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Minerva, caterva, & sonorant metathesis: Arguments against a sound law by Rix

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Plan of the talk

- ▶ Rix's PIE *-sw- > PIIt. *-rw-
 - The etymology of *Minerva*
 - L *caterva* & Umb. *caterahamo*
 - Rix's Latin data
 - The path forward
- ▶ Issues with Rix's proposal
- ▶ A heteroclitic solution to L *-erv-*
- ▶ *-mw- > *-m- in dissimilatory contexts





1 Rix's PIE *-sw- > Plt. *-rw-

The etymology of *Minerva*

- Rix (1981: 111–122 = 2001: 279–290) proposed an etymology for the Roman goddess *Minerva*:

(1) **menes-weh*₂- > Plt. **menerwā*-

a. VOL *menerva* (Praeneste *CIL* I² 2498; mid 4th cen. BCE)

i. > L *Minerva*

ii. ⇒ Etr. **men(e)rva** (6th cen. BCE Veii)

b. Fal. **menerua** (*CIL* I² 365/*Ve* 320)

c. Pael. *minerua* (*Ve* 203/*ST* Pg 4),

d. Osc. *meneruai* (*ST* Pg 8), **menere(vas)** (*Ve* 203/*ST* Po 38)

- Rix proposes a nominal stem $\sqrt{*mén-es}$ - ‘thought, mind, spirit’ with many cognates:
e.g., Ved. *mánas-*, Av. *manah-*, OP *m-n-h*, Gr. μένος



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- Because -rv- appears in early Etruscan (before Latin rhotacism) and across Italic, Rix proposed that PIE *-sw- > *-rw- / V__V already in Proto-Italic.



1 Rix's PIE *-sw- > Plt. *-rw-

L *caterva* & Umb. *caterahamo*

- Rix identifies another cognate set apparently showing PIE *-sw- > Plt. *-rw-:
 - (2) **kates-weh*₂- 'provided with enclosures' > **katerwā*- >
 - a. L *caterva* 'troop, band; group'
 - b. Umb. *kateramu/caterahamo* (Ib 20/VIb 56) 'form military ranks?' 2PL.PASS.IMP
- Rix compares *catēna* 'chain' < **kates-nā*- 'made of enclosures' & OE *heapor* 'confinement'.
 - The meaning 'provided with enclosures' and cognate *heapor* are difficult to understand.
 - Semantically better: 'chain (of troops)' ~> 'crowd' (cf. L *agmen* 'train; army; multitude')
 - If **kates*- meant 'chain', then L *cassis* 'hunting net' could be from **kat-s-is*.
 - Yet the military meaning of *caterva* and *caterahamo* appears primary.



L *caterva* & Umb. *caterahamo*

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 - b. Umb. *kateramu/caterahamo* (Ib 20/VIb 56) ‘form military ranks?’ 2PL.PASS.IMP
- Even if from **katerwāje/o-*, the meaning of *kateramu/caterahamo* remains uncertain:¹
 - This hapax (with copy) is from the lustration of the people during the cursing of aliens.
 - Follows *armanu/arsmahamo* (Ib 19/VIb 56) ‘form priestly ranks?’ (cf. *arsmor* ‘rites?’).
 - The division into priests and warriors mirrors the division of cursed aliens:

nerf. śihitu . anśihitu . iouie . hostatu | anhostatu (VIb 59–60)

‘citizens invited and uninvited (to office) and youths armed and unarmed’

¹See *WOU*: s.vv. *arsmahamo*, *caterahamo* with lit.



Rix's Latin-only data

- To *Minerva* and *caterva*, Rix adds several Latin-only etymologies with cognates:
 - (3) L *acervus* 'heap' < *akes-w-os « PIE *h₂ék-es- 'point, pointy thing'
 - a. L *acus* ~ *aceris* 'bran, chaff'
 - b. OE *ēar*, OHG *ahir* 'ear (of corn)' < PG *ahaz ~ ahiziz
 - c. TA *āk*, TB *āke* 'end'
 - (4) L *prōtervus* < *proptervus* (Pl.) 'violent; rash' < *proptes-wo- « PIE *pro-pt(h₁)-es- 'inclined'
 - a. Gr. προπετής 'falling down'
 - (5) L *furvus* 'dark, gloomy' < PIE *d^hus-wo-
 - a. L *fuscus*, OE *dox* 'dark' < PIE *d^hus-ko-
 - b. OE *dunn*, OIr. *donn* 'brown' < PIE *d^hus-no-



1 Rix's PIE *-sw- > Plt. *-rw-

The roadmap for this talk

§2 Problems for Rix's analysis

§3 A new way to derive -erv- from
*-w_r/wén-heteroclites with metathesis

§4 *-nw- > *-m- in dissimilatory contexts





Plan of the talk

- ▶ Rix's PIE **-sw-* > *PIt. *-rw-*
- ▶ Issues with Rix's proposal
 - Problems with the Latin-only data
 - Counterexample(s) to **-sw-* > *PIt. *-rw-*
 - Interim summary
- ▶ A heteroclitic solution to *L -erv-*
- ▶ **-nw-* > **-m-* in dissimilatory contexts





Problems with the Latin-only data

- Several problems exist for these data, however:
- (6) L *acervus* 'heap' < pre-PIt. **akes-w-os* « PIE **h₂ék-es-* 'point, pointy thing':
- a. As EDL: s.v. *acervus* points out: "While formally conceivable, the required shift in meaning (**akes-* 'chaff' > **akes-uo-* 'heap of chaff' > 'heap') is just a guess."
 - b. Alternatively, this formation could simply be **akes-ew-os* > **akerewos* > *acervus*.
- (7) L *proptervus* 'violent; shameless' < **propteswo-* « PIE **pro-pt(h₁)-es-* 'inclined, hasty':
- a. The root grades of *proptervus* & *προπετής* < **pro-pet(h₁)-es-* do not match.
 - b. See also Lundquist (2021) against root \emptyset -grades in compound **s*-stems.



Problems with the Latin-only data

- Several problems exist for these data, however:

(8) L *furvus* 'dark, gloomy' < PIE **d^hus-wo-*:

- a. Despite Rix's protestations, *furvus* could come from **d^hus-i-wó-*.
- b. As Nussbaum (1997: 190–191⁶²) shows, *helvus* 'yellow' must reflect **ǵ^hel(h₃)-i-wó-s*.
- c. **-wó-* stands beside **-i-wó-* elsewhere:²
 - i. **deks-wo-* > OIr. *dess* 'right, south', Goth. *taíhswa-* 'right'
 - ii. **deks-i-wo-* > Myc. *de-ki-si-wo*, Gr. *δεξιός* 'right', Gaul. *Dexsiua*
 - iii. **deks(-i)-wo-* > Umb. *desua*, *tesvam*, *dersua*, *dersua* 'right'

²Stüber (2006), Vine (2009: 6), and Oettinger (2017)



Counterexample(s) to *-sw- > PIt. *-rw-

- Two counterexamples without *-sw- > PIt. *-rw- have been identified:

- (9) L *pruīna* 'frost', not †*prurvīna* < **prus-w-īn-ā-* « √*prews-* 'to freeze'
- a. Compare Ved. *pruṣvā-* 'drop; frost' (AV) < **prus-w-éh₂-* (Gerow 1973)
 - b. Hamp (1973: 216–218) and *OHCGL*²: 175¹⁵ argue for haplology or dissimilation: **prus-w-īn-ā-* > **prurwīnā* > *pruīna*, but the haplology of *-ru-rw- is not exact!
 - c. *HLLF*⁴ I: 103 instead assume **prus-w-īn-ā-* > **prūwīnā-* > **prūīnā-* > *pruīna*. (cf. **dis-wert-^o/e-* > L *dīvertō* 'separate', though *-s#w- is heteromorphemic!)
 - d. Overall, this form is difficult to evaluate.



Counterexample(s) to *-sw- > PIt. *-rw-

- Two counterexamples without *-sw- > PIt. *-rw- have been identified:

- (10) Umb. **mersus** M.NOM.SG ~ **mersuva** F.ABL.SG/N.ACC.PL ‘as prescribed’
 < **medeswo-* < **med-es-wo-* « **méd-es-* (whence L *modus* ‘manner’)³
- Compare Umb. *mersto* (augurial ADJ), L *modestus* ‘moderate’ < **medes-to-*
 - We do not get †**mer(ru)v-** < **mederwo-* < **mederwo-* < **med-es-wo-*!
 - mersus** cannot be from **med-s-wo-*, which would give †*mesus*.
 (cf. Umb. **revestu** ‘examine’ FUT.ACT.IMP < **re-weyd-s-e-tōd*)
 - Meiser assumes Latin & Umbrian have sporadic, *einzel sprachlich* *-sw- > *-rw-,
 but this cannot explain the uniform -rv- in *Minerva* & cognates!

³Meiser (1986: 174–176) and *WOU*: s.v. **mersus**



Interim summary

- Besides *Minerva* and *caterva*, the evidence for *-sw- > *-rw- is weak or contradictory.
- Yet the rule often appears in handbooks: Meiser (2002: 117) and *OHCGL*²: 175+¹⁵⁻¹⁶
- But see Fortson (2017: 838–839) with similar critiques.
- A solution without 2 rounds of (pre-)Latin rhotacism would be preferable.





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 - Thematization and metathesis of Italic **-w̥r/wén-* heteroclitics
 - L *caterva*
 - L *proptervus*
 - L *Minerva*
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Thematization and metathesis of Italic $*-wr/wén$ -heteroclitics

- Latin possesses only 3 semi-functional $-r/n$ -heteroclitic paradigms:⁴

- (11) a. *femur* ~ *feminī* ‘thigh’ (of disputed origin; see below)
 b. *iecur* ~ *iecinoris* ‘liver’ (cf. Ved. *yákr̥t* ~ *yaknás*, Gr. ἧπαρ ~ ἧπατος)
 c. *iter* ~ *itinerī* ‘road’ (cf. TB *ytār-ye*, TA *ytār*)

- One archaic heteroclitite, however, was thematized in Latin with metathesis:⁵

- (12) *nervus* < Pit. $*(s)nēr̥wos$ < pre-Pit. $*snē-wr + -o-$ « $*snéh_1wr/won-$ ‘sinew’
 a. Pā. *nhāru* < $*snéh_1ru-$ vs. Ved. *snāvan-* < $*snéh_1won-$
 b. TB *ṣñor* < $*snéh_1ru-$
 c. YAv. *snāuuar*^{ᶞᶟ} < $*snéh_1wr̥$
 d. Gr. *νεῦρον* < $*snéh_1wr-o-$

⁴See *OHCGL*²: 257–258+⁷ for the most recent summary.

⁵Del Tomba (2021: 54–58) and Clayton (2023: 20–21, 52–53 with lit.)



Thematization and metathesis of Italic $*-wr/wén$ -heteroclitics

(12) *nervus* < PIt. $*(s)nēr̥wos$ < pre-It. $*snē-wr + -o-$ « $*snéh_1-wr/won-$ ‘sinew’

- Like (12), I claim that *caterva*, *proptervus*, & *Menerva* arose from thematized heteroclitics:

(13) a. *caterva* < PIt. $*katr̥_2wā$ < pre-It. $*katwr + -ā-$ « $*kát-wr$ ‘hostility’

b. *proptervus* < PIt. $*proptr̥_2wos$ < pre-It. $*proptwr + -o-$ « $*pro-pt(h_x)-wr$ ‘hastening’

c. *Menerva* < PIt. $*menr̥_2wā$ < pre-It. $*menwr + -ā-$ « $*mén-wr$ ‘thought’

- In F $*-wr/wén$ -heteroclitics, we expect $*-wer-ih_2-$ (Ved. $pívarī-$, Gr. $πίειρα$ ‘fat’ < $*píh_x-wer-ih_2-$).
 - But Italic has mostly replaced $*-ih_2-$ with $*-ā-$.⁶
 - Thus, these thematizations must be of Italic date.

⁶For a potential example of $*-ih_2-$, see Nussbaum (1973).



Thematization and metathesis of Italic **-wr/wén-*heteroclitics

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- I propose that pre-Pit. **wr* > Pit. **rw* / $\sigma_{\mu\mu} _ _ V$ (i.e., in onsets):

- Cf. L *parvus* ‘small’ < **pā.rwos* < **pā.wros* < **péh₂w-ro-s* (> Gr. παῦρος ‘id.’).

- Onset **wr* > *rw* occurs elsewhere in IE:

OAv. *ruuāta-* [*r^wwāta-*] ‘prayer’ < PIE **wreh₁-to-*

YAv. *ruuāēs-* [*r^wwae:s-*] ‘to turn’ < **√wreyk-*

OFr. *inrweze*, *inruesze* ‘wound’ < PG **in-wrak-ja-*



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c. *Menerva* < PIt. **men̥₂wā* < pre-It. **menwr + -ā-* « **mén-wr̥* ‘thought’

- I propose that pre-It. **wr* > PIt. **rw* / $\sigma_{\mu\mu} _ _ V$ (i.e., in onsets):

- This metathesis may be motivated by the crosslinguistic tendency of onset liquids to reach coronal targets before or concurrent with dorsal targets.⁷
- The non-metathesis in *taurus* ‘bull’ < **(s)táw.ros* (Gr. ταῦρος, Lt. *taŭras*, YAv. *staora-*, etc.) is then due to heterosyllabicity of **-w.r-*.

⁷Gick et al. (2006), Walker & Proctor (2019), and Clayton (2022: 67–70)

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- With this metathesis, $*r > *r_2 / C_w$.

- New Italic syllabic liquids $*r_2, *l_2 > *er, *el$ in Latin and Sabellic:⁸

Osc. *Aderl(a)* < pre-Osc. $*adr_2lā$ < Pit. $*atrolā$ < $*h_2h_1tr-o-l-eh_2-$

L *Atella* < pre-L $*atr_2lā$ < Pit. $*atrolā$ < $*h_2h_1tr-o-l-eh_2-$

⁸Latin: *LGr.* I: 142–144, *HLLF*⁴ I: 70–71, Meiser (2002: 74), and *OHCGL*²: 133; Sabellic: *GrOUD* I: 323–324, *GrOU*: 60–61, and Meiser (1986: 71–72, 132–133)



Thematization and metathesis of Italic $*-wr/wén$ -heteroclitites

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c. *Menerva* < PIt. $*menr_2wā$ < pre-PIt. $*menwr + -ā-$ « $*mén-wr$ ‘thought’

- With this metathesis, $*r > *r_2 / C_w$.
 - The resyllabification must have occurred simultaneously with the metathesis to avoid generating an undesirable $*-nr-$ sequence in $*menr̥wā-$.
 - These would be the first examples of new Italic syllabic sonorants arising without syncope.
- But now we must look at the evidence for these heteroclitites!



L *caterva* ‘military band’ \rightsquigarrow host, group’ \ll **kát-wr/won-*

- There is good support for a heteroclitite **kát-wr/won-* ‘hostility’:⁹

- (14)
- Ved. *śátru-* ‘enemy’ < **kát-ru-*
Ved. *śátrūyánt-* ‘acting as enemy’ < **kát-ru-h₂-yónt-*
 - NHG *Hader* ‘enmity’ < MHG *hader* < PGerm. **hapruz* < **kát-ru-*
 - HLuw. *katun^{a/i-}* < **kat-un-o-*

- It is conceivable that this is an *-r/n-extension of an older *-u-stem **kát-u-*:

- (15)
- Gaul. *catu-*, PrimIr. *cattu-*, OIr. *cath*, W *cad* ‘war’
 - H *kattu-* ‘enmity’
 - ON *hǫð-*, OE *heapō-* < PG **hapu-* ‘anger’

⁹Not OIr. *ceithern* ‘troop’ (F *-ā*) \Leftarrow L *quaterna* (cf. OOcc. *cazerna* \Rightarrow Fr. *caserne* ‘barracks’)



(“*314”)katun^a/i- in KARKAMIŠ A6

(16) KARKAMIŠ A6 §§14–17 (Morpurgo Davies 1986; *CHLI* I.1: 123–128; Gilibert 2022: 9–12):

§14 |*a-wa/i* |*kwa/i*||-*i-zi* | (“*314”)ka-tú-na-sa

§15 |*i-zi-i-sa-ta+ra/i-wa/i-ma-za* |*zi-la* | (“*314”)ka-tú-ni-zi

| (MANUS)*i-sà-tara/i-i* (“PONERE”)tú-wa/i-há

§16 |*kwa/i-zi-pa-wa/i-ma-za-'* | (“LIGNUM”)tara/i-pu-na-sá

§17 |*i-zi-i-sa-ta+ra/i-wa/i-ma-za* |*zi-la* | (“LIGNUM”)tara/i-pu-na-zi-i

| (MANUS)*i-sà-tara/i-i* “PONERE”-wa/i-ha ||

‘(For those of the king’s brothers) who are of hostility[?],

with honor then I put *k*-items[?] in their hands,

and for them who (are) of trampling[?] / plowing[?],

with honor then I put *t*-items[?] in their hands.’

- The regent Yariri honors the young king Kamani and his brothers, whom he gives gifts.
- The determinative *314 modifies words meaning ‘hostility’ or ‘enmity’.



L *proptervus* ‘rash; violent’ « **pró-pth_x-wr/won-*

- (17) a. Gr. πτύρομαι ‘be scared ⇐ fly’ < **ptuh_xr-yé-* < **pth_x-ur-yé-*
 b. Ved. *pátvan-* ‘flying; beating’ < **péth_x-won-*
- (18) a. Gr. ὀδύρομαι ‘mourn ⇐ suffer’ < **h₁d-ur-yé-*
 Gr. ὀδύνη ‘pain’ < **h₁d-ún-eh₂* (Schindler 1975)
 b. Ved. *°áadvan-* ‘eating’ < **h₁éd-won-*
 c. ON *jǫtunn*, OE *eoten* ‘giant’ < PGerm. **etunaz* < **h₁ed-un-o-s*

- (19) A similar semantic development in *RV* 5.6.7:

táva tyé agne arcáyo ' máhi vrādhanta vājínaḥ |

yé pátvabhiḥ śaphán^aām ' vrajā bhuránta gón^aām ' iṣam stotṛbhya á bhara ||

‘These flames of yours, o Agni, are greatly arrogant prizewinners,

which, by their hooves’ **beatings**, dart toward the double enclosures of the cows.

— Bring refreshment for the praise singers.’



3 A heteroclitic solution to L -erv-

L *Minerva* « **mén-wr/won-*

- I propose **mén-won-* assimilated to PNIE **mén-mon-* (a more common suffixal category).

(20) Vedic: *mánman-* ‘thought’

(21) OIr. *menmae*, MW *mynw*, MBret. *meno* ‘mind’ < PC **menman-* (DLG²: s.v. *menman*)

a. Gaul. *menmandutis-*, *Menmandutia*, *Memandus* ‘thought-giver’ < **men-mṛ-deh₃-t-*
(cf. L *sacerdōs* < **sh₂k-ro-deh₃-t-*; Delamarre 2010/2012: 100–102; Lambert 2013: 152)

b. Celtib. *Melmu* ~ *Melmunos*, *Melmanios*; Gaul. *Menimanius* < **men-mó(n-)*

c. Celtib. *Melmantama* ‘most thoughtful’ < **mén-mṛ-tamo-*

- It is possible that **mén-wr/won-* is built from **mó/én-u-* > Ved. *mánu-* ‘man’ and that PG **man(n)an-* ‘man’ reflects **mon-won-*, but other solutions exist.¹⁰

¹⁰For instance, EDPG: s.v. **mannan-* proposes **d^hg^hm-on-*.



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- ▶ **-nw-* > **-m-* in dissimilatory contexts
 - *L memor* ~ *memoris* / *Minerva*
 - *L femur* ~ *feminis* 'thigh'





4 *-nw- > *-m- in dissimilatory contexts

L *memor* ~ *memoris* / *Minerva*

- L *memor* ~ *memoris* ‘mindful; heedful’ is notoriously problematic:
 1. If from $\sqrt{(s)mer-}$ ‘to remember’,¹¹ the reduplicated **me-mor-s* > *memor* does not match the *i*-reduplications elsewhere:
 - **mi-mr-os* > PG **mimraz* > OE *mimor* ‘mindful’
 - **si-smer-ont-* > YAv. *hišmarəntō* ‘recalling’
 - **si-smer-y^e/o-* > Gr. ἱμείρω ‘long for’
 2. If from **me-mn-os*-¹² (with odd morphology), we require a special dissimilatory loss of *-n-.

¹¹LEW³ and DELL⁴: s.v. *memor*

¹²LGr. I: 610



4 *-nw- > *-m- in dissimilatory contexts

L *memor* ~ *memoris* / *Minerva*

- I propose instead **mén-wr̥-s* M, **mén-wr̥* N > *memor*, *memor*.
- Normally *-nw- does not produce L -m- (e.g., *invertō* ‘invert’ < **h₁en-wert-*).
- Special dissimilatory circumstances apply here, however.
- Recall that **n...n* > **r...n* (e.g., *carmen* ‘song’ < **kan-men-*, *germen* ‘seed’ < **gen-men-*).
- Given NOM/ACC **menwor* ~ OBL *menwon-* < **mén-wr̥/won-*, a contradiction arises:
 - An OBL **menwon-* wants to dissimilate to **merwon-*,
but this would level to an undesirable NOM/ACC *merwor*.
- Instead, a third, labial-conditioned dissimilatory target was chosen: **m*.



4 *-nw- > *-m- in dissimilatory contexts

L *femur* ~ *feminis* ‘thigh’

- The advantage of such an account is that it would also explain *femur* ~ *feminis* ‘thigh’:
 - **dʰén-wr/won-* ‘bow’ (> Ved. *dhánur*, *dhánvan-*; YAv. *θanuuar*^a ~ *θanuuan-*)¹¹ has the same phonological issue, so it dissimilates to **θemwr* ~ **θemwon-* > *femur* ~ *femin-*.
 - Pace Nikolaev (2021: 961+⁴⁰), I do not find it plausible that the best behaved heteroclit in Latin would come from a one-of formation from **dʰem-u-r/n* ‘thick thing’ (cf. Gr. *θαμύς* ‘thick’).
- This labial-conditioned dissimilation would find a parallel in L *lacruma* ‘tear’, which has intrusive -n- throughout IE:¹²

(22) OL *lacruma*, *dacrima* < **dakrumā* < **dakrunā* < *(*dʰrk-*)*h₂ek-ru* + -n- + -eh₂

a. Ved. *ásru-*

b. Gr. *δάκρυ*

c. TB *akrūna* OBL.PL

¹¹*EWAia*: s.v. *dhánuṣ-* also with **dʰén-wr/won-* > *femur*.

¹²*EDL*: s.v. *lacruma* and Clayton (2023: 53–56 with lit.)



Thank you for listening!

Any questions?



https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xXv3uHNuKI3v4_Pjr8clfUlOXfwXqgFo



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