Proceedings of the Thurneysen Fanclub: issue 26

Records of the discussions in the conference room on 04-12-2017

In attendance: David Stifter (chair), Elliott Lash, Fangzhe Qiu, Bernhard Bauer, Ekaterina Derevianchenko, Tatiana Smirnova, Romanas Bulatovas, Lars Nooij (scribe)

Apologies: Theodorus Fransen

Practicalities
Next week's meeting may or may not be the last meeting of the year. We could, perhaps, have a final meeting on the 18th, since at least David, Bernhard, Fangzhe and Lars are around (Ekaterina, Elliott, Romanas and Tatiana will not be available). David will give the matter some further thought.

Much of the backlog of proceedings of previous meetings has now been edited and posted online, both on academia.edu and on the project website (the latter thanks to Fangzhe). David has now also successfully tested out the comment function on the ChronHib website.[1]

Comments on the proceedings
David reports that the newly-uploaded proceedings have elicited a number of responses. They will be made available in detail in separate documents.

Robbie Hannan left a general comment on academia.edu. We congratulate him on starting his PhD in Belfast and are happy to know that he is following our meetings.

Peadar Ó Muirchertaigh commented on the pronunciation of Scottish Gaelic.

One D.S.[2] corrected his previous statement on the distributation of *áes* and *oís*; Würzburg has both spellings, rather than just *oís*.

Elizabeth Boyle emailed us, congratulating us on reaching our 25th meeting and sending us her apologies for her absence for most of those meetings.

Joseph Eska commented that Jasanoff has argued against Watkins on the origins of the *t*-preterite. This sounds intriguing and we will read that article.

David also commented on last week's discussion on the *o*-stem pl. word *enech* 'honour, face', which has the dat.pl. *inchaib* and which presumably goes back to *$en\breve{\imath}k^{u}o$- (Vedic requires $\bar{\imath}$, but Breton *enep* implies $\breve{\imath}$), but the preform of which explains neither the attested nominative nor the dative in Old Irish. David then mentioned that there were other words with similar problems, citing *inathar* 'entrails', which one would expect to go back to something like *enitro-* (which should have given Old Irish **inithir*). In the meantime he has come up with other examples. There is *inad* 'place, spot', which Elliott briefly proposed to reconstruct as *enito*,[3] but David rather reconstructs as *eni-sedo-* (cf. *cétad*, W. *cyntedd* 'first place'), or *eni-φedo-*, both of which have semantic connotations with 'place' in Celtic. There is also *imbed / imbad / immat* 'mound', the etymology of which is unknown, but which seems to have a similar problem (here reflected as variation) with the quality of the consonant. In general, these seem to be words in which there is a non-palatal consonant followed by what used to be a high vowel. We do not have an explanation for this, but note that the prefix *eni-* is rather frequent among them.

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[1] At this stage David opens a box of chocolate cookies, saying: "I'll crack this!" before turning towards Elliott, who was paying rapt attention, and saying: "I see you want this!" and passing him the cookies.
[2] Fangzhe: "Dáibhí Stíftear?"
[3] David: "But that wouldn't explain anything." Elliott, citing the problems with *enech* and *inathar*: "I thought we were coming up with things that don't work?"

Romanas commented on the discussion of middle length in proceedings 17; we note that his comment more or less reflects our own thoughts about this.

Romanas also commented on proceedings 21, noting that although it was indeed rare, Latin did have a native diphthong *oe*, i.e. it did not occur solely in Greek loanwords. This is indeed true, but it should also be noted that in late spoken Latin this diphthong would have been monophthongised to *ē*.

Fangzhe and Elliott also have some further comments, but will send them in by email sometime soon.

o, u for a and similar mutations (§80 (a) – continued)

"**muig** beside **maig**, dat. sg. of **mag** 'field'." The form *mog* is also attested. The Modern Irish pronunciation as /moi̯/ reflects a wholesale reordering of the paradigm, perhaps from the dat.sg.

"…also **crann** 'tree' (with *c-* < *qᵂ-*), gen. **cruinn**, dat. **crunn**; here, however, the *a*, as contrasted with Britann. *prenn*, Gaul. *prenne* 'arborem grandem' (Endlicher's Gloss.), has not been explained and is doubtless secondary." David does not want to talk about this word. MacManus' 1992 article offers an important and good discussion of the general problem of split paradigms after initial labiovelars, but still leaves this word unsolved. One simply needs a lot of analogy to get the attested paradigm. In Proto-Celtic the form must have been $*k^u resno->$ PC $*k^u renno-$. This directly yields P-Celtic *prenno-*, indeed reflected by Gaulish *prenne*, Breton *prenn* and Welsh *pren*. The word also has cognates in Germanic (e.g. German *Horst*, Dutch *horst*) and Balto-Slavic[4] (e.g. Church Slavonic *chvrastŭ*, Russian *chvórost*). In Irish, from $*k^u resno-$ the following paradigm would be expected (parallel to *cenn* 'head'):

	expected:	compare:[5]
nom.sg.	*crenn	cenn
gen.sg.	cruinn	cuinn
dat.sg.	crunn	cunn
acc.sg.	*crenn	crenn

Alas, of these forms only the gen. and dat. forms are attested in Milan and the Priscian glosses. *crenn is nowhere found; instead the oldest sources already have *crann*. There is also a younger, more streamlined paradigm:

	older:	younger:
nom.sg.	crann	crann
gen.sg.	cruinn	crainn
dat.sg.	crunn	craunn
acc.sg.	crann	crann

The question is, how do we get *crann*, with *-a-*, if *crenn*, *cruinn* is the starting point? A dative *crunn* in Late Old Irish could, in theory, reflect an Early Old Irish *craunn*, with reduction of the infixed *u*. It would therefore have been possible for a speaker of Late Old Irish to (hypercorrectly) reinterpret a form such as *crunn* as deriving from *craunn* and therefore from a paradigm in which *-a-* was the primary vowel, i.e.:

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[4] Which is problematic; no Slavic word should start with *ch-*.

[5] The vowel pattern of *cenn* is unusual from the synchronic perspective of Old Irish and was regularised in two ways, yielding a split paradigm:

	option 1:	option 2:
nom.sg.	cenn	conn
gen.sg.	cinn	coin
dat.sg.	ciunn	co(u)nn
acc.sg.	cenn	conn

nom.sg.	*crann*
gen.sg.	*crainn*
dat.sg	*cra(u)nn*
acc.sg.	*crann*

However, it should be noted that there are no early attestations of a dat.sg. **craunn* for this word. And given the great amount of analogy and re-ordering of the paradigm required to explain all its forms, the word is best regarded as not fully explained. Attempts to explain *crann* by means of a word like *Bran* are inherently flawed given that the precise synchronic vowel alternation of *Bran* is also poorly understood. One question is whether the attested dat. *Braun* is old or analogical? Anyway, this would be an attempt to explain something *obscurum per obscurius* ('something obscure through something more obscure').

To further complicate matters, there is the possibility that there was an ancient variation within the paradigm of *crann*: maybe zero-grade **kʷr̥sno-* next to **kʷresno-*. The Old Church Slavonic even reflects the *o*-grade of the root. David suggests to leave the fingers from *crann* for the moment.

"Mid.Ir. **rann** 'strophe', dat. **runn**, acc. pl. **runnu** (originally = **rond** 'chain' ?) is probably modelled on this." This is definitely *obscurum per obscurius*! There seems to be a difference between *rann* 'strophe' (m. *o*-stem) and *rann* 'part' (f. *ā*-stem), due to the different noun classes and genders, although the meanings seem very close.

"**mug** 'serf' from **maug** (cp. **Maug-dornu**… Gaul. *Magu-rix*), gen. sg. **moga**, nom. pl. **mog(a)e**, etc;" The word *mug* must come from **magus*, yielding an expected (and attested) nom.sg. *maug*. Its gen.sg. must come from **magōs*, which should have given ***mago*, but which is never attested in this form; the gen.sg. is always *mogo*, *moga*. In this case, the remodeling of the paradigm through nom.sg. *maug* > *mug* must have been very early. Although it must be kept in mind that we are here also potentially dealing with both the rounding and backing effects of a nasal and a guttural. Besides this, we wonder what the 'etc.' refers to; we know of no other examples for this specific context. The word *foil* < **u̯o-lego-* is different.

"**fot** 'length' influenced by gen. **fuit**, dat. **fut**…" This depends on the etymology of this word. Perhaps it was **u̯ozdo-*? Then everything would be fine.

"**foss** 'youth, servant', cp. nom. pl. **fuis** … = Britann. *gwas*, Gallo-Lat. *uassus, Uasso-rix*, etc." This does not go back to **u̯asta-* as Thurneysen thought, but to **u̯osto-*; British and Gaulish had a sound-change here, so the Irish is regular.

"**muir** (*i*-stem) 'sea', W. Bret. *mor*, Gaul. *Are-morici, Morini,* Lat. *mare*;" In this case the Lat. *-a-* is actually secondary so the vocalism of the Irish word is not problematic anymore. The Slavic cognate *more* is not informative on this point.

At any rate, this last part of the small-print is entirely diachronic in nature, so we would drop it.

o, u for a and similar mutations (§80 (b))
Moving on to section (b) of this paragraph,[6] we would reformulate this entirely. Thurneysen essentially states that *au* > *o* /_Cᵘ (i.e. *au* becomes *o* before a *u*-quality consonant). We would rather say that **ˈaC_{[+voice]}ŭ* > **ˈau̯C_{[+voice]}ŭ* > Early Irish *auC*… (i.e. stressed *a* becomes *au̯* before a voiced consonant followed by a *u*; this is the rule for 'u-infection'). It must be noted that this Early Old Irish *auC* is not the same as the diphthong *áu*. The diphthong *áu* later turned into *ó*, whereas *auC* became *uC*. This separate, later development shows that the two sounds were kept distinct in Old Irish.

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[6] David: "Number b." Others: "He said <u>number</u> b!"

Given that this rule has synchronic effects in Old Irish, it is relevant. A Late Old Irish scribe would have said *u* for earlier *au̯*, but would have known that this was sometimes written *au* in earlier sources, giving rise to hypercorrections, of which there are many.

David brings up the word *cul* 'chariot', which has been reconstructed as *$k^u e/olo$-*, but which he himself has reconstructed as **kalu-* (then originally meaning something like 'smith's work') on the basis of an attestation *caul*; cf. *Culann*. But he admits that this attestation of caul may itself be hypercorrect.

"**aub** 'river'… **oub**… **ob**… acc. **abinn**." It is well attested as *aub* and indeed also sometimes as *oub* and *ob*, but never as *ub*. This is unexpected for a word which seems to go back to **abū*.

It is a fair question what sound was actually represented by *au*. Might it have been a marginal vowel, which existed alongside the main, five-vowel system of stressed vowels in Old Irish? If so, perhaps something like /ɔ/? In this case, the Old Irish would simply not have had a fixed grapheme for the sound, explaining the spelling variations. This will tie in very nicely with what we will later discuss under section (c) of this paragraph.

If this is the case, we should compare it to ·*laumur,* ·*lomur*, although there are of course labials around. We should therefore distinguish between the various consonants, because they may have had different effects on the vowels.

As to *laugu, lugu* and later *laigiu*; the form *laigiu* is later, with secondary spread of the palatalization in the comparative to forms where it should not have originally have occurred.

o, u for a and similar mutations (§80 (c))
"In certain other words original *a* and *e* before *u*-quality consonants are represented by *au, e, i*, more rarely by *u* (which first becomes common in Middle Irish), and quite exceptionally by *ai*." Actually, *ai* is not that uncommon in this instance.

David points out that all this is far less mysterious than Thurneysen thought, and he demonstrates it with "**aupaith** (*ad + buith*) 'charm, spell'…" This word occurs in the spellings: *epaid / epuid, aipuid, upaid, opaid, aupaid*. This type of variation in the quality of the first vowel occurs in a limited number of words and reflects a rather marginal vowel for which Irish had no established grapheme. It seems that it was a front and round vowel, perhaps /ø/ (as Pedersen suggested), or /ä/ as David suggests. Taking this together with our tentative explanation of the variation in (b) as reflecting a marginal sound[7] one might have to envisage an expanded stressed short vowel inventory for Old Irish:

$$i \qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad u$$
$$\phi? \qquad\qquad\qquad ɔ?$$
$$e \qquad\qquad o$$
$$ä?$$
$$a$$
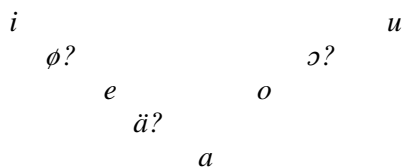
At any rate, the vowel /ä/ or /ø/ under discussion here appears to arise in a Primitive Irish cluster **ʲaCü > *ʲäCü* (or **ʲøCü*). The vowel /ü/ itself arose (probably) out of a *u* before a palatalised consonant in Primitive Irish.

All this is strikingly similar to the sequence which appears to yield the variation in (b), which would have been **ʲaᵘCu < *ʲaCu*.

The variation under (c) was fully productive and even occurs in loanwords, e.g. *draic, drauc, dreic*, etc. 'dragon', which was borrowed from British. Welsh *draic* is itself a borrowing from Latin *dracō*, which

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[7] David: "Let's call it the Fangzhe Qiu vowel", for Fangzhe raised this possibility.

became *dragū in Late Proto-British. This *dragū must have been borrowed as such into Irish, explaining the attested variation in Old Irish. Similarly, Latin *labōrem* > British *lavŭr* > Irish *laubair, lebuir*.

The word *audacht* 'testament' < *ad-uk^u-to (from the root *u̯ek^u-) does not belong here. The variations in the spelling of this word probably are the result of *u*-infection and analogy.

It should be said that the etymology of some of the words showing the variation in (c) is unclear, but the explanation appears to hold true for all words of which the etymology is known.

There is a word *tauluch, tulach* 'hill, mound', and a word *tailech, telaig, tilich*, etc. 'hill, mound'; the variation can be explained if one is regarded to reflect an $\bar{a}$-stem inflection and the other an $\bar{\imath}$-stem inflection of the same word. The first shows the regular effects of *u*-infection, i.e. treatment according to (b), the second shows the special development in (c), which was triggered by the soundchange proposed above (the $\bar{\imath}$ of the latter inflection caused palatalization, which caused the *u* to change into *ü, which in turn affected the *a of the first syllable).

The word *idbart* < *ad-us-ber is a weak point for the theory. It shows the variation under (c), but the *u* should not have become *ü here. Perhaps the sound law that changes *u* to *ü needs to be expanded somewhat to account for this.

As to *no-b·irpaid*, perhaps the labial, or the *r* affected the vowel?

The discussion of *inn-uraid* 'last year' is entirely diachronic and therefore irrelevant for the purposes of a synchronic grammar.

"**mór** (never in Sg.) beside **már** 'great', Gaul. –*marus, Maro-*, is probably due, not to the initial *m* has [sic] has been suggested, but to the comparative **mó** from **máu**…" There is actually one attestation of this word in Sankt Gallen as *mór*. As to Thurneysen's explanation, perhaps he is right. The form *már* is the more archaic (cf. Welsh *mawr*, Breton *meur*, which go back to *$\bar{a}$), but it is odd that the Irish derivative *móraid* never preserves the older *á*. [Lars: eDIL does claim that *máraid* exists as a variant and offers a very few examples]. In modern Munster Irish the form has turned into *muar* nowadays, which is unusual.

a for *o* (§81)
"Between *f* and palatal consonants *a* is often, though not consistently, written for *o*…" This is true, but what to make of it? This is actually very similar to what Thurneysen discussed under §80 (a) and the two should at least be related, although the neutralisation of the vocalism is perhaps stronger after *f*-.

The word *foil* 'pig-sty, enclosure, ring' < *upo-leg^h- ('under–lie-down'-place) varies with *fail* in Old Irish and should therefore be included here as well.

"In later MSS. o^i and a^i (sometimes also u^i) are completely confused. There is constant fluctuation between *a* and *o* in the later language, even where palatal consonance does not follow." This is, again, true. This vowel distinction is completely neutralised in later Irish. The variation found in Old Irish essentially shows that the neutralisation was already beginning by the Old Irish period. Also, one should take the influence of $o > a$ /_$a (vowel harmony) into account here.

Pages read in this session: c. 2–2,5