

NAMING THE PROVINCIAL LANDSCAPE: SETTLEMENT AND TOPONYMY IN ANCIENT CATALUNYA

LEONARD A. CURCHIN
UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO (CANADÁ)

RESUMEN: La historia del asentamiento antiguo en la Cataluña se refleja en su toponimia. Mientras que muchos de los nombres son ibéricos, hay también gran cantidad de nombres indoeuropeos (ni griegos ni latinos), que sugieren un asentamiento importante de habladores de una lengua indoeuropea, presumiblemente anterior a la dominación ibérica. Más sorprendente es la ausencia de topónimos célticos, no obstante la presencia de campos de urnos, cabezas cortadas, y espadas y fibulas de tipo La Tène. Se propone que tales costumbres y artefactos pueden interpretarse de otros modos, no célticos.

ABSTRACT: The history of ancient settlement in Catalunya is reflected in its toponymy. Although many of the names are Iberian, there is also a large number of Indo-European names (neither Greek nor Latin) which suggest an important settlement of Indo-European speakers, presumably antedating the Iberian domination. More surprising is the absence of Celtic toponyms, despite the presence of urnfields, severed heads, and swords and fibulas of La Tène type. The author proposes that these customs and artifacts can be interpreted in other, non-Celtic ways.

The study of ancient place-names can pay impressive dividends in reconstructing the linguistic history of a region¹. Toponyms tend to be conservative, remaining in use for centuries after their original meaning has been forgotten²; they thus serve as linguistic fossils, preserving traces of all the language groups that settled there. Geographic names recorded in sources of the Roman period therefore provide evidence not only for Romanization (as indicated by

¹ Funding for this project was generously provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. I am also grateful to research assistants Thomas Edward Butcher and Margaret McCarthy for their help.

² F.T. Wainwright, *Archaeology, place-names and history*, London, 1962, p. 11; W.F.H. Nicolaisen, *Scottish place-names, their study and significance*, London, 1976, p. 4.

the adoption of Latin toponyms), but also for the settlement history of pre-Roman peoples.

The subject of the present article is the toponymy of Catalunya, the north-eastern coastal plain of Spain. Corresponding in ancient administrative divisions to the northern half of the *conventus Tarraconensis*, Catalunya is the region surrounding *Tarraco*, important as the capital of Hispania Citerior, the largest Roman province in Europe³. While impressive archaeological survey work in recent years has done much to elucidate the Roman settlement pattern in this zone⁴, only toponyms can elucidate the languages of the original settlers.

In an earlier article I looked at Celticization and Romanization of toponymy in central Spain as an indicator of the three successive linguistic languages prevalent in that region: Indo-European (pre-Celtic), Celtic, and Latin⁵. In Catalunya, one would expect the indigenous place-names to be Iberian -a non-Indo-European language of disputed origin- with an overlay of Greek (from the trading posts sent out by *Massilia* before the Hannibalic war) and Latin toponyms. In fact the situation is much more complicated. In recent years, several Catalunyan place-names previously assumed to be Iberian have been re-interpreted as Indo-European by F. Villar⁶, raising questions about early Indo-European settlement in this supposedly non-Indo-European zone. More specifically, several recent writers such as B. Cunliffe⁷, J.L. García Alonso⁸, J. Gorro-

³ The modern name Catalunya is traditionally derived from a supposed tribe *Catouellauni, which is attested in no source and must be dismissed as popular etymology. So must the explanation *Gotalania “land of Goths and Alans” proffered by J. Jungfer, *Über Personennamen in den Ortsnamen Spaniens und Portugals*, Berlin, 1902, p. 18. The name *Cataloni* appears only in very late sources, but could well be derived from Ptolemy’s tribe Castellanoi (Ptol. II 6.70) through an intermediate form *Cattelani: A. Tovar, *Iberische Landeskunde* II/3, Baden-Baden, 1989, p. 40. The question remains *sub judice*.

⁴ J.-M. Carreté, S. Keay and M. Millett, *A Roman provincial capital and its hinterland: The survey of the territory of Tarragona, Spain: Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplement* 15, Ann Arbor, 1995.

⁵ L.A. Curchin, “Celticization and Romanization of Toponymy in Central Spain”, *Emerita* 65, 1997, pp. 257-277.

⁶ F. Villar, *Indoeuropeos y no indoeuropeos en la Hispania prerromana*, Salamanca, 2000.

⁷ B. Cunliffe, *The ancient Celts*, Oxford, 1997, p. 138 claims that Celtic toponyms in *-dunum* “were found over only a limited territory, concentrating mainly in Catalunya”. In fact, only one such name is found in Catalunya in antiquity. Cunliffe may be thinking of Catalunyan names like Verdú and Salardú, whose derivation from *-dunum* is unlikely: see F. Beltrán Lloris, “Galos en Hispania”, *Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 57, 2006, p. 189.

⁸ J.L. García Alonso, *La Península Ibérica en la Geografía de Claudio Ptolomeo*, Vitoria, 2003, pp. 478-517 lists *Aeso*, *Beseldunum* and *Beseda* as apparently Celtic, and *Sigarra*, *Adeba*, *Tarraco*, *Blanda*, *Indica*, *Sambroca/Sambuca*, *Ausa*, *Gerunda*, *Udura*, *Setebis*, *Telobis*, *Bacasis*, *Anabis*, *Cinna/Cinga* and the river *Rubicatus* as possibly Celtic.

chategui⁹, and P. Sims-Williams¹⁰ have identified a number of Catalunyan toponyms as being positively or possibly Celtic. The presence of Celtic geographic names would appear to be associated with the appearance of urnfields -an assemblage characteristic of the Final Bronze and Hallstatt cultures of central Europe- in Catalunya in the ninth to seventh centuries BC¹¹. Thus it is not surprising to see, in one of the standard histories of ancient Spain, a distribution map in which the urnfields of Catalunya are explicitly labelled as “Celtic sites”¹². According to T.G.E. Powell, the Catalunyan urnfields “represent the only satisfactory explanation for the introduction of Celtic place-names in the Peninsula”¹³. Finds at Ullastret and Puig Castellar of human skulls pierced with nails evoke the Celtic *tête coupée* ritual familiar from the south Gallic shrines of Entremont and Roquepertuse¹⁴. In addition, though dating to a somewhat later period, we find La Tène swords and fibulas in Catalunya¹⁵, again suggesting a Celtic material presence in the region. To address the problem of Catalunyan Celticity, the time is ripe for a fresh examination of the place-names of ancient Catalunya, with the aim of distinguishing the Iberian, Celtic and Indo-European linguistic strata and thus clarifying the settlement pattern of successive peoples in the region.

⁹ J. Gorrochategui, “Establishment and analysis of Celtic toponyms in Aquitania and the Pyrenees”, in *New approaches to Celtic place-names in Ptolemy’s Geography*, ed. J. de Hoz, E.R. Luján and P. Sims-Williams, Madrid, 2005, pp. 163-164 avers that the second element in *Sebendunon/Besendunon* is Gaulish, while *Cinna* “may be related to the Celtic name-element *cen-*.” He also compares the ending of *Aeso(n)* with that of *Segisamo(n)*.

¹⁰ P. Sims-Williams, *Ancient Celtic place-names in Europe and Asia Minor*, Oxford, 2006, pp. 238-239 says *Sebendunon/Besedunum* is “clearly Celtic”, while *Cinna*, *Cinniana* and the river *Alba* are possibly Celtic.

¹¹ P. Bosch Gimpera, “Els celtes i les cultures de la primera Edat del Ferro a Catalunya”, *Bulletí de l’Associació Catalana d’Antropologia, Etnologia i Prehistòria*, 3, 1925, pp. 207-214; J. Maluquer de Motes, “Las culturas hallstáticas en Cataluña”, *Ampurias*, 7-8, 1945-46, pp. 115-184; idem, *Història de Catalunya I: Prehistòria i edat antiga*, Barcelona, 1987, pp. 195-202; G. Ruiz Zapatero, *Los campos de urnas del NE. de la Península Ibérica*, diss. Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 1985.

¹² “yacimientos célticos”: F.J. Lomas, F. Presedo, J.M. Blázquez and J.F. Nieto, *Historia de España Antigua, I: Protohistoria*, Madrid, 1980, p. 27.

¹³ T.G.E. Powell, *The Celts*, New York, 1958, p. 48.

¹⁴ H. Obermaier, “Leichennagelung in Altspanien”, in *Festschrift: Publication d’hommage offerte au P.W. Schmidt*, ed. W. Koppers, Wien, 1928, pp. 943-948; R. Ten, J.M. Gurt and A. Martín (coordinators), *Arqueologia en Catalunya: Datos para una síntesis*, Barcelona, 1983, p. 106

¹⁵ G. García Jiménez, *Entre íberos y celtas: Las espadas de tipo La Tène del noreste de la Península Ibérica*, Madrid, 2006; R. Navarro, *Las fibulas en Cataluña*, Barcelona, 1970, chap. VII.

Such an inquiry is not without difficulties. For one thing, we have only a limited knowledge of the vocabulary of Iberian, which is not related to any other known language, and can only identify toponyms as “Iberian” if one or more of the name elements appear in Iberian inscriptions (which consist largely of personal names). Even then, not all names mentioned in Iberian inscriptions are necessarily Iberian. As an example of our imperfect understanding of Iberian, the element *il* or *ili*, which is presumed to mean “city”¹⁶, sometimes occurs in the extended forms *iltun*, *iltur* or *iltir*¹⁷, without it being clear why one form is used in preference to another in any given toponym. Another problem is that Greek, Latin and Celtic are themselves Indo-European. Therefore it is not always easy to distinguish names that are “Indo-European” (that is, belonging to an unidentified early Indo-European language) from those belonging to one of these derivative tongues. This problem applies particularly to Celtic, which is imperfectly known and is primarily reconstructed from ancient Gaulish and the Neo-Celtic languages of the British Isles.

In what follows, the ancient place-names of Catalunya (rivers, mountains, cities) are presented alphabetically for ease of reference. Conclusions will be offered as to their linguistic proportions and the problem of a Celtic presence¹⁸. The location of identifiable place-names is indicated on the map (Figure 1).

¹⁶ E.g. F. Villar, “Europeos y no europeos en Cataluña y el noreste hispano”, in *Els substrats de la llengua catalana*, Barcelona, 2002, p. 72; J. de Hoz, “Epigrafías y lenguas en contacto en la Hispania antigua”, *Palaeohispanica*, 5, 2005, pp. 74-76.

¹⁷ L. Silgo Gauche, “Ibérico *ilti*, *iltu* y derivados”, *Arse*, 32-33, 1998-99, pp. 11-45; J. Untermann, “Algunas novedades sobre la lengua de los plomos ibéricos”, in *Religión, lengua y cultura prerromanas de Hispania*, ed. F. Villar and M.P. Fernández Álvarez, Salamanca, 2001, p. 621; A. Pérez Almoguera, “*iltir/iltur* = *oppidum*: Los nombres de lugar y la ciudad en el mundo ibérico”, *Faventia*, 23, 2001, pp. 21-40; J.L. García Alonso, *La Península Ibérica*, p. 168; E.R. Luján, “Los topónimos en las inscripciones ibéricas”, *Palaeohispanica*, 5, 2005, pp. 475-476.

¹⁸ Note the following abbreviations: *IA* = *Itinerarium Antonini*; *Rav.* = *Ravennatis Cosmographia*; *IEW* = J. Pokorny, *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Bern, 1959); *MLH* = J. Untermann, *Monumenta Linguarum Hispanicarum, I: Die Münzlegenden* (Wiesbaden, 1975); *IE* = Indo-European; * = hypothetical form. All citations of Avienus, Pliny and Ptolemy refer to the *Ora maritima*, *Historia Naturalis* and *Geographia*, respectively.

RIVERS

Alba (Pliny III, 22). This clearly comes from the IE hydronym **albho-* (*IEW* 30)¹⁹. Parallels include the river Albi (Elbe) in Germany (Tac. *Germ.* 41) and the river Albe, Albas or Albula in Italy, an early name of the Tiber (Pliny III, 53; Steph. Byz. s.v. Albas).

Anystus (Avienus 547). While Pokorny saw this name as Illyrian, comparing the Bulgarian river Andzista, Schulten more reasonably interprets it as Greek *anystos* “practical”; thus, “the useful (river)”²⁰. However, the possibility remains that it is a hellenized transliteration of an indigenous name: cf. the river Anisus (modern Enns) in Noricum, which Anreiter *et al.* relate, not very convincingly, to a supposed IE **on-* with hydronymic suffix **-is-*²¹.

Arnus or *Arnum* (Pliny III, 22). Pliny gives the name in the accusative, which leaves the gender uncertain. Various hypotheses have been advanced: Pokorny made it Illyrian, Garvens Basque, while Jacob derived it from a supposed theonym Airo²². Its true root is surely the IE hydronym **ar-* with secondary suffix *-no-*²³. Cf. the Italian river Arnus (modern Arno).

Baetulo (Mela II, 89). See below on the city of the same name.

Clodianus (Mela II, 89). Clearly derived from the Latin personal name Clodius, which is very common in Spain²⁴. Schulten suggests that it was the name of a local estate owner²⁵.

Dilunus (Sallust, *Hist.* III, 6). Probably from Latin *diluere* “to wash away”.

Hiberus (attested in numerous sources). This is a Latinized form of Greek *Iber*, ultimately an Iberian name referring of course to the Iberians.

¹⁹ J. de Hoz, “Hidronimia antigua europea en la Península Ibérica”, *Emerita*, 31, 1963, p. 231.

²⁰ J. Pokorny, “Zur Urgeschichte der Kelten und Illyrier”, *Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie*, 21, 1938, p. 151; A. Schulten, *Iberische Landeskunde* I, Strasbourg/Keil, 1955, p. 302.

²¹ P. Anreiter, M. Haslinger and U. Roider, “The names of the eastern Alpine region mentioned in Ptolemy”, in *Ptolemy: Towards a linguistic atlas of the earliest Celtic place-names in Europe*, ed. D.N. Parsons and P. Sims-Williams, Aberystwyth, 2000, p. 129, note 53.

²² J. Pokorny, “Urgeschichte der Kelten und Illyrier”, p. 151; F. Garvens, *Die vorrömische Toponymie Nordspaniens*, diss. Münster, 1964, p. 43; P. Jacob, “Notes sur la toponymie grecque de la côte méditerranéenne de l’Espagne antique”, *Kiema*, 10, 1985, p. 251.

²³ J. de Hoz, “Hidronimia antigua europea”, p. 232.

²⁴ J.M. Abascal Palazón, *Los nombres personales en las inscripciones latinas de Hispania*, Murcia, 1994, pp. 113-114.

²⁵ A. Schulten, *Iberische Landeskunde*, I, p. 303.

Whether the river is named for the people, or the people for the river, is a moot point.

Lara. Mentioned in a gubernatorial arbitration from Tarraco concerning the *rivus Larensis* (*CIL* II, 4125). The derivation by Schulten from an Etruscan personal name Lar is improbable²⁶. A likelier etymology is **law-ra* from IE **lou-*, *la^u*- “to wash” (*IEW* 692, Latin *lavare*) with adjectival suffix *-ro*.

Maius (Mela II, 90). Though Schulten opted for the stem of Celtic personal names in *Maiu*-²⁷, the likeliest explanation of *Maius* (*flumen*) is the Latin comparative *maius* “quite large”.

Oleum. Another name of the Ebro, according to Avienus 505. Jacob unconvincingly construes it as a pre-Roman name **Elaisos* “river of Ele”²⁸. It is more reasonably seen as Latin, “olive river”, referring either to its colour or to local oleoculture (cf. the town name *Oleastrum*, below).

Rubricatum (Pliny III, 21). A Latin name pertaining to a reddish colour, cf. the town *Rubricata* (below) and the lake *Rubraesus* in *Narbonensis*.

Sambroca (Ptol. II, 6, 19). García Alonso proposes an etymology **sam-ar-o-ka* from Celtic **samo-* “summer”²⁹, which seems an unlikely root for a river-name. A possible etymology is **sem-ro-ka* from IE **iem-* “to hold (together), join, unite” (*IEW* 505), since a river unites the places along it as well as the tributaries that join it.

Subi (Pliny III, 21). Montoliu says this river was undoubtedly named for the neighbouring town of *Subur*³⁰. Garvens relates it to Basque *zubi* “bridge”, Villar to IE **-uba*³¹. However, a very similar name *sube* occurs on Iberian potters’ stamps and graffiti³².

²⁶ A. Schulten, *Iberische Landeskunde*, I, p. 307.

²⁷ A. Schulten, *Iberische Landeskunde*, I, p. 306.

²⁸ P. Jacob, “Notes sur la toponymie grecque”, p. 250.

²⁹ J.L. García Alonso, “Indoeuropeos en el Nordeste”, *Palaeohispanica*, 5, 2005, p. 245.

³⁰ M. Montoliu, “Els noms de rius i els noms fluvials en la toponimia catalana”, *Butlletí de Dialectologia Catalana*, 10, 1922, p. 11

³¹ F. Garvens, *Vorrömische Toponymie Nordspaniens*, p. 74; F. Villar, *Indoeuropeos y no indoeuropeos en Hispania*, p. 127.

³² I. Pera Isern, “Pervivencia de la lengua ibérica en el siglo I a.C.”, *Palaeohispanica*, 5, 2005, p. 321.

Ticis (Mela II, 89). Schulten would make it an Etruscan name, comparing the Italian river Ticinus³³, but a more likely root is IE **tek^w*- “to run, flow” (*IEW* 1059). There was another river Ticis (modern Tech) in southern Gaul.

Tulcis (Mela II, 90). Villar compares the town-name Titulcia, which he construes as **ilti-tulkia*³⁴. The root of Tulcis may be IE **dhol(o)*- “hollow” (*IEW* 245; Welsh *dol* “valley”, Old High German *tuolla* “gully”).

MOUNTAINS

Celebanticum (Avienus 525). Schulten rejects an etymology from Greek *kelebê* “cup”³⁵. The true root could be IE **kel-* “to be prominent; hill” (*IEW* 544) plus IE **bha-n-* “to shine; white” (*IEW* 104). Therefore, “white mountain”.

Iovis mons (Mela II, 89). Latin, “mountain of Juppiter”.

Malodes (Avienus 535). Probably Greek, from *malon* “apple” with suffix *-odes* “which has the look of”, therefore “apple-shaped (mountain)”³⁶. However, Villar derives all Mal- toponyms -even Malaca, which is Phoenician!- from IE **mel-* “to be prominent, elevated”³⁷, which is an alternative possibility for this oronym.

Sellus (Avienus 507). While Schulten vacillates between an Etruscan and Greek etymology³⁸, the correct root may be the IE suffixed form **sed-lo-* “seat, resting place” (*IEW* 884; Latin *sella*). There was an ancient river Sella in Asturias, and a town Sellium in Lusitania.

³³ A. Schulten, “Die Etrusken in Spanien”, *Klio*, 23, 1930, p. 389.

³⁴ F. Villar, “Los vocales /o/ y /u/ de la toponimia prerromana hispana”, *Veleia*, 10, 1993, p. 181.

³⁵ A. Schulten, *Iberische Landeskunde*, I, p. 229.

³⁶ J. Hubschmid, “Toponimia prerromana”, in *Enciclopedia lingüística hispánica*, ed. M. Alvar *et alii*, Madrid, 1960, p. 491.

³⁷ F. Villar and B. Prósper, *Vascos, celtas e indoeuropeos: Genes y lenguas*, Salamanca, 2005, p. 70.

³⁸ A. Schulten, “Die Etrusken in Spanien”, p.385; idem, *Iberische Landeskunde*, I, p. 230.

OTHER FEATURES

Campus Foenicularius (Cic. *Att.* XII, 8) = *Marathonos pedion* (Strabo III, 4, 9). “Plain of fennel”, from Latin *foenum* (Greek *marathon*).

Cassa (c)herronesos (Avienus 491). The name of this peninsula, is correctly preserved, is perhaps derived from IE **kas-* “grey” (*IEW* 533; Latin *canus*), referring to its colour.

Lunarium promontorium (Ptol. II, 6, 19). From Latin *luna* “moon”, perhaps referring to a crescent-shaped cape.

Toni stagnum (Avienus 544). Schulten conjectured that the name of this marsh might come from the rare personal name *Tonius* (*CIL* II, 5813), possibly a variant of *Tongius*³⁹. However, it is more likely derived from an o-grade form of IE **ten-* “to stretch, spread” (*IEW* 1065), connoting “stretched, extensive”.

CITIES, VILLAGES AND STATIONS

Ad Septimum Decimum (*IA* 452, 4). Latin, “at the seventeenth (milestone)”.

Adeba (Ptol. II, 6, 63). The structure of the name appears similar to that of Edeba (Oretania) and the river Udiva (Contestania), but the etymology is unclear.

Aeso (Pliny III, 23). The town’s pre-Latin coins read *eso*, therefore “Ae” seems to be a Latin hypercorrection. Evans compares the Gaulish theonym *Esus*⁴⁰, but this is not attested in Spain. The name may rather come from the IE hydronym **eis-* “move quickly” (*IEW* 299)⁴¹.

Antistiana (*IA* 398, 6). This station probably denotes the estate of an *Antistius*, a very common Latin name. Contrary to the view of Roldán Hervás⁴²,

³⁹ A. Schulten, *Iberische Landeskunde*, I, p. 376; cf. A.J. Carnoy, *Le latin d’Espagne*, Paris, 1906, p. 154.

⁴⁰ D.E. Evans, *Gaulish personal names*, Oxford, 1967, p. 200, note 2.

⁴¹ C. Jordán Cólera, “La raíz **eis-* en la hidrotponimia de la Península Ibérica”, *Beiträge zur Namenforschung*, 32, 1997, pp. 417-455.

⁴² J.M. Roldán Hervás, *Itineraria hispana*, Valladolid and Granada, 1975, p. 213.

this is not likely to be C. Antestius Vetus, who in 69-68 BC was governor of Hispania Ulterior, not Citerior.

Aquae Calidae (Pliny III, 23; Ptol. II, 6, 69). A Latin name meaning “hot waters”.

Aquae Voconiae (IA 398, 1). Named after a Voconius, a Latin name well attested in Spain.

Arketurki (MLH A.28). In successive publications, Villar derives this pre-Latin mint name from IE **tur-* and IE **urc-*⁴³. This illustrates a defect in his method, since the name obviously cannot come from both roots. Arke- could come from IE **ar(e)q-* “to protect” (IEW 65-66; Greek *arkeo*, Latin *arceo* “protect”). However, the existence of numerous Iberian personal names in Arki-, and the word *arkatan* on an Iberian inscription from Liria, leave open the possibility of an Iberian root⁴⁴. Cf. Arcilacis in Bastetania (Ptol. II, 6, 60). On *-turki* cf. Iiliturgi, below.

Arrago (Rav. 303, 9). Perhaps from IE **an-* “not” (IEW 756) plus **wreg-* “to break” (IEW 1181), perhaps referring to unbroken terrain; cf. Greek *arragês* “unbroken”.

Ascerris (Ptol. II, 6, 71). A number of Asc- names in Spain (Ascuá), Sicily (Askelos) and central Europe (Ascis, Ascaulis) suggest that this is an IE name, though of unclear etymology⁴⁵. The sequence *-erris* is seen in Hispanic names like Iliberris.

Ausa (Pliny III, 22; Ptol. II, 6, 69). Its pre-Roman name may be **Ause*, as suggested by the Iberian forms *auśes*, *auśesken*⁴⁶. Attempts to relate it to Basque *auzo* “neighbourhood” are unconvincing⁴⁷. Possibly from an IE hydronymic root **aus-* “to drain, draw off water” (IEW 90). Cf. the river Ausoba in Ireland.

⁴³ F. Villar, “Europeos y no europeos en Cataluña”, p. 68; F. Villar and B. Prósper, *Vascos, celtas e indoeuropeos*, p. 101.

⁴⁴ J. Siles, *Léxico de inscripciones ibéricas*, Madrid, 1985, pp. 61-64.

⁴⁵ F. Villar, “Europeos y no europeos en Cataluña”, p. 71.

⁴⁶ J. de Hoz, “El complejo sufijal *-(e)skén* de la lengua ibérica”, *Palaeohispanica*, 2, 2002, p. 163.

⁴⁷ J. Álvarez Delgado, “El sustrato en el topónimo Vich: Traducción del ibero-vasco *auzo*”, *VII Congreso Internacional de Lingüística Románica*, II, Barcelona, 1955, pp. 849-853; L. Silgo Gauche, “Comentarios sobre cinco topónimos ibéricos”, *Arse*, 37, 2003, pp. 15-16.

Bacasis (Ptol. II, 6, 71). Although there are Celtic names in Bac-⁴⁸, the word *bakasketai* on an Iberian inscription suggests that **bacas-* is an Iberian element⁴⁹.

Baecula (Pliny III, 23; Ptol. II, 6, 69). Villar derives the element *bai-* in various Hispanic toponyms from IE **g^whei-* “to shine, be white” (*IEW* 488-489), though the Iberian personal name *baikaŕ* may argue for an Iberian root **bai-* or **baik-*⁵⁰. In any case, there is no guarantee that all *bai-* toponyms (e.g. Baetis, Baedunia, Baesucci, Baelo) come from the same root. Polybius (X, 38, 7) mentions another Baecula in Bastetania.

Baetulo (Mela II, 90; Pliny III, 22; Ptol. II, 6, 18). Like Baecula, this name could be formed from IE **g^whei-*. However, the word *baites* which appears repeatedly in Iberian inscriptions on lead shows the possibility of an Iberian origin⁵¹. The suffix *-ulo* is a latinized form, as shown by the orthography *baitolo* on the town’s pre-Latin coinage; cf. the classical spelling *Castulo* for indigenous *kastilo* in Oretania.

Bagara. Name reconstructed from the ethnonym *Bagarensis* on the Ascoli bronze (*CIL* I², 709). There are several potential IE roots for this name: **bhag-* “to apportion”, **bhag-* “sharp”, **bhago-* “beech” (all in *IEW* 107). *-ro* is an IE adjectival suffix. The word *bagarok* on an inscription from Alcoy is not evidence for an Iberian root **bagar-*, because *-rok* is a suffix⁵².

Barcino (numerous sources). The name is spelled *barkeno* on pre-Latin coinage (*MLH* A.6). Though Late Roman writers believed this city owed its name to a foundation by the Barcids (Ausonius *Ep.* XXVII, 68; Orosius VII, 43, 8), it is doubtful that there were Punic settlements north of the Ebro. While some have claimed that the name is Iberian, Villar opts for an IE origin⁵³. The root could be IE **bhar-* “projection, point” (*IEW* 108).

Bassi (Ptol. II, 6, 70). Though possibly the genitive form of the common (though non-Latin) personal name Bassus, the existence of a toponym Bassai in

⁴⁸ A. Holder, *Alt-celtischer Sprachschatz* I, Leipzig, 1896, col. 322-325.

⁴⁹ J. Velaza, *Léxico de inscripciones ibéricas*, p. 43.

⁵⁰ F. Villar, *Indoeuropeos y no indoeuropeos en Hispania*, p. 246; J. Siles, *Léxico de inscripciones ibéricas*, p. 83.

⁵¹ A. Quintanilla, “Palabras de contenido verbal en ibérico”, *Palaeohispanica*, 5, 2005, p. 516.

⁵² J. Siles, *Léxico de inscripciones ibéricas*, p. 79; A. Quintanilla, “Palabras de contenido verbal”, p. 515.

⁵³ A. Dietrich, *Phönizische Ortsnamen in Spanien*, Leipzig, 1936, p. 24; F. Garvens, *Vorrömische Toponymie Nordspaniens*, p. 55; F. Villar, “Europeos y no europeos en Cataluña”, pp. 71-72.

Greece and an ethnonym Bassi in Belgica point to a broader IE root, perhaps **bha-s-* “light, shine” (*IEW* 105).

Bega. Name reconstructed from *Begensis* in *CIL* I², 709. Though Villar derives it from IE **bai-* “brilliant”⁵⁴, a likelier root is IE **bheg-* “bend, curve”, seen in several geographic and personal names Beg-/Veg- in Gaul⁵⁵. Cf. *Begastrium* in *Bastetania* (*CIL* II, 5948).

Bergium (*Livy* XXXIV, 21, 1). Apparently from IE **bher(e)gh-* “high, hill” (*IEW* 140). There was another *Bergium* in Germany (*Ptol.* II, 11, 14) and two towns *Bergidum* in Spain.

Beseda (*Ptol.* II, 6, 70). Perhaps from IE **bhes-* “to rub” (*IEW* 145), with IE adjectival suffix *-do*⁵⁶.

Biscargis (*Pliny* III, 3, 23; *Ptol.* II, 6, 63). This toponym contains the Iberian element *biskar*, seen in personal names *Arbiscar* and *Sakarbiskar*⁵⁷.

Blaberura (*Steph. Byz.* p. 332 M). From Greek *blaberos* and *oura* “harmful tail”, therefore “deadly cape”^{58?}

Blanda (*Mela* II, 90; *Pliny* III, 22; *Ptol.* II, 6, 18). Conceivably from Latin *blandus* “smooth”, with reference to flat topography. However, the eastern toponyms *Blanda* (Crete) and *Blandos* (Cappadocia) suggest a non-Latin root, perhaps an extension of IE **bhel-* “shining, white” (*IEW* 118).

Brachyle (*Steph. Byz.* p. 185 M) A compound of Greek *brachys* and *hylê* “small wood”.

Callipolis (*Avienus* 514). Greek, “beautiful city”⁵⁹.

Cardona (*Sidon. Apoll. Epist.* IX, 12). Probably from IE **kar-* “hard” (*IEW* 531) with suffix *-to/-do-* (Epic Greek *kartos* “strength”, Gothic *hardus* “hard, strong”: *IEW* 531-32). Cf. *Carduae* near *Bilbilis* (*Martial* IV, 55, 17), and *Cardena* in Belgica. *-no* is an IE secondary suffix.

Ceresus (*Ptol.* II, 6, 71). Probably from IE **ker-* “horn, head” (*IEW* 574), with reference to its topography. *Ceresius* is hypothesized as the ancient name of Chérêt, Aisne⁶⁰.

⁵⁴ F. Villar, *Indoeuropeos y no indoeuropeos en Hispania*, p. 239.

⁵⁵ A.L.F. Rivet and C. Smith, *The place-names of Roman Britain*, Princeton, 1979, p. 266.

⁵⁶ A. Meillet, *Introduction à l'étude comparative*, p. 268.

⁵⁷ J.L. García Alonso, “Indoeuropeos en el Nordeste”, p. 237, note 5.

⁵⁸ P. Jacob, “Notes sur la toponymie grecque”, p. 287.

⁵⁹ There is no necessity (*contra* J. Icart Leonila, “Cal·lipolis fou Tàrraco”, *Faventia* 15:1, 1993, p. 84) to identify this town with Tarraco.

Cervaria (Mela II, 84). From IE **ker-wo-* “horned; deer”. Therefore “deer town”? There was a homonymous town in Oretania (Ptol. II, 6, 58).

Cesse (MLH A.12). Against the form *Kissa* in Polybius (III, 76, 5, whence *Cissis* in Livy XXI, 60-61) must be placed the coin-legend *kesse* (variant *kese*) and the tribal name *Cessetani*. There are no Iberian parallels for this name. Tovar relates it to a (non-existent) Greek word *kissa* “pebble” which he characterizes as “Mediterranean”⁶¹, but cf. IE **geis-* “gravel” (IEW 356; German *Kiesel* “flint, pebble”). There are several places named *Kissa* in the Greek world, but no *Cesse*.

Cinna (Ptol. II, 6, 71). Hardly from the Etruscan(?) personal name *Cinna*. A likelier etymology is IE **ken-* “to spring up” (IEW 563) with secondary suffix *-no-*.

Cinniana (IA 397, 9; Rav. 303, 2) Similar etymology to the preceding entry.

Corbio (Livy XXXIX, 42). Probably related to *Corbis*, name of a Spanish chieftain (Livy XXVIII, 21, 6-10), and possibly to the Gallic city *Corbilo* (Strabo IV, 2, 1), from the o-grade of IE **kerb-* “dark, stained”⁶². There was another *Corbio* in Latium (Livy II, 39, 4).

Cypselā (Avienus 527). Greek for “box, chest”, possibly referring to fortifications⁶³. There are homonyms in Arcadia and Thrace.

Deciana (Ptol. II, 6, 72; Rav. 303, 1). Latin, indicating the property of a *Decius*.

Dertosa (Strabo III, 4, 6; Pliny III, 23; CIL II² 14, 786-87). Probably from IE **dher-* “to hold firm” (IEW 252). Cf. *Dertona* in Italy.

Egara (CIL II 4494-95). Possibly a hydronym, from IE **eg^wh-* “to drink”⁶⁴ with adjectival suffix *-ro-*.

Egosa (Ptol. II, 6, 70). Perhaps from the same root as the preceding. It is possible that the name is linguistically related to that of *Icosium* (Pliny III, 19-

⁶⁰ A. Holder, *Alt-celtischer Sprachschatz*, I, col. 992.

⁶¹ A. Tovar, *Iberische Landeskunde*, II/3, p. 435.

⁶² M.L. Albertos Firmat, *La onomástica personal primitiva de Hispania Tarraconensis y Bética*, Salamanca, 1966, p. 95.

⁶³ P. Jacob, “Notes sur la toponymie grecque”, p. 260.

⁶⁴ C. Watkins, *The American Heritage Dictionary of Indo-European Roots*, Boston, 1985, p. 16. On *-ro-* see M. Meier-Brügger, *Indo-European Linguistics* (Berlin and New York, 2003), p. 289.

20; *AE* 1999, 960), a town in Contestania; cf. the classical spelling *Egelesta* for the Carpetanian city attested on coins as *ikalesken*. Isaac regards **ico-* as a Celtic element, possibly from IE **iek-* “to heal” (*IEW* 504)⁶⁵; but there was also an Icosium in Mauretania (Pliny V, 30; Ptol. IV, 2, 6). The suffix *-osa* is seen in Dertosa (above), Succosa (Ebro valley), Metercosa (Carpetania), Tolosa (Aquitania).

Emporion (Strabo III, 4, 8; Livy XXXIV, 9). Greek, “trading post”.

Ennega (*CIL* I², 709). Perhaps a hydronym, from IE **en-* “in, on” plus **neig^w-* “to wash” (*IEW* 761).

Fines (*IA* 398,5; *Rav.* 317, 18). A Latin name, perhaps indicating the boundary between two towns or tribes.

Gerunda (Ptol. II, 6, 69; *IA* 390, 4). The likeliest root is IE **gher-* “to enclose” (*IEW* 442).

Hylactes (Avienus 497). Greek *hylê aktês* “forest of the cape”. The name Hystera in the same line is probably not a toponym but Avienus’ misunderstanding of the word *hystera* in his Greek source⁶⁶.

Iesso (Ptol. II, 6, 71; Pliny III, 23; pre-Latin coins of *ieso*). The IE root **ies-* “to boil, bubble” (*IEW* 506) suggests that the town may have been named after a local spring. On the ending, cf. above, Aeso/*eso*.

Ildum (*IA* 399, 6; *Rav.* 304, 4). Appears to be a latinized spelling of Iberian *iltun/iltur* “city”⁶⁷.

Il(t)uro (*ilturo* on pre-Latin coins, *MLH* A.11; *Iluro* in Pliny III, 22). Clearly from Iberian *iltur* “city”.

Iliturgi (Livy XXIII, 49, 5). The suggestion of Villar that this name combines Iberian *ili* with an IE hydronym **tur-* seems improbable⁶⁸. More likely the name is wholly Iberian, from *iltur* “city”. On the ending, cf. above, Arketurki. There is a homonymous town in Baetica.

Indice (Steph. Byz. p. 332 M). Capital of the people known in classical sources as *Indicetes* (Avienus 532; Sallust, *Hist.* II, 98, 5; Strabo III, 4, 1) or *Indigetes* (Pliny III, 21; Ptol. II, 6, 19) but in pre-Latin coinage as *untikesken*. Coin evidence indicates that it was located in the vicinity of Emporion. Its ety-

⁶⁵ G.R. Isaac, *The Antonine Itinerary land routes*, CD-ROM, Aberystwyth, 2004, s.v. “Celtic Elements”, p. 18.

⁶⁶ P. Jacob, “Notes sur la toponymie grecque”, p. 262.

⁶⁷ J. Velaza, *Léxico de inscripciones ibéricas*, p. 75.

⁶⁸ F. Villar, “Europeos y no europeos en Cataluña”, pp. 68-69.

mology is unclear. It may be related to the mint-name *untikia* or *auntiki* in southern Gaul⁶⁹.

Intibilis (Livy XXIII, 49, 12; *IA* 399, 5; *Rav.* 310, 14). The name is clearly related to that of the Hispanic leader Indibilis. Both share the same element *-bilis* as Bilbilis; the name should therefore be Iberian.

Iulia Libica (Pliny III, 23; Ptol. II, 6, 68). The imperial *nomen* Iulia has been attached to an indigenous name Libica, an adjectival form similar to the place-name Libia of the Berones. The root may be IE **leubh-* “to like” (Latin *libere* “be dear, be pleasing”: *IEW* 683), therefore “friendly/pleasant place”?

Mentissa (Livy XXVI, 17, 4). From IE **men-to-* “projection” (*IEW* 726). The suffix *-issa* is generally regarded as pan-Mediterranean (e.g. Iturissa and Etovissa in Spain, Larissa in Greece, Vindonissa in Raetia).

Oleastrum (*IA* 399, 2). A variant (attested in Calpurnius Siculus II, 44) of Latin *oleaster* “wild olive tree”. There was a grove (*lucus*) of the same name in Baetica (Mela III, 4).

Orre. Name reconstructed from *Orretanus* in *CIL* II, 4465. Schulten thought it must be the same place as Oretum in south-east Spain⁷⁰, but this would have yielded the adjective **Oretensis*. More likely we are dealing with the site of the Iberian mint *ore*. The name may be Iberian, cf. Oretum, Oripo (Baetica) and the mint *orosiz*.

Palfuriana (*IA* 398, 7; *Rav.* 303, 12). Named after Palfurius, a rare name. Outside of Spain (as attested by Palphurius in Lusitania, *CIL* II, 934) this *nomen* is represented by a suffect consul P.(?) Palfurius, whom Syme believes to be of probable Spanish origin⁷¹, his son Palfurius Sura the philosopher, another Palfurius Sura on an amphora stamp in northern Italy (*CIL* V, 8812.64) and a family of Palfurii in the Sabine country (*CIL* IX, 4383). The family presumably originated in Italy⁷².

Pyrene (Avienus 559). A hellenized name related to that of the Pyrenees. Herodotus (II, 33) claims that the source of the Danube is near Pyrene; this is either a geographical error or a reference to a place of that name in the Alps.

⁶⁹ *MLH* 163; cf. F. Villar, *Indoeuropeos y no indoeuropeos en Hispania*, p. 251.

⁷⁰ A. Schulten, “Orretum”, *RE*, XVIII, 2, Stuttgart, 1942, col. 1417.

⁷¹ *PIR*² VI, n° 67 (and 68 for his son); R. Syme, “Rival cities, notably Tarraco and Barcino”, *Ktema*, 6, 1981, p. 281 = *Roman Papers* IV, Oxford, 1988, p. 88.

⁷² Though hardly South Italy, *contra* J. Pons i Sala, “Propietats agràries d’itàlics a Catalunya”, *Pyrenae*, 21, 1985, pp. 133-134.

Rhode (Ptol. II, 6, 19, Pliny III, 33). The name of this Greek trading station is Greek for “rose bush”. The Attic-Ionic ending *-e* rather than Doric *-a* makes it unlikely that this was a colony of Rhodes⁷³.

Rubicata (Ptol. II, 6, 72, *Rav.* 304, 3). A Latin name: see above on the river Rubricatum.

Salauris (Avienus 514). From the IE hydronyms **sal-* (*IEW* 878) and **(a)ur-* (*IEW* 80-81)⁷⁴.

Saltus. Attested in the accusative case *Saltum* in *Rav.* 342, 6 and as *Sub Saltu* on the Vicarello cups. It is purely Latin, meaning “glade”.

Sebendunum (Ptol. II, 6, 70). Though some scholars would emend this name to *Beseldunum* in an attempt to identify it with modern Besalú⁷⁵, the existence of a place-name *Sebelaci* in Edetania (*IA* 400, 1) suggests that *Seben-* is the correct reading. The root is IE **seib-* “to pour out, drip” (*IEW* 894). Though Sims-Williams sees the ending *-dunum* as proof of Celticity, it is basically IE, from **dheuh-* “to finish, come full circle”⁷⁶.

Sedeisken (*MLH* A.25). This pre-Latin mint appears to have an IE name, from **sed-* “to sit” (*IEW* 884; Sanskrit *sádas* “abode”, Latin *sedis* “seat”).

Segestica (Livy XXXIV, 17, 12). From IE suffixed form **segh-es-* “conquest”⁷⁷, the same root found in *Segesta* (Sicily) and *Segestica* (Pannonia).

Semproniana. This name, attested on the first Vicarello cup (*CIL* XI, 3281), is clearly derived from the Latin name Sempronius.

Setelsis (Ptol. II, 6, 71). While an IE origin is possible (see *Seterrae*), the personal names *Setal* (on Latin coinage of Ilici) and *Setulecia* (*CIL* II, 2303) suggest that **setel-* is Iberian.

Seterrae (*IA* 398, 2). Perhaps from IE **se(i)-to-* “something bound”; Old Indian *setu* “bridge, dam” (*IEW* 892) with suffix *-ro-*.

Sigarra (Ptol. II, 6, 63; *CIL* II, 4479; *ordo Segarrensensis* on an inscription⁷⁸; *sígarra* on pre-Latin coins⁷⁹). Despite a superficial resemblance to the

⁷³ R.A. Santiago, “Enigmas en torno a *Saguntum* y *Rhode*”, *Faventia*, 16:2, 1994, p. 61.

⁷⁴ F. Villar, “Europeos y no europeos en Cataluña”, p. 68.

⁷⁵ See J.L. García Alonso, *La Península Ibérica*, p. 410.

⁷⁶ P. Sims-Williams, *Ancient Celtic place-names*, p. 239. On **dheuh-*, C. Watkins, *Selected writings*, II, Innsbruck, 1994, pp. 751-753. For a list of *-dunum* toponyms in Spain, see W. Meyer-Lübke, “Zur Kenntnis der vorrömischen Ortsnamen der Iberischen Halbinsel”, *Homenaje Menéndez Pidal*, I, Madrid, 1925, p. 64.

⁷⁷ C. Watkins, *American Heritage Dictionary*, p. 56 (compounded from **segh-*, *IEW* 888).

personal names Sigerus and Sigerius, whose linguistic affiliation is unclear⁸⁰, this name could come from the IE hydronym **seikw-* “to flow” (*IEW* 893); cf. the ancient river Sicoris in the Ebro valley. The ending may be derived from *-er-ro* (see Seterrae).

Stabulum Novum (*IA* 390, 6). Latin, “new stable”, referring to the stabling of horses at this *mansio*.

Subur (Mela II, 90; Ptol. II, 6, 17; Pliny III, 21). Despite a superficial resemblance to Subura, a low-lying quarter of Rome, this toponym is undoubtedly related to that of the river Subi (see above), which we have reason to suspect is Iberian.

Summus Pyrenaeus (*IA* 397, 7; *CIL* XI, 3284; Tabula Peutingeriana). This *mansio* has a Latin name, meaning “top of the Pyrenees”.

Tarraco (numerous sources). Attested as *tarakon* on pre-Latin coinage, this city’s etymology has variously been seen as Phoenician, Etruscan, Celtic, or Iberian⁸¹. Villar more convincingly derives it from IE **tara-* “strong” (from **ter(e)-* “to rub”, *IEW* 1071) with adjectival suffix *-ko*⁸².

Theava (Ptol. II, 6, 63). From IE **ta-*, *te-* “to melt, flow” (*IEW* 1053) plus the IE hydronym *av-* (from Proto-IE **h₂ep-/*h₂eb-*)⁸³.

Tiar Iulia (Ptol. II, 6, 63) or *Tear Iulia* (Pliny III, 23). Tovar compares the rivers Tiarantos and Tearos in eastern Europe⁸⁴; there are also place-names Tiare in the Troad and Tiarai on Lesbos. All these suggest that we are dealing with an IE derivative.

⁷⁸ G. Fabre, M. Mayer and I. Rodà, *Inscriptions romaines de Catalogne*, I, Paris, 1984, n° 18.

⁷⁹ L. Villaronga, *Corpus nummorum Hispaniae ante Augusti aetatem*, Madrid, 1994, p. 513.

⁸⁰ M.L. Albertos Firmat, *Onomástica personal primitiva*, p. 207. I am aware of no evidence for a supposed Celtic root *segar(ra)* “apple” as claimed by A. Galmés de Fuentes, *Toponimia de Alicante (La oronimia)*, Alicante, 1990, p. 39.

⁸¹ W. Smith, *Dictionary of Greek and Roman geography*, II, London, 1857, p. 1.104; A. Schulten, “Etrusken in Spanien”, p. 370; A. Flamanc, “Nota filológica: Tarraco, Tarragona, nombre celta”, *Boletín Arqueológico*, 57, 1957, pp. 83-87; A. Cherpillod, *Dictionnaire étymologique des noms géographiques*, Paris, 1986, p. 450.

⁸² F. Villar, “*Termes, Tarraco, Turiasu*: Los dobles con r/tr en la toponimia prerromana hispana”, *Beiträge zur Namenforschung*, 28, 1993, p. 308.

⁸³ F. Villar, *Indoeuropeos y no indoeuropeos en Hispania*, p. 171, note 235; M. Meier-Brügger, *Indo-European Linguistics*, p. 118.

⁸⁴ A. Tovar, “Más conexiones precélticas en hidrónimos y orónimos de Hispania”, in *Homenaje al Excmo. Sr. Dr. D. Emilio Alarcos García*, II, Valladolid, 1967, p. 87.

Tolobi (Mela II, 90). Probably from the same root as *Telobis* in the Ebro valley, from IE **tel-* “even, flat; ground” (Latin *tellus*: *IEW* 1061) plus the IE hydronym *-ob*⁸⁵. A linguistic connection with *Tolosa* in *Narbonensis* is uncertain.

Tria Capita (*IA* 399, 3). Latin, “three heads”, perhaps the name of an inn.

Turissa. Named on a mosaic from *Tossa de Mar*. Probably to be linked with IE **tur-* “to swell” (*IEW* 1083) rather than with *Iturissa* in the Ebro valley (*Ptol.* II, 6, 66; *Rav.* 311, 14). On the ending, see *Mentissa*, above.

Tyrichae (*Avienus* 498). Despite its resemblance to the Phoenician city of *Tyre*, the name probably comes from IE **tur-* “to swell”⁸⁶. It is unclear whether the name is related to the personal name *Turikainos* on the third bronze tablet from *Botorrita*⁸⁷.

Udura (*Ptol.* II, 6, 71). Suffixed zero-grade form **udor-* from IE **uedor* “water” (*IEW* 78; Greek *hydôr*, Umbrian *utur*).

Untikesken – see *Indice*.

CONCLUSIONS

In view of the problems outlined in the Introduction, it is hardly surprising that no comprehensive study of the origins of the 97 ancient place-names of *Catalunya* has been attempted before. In most cases we cannot be absolutely certain of their etymology. However, the following recapitulation purports to represent the balance of probability:

Iberian names (10 = 10% of total): *Hiberus*, *Subi* (rivers); *Bacasis*, *Biscargis*, *Ildum*, *Ituro*, *Iliturgi*, *Intibilis*, *Orre*, *Setelsis*.

Indo-European names (49 = 51%): *Alba*, *Arnus*, *Lara*, *Sambroca*, *Ticis*, *Tulcis* (rivers); *Celebanticum*, *Sellus* (mountains); *Cassa* (peninsula), *Toni* (marsh); *Aeso*, *Arrago*, *Ascerris*, *Ausa*, *Bagara*, *Barcino*, *Bassi*, *Bega*, *Bergium*, *Beseda*, *Blanda*, *Cardona*, *Ceresus*, *Cervaria*, *Cinna*, *Cinniana*, *Corbio*, *Dertosa*, *Egara*, *Egosa*, *Ennega*, *Gerunda*, *Iesso*, *Iulia Libica*, *Mentissa*, *Salauris*,

⁸⁵ F. Villar, “Europeos y no europeos en Cataluña”, p. 68.

⁸⁶ F. Villar, “Europeos y no europeos en Cataluña”, p. 68.

⁸⁷ F. Beltrán Lloris, J. de Hoz and J. Untermann, *El tercer bronce de Botorrita (Contrebia Belaisca)*, Zaragoza, 1996, line IV.2.

Sebendunum, Sedeisken, Segestica, Seterrae, Sigarra, Subur, Tarraco, Theava, Tiar Iulia, Tolobi, Turissa, Tyrichae, Udura.

Greek names (10 = 10%): *Anystus* (river); *Malodes* (mountain); *Blaberura*, *Brachyle*, *Callipolis*, *Cypsela*, *Emporion*, *Hylactes*, *Pyrene*, *Rhode*.

Latin names (22 = 23%): *Clodianus*, *Dilunus*, *Maius*, *Oleum*, *Rubricatum* (rivers); *Iovis* (mountain); *Campus Foenicularius*; *Lunarium* (promontory); *Ad Septimum Decimum*, *Antistiana*, *Aquae Calidae*, *Aquae Voconiae*, *Deciana*, *Fines*, *Oleastrum*, *Palfuriana*, *Rubricata*, *Saltus*, *Semproniana*, *Stabulum Novum*, *Summus Pyrenaeus*, *Tria Capita*.

Unclear (6 = 6%): *Adeba*, *Arketurki*, *Baecula*, *Baetulo* (river and city), *Cesse*, *Indice*.

It will be seen that the names identified as Indo-European account for approximately half the total attestations; Iberian and Greek names each represent about one-tenth, while Latin names comprise nearly a quarter. The strong showing of Indo-European names suggests the presence of a substantial Indo-European speaking population, which may have preceded the domination of this region by the Iberians, the people encountered by the Romans in the third century BC. This would be consonant with the situation in Central Spain, where there is ample evidence for a non-Celtic, and presumably pre-Celtic, Indo-European linguistic stratum⁸⁸. It would be difficult to conceive of an unknown group of Indo-European speakers arriving in the Iberian Peninsula subsequent to the Celts and Iberians; certainly no such group is mentioned in historical sources.

Perhaps the greatest surprise in this study, by comparison with the claims of previous scholars, is the lack of Celtic toponyms in our region. This absence casts serious doubt on the supposed early Celticization of north-east Spain, despite the evidence for urnfields and severed heads. While the urnfield people of central Europe, or some of them, may have spoken an early form of Celtic, the spread of the urnfield culture across the Alps and Pyrenees was not necessarily accompanied by a spread of language⁸⁹. Head-hunting may have been prac-

⁸⁸ Cf. the numerous examples of Indo-European anthroponyms and toponyms from Central Spain in M. Albertos Firmat, *Onomástica personal primitiva* and L.A. Curchin, "Celticization and Romanization", *passim*.

⁸⁹ The urnfield people in Italy, better known as the Villanovans, had a settlement and cemetery on the site of Rome in the eighth century BC, but this does not mean that the Romans spoke Celtic. The Celtic languages attested in central and north-west Spain need not have "arrived" via Catalunya; alternative routes of transmission could include the Atlantic coast and the western passes of the Pyrenees.

tised in Catalunya -as it was also in Rome⁹⁰- but this does not make the region Celtic. Neither does the importation of La Tène swords and fibulas, which are merely articles of trade. García Alonso claims to find Celtic parallels for many of the Catalunyan toponyms⁹¹; these supposed parallels should rather be seen as Celtic cognates of Indo-European (but non-Celtic) name elements.

Thus, the evidence of toponymy suggests that the region of Catalunya was initially settled by speakers of an early Indo-European language, with a subsequent overlay of Iberian settlement as well as activity by Greek merchants. There is no cogent evidence for the putative presence of Celtic speakers. In the Roman period, some 23% of the names were Latin, reflecting not only the foundation of new towns or renaming of old ones, but also the establishment of *mansiones* along the Roman roads.

⁹⁰ J.L. Voisin, “Les romains, chasseurs de têtes”, in *Du châtimeut dans la cité: Supplices corporels et peine de mort dans le monde antique*, Roma, 1984, pp. 241-293.

⁹¹ See above, note 8.

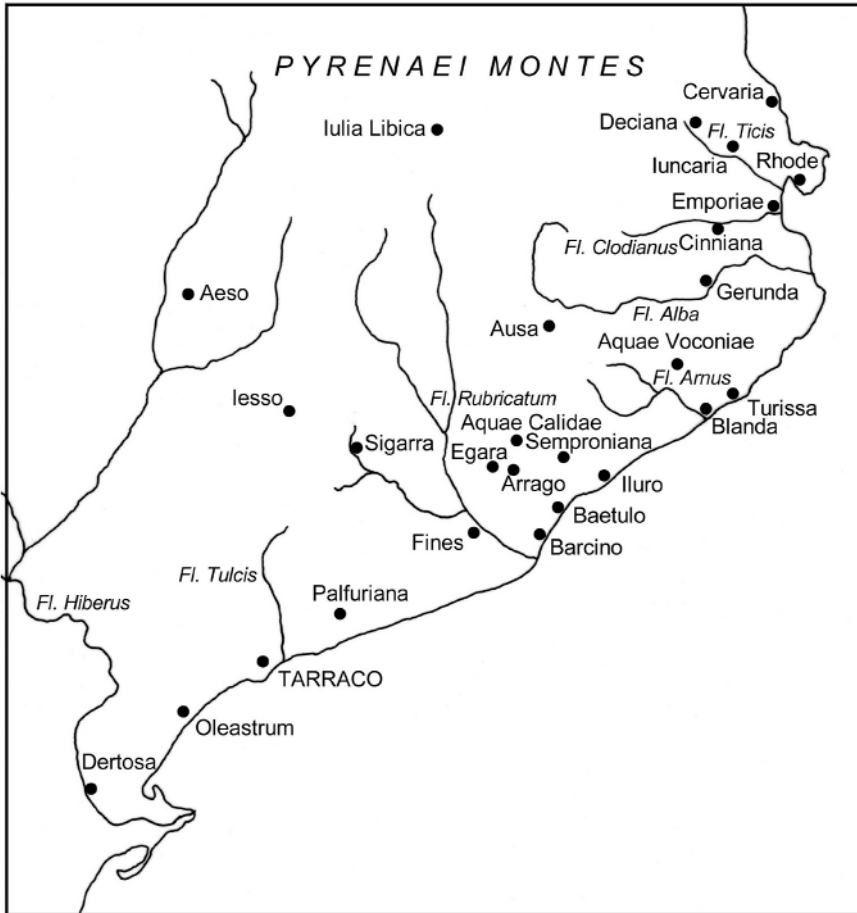


Figure 1. Map of toponyms of known location in ancient Catalunya.