# «A SATISFACTORY ETYMOLOGY HAS LONG BEEN AVAILABLE» NOTES ON VASCONIC NAMES OUTSIDE THE BASQUE COUNTRY WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO SOME BRITISH *ARN-* AND *EARN-* NAMES AND TO GERMAN *ARNOLDSWEILER*

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## 1. Ferninst the Vasconic theory*

When I first opened my copy of Larry Trask's admirable book *The history of Basque* (1997), I was greatly surprised to find in it two pages (365-67) discussing early attempts of mine at identifying the language of the Old European toponymy with an early form of Basque, which I named *Vasconic*. Only when reading the entire chapter did it occur to me that mine was in Trask's eyes merely the latest attempt to identify relatives for a language which he had vigorously claimed in

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\* This paper was written and submitted for a festschrift planned by the Editors to be presented to Larry Trask on 10 November 2004, his 60th birthday. I wrote it with the expectation that Larry would have relished being addressed and challenged in a scholarly area close to his heart, and I was very much looking forward to his response which I considered certain to come, written in the brisk and pithy style we all have known and enjoyed for many years. Instead there came 27 March 2004.

Prof. Trask, as is well known and can be seen again in some of the quotations in section 1 below, held firm views and tended to use strong words. But those who had occasion to communicate with him know that he was not dogmatic or pertinacious. Electronically searching my correspondence for his name I found the following passage written on 22 February 1998, which may be compared to section 1.2 below for content and to 1.3. for attitude:

> When recently I wrote to Trask that Basque *izurde* 'dolphin' = *iz* + *urde* "water-pig" (as opposed to Michelena's reconstruction *giza* + *urde* "man-pig") had support in Middle High German *merswīn* 'dolphin' (= *mer* 'sea' + *swīn* 'pig'), he signalled that he was ready to reconsider that example. In this attitude I recognize not only a great scholar but also a great teacher —one who has firm, well-founded opinions but on argumentation is ready to listen and to reconsider.

Though Larry Trask and I never met, and though we often fought for different views both in semi-public and private e-correspondence and in published work, we were below this surface bonded together by mutual scholarly advice and academic support. Thus I have not only lost my dearest opponent but a friend. I beg forgiveness for letting this paper go into the world as if he were still alive.

publications and in e-mail discussions, and claimed again in his book, to be an isolate. Mine had become part of what he characterizes in the book as "this vast body of work [which] ranges from the sober and well informed through the increasingly fanciful and incompetent to the downright preposterous, with a rather strong bias towards the preposterous end of the scale" (358).

I will not misuse this occasion to show in which ways Trask's treatment of my proposal is inadequate. For his main argument, that it is incorrect to assume only a few languages for pre-Indo-European Europe north of the Pyrenees and the Alps because "far more probably, what the Indo-Europeans found was a patchwork of languages" (364), I have done so in Vennemann 1998a: sec. 1.[1]

### 1.1. "*München,* for which a satisfactory Germanic etymology has long been available"

There is one notion in Trask's book, however, that really worries me. That is the idea that once we possess an etymology for a place-name there is no need for another. That, if taken seriously, would be the end of all etymology (and, by generalization, of all science), because there is no word or name in the world for which some etymology has not already been suggested. To be honest: Trask says "a satisfactory ... etymology", but that amounts to the same because even the worst etymology is satisfactory to someone, most commonly at least to its original perpetrator. Here are Trask's own words:

> Vennemann has attempted to find Basque (or more precisely 'Vasconic') sources for a wide range of European toponyms. ... One of these is the city name *München,* for which a satisfactory Germanic etymology has long been available (Trask 1997: 367).

It is true that a derivation of *München* from the Middle High German appellative *münich* 'monk' (dat. plur. *münichen*) has been available since 1533, and it may be true that Trask finds this derivation satisfactory, even though I do not know on what basis.[2] There is absolutely no evidence, however, that Munich is a monasterial foundation, the place on the contrary having been property of the Duke of Brunswick at the time of its earliest attestation. So the derivation of *München* from *münich* has nothing to go by than the phonological similarity of these two words and may thus serve as a model case of a folk-etymology for writers of elementary textbooks. — It so happens that Trask does not say explicitly where exactly he locates my proposal of a once-Vasconic Europe north of the Pyrenees and the Alps between the sober and the preposterous on his evaluation scale for proposals relating the world's languages to Basque; but his presentation leaves little doubt that it cannot be very far from the bottom end.

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[1]  This and all other papers of mine dealing with the linguistic prehistory of Europe north of the Pyrenees and the Alps are now easily available in Vennemann (2003).

[2]  Bammesberger (1995) had already supported the prerequisite assumption of my etymology (cf. Vennemann 1994) that Munich is older than the Christianization of the area, so that a derivation of its name from a Christian concept is unlikely.

## 1.2. Basque *iz-* 'water'— "this ghost word", "a phantasm"

However, Trask is not entirely consistent in his rejection of new etymologies. When a new proposal stems not from an outsider like myself but from a scholar inside his area of specialization, such as the great philologist Luis Michelena whom he admires, he may accept it, even if it violates basic principles of reconstruction. An example that keeps coming up is de Azkue's interpretation of Bq. *izurde* 'dolphin' as a compound *iz+urde*, literally "water-pig", with a first constituent de Azkue demonstrates also to occur in a considerable number of other Basque compounds, always with the meaning 'water' or 'body of water', plus the ordinary Basque noun for 'pig'. "Water-pig" is, of course, an instance of a class of metaphorical designations of "secondary" animals after "primary" ones occurring in all European languages. The following is a small selection from Basque, with Bq. *ur* 'water':

— *urxahal* "water-calf", 'seal' (*xahal* 'calf')
— *uharts* "water-bear", 'pike' (*uh-* 'water', *(h)arts* 'bear')
— *urotso, ugotso* "water-wolf", 'pike' (*ug-* 'water', *otso* 'wolf')
— *uroilo* "water-hen", 'coot, kingfisher' (*oilo* 'hen')
— *urtxakur* "water-dog", 'otter' (*txakur* 'dog')
— *urtxori* "water-bird", 'water wagtail' (*(t)xori* 'bird')

English has *water bear, water hen, water thrush, sea cow, sea lion, sea elephant, sea dog, sea horse, sea hare, sea mouse*, and many more. Where Basque has *urxahal* "water-calf" for the seal, German has *Seehund* "sea-dog", where the *See*-part replaced the reflex of OHG *selah* in order better to fit the name into the general pattern (cf. Vennemann 1996: 120, 2003: 321f.). However, since Michelena taught that the first constituent of *iz-urde* derives from *giza-* 'man' (and from other words in other *iz-* compounds), Trask (1997: 328) accepts this, ending his presentation with one of the friendly attacks for which he is justly famous: "Seekers after remote comparisons never tire of invoking this ghost word in their comparisons." What Trask does not seem to have noticed is that he has violated a fundamental rule of our discipline: Whereas Michelena was free to show on paper that *izurde* can derive from *\*gizurde*, Trask as a linguist was under obligation to demonstrate the reasonableness of this reconstruction, i.e., he had to show parallels rather than arguing from authority. Which are the languages (other than Basque) in which the dolphin is named a "man-pig", whilst so many other aquatic animals are named for where they live? The reconstruction *\*gizurde* "man-pig" fits no pattern and has no demonstrated parallels; *izurde* "water-pig" fits a Basque, European, and indeed universal pattern of metaphorically naming "secondary" animals, and it has a European parallel in the Middle High German name of the dolphin, *merswīn* "sea-pig".

That Trask includes me among the seekers addressed in his section on Bq. *iz-* in his book becomes evident in a later chapter:

> None of the roots or suffixes listed by Vennemann for Old European looks like anything in Basque, save (inevitably!) for the root *\*Is-*, which Vennemann of course wants to identify with Azkue's putative Basque root *\*iz-* 'water', discussed and dismissed as a phantasm in Chapter 5 (Trask 1997: 367).

## 1.3.  A first sunbeam?

All that was in 1997. Of course, I am not so presumptuous as to believe that Trask's view of my endeavors is less dim now than it was then. But there has occurred one moment in our e-mail exchanges that struck me like the first sunbeam after a cloudy night. On 20 April 2000, I received an e-letter in which he responded in the following way to portions of an earlier e-letter of mine (the passages from my letter and from Trask's responses are identified by initials):

T.V.:  The evidence [for my theory] is becoming ever more specific. Would you believe that we have river names in *-*ald*-?[3] *Nagold, Singold*.[4] We even have *\*Isald*- (your *Izalde*),[5] in the name of a village, *Eisolzried*.[6] (It is situated on a slope rising on one bank of a river whose other side, being a swamp, is flat to the horizon). The names with *\*aran*- are plentiful, and they all relate to valleys.[7]

L.T.:  I confess I find the valley names in *\*aran*- particularly striking, since *(h)aran* is one word it seems safe to project very far back in Basque.

T.V.:  The name elements even begin to combine, as in *\*aran-ald*- > *Arnold*-, situated on the slope of a valley named Grosses Tal. But please do keep up your resistance.

L.T.:  I'm afraid that, by nature, I'm a bit of what the Irish call a "ferninster" — that is, somebody who is by nature sceptical of new proposals. No doubt this is very bad of me, but I guess we need ferninsters as well as idea-people.

T.V.:  Since everyone will believe you, that gives me time to work out my theory all by myself and in quiet.

Thus, the *aran*- names, of which there are many all over Europe, may one day form the passage through which the ferninsters will enter the theory of a once Vasconic Europe.

## 2.  Synonymous head addition

A good way to determine the meaning of a prehistoric toponym, besides the *Realprobe*, the investigation of the geophysical situation of the place, is looking at how it has fared in head renewal, e.g. head addition.[8] This process can be studied in many cases where we know the meaning of both the specifier and the new head;

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[3]  The Basque noun *alde* means 'side, region, place (of an object)'; as a denominal suffix (or "pseudo-suffix", using Trask's [1997: 254] term) *-alde* indicates proximity.

[4]  Both in Southern Germany; *-ald*- > *-old*- is a frequent sound change. The river name *Onolzbach* (< *Onoldesbach* < ⁺*An-ald*- or, possibly, ⁺*On-ald*-) also belongs here; it is at the same time the etymon of the Franconian city name *Ansbach*.

[5]  A river south of Bilbao, *Iz-alde* (cf. Trask 1997: 330-31).

[6]  In Bavaria. Cf. Vennemann (2000).

[7]  Bq. *aran* means 'valley'.

[8]  These concepts are defined and illustrated in Vennemann (1999a).

it is safe to conclude that the same process has occurred in cases where only the meaning of the head is known, so that the meaning of the specifier can be inferred.

An example which has become widely known is *Lake Chiemsee*. The specifier *Chiemsee* already refers to a lake, German *-see* meaning precisely this, 'lake'. The added English head *lake* merely recognizes the fact that the Chiemsee is indeed a lake, which is easy enough to perceive. Not understanding the *-see* part of *Chiemsee*, the US American military after World War II made it clear that they too had perceived the nature of the object and consequently renamed it *Lake Chiemsee*, thereby providing toponomastics with a suitable name for the results of this particular kind of head addition, the process of synonymous head addition: A Lake Chiemsee is a toponym arising from synonymous head addition.

One of the best known Lake Chiemsees is *Pendle Hill*, name of a hill in Lancashire, England. *Pendle*, from 14th century *Penhill*, composed of PrW[9] ⁺*penn* 'a head, end, top, height' and the added Old English head *hyll* 'hill', is "the hill named Penn"; "it shows the Anglo-Saxon failure to perceive the PrW *penn* as an appellative rather than a name and late pleonastic addition of ModE *hill* when the original compound became obscured by the reduction of its second element to [ə]" (Watts [ed.] 2004: s.v. *Pendle Hill*). This double Lake Chiemsee is particularly instructive. Needless to say it would be totally wrong to say that *Pendle Hill* means 'Hill hill hill'. What we really learn from the analysis of this name is an interpretative strategy: The added head *Hill* suggests that the specifier *Pendle* means 'hill'. Learning that *Pendle* derives from *Penhill*, we hypothesize that *-hill* here is an added head and that therefore the *Pen* part likewise means 'hill'. This kind of abductive inference may, of course, lead to wrong results, but in many cases its application is successful. In this particular case we are lucky: The result is correct, because the language preceding English in Lancashire was related to Welsh, so that the identification of the *Pen* part of the name with PrW ⁺*penn* 'hill' is plausible enough.

A recent Lake Chiemsee was made known to me by John Ole Askedal of Oslo: He sent me a clipping from the Norwegian newspaper *Dagbladet* of 15 February 2004 with a caption reading "250 mennesker tok seg et bad i Ostseesjøen i Tyskland i anledning valentinsdagen i går."[10] Here the Norwegian neologism *Ostseesjøen*, a definite compound literally meaning 'the Ostsee Sea', was apparently formed in ignorance of the fact that German *Ostsee* by itself already means 'Baltic Sea' (literally "East-Sea"); the traditional Norwegian name of the Baltic Sea is *Østersjøen*.

Closer to my topic in this paper is another Lake Chiemsee, the name of a valley in the Pyrenees, named *Val d'Aran* in Occitan. This is again a demonstrable Lake Chiemsee because we know that both *val* (Latin *vallis*, *vallēs*) and *aran* mean 'valley', *val* in Occitan and *aran* in Basque. This example is indeed so clear that *Val d'Aran* has become another name for the result of synonymous head addition: *Val d'Aran* is a Val d'Aran, and so is *Lake Chiemsee*; and *Pendle Hill* is a double Val d'Aran.[11]

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[9]   "PrW" abbreviates 'Primitive Welsh' in Watts [ed.] (2004).

[10]  '250 people had a swim in the Baltic Sea in Germany yesterday on account of Valentine's Day.'

[11]  *Lake Chiemsee* would also be a double Val d'Aran if the *Chiem-* part of *Chiemsee* meant 'lake'. But unfortunately we know neither the meaning of *Chiem-* nor even the language from which it derives.

Whereas the Val d'Aran (or Lake Chiemsee) character of *Val d'Aran* is universally accepted, apparently because the Val d'Aran valley is not very far away from the Basque Country, I have never seen support for my proposal (in Vennemann 1999a) that the Germanic analogs have exactly the same origin in synonymous head addition. Well, they do; the only difference apart from the usual Germanic reductions in the unstressed syllable is that the synonymous head added to the old ⁺*Aran* is Germanic ⁺*dal-* 'valley' rather than Romance *vallis, vallēs*. I have argued that *Arundel* ("borough, county of West Sussex, England, situated in the valley of the river Arun cutting through the South Downs", cf. *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*, 15th ed., 1973, s.v.) not only is a Val d'Aran but literally means the same as *Val d'Aran*; and the same is true for several places named *Ahrntal, Ahorntal*, etc. in the German speaking countries as well as *Arendal* in Norway and Sweden. All these places are marked by valleys, as is to be expected on account of the meaning of the added head; and the same is true of all other places containing *arn-* or a variant of it, even if they lack the ⁺*dal-* part, such as *Arnsberg, Arnstadt, Arnstein, Arnschwang, Arnstorf, Ahrensfelde, Arberg* (a. 1390 *Arenberg*), *Mohrenstein* (a. 1270, 1283 *Marnstein*, a. 1436, 1440, 1620 *Arnstein*, with *Marnstein < am Arnstein*).[12]

*Yarnscombe* (Devon), in the Domesday Book *Hernescome*, a. 1228 *Ernescumbe*, is explained in Ekwall 1960: s.v. (and in Watts [ed.] 2004: s.v.) with OE *earnescumb* as 'eagle valley', OE *cumb* 'coomb, valley' possibly being a Celtic loan-word (cf. Watts [ed.] 2004: xliii). This too looks like a fine Val d'Aran.[13]

An undisputable Val d'Aran is *Strathearn Valley*, name of the valley into which the River Earn (of Perth and Kinross) emerges from Loch Earn.[14] *Strath*, from Scottish Gaelic *srath*, means 'valley'. So *Strathearn Valley* is at least a partial Val d'Aran — like *Lake Chiemsee*, where *Chiem-* is unknown but may likewise mean 'lake'. I think in the case of *Strathearn Valley* we can do better. There is no recognized etymology for the name of the river Earn.[15] I therefore propose that *Earn* is simply

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[12] I may add, from Vennemann (1999b), *Ohrenbach, Arensburg*, and *Bachern* (a. 1135 *Pacharn*, Bavarian for ⁺*Bacharn* < ⁺*Bak-aran* 'creek valley').

[13] So does *Arnagill* (Upper Nidderdale, Yorkshire Dales), with its Old Norse head *gil* 'ravine', whence Middle and Modern English *gill* 'a deep rocky cleft or ravine, usually wooded and forming the course of a stream' (cf. OED: s.v. *gill* n.²). Unfortunately there do not seem to exist old attestations, so that my guess that *Arnagill* is a remodeled *aran-* name is not better than that in Gambles (1995: 55): "Possibly ON personal name, Arni + ON gil. Arni's ravine."

[14] The valley is also simply referred to as *Strathearn* and *Strath Earn*, but I have found on the Internet quite a number of references to it by means of *Strathearn Valley*, e.g. "The Strathearn Valley in which Aberuthven is located had at one time been known as the Kingdom of Fortriu or Fortrenn, the capital of the Southern Picts." Cf. http://www.author.co.uk/peterson/strathearn. html (28 February 2004).

[15] On the Internet page "Strathearn Perthshire Scotland > History > Place Name Meanings", http://www.strathearn.com/ge/place_names.htm (28 February 2004), one can read, "In any area river place names are the oldest, often outdating any known language. *Earn* is pre-Celtic. Possibly the name of an ancient goddess. Could have same root as *Eireann-Ireland*." The idea that *Earn* is pre-Celtic strikes me as very good; Nicolaisen (1986: 187) too considers a pre-Celtic (yet Indo-European) origin of the name possible, even though "the evidence is too scanty to make a final judgement". However, I do not consider it wise to derive the river name from the unknown name of an unknown goddess, i.e. *ignotum per ignotius*. If the name were the same as that of Ireland, it would ultimately have a Semitic origin, cf. Vennemann (1998b). In any event, the equation of

another *aran-* name. In support I take the liberty of citing the following passage from my "Remarks on some British place-names":

> There are many rivers in Europe with a name derived from Vasc. *aran* 'valley'. That is easy to understand, because people do not always distinguish clearly between a river and its valley. Bq. *ibar* 'valley' and *ibai* 'river' demonstrate this identification: The two words are considered reflexes of the same etymon (cf. Agud/Tovar 1992: s.v. *ibai*). Likely examples of river names based on Vasc. *aran* are: the Earn in Somerset (already a. 762 *Earn*), earlier name of a tributary of the Isle; the Arno river (Lat. *Arnus*) in Tuscany and other Italian rivers of the same name; also the Arn in Southern France, the Arne (a. 1066 *Arna*) in Northern France, and derivates such as *Erft* (ca. 700 *Arnefa*) in Germany, and others.[16] Trask (1997: 329) mentions a river named *Aran* in the Basque Country whose name he tentatively relates to Bq. *aran* 'valley'.[17] Therefore it is tempting to consider the Arun[18] yet another example of this set. The lack of attestation before W. Harrison[19] by itself would not speak against a greater age of the name, and indeed Förster (1941: 222) lists the name of the Arun among those for which a greater age cannot be excluded and may be proved one day if earlier attestations are found (Vennemann 1998a: 31, 2003: 487).

If my proposal is correct, then we have with *Strathearn Valley* yet another double Val d'Aran: All three components of the name mean 'valley': *valley* in English (as *vallée* in French, as *vallis*, *vallēs* in Latin), *strath* (as *srath*) in Scottish Gaelic, and *earn* (as *aran*) in Basque.

## 3. Folk-etymology

Old place-names are often, in whole or in part, semantically obscure because they contain lexical material that does not, or does no longer, belong to the language in which the toponyms are used. Therefore they form a prime target for folk-etymology, including the learned folk-etymology of professional or self-appointed toponomasts.[20] *Munich* was cited as an example in section 1.1 above. *Aran-* names are no exception.[21]

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the roots of *Earn* and *Eireann-Ireland* has little to speak in its favor; it is not even mentioned by Nicolaisen.

[16] Cf. Krahe (1964: 46), for *Erft* also Berger (1993): s.v., for *Earn* also Ekwall (1928): s.v. *Earnshill*, for *Arno* also Pellegrini (1990: 368). [*Arnefa*, before the second consonant shift ⁺*Arnapa*, is itself composed of ⁺*Aran* and ⁺*apa*. The latter constituent, originally a noun meaning 'river' developing into the very frequent river-name suffix *-apa*, may be the same pre-Indo-European etymon as Lat. *aqua* 'water'.]

[17] Trask writes *haran*, which is a regional and the Standard Basque variant of *aran* (cf. de Azkue 1984: s.v. *aran*, Agud/Tovar 1989: s.v. *aran*¹). See Trask (1997: 157-63) for the special, mostly non-etymological status of aspiration in Basque.

[18] [This is the Arun of Arundel, mentioned above.]

[19] [The reference is to W. Harrison, *The Description of Britaine*, 1577; cf. Ekwall 1960: xlv].

[20] See Vennemann (1999b) for analysis and illustration.

[21] There is a long section on folk-etymological re-interpretations of *aran-* names in Vennemann (1999b).

### 3.1.  *Arn-, Earn-* (etc.) in German and English place-names

As a rule, there is one word in the language that sounds similar to the obscure name and is therefore identified with it, whether it makes sense or not. This is true for *München*, where the identification with *münich* 'monk' makes a modicum of sense, because some places are peopled by monks and some may even have been founded by monks, even though there is definitely no evidence for this being true in the case of Munich. The *aran-* names are different: There are two or more similar sounding words in the Germanic languages. E.g., in older German there are the appellatives *arn-* 'eagle' and *ahorn* 'maple tree', plus *Arn-* as part of personal names such as *Arno* and *Arnold*. Needless to say all three elements are used by toponomasts to "interpret" *aran-* names, *Arn-* being preferred for objects plausibly possessed by human beings, such as villages and towns, but *arn-* or *ahorn* if this is not so, e.g. in the case of rock formations in valleys or even entire valleys. In English there is no *ahorn*, but *arn-* 'eagle' did exist, usually in the shape *earn*, and thus it is used to "interpret" possible *aran-* names, e.g. in the case of *Arncliffe* 'the eagle's cliff'[22] and *Arnold* (a. 1086 *Ernehale*) '(the settlement) at eagles' nook'[23] (Watts [ed.] 2004: s.vv.). Other names in which OE *earn* 'eagle' is seen by toponomasts include *Eridge* (a. 1202 *Ernerigg*) 'eagles' ridge', *Earnstrey* (a. 1172 *Ernestreu*) 'the eagle's tree', *Earnwood* (a. 1327 *Erne Wode*) 'eagles' wood'.

Old English offers further elements to interpret similar names, e.g. *ærn* 'house', *ærne-* (as in OE *ærneweg* 'road for riding on'),[24] and, of course, personal names such as *Earn(a)*, *Earnwulf*, and *Arnaldr*.

Thus I find, in Ekwall (1960) and Watts [ed.] (2004), *Arrington* (ca. 950 *Earnnington*) 'the settlement of Earn(a)'s people', *Armingford* (a. 970 *Earnigaford*) 'the ford of Earn(a)'s people', *Ermine Street* (a. 955 *Earninga stræt*) 'the street [Roman road] of Earn(a)'s people'. There is no reason to doubt the meanings given for the heads of these names. As a matter of fact, wonderful studies over the last twenty years have developed a fine-grained system of *Wortfelder* especially for those heads expressing aspects of the landscape, e.g. Gelling (1984), Jacobsson (1997), and Gelling and Cole (2000), also Gelling (1998) in Taylor [ed.] (1998).[25] But there is every reason to doubt the interpretation of the specifiers. Here as in many other British place-name etymologies, toponyms, or parts of toponyms, of the shape *X-ing* are interpreted as 'X's people'. This is always wrong. It has long been shown that

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[22]  The valley character of this *aran-* place is nicely illustrated with a photograph of Yew Cogar Scar near Arncliffe in Littondale (!) in Yorkshire Dales (!) National Park at the following Internet address: http://www.skiptonweb.co.uk/gallery/picture2.asp?id=1784 (27 February 2004).

[23]  I have seen no geophysical information on Arnold but find some encouragement in the following excerpt from the minutes of a local cabinet meeting: "A presentation was given by Kay Atkins of KAMS and representatives of Arnold Town Football Club on the progress to date of Arnold Town Football Club's proposed relocation to Eagle Valley." Cf. http://66.102.9.104/search?q= cache:7SyFSbuw84AJ:www.gedling.gov.uk/cabine_22.1.04-2.pdf+Arnold+Notts+valley&hl= en&ie=UTF-8 (27 February 2004).

[24]  Used in Watts [ed.] (2004) to interpret *Arnford* (North Yorkshire), a. 1086 *Arneford(e)*, as 'ford which can be crossed by riding'.

[25]  Gelling's findings have also found their way into a summary of the most important place-name heads in the "Glossary of most frequently used elements" of Watts [ed.] (2004): xlii-xlix.

the suffix *-ing* of *X-ing* is not inherently relational, allowing or requiring an interpretation such as 'belonging to X', or even 'person/people belonging to X', 'follower(s) of X', or the like, but merely has individualizing force; its meaning can be paraphrased as 'the object characterized by X'; in the words of Munske (1964):

> Das Suffix *\*-inga/unga* hat die Funktion, Personal- und Sachbezeichnungen nach charakteristischen Merkmalen zu bilden. Die Grundwörter, welche diese Charakteristika bezeichnen, können Adjektive, Substantive und Verben sein. Der bisherigen Annahme, *-ing* drücke Zugehörigkeit oder Herkunft aus, wurde entgegengehalten, daß sich die Bedeutung der Ableitung vor allem aus der Bedeutung der Grundwörter ergibt. Die Merkmale der Grundwörter dürfen nicht der Leistung des Suffixes zugeschrieben werden (Munske 1964: 127).[26]

Applying this result of general linguistic study to the study of place-names containing this suffix, I have argued (in Vennemann 1993: 429, 441f., 444) that *X-ing* toponyms are never derived from personal names. In cases where personal names do not even exist independently of their presumed encapsulation in place-names but are merely inferred from the structure of place-names, such etymologizing is clearly unscientific, namely circular: the anthroponym is inferred from the toponym, then the toponym is explained by reference to the anthroponym.[27] But even when elements of toponyms resemble existing personal names such etymologies have to be rejected, simply because there are no clear cases of such a naming practice at the time levels from which most toponyms date, excepting a few known Roman instances of cities named for high-ranking personalities such as emperors. In particular I have never seen an instance of an *X-ing* name where the bearer of the name *X* (or its reconstructed form) has been identified. Therefore operating with personal names in this division of toponomastics is but an inane game in which no serious scholar should participate. Etymologies of the type "*Arrington* (ca. 950 *Earnnington*) 'the settlement of Earn(a)'s people'" are learned folk-etymologies of the cheapest brand.

One of the most common mistakes toponomasts are prone to make is to determine the language of the specifier on the evidence of the language of the head. The result is an identification and interpretation of many specifiers in the wrong language, which of necessity leads to folk-etymologies. Of course, all toponomasts

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[26] 'The function of the suffix *\*-inga/-unga* is to form designations of persons and things according to their characteristic features. The basic words designating these characteristics may be adjectives, nouns, and verbs. The traditional assumption that *-ing* expresses membership, belonging, or origin is rejected in the present study with the argument that the meaning of a derivate follows primarily from the meaning of the basic words. It is illegitimate to ascribe the meaning of the basic words to the function of the suffix' (my translation).

[27] This is common practice not only in German but also in British toponomastics. As an English example, I have criticized (in Vennemann 1993: 463) Ekwall's reconstruction of an hypothetical Old English personal name *\*Mynna* from the settlement name *Minworth* (Warwickshire), used by him to explain *Minworth* as the *worþ* (farmstead) of this very *\*Mynna*. — Or should I write "this very Mynna"? For eleven years later one can read in Watts [ed.] (2004): "*Minworth...* 'Mynna's enclosure'", even though Mynna's name is declared in the same lemma not to exist ("OE pers[onal] n[ame] *\*Mynna* + *worth*").

are aware of the fact that specifier and head of one and the same toponym may be from different languages, because they all know toponyms such as *Edinburgh* and *Augsburg* where the head is known to be Germanic whereas the specifier is known not to be Germanic. But in their actual practice they forget this lesson and proceed by the rule "Germanic head, Germanic specifier". As a result, since most English place-names are compounds with a Germanic, namely Old English or Scandinavian, head constituent, they have created the impression that almost all English place-names are Germanic, even though this would imply that almost all English settlements were either founded or renamed by Anglo-Saxon or Scandinavian intruders. I think there is no evidence that either implication is correct. My own experience with toponyms, especially the recurring phenomenon that it is much easier unambiguously to identify the head than the specifier of a toponym, has taught me that the *Edinburgh* and *Augsburg* type is not the exception but the rule: The specifier is likely to continue the old name of the place, the name before its integration into a new or changing language by means of head renewal (head replacement in the case of [Brit.] *Din Eidyn* / [Gael.] *Dùn Éideann* → *Edin-burgh*, head addition in the case of *Augusta* → *Augs-burg*). Simon Taylor has emphasized the importance of paying attention to this phenomenon (Taylor 1997), and so have I (e.g. in Vennemann 1999a: 27-30, cf. 2003: 482-86). But it takes time for such suggestions to find a reflex in toponymic dictionaries, if Watts [ed.] (2004) is representative.

Thus, applying the model of repeated head addition —not just of the Val d'Aran type as in *Pendle Hill* or, possibly, *Strathearn Valley* but of the general kind— to problematical cases such as *Arrington*, namely to its earlier form *Earnnington*, our question should be, What was the name of the place before it became +*Earnington*? A likely answer is: +*Earning*. That is a good answer, because there are quite a few places with names ending in *-ing* even nowadays. Now +*Earning*, by Munske's reconstruction of the function of *-ing*, should be the object, here a settlement, characterized by *Earn-*. Then the remaining problem is the signification of *Earn-*. It may be a Germanic word or name, but chances are that it is not. Assuming that the addition of *-ing* reflects a first round of Germanicization, *Earn-* may simply be the reflex of the yet earlier name of the place. It may be the 'valley' word again, or something different. British toponomasts will find out.

## 3.2. *Arundel*

One of the worst topological folk-etymologies I know is the standard etymology of *Arundel*: It is beyond my understanding that an important settlement, famous in the Middle Ages, should be named for a hole in the ground where a certain plant grows. In my treatment of the name in Vennemann (1999a), I introduce the etymology as follows:

> Ekwall (1960: s.v.) writes about the river *Arun* in Sussex and about *Arundel*:
> "**Arun**... [*Aron, Arunus* 1577 Harrison].[28] A back-formation from **Arundel** (ăr-)[29]

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[28] [See note 19 above.]
[29] The pronunciations of the name, according to Forster (1982: s.v.) who cites various sources, are ['ær(ə)ndl, 'ærəndel, ɑ:nd(ə)l].

[*Harundel* DB, *Arundell'* 1087 Fr].[30] This has been explained as OE *Hārhūn-dell* 'hoarhound valley' (OE *hārhūne*)." This etymology is likely to be a learned folk-etymology: First, the initial *h* in the Domesday Book rendering *Harundel* is surely but a French spelling and not an organic part of the name, as is shown by the later and modern forms, and even with this *h* a reconstruction of *hārhūne* from *(h)arun* would not be cogent. Second, Ekwall does not make it plausible that the place is or was in any way marked by hoarhound,[31] and without such evidence the reconstruction is unfounded. Thus the etymology fails on both phonological and semantic grounds (Vennemann 1999a: 30-32).

At the time when I was writing this I had an e-mail exchange with Richard Coates. When I wrote to him about my qualms with the 'hoarhound' etymology of *Arundel* and the back-formation for the name of the Arun river, he wrote:

> The etymology of Arundel is pretty secure; there are eleventh- to thirteenth-century spellings with initial <h> which make it practically certain that, as Henry Bradley observed about 90 years ago, the place-name means 'horehound dell'. Horehound (*aka hoarhound*) is a plant, *Marrubium vulgare*, which still grows there, and is relatively uncommon on the downs in general in Sussex. A dell is, moreover, not a valley, but an artificial excavation or a natural feature resembling one, i.e. a minor feature like a chalkpit. No way is *Arundel* to be interpreted as referring to the Arun valley.
>
> The spellings are perfect for Bradley's etymology; the situation and botany are perfect. Why do we need a different theory?[32] The name of the river is a back-formation of the Harrison type, of which many sprang up from Tudor times onwards. That this is the case is strongly suggested by the fact that *Arun* first appears in Harrison's own book, *Description of Britaine* (1577)!
>
> I really think your use of the evidence of this place-name in support of your Vasconic theory cannot be sustained. Not one snippet of it is on your side (Richard Coates, 9 March 1998, with copy to the discussion list nostratic@ mcfeeley.cc.utexas.edu).

The following is the relevant passage of my answer:

> The hoarhound etymology you cite ... to me is a prototypical folk-etymology. (Pardon me for being blunt, but it is not your etymology.) Even if everything were perfect (and I do not have to tell you about medieval English *h* spellings, after all the name is not *Harundel*), I would still consider it a folk-etymology.

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[30] The reference is to *Documents preserved in France*, Rolls Ser. 1899; cf. Ekwall (1960): xliv.

[31] The name is explained in the OED as follows: "*horehound, hoarhound...* [OE. *hāre hūne*, f. *hār* hoar, hoary + *hūne* name of a plant, of uncertain origin; thence ME. *hôrhowne*, altered by popular etymology to *horehound*, which puts some appearance of meaning into the second element. The analogical spelling is *hoar-*, but this is much less usual in England than *hore-*.] 1. A labiate herb, *Marrubium vulgare*, having stem and leaves covered with white cottony pubescence; its aromatic bitter juice is much used as a remedy for coughs, etc. Hence extended to several allied herbs..., horehound proper being then distinguished as *common* or *white horehound...* 2. An extract or confection of the plant *Marrubium vulgare*, used as a remedy for coughs."

[32] That is the question. Cf. the title of the present paper.

Everything is perfect with our *Rosenheim*, and the standard etymology is 'a place (home) surrounded by a hedge of roses grown by the inhabitants to defend themselves'. I thought we, you and I, were trying to get beyond this level of etymologizing (Theo Vennemann, 10 March 1998, with copy to the discussion list nostratic@mcfeeley.cc.utexas.edu).

To this, Coates responded as follows:

'Horehound valley' isn't a folk-etymology — you should see what it replaced, viz. a theory that it was an application of the name of the steed of Sir Beves of Hampton in the medieval romance, namely *Hirondelle*! Please don't ask pardon — I wish it WAS my etymology, since it is one of the most convincing known to me...

It is true that <h> and <0> alternate in the early spellings, and that it is not pronounced with /h/ now. But it has long been accepted that the loss of /h/ cannot be separated from the fact that the town was a centre of Norman administration, and virtually a garrison town; this will have meant that the dominant local pronunciation, and the one that would fetch up in the written records produced by French-trained clerks in the castle, was of the French type, without /h/. I agree that the alternation of <h>~<0> could reflect a pronunciation without /h/, but that pronunciation must already have replaced the English one with /h/.

[As for your *Rosenheim* example], it's not the same. A rose-hedge may or may not be accurate, and if you say it isn't I'll believe you. You're the man on the spot. If you come to Arundel, I can show you a prototypical dell, with horehound in it —one of only six places in Sussex where the stuff grows wild (Richard Coates, 10 March 1998, with copy to the discussion list nostratic@mcfeeley.cc. utexas.edu).

Two days later, I received the following e-letter which was not at the same time put in the public domain:

Ein Botaniker meiner Bekanntschaft teilt mir mit, dass das letzte *Marrubium vulgare* im *Harhun-dell* vor ungef. 10 Jahren von Kuehen gefressen wurde. Ich koennte es Ihnen also nicht vor Augen stellen! (Richard Coates, 12 March 1998)[33]

I am not sure I am able to interpret this. In German it means 'end of etymology'. I am afraid that in English it only means 'end of discussion'.[34]

As is to be expected, no notice is taken in Watts [ed.] (2004) of the new etymology of *Arundel* in Vennemann (1999a), not even in order to reject it, though the book is

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[33] 'A botanist I know personally has informed me that the last *Marrubium vulgare* in *Harhun-dell* was eaten up by cows about ten years ago. I would therefore not be able to show it to you' (my translation).

[34] A note (Coates 2000), published two years after this e-mail correspondence, strongly suggests that it meant 'end of discussion'. There all the same arguments can also be found, plus two additional ones: first, that in one dictionary the meaning of Bq. *aran* is given as 'valley, high valley' rather than just 'valley'; second, that *u* is an unexpected spelling for the reduced second vowel of *Arundel*. Also a description of the dell or dells of Arundel is offered.

advertised by the Publisher as "reflecting the most recent scholarship in the subject".[35] As a matter of fact, its three lines on the name are hardly more informative than Ekwall's entry of 44 years earlier:

> ARUNDEL WSusx TQ 0107. 'Hoarhound Valley'. *Harundel(le)* 1086-1341, *Arundell(e)* 1087-1488, *Arondel(l)* 1093, 1273-91, 1303. OE **hārhūne** + **dell** [plus references] (Watts [ed.] 2004: s.v.).[36]

I consider this brief dictionary article a disturbing commentary on one of the foremost names of the Isles, famous in the literature of the Continent in the High Middle Ages as the home of Isolde of the White Hands and her parents, the Duke Jovelin and the Duchess Karsie,[37] namely in Gottfried's *Tristan* (of ca. 1210).[38]

> Nu was ein herzentuom gelegen
> zwischen Britanje und Engelant,
> daz was Arundêl genant
> und stiez daz ûf daz mer alsô (vv. 18,686-689).[39]

> nu man ze Parmenîe
> gesagete Tristande
> daz urliuge in dem lande
> ze Arundêle waere,
> er gedâhte sîner swaere
> aber ein teil vergezzen dâ.
> von Parmenîe vuor er sâ
> hin wider Arundêle
> gegen einem castêle,
> daz was Karke genant (vv. 18,714-724).[40]

> si riefen wider ein ander
> hie: «schevalier Hante,
> Doleise unde Nante!»
> dort «Karke und Arundêle!» (vv. 18,878-881).[41]

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[35] Cf. http://books.cambridge.org/0521362091.htm (2 March 2004). On the dust-jacket of the book, to be honest, the claim is phrased more modestly: "This alphabetical dictionary ... reflects recent scholarship and new research in the subject."

[36] At least the dictionary says 'Valley" and not, as Coates suggests, 'an artificial excavation or a natural feature resembling one, i.e. a minor feature like a chalkpit'.

[37] Gottfried turned the earldom of Arundel into a dukedom and placed it south of the Channel. Living in Straßburg in southern Germany, he did not have a precise mental picture of the north. Cf. Hatto (1967: 389). — The following verses are cited from Krohn's (1981) edition.

[38] I am grateful to Prof. em. Hans Fromm (University of Munich) for drawing my attention to this particular Continental attestation of *Arundel*.

[39] 'Now there was a duchy lying between Brittany and England called Arundel, bounded by the sea' (Hatto 1967: 287).

[40] 'When Tristan was told in Parmenie that there was a feud in the land of Arundel, it occurred to him that he could again forget some part of his sorrows there. He left Parmenie at once for Arundel and made for a castle named Karke' (Hatto 1967: 287). The name *Karke* has reminded some scholars of the mountain-town Carhaix in Brittany, some of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Kaercarrei (Krohn III.180).

[41] 'On one side they hailed each other with "Chevalier Hante, Doleise, e Nante!" On the other, "Karke and Arundel!" (Hatto 1967: 289).

ich waene, ûz Curnewâle
ist worden Arundêle,
Karke ûz Tintajêle
und Îsôt ûz Îsôte (vv. 19,008-011).[42]

ez ist diu von Arundêle
und niht Îsôt la bêle...
ez was Îsôt la bêle,
niht diu von Arundêle (vv. 19,031-032, 19,287-288).[43]

I find it hard to accept that a place of international fame should nationally be registered as a hole in the ground with an herb in it. Perhaps English toponomasts will reconsider, and even re-evaluate the foundations of their discipline. Among other things, they may wish to observe the rule for proper reconstruction already mentioned in section 1.2 above, a rule well established in a neighboring discipline, historical linguistics, which says that one should not reconstruct something one cannot at the same time demonstrate from *bona fide* parallels. Which are the established parallels of towns named for hoarhound or some similar medicinal herb (growing in a hole in the ground)? Which are the parallels of English towns losing an initial *h-* owing to French influence?

I would like to return briefly to the older *Hirondelle* etymology for *Arundel* cited above, which does not appear as silly to me as it does to Coates. As a matter of fact, I think it is much more helpful than the *hoarhound* etymology: It may help explain exactly those aspects of the early spellings of the name that trouble Coates, viz. the initial *h-* and the internal *-u-*: To French-speaking scribes the name of the place must have sounded very similar to their own word *arondelle*, Latinized *hirondelle* 'swallow' (< Gallo-Lat. ⁺*harunda* < Vulgar Lat. *hirunda* < Lat *hirundo*; cf. Bloch and Wartburg 1994: s.v. *hirondelle*); so they spelled the name of the place *Harundelle, Arundelle, Arondell,* etc. After all, they were just as clever folk-etymologists as present-day toponomasts and dictionary-makers. These French renderings of the toponym are in perfect folk-etymological harmony with my reconstruction: Late OE ⁺*Arendæl,* with a reduced middle vowel deriving from an earlier ⁺*a*, and OE *dæl* 'dale, valley'.

## 4. More on *Arn-/Earn-*names

Some of the other *Earn-, Arn-, Ern-, Ar-, Er-* (etc.) names with proper older attestations appear likely to me to contain reflexes of *aran-* 'valley'. For most of these places I do not have access to the requisite geophysical information. Only for a few of them could I gather some from homepages on the Internet. E.g., Earley (Berkshire), its name deriving from OE *earn-lēah* 'eagle wood', according to Ekwall (1960: s.v. *earn*), makes reference on its beautiful homepage both to its important

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[42]   'It is as if Cornwall had turned into Arundel, Tintagel into Karke, Isolde into Isolde' (Hatto 1967: 291).
[43]   'It is Isolde ... the maid of Arundel and not Isolde the Fair. ... It was Isolde the Fair, not the maid of Arundel' (Hatto 1967: 291, 294).

forest and a valley.[44] For Arnfield (*Arnfield Brook*) the attestation is as follows: a. 1350, 1351 *Arn(e)wayesfeld -is-*, a. 1360 *Arn(i)es(s)feld*, 14th century *Arn(e)wayfeld*, a. 1360 *Arnefeld*, a. 1831 *Arnfield*. This is apparently a very small place, but luckily I found the following reference on the Internet, which I have to cite extensively to keep it understandable; the highlighting is mine:

> The following is an extract taken from Aikin's book *Forty Miles around Manchester*, 1795
>
> From the summit of the hill in Mottram is a delightful prospect up Longdendale to the Wood-head, including beautiful windings of the Mersey, with the high Derbyshire hills on the east, gradually rising from it, among the scattered villages of Hadfield, Padfield, Whitfield and Charlesworth; and on the west the Cheshire hills, which as well as the Derbyshire are, with the villages of Tintwistle and **Arnfield**, pastured to their tops. The valley is tolerably well wooded with trees of various kinds, but rather stinted in their growth...
>
> Two miles from Mottram on the same road, is the very ancient village of Tintwistle or Tinsell, containing thirty-five houses and a dissenting chapel. It is entirely built of thick free-stone, got on the spot. Tradition reports this to have been a borough in former times.
>
> Half a mile to the left is **Arnfield**, a small village of straggling houses, built like the former and probably as ancient, there being leases in some of the families dated about 500 years since, and couched in a few lines. **It is built on the sides of two steep hills parted by a brook**, and is the last village adjoining the moors.[45]

An area between two steep hills parted by a brook is an *aran*, a valley. Therefore I propose that the place-name does not contain a personal or surname, *Arneway* < OE *Earnwig*, as suggested in Watts [ed.] (2004): s.v. *Arnfield Brook*, but is constructed as (a name of a settlement on) a *feld* along the ⁺*Earn-weg*, the path through the ⁺*Earn*, the valley of Arnfield, where this element was no longer understood as the appellative *aran* 'valley' from which it had developed, but as a name of this valley. — If an etymology remaining inside English is desired, then one based directly on OE *ærneweg* 'road for riding on', viz. *ærneweg* + *feld*, seems preferable to that based on the name of an unknown individual. Also a crossing between the old *aran-* word and OE *ærneweg* is conceivable; contaminations between 'path' words and 'valley' words are on record.

For *Armthorpe* (South Yorkshire) I have found the following note on the Internet:

> The hamlet of ARMTHORPE is mentioned in the Doomsday Book (1085) as Ernulfestorp. In the time of Henry 1, William, third Earl Warenne, granted to Lewes Priory the church of Little Sandal (Kirk Sandall) with the chapel of Hernoldsthorpe (Armthorpe). Armthorpe became an independent Parish before 1202.[46]

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[44]   Cf. http://www.earleytc.co.uk/page1.html (28 February 2004).

[45]   From the homepage "Mottram and District 1795", http://members.aol.com/gayjoliver/Mottram1795.htm (28 February 2004).

[46]   Cf. http://www.armthorpe-aim.org.uk/history_armthorpe/history_a.htm (27 February 2004).

In Watts [ed.] (2004): s.v. *Armthorpe*, the same and a few more old forms are listed, but despite the confusion it is considered certain that the place name is derived from a personal name, "OE *Earnwulf* or ON *Arnulfr* alternating with CG *Ernald*, genitive sing. *Earnwulfes, Ernaldes*, + *thorp*. The change in pers[onal] n[ame] may reflect change of ownership or confusion in the unstressed syllable". All of this is, of course, guesswork. The most important information one needs to have when trying to understand a place-name, the geophysical situation of the place, is not provided. That is characteristic of Watts [ed.] (2004) exactly as it was of Ekwall (1960). But is it meaningful to speak or read of place-names without possessing information on what the place and its environment look like, and looked like in the past, and thus what it meant to the people naming it? I think it is not. And I suspect that the failure to provide such information is not merely a matter of parsimony or some other exterior factor but demonstrates that the dictionary makers have a mistaken view of their subject matter: They fail to understand that old place-names are in nearly all cases originally descriptions of their places which only developed into names as time went on and the language changed, or was replaced by another one. But how can one appreciate the adequacy of a description, or the meaning of an expression developing from a description, without knowing what the described object is or was like? It seems that dictionary toponomasts spend all their time studying the forms of the names past and present, but do not look at the places to which those names apply. Therefore their books are mainly valuable for the documentary evidence they collect; their etymologies are in large measure worthless because no proofs are provided, so that even in the rare cases in which they are correct this is often accidental. For most names in such a dictionary the user is left alone to find reasonable interpretations, namely by comparing the documentary evidence against the physical and historical reality of the places named.

In the case on hand, I have to abstain from attempting an etymology of the place-name. If however I were told that the hamlet is somehow distinguished by a relationship to a valley I would venture a reconstruction as OE ⁺*Earn-old-* < ⁺*Earn-ald-* < pre-OE ⁺*Arn-ald-* < Vasc. *Aran-ald-* '(the settlement) near (the) valley', misunderstood by newcomers as a personal name and provided with a suitable head, *thorp*, yielding ME *Ernaldesthorp* and, with the unorganic (French) initial *h-*, *Hernoldesthorp*. — Whether correct or not, this reconstruction, as one can see, makes a nice transition to the next section.

## 5. *Arnoldsweiler*

Arnoldsweiler is a village in the Rhineland, on the right side of the river Rur, a left tributary of the Rhine. It is integrated into the city of Düren. The earliest attestation of the name occurs in a deed of donation of the year 1168, referring to a considerable gift of land by one *Godefridus sacerdos de **Wilre sancti Arnoldi*** to the convent of St. Kunibert in Cologne, issued by Philipp von Heinsberg, Archbishop of Cologne and Chancellor of the Reich from 1167 until 1191 (cf. Wyrsch 1994, Kaspers 1949: 69f., Cramer 1914: 157). The name appears as a compound, written *Arnoltzwilre*, for the first time in the year 1360 (Kaspers 1949: 69f.).

There is a tradition that the original name of the village of Arnoldsweiler was *Ginizwilere*.[47] This name occurs for the first time, written *Ginizuuilere*, in the foundation deed of the convent of St. Ursula in Cologne, dated to the year 922, where the place is mentioned as possessing two churches (Wyrsch 1994: 12). It so happens that no place continuing the name *Ginizwilere* has been unambiguously identified, which is not unusual for a place-name in medieval documents.[48] But curiously this name re-emerges in a legendary *Vita sancti Arnoldi confessoris*, preserved in 16th century copies and a 17th century print, presumably of a 12th century original (Wyrsch 1994: 15, 116). There the life of an obscure saint Arnoldus is described who is supposed to have come *e Graetiae* (or *Graeciae*) *partibus*[49] to live as a musician at the court of Charlemagne (i.e. about a. 800), and in the various versions of this vita it says that the village Ginnizwilre[50] is nowadays named for St. Arnold (Wyrsch 1994: 11). Needless to say that this St. Arnold, now St. Arnold of Arnoldsweiler, has become a much venerated saint of the village of Arnoldsweiler and beyond, and in 1886 the veneration of St. Arnold even found papal recognition (Wyrsch 1994: 20). It remains a fact, however, that there is absolutely no historical record of such a person, only a legend recorded several centuries after his presumed lifetime. Historians therefore discount St. Arnold entirely or merely grant him a derived existence, derived by confusion with historical saintly personages, chief among them Bishop Arnulf of Metz, who died ca. 640 (Wyrsch 1994: 5).[51] The relics and grave of St. Arnold in Arnoldsweiler (cf. Wyrsch 1994: 15, 17) need not be taken more seriously as historical testimony than those of Santiago (St. Iago, St. James the Elder) in Santiago de Compostela.

I see no reason why modern toponomastics should take its inspiration from medieval ætiological legends, invented to interpret an obscure place-name in a Christian frame-work. In my secular attitude, I trust history more than religious

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[47] "Der ursprüngliche Name ist *Ginizwilere* a. 922 (E[rläuterungen zum geschichtlichen] A[tlas der Rheinprovinz] 1895 ff., V 1 60)" (Kaspers 1949: 69). This name is unexplained. Kaspers (1949: 69) writes: "Ich halte Cramers [(1914: 156)] Zurückführung auf griech.-lat. *gynaecea* 'Frauenwohnung' für die einzig mögliche". [I consider Cramer's derivation from Graeco-Lat. *gynaecea* 'women's dwelling' the only possibility]. This may once more be a learned folk-etymology. Since a root *gin-* occurs in other place-names in the west of Germany (*Ginsweiler* [Kusel, Rheinland-Pfalz], *Ginsheim* [Groß-Gerau, Hessen]) and in France (*Gignac* [< +*Giniacum*], *Gignat*, *Ginoles*), the name *Ginizwiler* appears to be genuinely toponymic, perhaps Celtic or Old European. As a matter of fact, twelve miles west of Arnoldsweiler lies the village of Kinzweiler, a. 1227 *Kentzwylre*, a. 1310/1316 *Kintzwilre*, one of the oldest parishes of the region (Cramer 1914: 153, 168), which may actually continue the *Ginizwilere* of a. 922. (Anlauting *k/g* are not stable, cf. e.g. *Gürzenich* < *Curtiniâcum* [Cramer 1914: 159] and *Mercurius Cimiacinus*, named after +*Cimiacum*, now *Gimmenhausen* [Vennemann 1995].) But there is, on the whole, little evidence for the belief that the *Ginnetzweiler, Genezwylre, Gimezswilre* etc. of the copies and prints of the *Vita sancti Arnoldi* have anything to do with the *Ginizwilere* of a. 922. The various name forms may refer to a part of the village, or a neighboring place that was integrated into Arnoldsweiler, a suggestion that seems to have been made before (cf. Wyrsch 1994: 207).
[48] See the preceding note.
[49] It is disputed whether this means 'from Greece' or 'from Graz (in Austria)'.
[50] Etc., see note 47.
[51] For the confusion of *Arnold* and *Arnulf*, see *Armthorpe* (a. 1086 *Ernulfestorp*, a. 1147-1223 *Hernoldes-, Ernaldest(h)orp*, cf. Watts [ed.] 2004: s.v.) in the preceding section of this paper.

tradition; and history evidently knows of no St. Arnold, and in particular no
St. Arnold of Arnoldsweiler.

My own proposal is the opposite of that of the traditional toponomastic lore:
Arnoldsweiler is not named for some medieval saint, Arnold, rather a *Vita Sancti
Arnoldi* was construed because there was that village named *⁺Arnold* which could so
easily be provided with a Latin-German head *wīlāri/wīler*[52] and religiously beautified



The arms of Arnoldsweiler, granted in 1966 (cf. Domsta 1985: 68)

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52    From Lat. *vīllāre* (< *vīlla*) 'belonging to a villa, village'.

by adding *Sanctus*, yielding the *Wilre sancti Arnoldi* of a. 1168. This first attestation of the name by its very wording suggests that there was no *Arnoldswilre* at that time but merely a village (*Wilre*) named *Arnold*, suggestive to the medieval Christian mind as a personal name and therefore upgraded to *Sanctus Arnoldus*.[53]

The inspiration by an unintelligible place-name to recognize in it a personal name and, in particular, the name of some Christian saintly personage is, of course, not limited to *Arnoldsweiler* but is a recurring component of ætiological folk-etymology. One does not have to look very far: Three miles to the southwest of Arnoldsweiler lies Mariaweiler, since 1972 also part of Düren. The village is first attested a. 973 as *Miluchwilere*. By 1188, the name had degenerated into *Milwilre* and *Melwiler*. Between 1482 and 1624, it is attested as *Myrwilere*, *Mirweiler*, *Miyrweylir*, etc. In 1721, it emerges as *Mariaweiler* and *Marienweiler*, in 1790 semi-Latinized as *Mariaeweiler*. Then, after another occurrence a. 1810 of *Mirweiler* and what appear to be dialect variants of *Mariaweiler* (such as *Märgeweyler*) and a Napoleonic-French rendering (*Margwillier*) in 1811, the name was *Marienweiler* for the last time in 1813 and has otherwise been *Mariaweiler* to the present day, except in the local pronunciation where it is still *Melwiler*.[54] Needless to say Mariaweiler has a church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, viz. *St. Mariae Himmelfahrt* (St. Mary's Assumption).
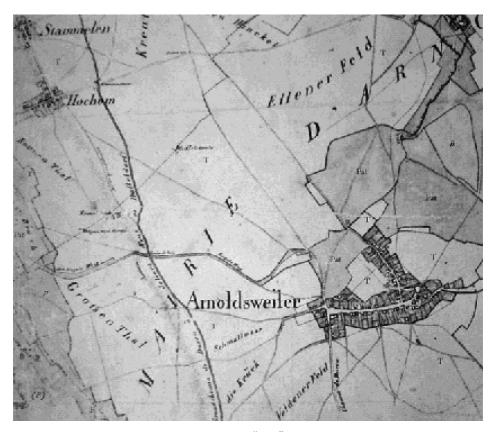
The question then is, what is the original *Arnold*? I suppose that by this time certainly Prof. Trask will know: It is Vasc. [+]*(H)aranalde*, i.e. [+]*(h)aran+alde* "valley-vicinity", i.e. '(the place) by the valley', cf. Bq. *(h)aran* 'valley', Bq. *alde* 'side, vicinity, near, place', also as a suffix *-alde* (de Azkue 1984: s.vv., Agud/Tovar 1989: svv.).[55] Ordinary sound changes, viz. apocope, syncope, and the velarization and concomitant labialization of *a* to *o* before coda-*l*, turn a prehistoric [+]*(H)aranalde* into an Old High German [+]*Arnold*. The Basque noun *(h)aran* 'valley' occurs in several place-names as well as surnames, surnames being in large measure de-toponymic in the Basque Country: *Harana* (Span. *Valle de Arana* [!]), name of a village in the province of Araba (Alava), also a surname, *Arana* or *Harana*; *(h)aran-guren* 'edge of the valley', name of a village in the province of Bizkaia (Biscay), also a surname; *(h)aranburu* "valley head", i.e. 'upper part of a valley', also used as a surname; *(h)araneder* 'beautiful valley', also used as a surname.

Therefore it clearly makes philological sense to see *Arnold(sweiler)* as just another of the many *aran-* names to be seen all over Europe. The remaining question then is whether the reconstruction of *Arnold(sweiler)* as [+]*(H)aran-alde* 'place by the valley' is also a good etymology, i.e., whether the *Realprobe* supports it.

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[53] This interpretation is indirectly supported by the fact that the original patron saint of the village was St. Urban (Wyrsch 1994: 12, 48 n. 90).

[54] Cf. Cramer (1914: 158f.), Kaspers (1949: 69), and a private home-page at http://www.mariaweiler.eu.tc/ (5 March 2004).

[55] The formation of *Haranalde*, or of *Aranalde* with the meaning 'place by the valley', is now superseded by the lexicalization of *aranalde* 'place of plums (also used as a surname)' ← *aran* 'plum' + *alde* 'place'. But that does not preclude the possibility of its formation in the distant past. [As the Editors have kindly pointed out, the formation of a compound *(h)aranalde* 'valley area, valley side' is not even blocked in contemporary Basque, e.g. in contrast with *mendialde* 'mountain area'].

**Map 79 "Buir"**

of Tranchot and v. Müffling 1803-20; southwest corner

After all, the area around Düren is not known for high mountains and deep ravines; it is, on the contrary, flat country more than it is mountainous. This observation does not, however, settle the matter, because the definition of a valley is not the same to all people at all times. E.g., the country north of Hamburg is also quite flat; nevertheless I was able to show that *Ahrensfelde/Ahrensburg* is a genuine *aran-* name: The place lies on the edge of the Ahrensburger Tal (Ahrensburg Valley), a so-called tunnel valley created by the last ice-age which is hardly perceptible (cf. Vennemann 1999b: 311, 2003: 785).[56] Therefore, the question to be answered is: Is Arnoldsweiler really a place by the valley?

It is. I first found the proof when studying the French Tranchot and v. Müffling maps of the Rhineland of 1803-20. There Arnoldsweiler is drawn sitting on the

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[56]  The concept is defined and illustrated on the Internet page "Subglacial Stream Valleys or Tunnel Valleys" at the following address (6 March 2004): http://pbisotopes.ess.sunysb.edu/reports/dem_2/tunnel_valleys.htm.

eastern edge of an area named *(Im) Großen Thal* '(In the) Great Valley'. Since the village has grown somewhat, the Großes Tal is now part of Arnoldsweiler. As a matter of fact, it is an important part with its own bus stop, because the village's commercial park was built right into the valley. The south-to-north road from Düren to Jülich is seen running through the valley in the map; it still does, now together with the railroad track.

The final question to be addressed is whether the place is old enough to continue an Old European name. That question is harder to answer. But there is some indirect evidence for a positive answer. First, the place existed in Roman times:

> Schließlich fehlen auch die Spuren römischer Besiedlung bei Arnoldsweiler nicht. In der romanischen Kirche stecken "mächtige, ungleichmäßige, mit anderm Mauerwerk zusammengestellte Sandsteinblöcke", die "zumeist Findlinge aus untergegangenen Römerbauten sein" dürften. Und gerade das heutige Arnoldsweiler ist rings umgeben von einer auffallend großen Zahl römischer Trümmerfelder, von denen eines, etwas südlich gelegen, besonders große Ausdehnung hat (Cramer 1914: 158).[57]

Second, recent excavations in the Großes Tal, prompted by the planning of the new commercial park, have brought to light, over and beyond the inevitable Roman remains along the old bed of the river Rur, traces of a "möglicherweise bereits vorrömische Erzgewinnung" ['possibly even pre-Roman production of iron ore'] and pits with fragments of ceramics from the Latène as well as from the Roman period, according to the excavation report put on the Internet by Peter Enzenberger.[58]

Third, the entire area is known to have been settled since at least the beginning of the neolithic period. This was demonstrated once again in 1989 by the discovery of a 7,000 year old neolithic well in Erkelenz-Kückhoven, the oldest preserved wooden structure in the world (Weiner 1996, Koschik [ed.] 1998). The farming quality of the area especially around Arnoldsweiler by itself makes such early settlement likely:

> Auf gutem Weizen- und Rübenboden liegen z.B. Frauwüllesheim und überhaupt die *-heim*-Orte im Strich von Arnoldsweiler über Binsfeld und Kelz nach Disternich (Kaspers 1949: 80).[59]

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[57] 'Finally traces of Roman settlement at Arnoldsweiler are much in evidence. The Roman church is partly built with mighty, irregular blocks of sand-stone integrated into the other masonry, which are probably for the most part foundling-stones from perished Roman buildings. And present-day Arnoldsweiler more than any other village is surrounded by an unusually large number of fields of Roman debris one of which, somewhat to the south, has an especially large extension' (my translation).

[58] "Maßnahme: Archäologische Voruntersuchung im Rahmen der Erstellung der Gasleitung WEDAL II. Ort: Bereich des Wingas-Leitungstrassenplanes 15.02. Abschnitt 9, Düren - Arnoldsweiler (Gewerbegebiet «Im großen Tal»). Aktivitätsnummer: NW 98/1006." Cf. http://www.urban-archaeologie.de/Archaeologie/asf/Reports/Bericht_1006.htm (6 March 2004).

[59] 'The following villages, among others, lie on good soil for growing wheat and turnips: Frauwüllesheim and generally the settlements with *-heim* names in the tract from Arnoldsweiler past Binsfeld and Kelz to Disternich.'

In short, all the evidence combines to support the proposal that the *Arnold-* in *Arnoldsweiler* is indeed an Old European name with a Vasconic etymology, namely one of the *aran-* names containing the etymon of Basque *(h)aran* 'valley'.

I trust that researching *Arnold-* names in other parts of Europe would support my interpretation of *Arnold-* in the case of *Arnoldsweiler*. A place to start could be *Ernolsheim-sur-Bruche.* Dauzat/Rostaing ([1978]: s.v.) write, "*Ernolsheim*, B[as]-Rhin, cant. Molsheim (*Arnoldesheim*, 1286): nom d'homme germ. *Arnold* et germ. *heim*, village". As usual, the dictionary does not offer the most important information, the geophysical character of the place. On the Internet I found the following (10 March 2004): "Située à flanc de coteaux, la cité domine la dépression de la Bruche".[60]

## Conclusion: A word of warning

In this paper dedicated to Larry Trask I have referred to some critical discussion, mostly between him and myself, of aspects of the Vasconic theory of Old Europe, and I have in particular taken up his singularly obliging comment, "I confess I find the valley names in *\*aran-* particularly striking, since *(h)aran* is one word it seems safe to project very far back in Basque". After returning to, and expanding on, some older etymologies of place-names containing, in my view, this Vasconic element +*(h)aran-* 'valley', chief among them *Arundel* whose standard interpretation as 'hoarhound dell' I find both unfounded and undignified, I concentrate on the German *Arnoldsweiler* whose interpretation as 'St. Arnold's village' I criticize and replace by an etymology (for the original +*Arnold*) as '(place) near the valley', which perfectly describes this village with its Roman and pre-Roman remains.

Perhaps therefore Larry Trask, and then some toponomasts, will actually consider accepting my interpretation of those *ArVn-*, *Arn-*, *Earn-* (etc.) names as Vasconic. But a word of warning is in order. These names extend from the Basque Country through France and Germany to the British Isles and Scandinavia. And a name does not travel by itself. Rather, if the Vasconic etymology of the *Arn-* names is true the conclusion must be that the Vasconic theory is true. This is logic. Accepting the premise therefore is dangerous: It would put an end to ferninsting.[61]

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[60]  'Situated on the slope, the city dominates the wide valley of the river Bruche'. Cf. http://www.ot-molsheim-mutzig.com/francais/localites-f/ernolsheim-f.htm. The site at http://www.bruchenvironnement.org/bruchenvironnement_accueil.html offers "Une galerie de photos de la vallée de la Bruche" and a map showing *Ernolsheim*.

[61]  I would like to thank Stephen Laker (University of Leiden), Robert Mailhammer (University of Munich) and Robert Vetterle (University of Munich) for reading manuscript versions of this paper and suggesting numerous improvements.

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