Contributions to Celtiberian Etymology III. The Bronze of Novallas (Z.02.01)

Etimologías celtibéricas III. El bronce de novallas (Z.02.01)

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Abstract: This article makes etymological proposals for five words in the Celtiberian inscription from Novallas (Z.02.01): the place name TERGAȘ is connected with Western Indo-European **tr̥go-/tergeh₂-* 'market'; DOIBIM is explained as a dative dual **dou̯ibim* 'to the two'; the gerund DVNDOM 'to give' is tentatively analysed as **dh₃(u)-un-do-*; MEDOM is compared with Old Irish *med* 'measure, balance' and Welsh *medd* 'authority'; and the fragmentary DERNV[is compared with words for 'hand' or 'palm' in other Celtic languages. It is suggested to transcribe the new sibilant sign of Celtiberian with Ș (Unicode 2C7E).

Keywords: Bronze of Novallas, Celtiberian, etymology, sibilant transcription.

Resumen: En este artículo se plantean propuestas etimológicas para cinco palabras que aparecen en la inscripción celtibérica de Novallas (Z.02.01): se relaciona el topónimo TERGAȘ con **tr̥go-/tergeh₂-* 'mercado' del indoeuropeo occidental; se explica DOIBIM como un dativo dual **dou̯ibim* 'a los dos'; se analiza de manera tentativa el gerundio DVNDOM como **dh₃(u)-un-do-*; MEDOM es comparado con el irlandés antiguo *med* 'medida, equilibrio' y el galés *medd* 'autoridad'; y se compara la forma incompleta DERNV[con palabras para 'mano' o 'palma' en otras lenguas celtas. Se sugiere transcribir el nuevo signo celtibérico para la silbante con Ș (Unicode 2C7E).

Palabras clave: Bronce de Novallas, celtibérico, etimología, transcripción de la silbante.

6. TERGAŞ

One of the exciting new insights that the Bronze of Novallas provides into Celtiberian literacy is the realisation that a special letter, an *S* with a horizontal diacritic stroke at its bottom, was used to write a native sound for which no suitable letter was available in the Latin alphabet (Beltrán Lloris *et al.* 2021, 71-87). The editors of the inscription adopt the letter *Ś* (Unicode 015A) to represent this special sign. Since *Ś* is already in use in the transliteration of the letter *san* in the Iberian semisyllabary in order to distinguish it from *sigma*, I find it preferable to adopt a separate character to represent the new Celtiberian letter. A good candidate is Ş (Unicode 2C7E), which has not been used in Palaeohispanic philology before and which is reasonably similar to the actual form of the letter on the inscriptions.

One word which features this letter is TERGAŞ in line 2. The editors interpret it as the ablative of a placename (Beltrán Lloris *et al.* 2021, 117), identical with the modern placename *Tierga* (Zaragoza). It is probably the base of the adjective *terkakom* 'of Terga' on coin A.70. The same etymon is perhaps reflected in the personal name *Tergido* in an inscription from Gastiain (Navarra; *HEp* 1993, 260 = *HEp* 1995, 616).

It seems not to have been noticed before (*cf.* Untermann 2018, 686) that the placename *Terga* has parallels in ancient Celtic and in other Indo-European languages. It is evidently the same etymon as that found in the ancient, possibly Celtic place *Tergolape* (Noricum Ripense, in modern Upper Austria), in Venetic *Opitergium*[1] (modern *Oderzo*; Lejeune 1974, 170; Prosdocimi 1988, 397-401), *Tergeste* (modern *Trieste*), and perhaps in *Tergilani*, mentioned as a settlement of the Lucani by Pliny (3, 11). While these ancient placenames allow no inference about the meaning of the etymon **tergo-*, this information is provided by the related ablaut variant **tr̥go-*, which is attested in Proto-Slavic **tъrgъ*, OCS *trъgъ* 'market' (Vasmer 1987, 82). The Slavic word was borrowed into a range of languages, including Lith. *tur̃gus*, Swed. *torg*, Albanian *treg*, all 'market', and the Finnish placename *Turku*. Finally, the root may be found once in a nominal formation or onomastic element, namely in the naming formula *P. Domatius P. f. Tergitio negotiator* (Horitschon; *CIL* III 4251; Katičić 1976, 172) from the region of the Boii in Pannonia Superior. The Latin epithet *negotiator* 'businessman' could be a translation of *Tergitio*,

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1   The meaning is probably 'at/near the market' (Pellegrini & Prosdocimi 1967, ii 148).

which could be interpreted as the vernacular word for the profession of the man. However, the reading of the word is not entirely certain and could also be *Tercitio* (see http://lupa.at/455).

The nominal root **terg-* 'market', which underlies all these formations and which therefore can be projected back to a stage before the emergence of the individual branches of Western Indo-European, has no separate entry in Pokorny's *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, although he mentions it in passing in *IEW* 324. The Celtiberian town of **Tergā* would appear to be a market-town by nature. TERGAŞ in the Bronze of Novallas refers either directly to that town, or it could be used as a generic noun for 'market'. Whether there is a difference in meaning between the formations **tr̥go-* and **tergeh₂-* is unclear to me.

7. DOIBIM

TERGAŞ is followed directly by DOIBIM for which a series of explanations have been suggested (see Beltrán Lloris *et al.* 2021, 117-118). I want to add another formal possibility. DOIBIM could be a spelling for something like **dou̯ibim*, the dative dual of the Proto-Celtic numeral **duu̯o* '2', i.e. 'to/for/with two'. The lowering of **u > *o* in Celtic is a regular development before vowels other than **i* (McCone 1996, 55); in **dou̯ibim* the lowering could be analogical after the nominative/accusative **dou̯o*. For the non-spelling of **u̯* between *o* and *i*, compare Gaulish *Ioincorix < *i̯ou̯inko-* 'young' or Lusitanian *oilam* 'sheep' < **ou̯ilā-*. The dative/prepositional *dib^N* of the numeral '2' caused nasalisation in Old Irish, e.g. *i ndib n-úarib deac* 'in twelve hours' (Carlsruhe Bede 3c), *for dib ngablaib* 'on two forks' (Ml. 45c9), *ó dib n-ógaib* 'of two integral (words)' (Sg. 75a5). McCone (1994, 202) derives OIr. *dib^N* from the Proto-Celtic dative **du̯i-bim*. It is conceivable that such a form was crossed with the stem of the nominative/accusative **dou̯o* in Celtiberian to result in **dou̯ibim* = DOIBIM.

I want to note in this context that conjugated prepositions of Old Irish did not make a gender distinction in the 3rd person plural. The forms *doäib*, *doïb*, *duäib* and *dóib* are just chronological, and perhaps dialectal, variants of a single morpheme, but are not differentiated by gender (Beltrán Lloris *et al.* 2021, 118).

8. DVNDOM

Jordán Cólera 2014, 430-432, explains the form DVNDOM in line 3 as a gerund of the verb 'to give', from the extended root $*deh_3$-u-. While the evidence for this extended root is very meagre, he points out that it is reflected in OIr. *dúas* 'gift, reward given for a poem' < $*deh_3usteh_2$- (2014, 432 fn. 21). It may also be found in another word that is closely associated with *dúas*, namely OIr. *dúan* 'poem', if it continues $*deh_3u$-neh_2-. However, there are a number of alternative explanations for the latter, namely $*deh_3$-un-eh_2- (derived from $*deh_3$-$u\mathring{r}/\underline{u}en$-), or $*d^h(e)ug^h neh_2$- 'veneration', or $*dh_2pneh_2$- 'that which has been apportioned' (see Stifter 2016, 45-46). In view of the obscure, but probably Italic-internal origin of the Latin gerundive suffix -*ndus* (e.g. Weiss 2020, 471-472), Jordán Cólera's reconstruction $*dh_3u$-ndo- does not seem advisable. I wonder if an alternative segmentation of the suffix is possible, namely $*dh_3(u)$-un-do-. $*$-un- would be the zero grade of the verbal abstract suffix $*$-$\underline{u}er/n$-; the nature of $*$-do- is less clear, but I note that a "participial" suffix $*$-do- has been postulated for Celtic by Hamp 1989.

9. MEDOM

The Insular Celtic languages have simplex nouns that, aside from the gender, could correspond more or less directly to MEDOM, namely the OIr. *ā*-stem *med* 'weight, measure, balance, extent, amount, equivalent' < $*medā$, and the rare Welsh word *medd* 'authority, power'.

10. DERNV[

Unfortunately, DERNV[, the last word of line 8, is fragmentary. The editors suggest an analysis as PIE $*derno$-, i.e. an ablaut variant of British Celtic words for 'piece', i.e. PC $*darno$- < PIE $*d\mathring{r}$-no- (Beltrán Lloris *et al.* 2021, 130). This is formally possible. However, an alternative comparsion is with the OIr. fem. *n*-stem *dernu**, gen. *dernann* 'palm of the hand'. This word of hitherto uncertain etymology (Stüber 1998, 116) can be set up mechanically as PC $*derna\underline{u}on$- (*uel sim.*), which is relatively close to Cib. DERNV[. The matter is more complicated, though. It is suggestive to see a relationship between OIr. *dernu** and OIr. *dorn* 'fist'. However, this cannot be a simple case of ablaut since the latter's congeners W *dwrn*, Bret. *dorn* 'fist, hand, paw', Gaul. *durno*-prove that the Proto-Celtic preform is $*durno$- (for which see Zimmer 2021). One possibility to connect the two Irish words would be to derive *dernu** from

*$du̯ern°$, a full-grade formation of the root *$dʰu̯er$-. In this case it would have to be assumed that Celtiberian had simplified initial *$du̯ > d$, like it happened in Irish, perhaps in dissimilation against the second *$u̯$ later in the word. In view of the overall concern of the Bronze of Novallas with width and measurement, a word for 'palm' or 'hand, fist' could be intended as a measurement of length. Gaulish *durno-* was borrowed into Vulgar Latin *durnus* and Old Occitan *dorn*, which both serve as 'a measure of a hand-width, span' (*LEIA* D-177-178).

⎪B I B L I O G R A F Í A⎪

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David Stifter

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