Štech, Svatopluk

A few remarks on the etymology of OE □dre 'vein'

Brno studies in English. 1969, vol. 8, iss. 1, pp. [179]-181

Stable URL (handle): https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/118057
Access Date: 18. 02. 2024
Version: 20220831

Terms of use: Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University provides access to digitized documents strictly for personal use, unless otherwise specified.

MUNI ARTS Masarykova univerzita Filozofická fakulta

Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University
digilib.phil.muni.cz

A FEW REMARKS ON THE ETYMOLOGY OF OE ĀĒDRE 'VEIN'

SVATOPLUK ŠTECH

University of Göteborg

The OE. word *ēdre, ēder* f. 'vein, water stream, brine, a channel for liquids, fountain,' further 'a nerve, sinew,' in the pl. also 'kidneys' seems to be an expression with parallels only in Germanic languages and with certain further relatives in Old Irish, Old Greek, and Cymric.[1] To this word family belong OHG. *ād(a)ra*, MHG., MLG. *āder(e)* 'vein, muscle, sinew, intestines, bowls', MDu. *adere*, ND. *ader*, OSw. *āþra*, NSw. *ådra*. The ON. *æðr* (in which the *-r* is considered the nominative ending) seems to point to Pr.Gmc. **ē-þ*, IE. **ēt-*; this may be attached to OGreek *étor* 'heart', *étron* 'stomach', and these words are generally put into relation with OHG. *ināditi*, OIrish *inathar*, OCornish *enederen*. The MHG. and MLG. plural forms mean 'intestines', too. To this group belongs also the river name *Oder*, i.e. 'water vein'.[2] Cf. also OSax. *ūt-innāthrian* 'to eviscerate'.

A similar explanation is presented by E. Hellquist,[3] who records all the forms and meanings to be found in Scandinavian languages; he offers the PrGmc. form **ēðrō-*, **ēðri(-ō)* f., Icel. *æðr* (g. sg. *æðar*, the stem *-r*, in his opinion, being lost here); this assumption prevents one to see a direct parallel between the word in question and the mentioned OGreek forms containing a *-r-*; Hellquist therefore accounts for **ēðrō-* as derived from an IE. word corresponding to OGreek *étor*, and the consonant group necessarily remains unclear. He also suggests a possible relation to the Slavonic word *jadra* 'lap', which in its turn is of dark origin, too. The meanings of the single Scandinavian words are slightly different, but this is undoubtedly no serious obstacle, cf. the various meanings of Goth. *haírþra*, OE. *hreþer* 'intestines, stomach, heart'; possibly related to OSlav. *črěslo*.[4]

J. De Vries[5] offers a similar explanation, too: he regards the terminal *-r* as an *i*-stem nominative ending; it follows that he assumes the existence of PrN. **āðī-*, this basic form being seemingly corroborated by the occurrence of NIcel. *æð*, Faroese *æðr*; the forms with *-r* are denoted as *r*-augmented (while Hellquist interprets the *r* as belonging to the stem). Even his dictionary records the quoted parallels *étor*, *étron*, *inathar*, but without any explanatory notes concerning their mutual relationship. On the other hand, the author connects with this word group also the expression *æðra* f. 'anguish', maybe from Germanic **ēþriō* 'intestines' (here with a stem-*r*?), cf. p. 681.

The Germanic form **ēþ-*, IE. **ēt-* being regarded as basic, there have been suggested also some false connections; one got misled by the likeness with OGreek *oidma* 'swollen spot', *oidos* 'boil', *oidáō* 'I inflate', all derived from the IE. root **oid-*;[6] this root in an *r*-augmented form is to be found in G. *Eiter*, OE. *āt(t)or*, NE. *etter* (PrGmc. **aitra-*), and, according to H. S. Falk and A. Torp,[7] probably also in OSlav. *jadro*, *ědro* (while Hellquist connects *jadro* with Gmc. **ēðrō-*; cf. also various explana-

tions in other dictionaries[8]); corresponding forms without the augment are, e.g., Armenian *aitnum* 'I inflate' (< **oid-nu-mi*), *aitumn* 'boil'.[9]

As a matter of fact, the word *ēdre* etc. requires another explanation. One ought to assume an IE. root containing the *r*-element, viz **ēter-*, and interpret the *r* in OIcel. *æðr* as belonging to the stem and not as a nominative ending. This is explained in detail by J. Pokorny,[10] who also records most of the quoted words. These forms may occur combined with the prefix/preposition *inn(a)-*, *inno* (< **inō*), cf. OHG. *innodili* (with a changed suffix); a similar combination is supposed for PrCelt. (**en-ōtro* > OIrish *inathar*). Pokorny, nevertheless, records no related words in Slavonic languages.

Nevertheless, the examined word group does not seem to lack certain parallels in this language family. Is appears to be possible to connect this Germanic word group with Czech *ňadra* 'bosom', Russian *nědra* 'intestines', figuratively also 'the inside' (cf. a quotation from a technical context: *mineral'nye resursy khoronilis' v nedrakh zemli*).[11] The OSl. forms of this word were *nědra* and *jadra*, PrSl. **ědra*. The variant with the initial *n-* may have had its origin in the connection *vъnědrech* (loc. pl.) or *vъnědra* (acc. pl.);[12] according to Vasmer, the occurrence of the group *-dr-* (instead of the expected *-tr-*) in the Slavonic languages may be due to the existence of words of related meanings. In this way, it seems possible to rank the expression *ědra*, *ňadra* under the IE. root **ēter* and not under **oid-*, as Pokorny (774) does.

This new explanation is also borne ont by semantic reasons. We should not forget that the original meaning of *ědra* is 'intestines', still extant in Russian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, and Serbo-Croatian; OHG. *in-ādiri*, esp. in the pl., carries the same meaning. These words do not seem to convey any implication of swelling, inflating, etc., nor do they cover the specialized meaning of 'the boils', or the figurative one of 'being angry'; on the other hand, this is the case with the expressions derived from the root **oid-*. The development of the Germanic forms is accounted for by J. Schmidt.[13]

The Slavonic, as well as the Germanic and the Celtic forms, occur in combination with the preposition/prefix *in-*; cf. OIrish *inathar* < **en-ōtro*; similarly OHG. *in-ādiri*, etc., cf. Pokorny 344, OFranconian *innēthron*.[14] This is probably due to an extremely high occurrence of this combination in a locative function; the same may be said about the Slavonic forms.[15] But in the Slavonic languages, one comes across expressions whose origin is to be found in a mistaken decomposition; nothing similar is known in Germanic.

NOTES

* Dr. Svatopluk Štech died in Göteborg on January 7th, 1968. The proofs for his contribution have been read only by the editors. For a tribute to Dr. Štech, see p. 18 of the present volume. —*Eds.*

[1] F. Holthausen, *Altenglisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*[2] 9 (Heidelberg, 1963).
J. Bosworth—T. N. Toller, *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* 9 (Oxford, 1889), *Supplement* 10 (1921).

[2] F. Kluge, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*[17] 7 (Berlin, 1957).

[3] E. Hellquist, *Svensk etymologisk ordbok*[3] II. 1416 (Lund, 1948).

[4] S. Feist, *Vergleichendes Wörterbuch der gotischen Sprache*[3] 235 (Leiden, 1939).
H. Hirt, 'Zur Lösung der Gutturalfrage im Idg.', *Beiträge zur Kunde der idg. Sprachen* 24. 254 (Göttingen, 1894).

[5] J. De Vries, *Altnordisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*[2] 680—1 (Leiden, 1962).

[6] W. Prellwitz, 'Studien zur idg. Etymologie und Wortbildung', *Beiträge zur Kunde der idg. Sprachen* 23. 65—69 (1893).
J. Holub—Fr. Kopečný, *Etymologický slovník jazyka českého* 155 (Praha, 1952).
J. Pokorny, *Indoeuropäisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* I, 774 (Bern, 1959).
[7] H. S. Falk—A. Torp, *Norwegisch-dänisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*[2] 180 (Oslo, 1960).
J. De Vries, *l. cit.* 98.
[8] E.g. E. Berneker, *Slavisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* I. 270—1 (Heidelberg, 1908—13).
[9] J. Pokorny, *l. cit.* 774.
[10] J. Pokorny, *l. cit.* 344.
[11] V. Machek, *Etymologický slovník jazyka českého a slovenského* 316 (Praha, 1957): cf. p. 182.
J. Holub—Fr. Kopečný, *l. cit.* 238.
[12] M. Vasmer, *Russisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* II. 208 (Heidelberg, 1955).
[13] J. Schmidt, *Die Pluralbildungen der idg. Neutra* 198 (Weimar, 1889).
[14] S. Bugge, 'Beiträge zur etymologischen Erläuterung der albanesischen Sprache', *Beiträge zur Kunde der idg. Sprachen* 18. 171 (1892).
[15] A. Meillet, *Études sur l'étymologie et le vocabulaire du vieux slave*[2] II, 408 (Paris, 1961).
E. Fraenkel, 'Zur baltoslavischen Sprachgeschichte und Grammatik,' *Archiv für slavische Philologie* 39. 73 (Berlin, 1925).

RESUMÉ

Několik poznámek k etymologii sta. *ə̄edre*

Příspěvek se pokouší najít jiné etymologické vysvětlení a nové vztahy pro sta. slovo *ə̄edre*, sthn. *ināðiri*, nhn. *Ader*. Koncové *-r* u tohoto slova by mělo být považováno za součást kmene (i přes mylný rozklad v islandštině), takže předgermánský tvar by byl **ētér*. Pak je možno předpokládat příbuznost se slovanským tvarem *ědro*, v němž se *ě* vyvinulo z ide. **ē-*. Zdá se, že sémantické hledisko podporuje navrhované vysvětlení.