

***aiþī** Runic: 𐰪 𐰺 𐰽 | Pronunciation: /'ɑj.θĩ:/

noun · feminine · ĩn-stem

Meanings

mother

Etymology

Probably derived from **aiþaz*, originally denoting a woman joined by a binding marital oath, hence ‘lawful wife, wedded woman’ and subsequently ‘mother’. Hansen (2017a: 209–11) reconstructs a Proto-Indo-European formation **h₁óy-ti-h₃n(h₂)-* (‘the one endowed or charged with an oath’), a *ti*-stem from an *o*-grade form of root **h₁ey-*, with the Hoffmann suffix (creates nouns and adjectives meaning ‘one who possesses, is characterized by, or is associated with X’), though the precise suffixal analysis remains uncertain. The semantic development is supported by Old English *æw* and its adjectival use in the sense ‘lawful, legitimate’ (Hansen 2017a: 209–11; Mezger 1959; Milanova 2020: 85). The traditional interpretation as a nursery formation is unlikely; unlike genuine Germanic nursery words such as **attô* and **ammō*, **aiþī* lacks the characteristic phonological structure of child-directed formations (Hansen 2017a: 210; Hansen 2018: 176–79, 181). Proto-Finnic **äitei* is probably borrowed from Germanic (Kylstra et al. 2012: 429–30).

Declension

Case	Singular	Plural
Nom.	aiþǿ	aiþǿniz
Acc.	aiþǿnu	aiþǿnunz
Gen.	aiþǿniz	aiþǿnô
Dat.	aiþǿni	aiþǿmaz
Inst.	aiþǿnē	aiþǿmiz
Voc.	aiþǿ	aiþǿniz

Descendants

- *aiþǿ (Proto-West Germanic)
 - *eidǿ (Old High German)
 - eide (Middle High German)

- eiðǿ (Old Norse)
 - eiðǿ (Icelandic)

𐌰𐌿𐍆𐌰 (aiþei) (Gothic)

*äitei (Proto-Finnic)

[View on Wiktionary](#)

Related Words

Words mentioned in this entry

*aiþaz noun *ammō noun *attō noun