Togi- the Terrible

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Résumé : *L'étymologie conventionnelle de l'élément de nom personnel celtique (royal)* togi *<*teugi « hache » (cf. vieil irlandais* túag, *« hache ») est un détournement de racines indo-européennes (*teu̯-g- « gonfler » et/ ou *(s)teu̯-g- « frapper »); il dérive correctement de l'indo-européen *h₂teu-g- / h₂tu-g- « peur, terreur ». La tradition celtique selon laquelle un chef était un être effrayant, un redoutable protecteur, est ancrée dans la scène de la mort de Mac Cécht, à la fin du conte irlandais* Togail Bruidne Da Derga, *une instruction finale qui rappelle celle donnée par Bhīṣma agonisant à Yudhiṣṭhira dans le livre 13 du* Mahābhārata.

Mots-clés : Togirix, Esus, Sucellos, *grammaticalisation, hit.* ḫatuk- *« être terrible »,* ἀτυζόμενος *« terrorisé ».*

Abstract : *The conventional etymology of the (regal) Celtic personal name element* togi *<*teugi 'axe' (cf. Old Irish* túag *'axe, hatchet') is a misappropriation of Indo-European roots (*teu̯-g- 'to swell' and/or *(s)teu̯-g- 'to strike'); it correctly derives from Indo-European *h₂teu-g- / h₂tu-g- 'fear, dread, terror'. The Celtic tradition that a leader was a fearsome being, a formidable protector, is shown to be embedded in the scene of Mac Cécht's death at the close of the Irish tale* Togail Bruidne Da Derga, *a final instruction reminiscent of that given by the dying Bhīṣma to Yudhiṣṭhira in Book 13 of the* Mahābhārata.

Keywords : Togirix, Esus, Sucellos, *grammaticalization, Hitt.* ḫatuk- *'to be terrible,'* ἀτυζόμενος *'in terror'.*

In her important contribution to the *Festschrift* on the occasion of the sixty-fifth birthday of Oxford's D. Ellis Evans, Patrizia de Bernardo Stempel, a highly accomplished Celticist in her own right, discusses the important onomastic element *togi*.[1] This lexeme appears both initially and finally in (regal) Insular and Continental Celtic personal names. Prominent examples are as follows: (initially) *Togi-dubnus* (Britain), *Togi-marus* (Aquitania), *Togi-rix* (Eburodunum, Gaul), *Togi-vepus* (Noricum) beside the exceptional *Togodumnus* in Cassius Dio (60.20.1, 60.2.11) for Tacitus's *Togidumnus* (or *Cogidumno*) in his *Agricola* (14); (finally) *Ver-tougi* (Gaul), *Con-touca* (a Tiberian potter from Montans).[2]
Patrizia de Bernardo Stempel (*loc. cit.*) continues her discussion by informing us that the etymological connection between *togi-* and early Celtic **tou̯gi-* < **teu̯gi-* has "long been seen in Old Irish *túag* 'arch' and 'hatchet'". In a footnote to this assertion she posits the Indo-European roots **teu̯-g-* 'to swell' and **(s)*

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1. de Bernardo Stempel, 1995, p. 24.

2. see Evans, 1967, p. 66, and Schmidt, 1957, p. 279, for critical listings of these names and on Noricum's *Togivepus (Togiouepus)* see Lovenjak, 1998, p. 193?

teu̯-g- 'to strike' as sources, both of which are detailed by Julius Pokorny in his *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*.[3] Pokorny's monumental dictionary is a standard go-to etymological Bible for the comparativist. But one then wonders which root is the actual source. Comparative linguistics is supposedly a science, not a game of chance.

Seeking subsequent scholarship for confirmation of which Indo-European root is the culprit, one then turns to the second edition of Xavier Delamarre's authoritative *Dictionnaire de la langue gauloise* (2003) in which, under *touga, tougi*, 'hache' ou 'arc',[4] we are informed that the root would be that of Sanskrit *tunákti* 'he strikes' and Greek τύκος 'hammer, stone axe'. Delamarre thus opts for a Proto-Indo-European *s*-mobile root *(*s*)*teu̯-g-*, Pokorny's (*op. cit.*) entry 1032-1033. So, now it's no longer a game of chance, a single root has been selected as the primitive source of *togi-* in, say, *Togi-rix* (*rix* = Lat. *rēx* 'king') which would then mean *Axe-King* or *King Hatchet*. Some scholars have, however, claimed that these Celtic proto-forms are associated with the Sanskrit radical *tuj-* 'to push, thrust, urge', but there is no Celtic *King Pushy* or *Thrusty King*.[5] In his dictionary of the inherited Celtic lexicon, Ranko Matasović suggests, apparently in desperation, derivation from **tonketo-* 'destiny'',[6] which is unfeasible both phonologically and semantically. This, of course, predicates a fool's errand, a search for an early Celtic *Axe-King*. No such king is recorded in Celtic mythology. One might, nevertheless, contemplate such a king depicted in plastic art bearing an axe as his symbol of office, such as the Hittite (Hurrian) weather god depicted as holding a mace in the rupestrian procession at Yazilikaya (about two miles from Boghazköy). A Celtic deity Esus is, in fact, shown chopping a tree with an axe on the famed Paris Pillar of the Boatmen (Musée des Thermes), but virtually nothing outside Gaul is known of him. The Frisian deity Fosite, arrestingly identified as Poseidon by Hans Kuhn,[7] is the legendary helmsman with a golden axe on his shoulder who steered a boat carrying twelve Frisian *Āsegas* ('law-speakers') to an island where he taught them their laws and then disappeared. Notwithstanding, in Germanic mythology it is not the axe, but Thor's hammer Mjölnir (from a Northern European root *meldh that is quite possibly Pre-Indo-European), that plays a focal role. Ceremonial axes are, nevertheless, known from the archaeologies of Celtic sites such as Horné Orešany (Slovakia) and Hallstatt (Austria). Miniature axe heads fashioned as amulets or perhaps charms are also known from Romano-Celtic sites.[8]

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3. Pokorny, 1959, 1080 and 1032-1033 respectively.
4. Delamarre, 2003, p. 299.
5. See *(*s*)*teu̯g* in Rix *et al.,* 2001.
6. Matasović, 2009, p. 383-384.
7. Kuhn, 1978, p. 186-188.
8. See Guštin and Popović, 2017.

There is, moreover, a Gaulish deity *Sucellos* (*Sucellus*) 'the good striker' or 'the good protector' who carries a large mallet and an olla or barrel. He is identified with Silvanus in the *interpretatio Romana* and is known from Eastern Gaul, the Rhineland, Canton Basel (Augusta Raurica) and Britain (in an inscription at York). Recall that Dagda, one of the Tuatha Dé Danann, carries a barrel on his back and bears a big club (*lorg mór*).

We conclude that, while there are regional Celtic associations with axes as symbols or charms, there is surely no Celtic *Axe King* or *Hatchet King*. Moreover, the other *togi*-names do not support convincing semantic associations with 'axe, hatchet'. A case in point is Noricum's *Togivepus* which would etymologize as 'axe word' or the like with *vepus* < PIE *wek^wos (cf. Lat. *vōx* 'voice, speech, saying'). Clearly, there is something wrong here, a misplaced effort at etymologizing, so if one paradigm (*(s)teu̯-g-*) doesn't work, then it's time to change to another more convincing and workable paradigm.[9] We now suggest deriving Celtic *teu-g-> onomastic *togi*- from Proto-Indo-European *h_2teu-g- / h_2tu-g- 'fear, dread, terror' as reflected in, for example, Gk. ἀτυζόμενοι (*Iliad* 18.7) 'in terror, bewildered, dazed, distraught' (and so also in Pindar, Sophocles, Euripides, Theocritus and Apollonius Rhodius [e. g. ἀτύζει 'terrifies', *Argonautica* Bk. 1, li. 465], etc.); Skt. *tujyáte* (*Rig Veda* 1.84.17a) 'flees in terror, is seized by fear'; Hitt. *ḫatuk-* 'to be terrible', *ḫatugatar* 'frightfulness' (an *r/n*-stem), and generic *ḫatuga-* 'abomination, terrible things (of any kind)' a cover term for evils in the *Old Hittite Ritual for the Royal Couple* (*KBo* XVII 1). This latter text is from the oldest stratum of Anatolian ritual and has been splendidly edited by Otten and Souček (1969) who discuss *ḫatuga-* in detail (1969: 95-96).[10]

This verb does not survive into Modern Greek or Indic, and other than Celtic, as proposed here, it is found elsewhere in Europe only in Albanian, *i. e.* the passive reflexive verb *tutem* 'to be frightened' and its noun *tútë* 'fear'.[11] In Greek, ἀτυζόμαι 'to be distraught from fear, to be terrified' was apparently replaced in Modern Greek by φοβούμαι (φοβάμαι) 'to fear, be afraid of'. In Indic √ *tuj-* underwent pernicious homonymy with √ *tuc-* and Vedic *toj-*.[12] It is Robert

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9. This alternative paradigm was suggested to me by Markus Egetmeyer during a long telephone conversation from Paris on May 29th this year (2020) when he also wished me well on my 80th birthday.

10. Otten and Souček, 1969, p. 95-96. For research history and further details about *ḫatuga-*'s etymology, see Tischler, 1983, p. 227-229, who implausibly derives *ḫatuk-* from Proto-Indo-European *h_2ed- (e. g. Lat. *ōdium* 'hatred'), and then Kloekhorst, 2008, p. 392-393, who accepts Gk. ἀτυζόμαι (< *h_2tu-g-) as a cognate following Benveniste's (1937, p. 497) convincingly definitive lead.

11. See Orel, 2000, p. 140.

12. On which processes see Rix *et al.*, 2001, p. 286, s.v. *$h_2teu̯g$-, albeit flawed by a misleading reference to Pokorny, 1959, unfortunately one of the numerous dead-end references in this work.

Plath, however, who is to be credited with clarifying the derivation of ἀτυζόμαι and *ḫatuk-* from Proto-Indo-European *$*h_2teu$-g- / h_2tu-g-*.[13] So, for example, Gk. ἀτυζεται and Sanskrit *tujyáte* (despite its accent as a middle intransitive and not passive) both impeccably derive from Proto-Indo-European *$*h_2tug^x$-ye-toi.* This laryngeal root also etymologizes the Sanskrit reduplicated perfect middle participle (barytonic) *tū́tujāna-* / (oxytonic) *tūtujāná-* < *$*h_2tu$-h_2tug-* with the barytonic alternate considered secondary and adjectival and the oxytonic alternate considered primary and participial (more verbal). This dichotomy, omitted by Lowe,[14] is appreciated by Kuryłowicz,[15] a further illustration of that scholar's demonstration of primary vs. secondary grammaticalization in historical evolution.

In Celtic *togi-* we see detritus of Proto-Indo-European *h_2teu-g- / h_2tu-g-* that was onomastically stranded and thereby underwent a sort of linguistic cryogenesis. These processes preserved a fragment of highly antiquated Indo-European culture in Western Europe, namely denotation of a hereditary leader as one to be feared, *Togi-* "the Terrible".

Having etymologized the *togi-*king as "the fearsome, dreaded king," German *ehrfürchtig*, he stands in perfect cultural isolation and demands contextualization for comprehension and appreciation. I suggest that we find interpretative contextualization for such a Celtic leader in general at the conclusion of the Irish tale *The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel* (*Togail Bruidne Da Derga*); *Da Derga* meaning "the red deity". I refer to Eleanor Knott's edition.

At the end of the third day of battle, the hero Mac Cécht is left lying near death among the wounded on the field of slaughter. He sees a woman going by and asks her to stay a while. She says: *Ní lamain a dola, ol in banscál, lad gráin 7 t'oman.* (I dare not go to you, the woman said to him, for fear and horror of you. [li. 1500]), in which the key words for an adequate interpretation are: *gráin* 'horror, loathing' and *oman* (*omon*) 'fear, terror'. Clearly, Mac Cécht is the equivalent of a fearsome, dreaded king. Middle Irish *gráin*[16] 'horror' is related to Gk. γοργός 'grim, fierce, terrible' and thus the Gorgons with analogues elsewhere in Indo-European language and myth, e.g. Old Church Slavic *groza* 'horror'. Old Irish *ómun* (*n*-stem, later an *o* and *u* stem masc.) 'fear, being afraid' corresponds to Welsh *ofn* 'fear, dread', which is derivationally unclear, but probably reflects a Proto-British *obnus* (*omnus*?); Middle Irish *uamhan* 'terror'.[17] Mac Cécht then replies with a highly formulaic response: *Nodn-gabaim for fír mo oinich 7 mo foesma.* (I give you in truth my honor and my protection. [li. 1503]), precisely

13. Plath, 2000.
14. Lowe, 2015, p. 268.
15. Kuryłowicz, 1968, p. 47-48.
16. Pokorny, 1959, 353.
17. See Schrijver, 1995, p. 353.

what a king is expected to offer a subject. It is from a position of fearsomeness that he does so. Old Irish *oinich* (*enech*) is a polysemous term with a rich investigative history. Literally, it is what is on one's face, front cheeks or brows, but it took on the meaning honor and also hospitality, that which was granted a guest in Indo-European tradition. Old Irish *fóes*(*s*)*am* < *fo-essam* 'protection, safeguard' (Welsh *gwaessaf* fem. 'guarantee' < **Waïssau* < **u̯o-sista-mu*) to Lat. *sistit* (Sanskrit *tíṣṭhati* 'stands') signifies protection, confession, and basically 'one who stands for someone as a protector'; see Schrijver (1995: 117).[18] The woman then goes to Mac Cécht, examines his wound and tells him, using a metaphor *sengán sentalman* 'an ant of the ancient earth', that is a 'wolf' was nipping at it. Exegetically and dispositively he then says: *Tonga do dia a toingti mo thúath* (I swear by the god my tribe swears by. [li. 1507]), a traditional exculpatory oath avoiding divine anger, after which he dies.

Thus it is that a fearsome king recites his traditional dedicatory obligations to a subject followed by his final expiatory oath upon death. This is a formulaic ending of a tale, an inorganic extension that is virtually pedagogical in scope. It glosses the *togirix* as "*togi* the Terrible". The scene evokes the instructional mystery of *dharma* giving by the dying Bhīṣma to Yudhiṣṭhira in Book 13 of the *Mahābhārata*.

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18   See Schrijver, 1995, p. 117.

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