Umbrian was a group that came only later in the neighbourhood of Latin.) In the same way, if the word was inherited in Baltic, it must have been present in Slavic. But the distribution of the word makes it more probable that, in some way or other, it is an innovation of the western languages. Porzig 1954, 200 speaks of "Neuerungen". Benveniste 1969 I, 366 is also vague when he says that the later Indo-Iranians, Latins(!) and Greeks had left the community "avant que prévalût le terme **teutā*" in the later western languages. Mallory (1989, 124f) writes: "To what extent... these terms can be extrapolated back into Proto-Indo-European society ... is debatable." In my opinion the fact that the word is found in a continuous group of IE languages in the West points not to a retained archaism, but to some kind of innovation.
- 2) Perhaps the word was of PIE date, but with a different meaning, and the western languages innovated in developing the meaning 'people'. Again I think that it is improbable that all these languages knew the same development.
- 3) An innovation in the sense that these languages created the word, i.e. from inherited, IE material, is improbable because the word is isolated, unmotivated. It is *possible* that it was made from material unknown to us, but this is not probable. Also there are few if any innovations that these languages made together.
- 4) The possibility that remains is that these languages innovated by adopting a loanword, somewhere in eastern or central Europe.

Above, section 4, I speculated about the possibility that the word had a variant with *au* beside *eu*, like (perhaps) the word for 'bull'. This would show a non-IE vowel change. But this is very speculative.

Above (§ 2) I pointed to the non-IE suffix *-am-*.

Thus I think that, though we have no hard, formal evidence for non-IE origin, the conclusion that the word is a loanword from a substratum or adstratum language, is the most probable solution. The considerations were: 1. The word is unmotivated in IE; 2. the word is found in a limited area; 3) the word is found in a continuous area which often shows non-IE loans; 4. there was probably no word for this notion in PIE; 5. words for this concept are often loanwords.

That a loanword appears in Germanic and in Celtic is unproblematic. That such words appears in Baltic and Germanic is seen frequently. Nor is it a problem that Italic participates (as e.g. *caput*, Beekes 1996.) How we have to imagine the process is an other matter. One way is to assume that the word was taken over, when the relevant groups still lived in South Russia, from the Tripolje culture. The word would then not have spread to the eastern part of the IE world. The advantage of this suggestion is that it would explain how the word came to be adopted by almost all western languages.

However, another solution is indicated by Krahe. Ik 1954, 66 he writes: "Eine Verbreitungskarte [der von **teutā* aus gebildeten Eigennamen] deckt sich nahezu vollständig mit einer solchen der alteuropäische Gewässernamen, so dass an einem sprachgeschichtlich-ethnischen Zusammenhang beider Kategorien kein Zweifel möglich ist." This means that **teutā* probably belonged to the language of the Old European river names. For Krahe this was Indo-European. We now know that this language was non-IE.

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