

***ēlō** Runic: 𐌿𐌽𐌳 Pronunciation: /'ɛ:.lɔ:/

noun · feminine · ō-stem

Meanings

awl

Etymology

Traditionally analyzed as descending from Proto-Indo-European **h₁éh₁l-eh₂-* ('awl') from a theoretical root **h₁el-*. Cognate with Sanskrit आरा (*ārā*) (*ārā*, 'awl') (Kroonen 2013: 19; Mallory & Adams 1997: 37). It is generally connected with **alaz* ('awl'), but the vowel alternation **a ~ *ē* is not straightforward: (Kroonen 2013: 19, 117) alternatively derives **ēlō* and **alaz* from different stem grades of an inherited ablauting paradigm, with **ēlō* generalized from the nominative **h₁éh₁l-eh₂* and **alaz* from the oblique stem **h₁h₂l-h₂-*, or treats **alaz* as an independent formation **h₁oh₁-lō-*, with pretonic shortening of earlier **ō*. Mallory and (Adams 1997: 37) give the more general reconstruction **h_xóleh_a-* ('awl', in standard laryngeal notation: **Hóleh₂-*). However, I believe an analysis of **ēlō* as an inherited instrument noun **h₁éh₁-tléh₂-* is formally and semantically attractive in light of Kroonen's account of Proto-Germanic **-l-* from PIE **-tl-/*-d^hl-* (Kroonen 2017). It competes with the conventional reconstruction with the root itself ending in **-l-*, but that analysis is not based on an independently established root; rather, it reflects the traditional segmentation of Sanskrit आरा (*ārā*) (*ārā*, 'awl') and the PGmc forms. The relation of **alaz* could then involve a parallel masculine instrument formation, perhaps **h₁oh₁-tlō-*, though the precise vocalism and PGmc consonant development would still require explanation, and this could sever the relationship with the Sanskrit noun as a direct cognate. (Lieberman 2020) contends that the length of the root vowel in PGmc is essentially unknown and considers the word a likely Wanderwort.

Declension

Case	Singular	Plural
Nom.	ēlō	ēlōz
Acc.	ēlō	ēlōz
Gen.	ēlōz	ēlō
Dat.	ēlōi	ēlōmaz
Inst.	ēlō	ēlōmiz
Voc.	ēlō	ēlōz

Descendants

***ālu** (Proto-West Germanic)

āl, **ǣl** (Old English)

***ālu** (Proto-West Germanic)

 ***āla** (Old Dutch)

 ***āle**, ***ael** (Middle Dutch)

aal (Dutch)

***ālu** (Proto-West Germanic)

 ***âl**, ***ēl** (Old Frisian)

Äil (Saterland Frisian)

***ālu** (Proto-West Germanic)

āla (Old High German)

āle (Middle High German)

Ahle (German)

***ālu** (Proto-West Germanic)

 ***āla** (Old Saxon)

âl (Middle Low German)

Ahl (Low German)

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