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**INDO-EUROPEAN HYDRONYMIC FORMANTS AND ISOGLOSSES
OF THE SAMARA VOLGA REGION
IN ETHNOHISTORICAL CONTEXT**

Abstract

The article considers a number of hydronymic formants characteristic for early Indo-Europeans in connection with the hydronymy and ethnic history of the Samara Volga region. The article argues for the necessity to single out the formants as far as they correspond to a number of significant toponymic criteria. The primary attention is paid to the particular need to distinguish *RA* formant as the one being the most important for macro- and meso-hydronymy in the region under study. There are reasons to consider that the hydronyms of Samara Volga region containing *RA* formant, are the most archaic to the area and date back to the languages of the peoples who were the first to fully settle in the region during the Aeneolithic period. Other hydronymic formants and isoglosses discussed in the article could exist parallel to the formant, as proved by a number of examples, or could be included in topogenesis at the later stages of Indo-European development of the region. Each of the reported formants is illustrated, where possible, by examples from hydronymy of Samara Volga region accompanied by ethnohistorical interpretation. In general, the presence of early Indo-European hydronymic formants in most of the names of large and medium-sized rivers of the region proves the hypothesis about the formation of the major hydronemic nomenclature of the Samara Volga region in the early Indo-European ethno-linguistic environment, in the era of Samara, Khvalynsk, Ancient Yamna (Pit-grave), Poltavka and Srubna (Timber-grave) archaeological cultures.

Keywords: toponymy, hydronyms, Samara Volga region, ethnic history, ancient Indo-European hydronyms.

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