Proceedings of the Thurneysen Fanclub: issue 23

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Apologies: Theodorus Fransen

Practicalities
Elliott remarks that we never discuss the previous proceedings anymore. In this particular case, that would have been difficult, since they had not been processed and sent off to David by the scribe yet, but in general, it is indeed true that the minutes have not been sent round for about half a year now. [Signs of contrition form on the chair's face.]

Lowering (§73)
"**e** and **o** for **i** and **u**", we would change the title to 'Lowering'.

At the start of the meeting David stated that since this paragraph is largely diachronic, he did not want to say too much about it,[1] although lowering does of course have all sorts of synchronic repercussions and manifestations.

"Earlier *ĭ* and *ŭ* are lowered to *e* and *o* when the following syllable contains or formerly contained *ā̆* or *ŏ*...". This is a purely diachronic description. In a synchronic grammar one should rather open with something along the lines of "in certain morphological contexts there are variations between the vowels…" and then note that this is caused by a diachronic rule.

When is 'formerly'? In Primitive Irish, i.e. directly before the Old Irish period, or in Proto-Celtic? This matters, given that e.g. *-os* > *-as* in Primitive Irish; but mostly it is at odds with Thurneysen's mention of *ō*. One might rather say "when the following syllable contained a Proto-Celtic *ā̆* or *ŏ̆*."

"…(or an *ō* which did not become *ū*…)". When did *ō* not become *ū*? In the article *inna* and in the dual, perhaps (but this are due to exceptional shortenings)?

Examples for the effects of the other vowels are more common: e.g. *u̯ira-* > *fer*, *u̯ikonti* > *fechait*.

As to the dual, these forms need somewhat more of an explanation. The expected form of the nom.du. would be e.g. PIE *u̯iHroh₁* > *u̯irō* > *u̯irū* > Old Irish ****fiur*. However, Old Irish has nom.du. *da fer*, followed by lenition, rather than ****da fïur*. The solution for this is that the vowel must have been a short, rather than a long *o* (*u̯iro* > Old Irish *fer*). This is in turn explained by arguing for the loss of laryngeals in pausa forms. A pausa form occurs right before a strong prosodic boundary, e.g. before a comma, or at the end of a phrase. In Vedic Sanskrit it is known that laryngeals are indeed lost in such forms. David: "Let's assume that Maria existed in Vedic." The nom. would have been *Mariā* < PIE *mariah₂*. However, the vocative would have been *ā Maria* < PIE *maria*, with loss of the laryngeal at the end of the 'O Mary!'-phrase. Why would a pausal form have been used for the dual? Perhaps because it is natural for it to occur in answer to questions of 'How many?', where the dual could have constituted the entire answering phrase, 'Two men.', thus placing the dual at the end of the phrase and therefore in a clear pausal position. Moreover, some such explanation is also required for the word for 'two' itself, which should have been PIE *duu̯oh₁* > *duu̯ō* > *duu̯ū* > Old Irish ****dú*. A form with a short *o* is needed. Indeed, an erstwhile *duu̯o* that arose in pausa may have influenced all other duals.

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[1] This turned out to have been a very optimistic statement, as we proceeded to spend the next hour and a half discussing this and the following, related paragraph.

The contexts in which $*\bar{o}$ occurred were very marginal, since $*\bar{o} > \bar{a}$ word-internally, or $\bar{u}$ in final position. It would have to be derived from $*o\underset{\smile}{u}$.

"The only exception is *i* before *nd*, which always remains..."; this is true, but rests on only two solid examples.

The etymology of *find* 'fair' is not completely straightforward. *Find* < $*\underset{\smile}{u}indos$ < PIE $*\underset{\smile}{u}e\underset{\smile}{i}d$- 'to see, know', but *n*-infixes are only found in verbs in PIE, e.g. in *ro·finnadar* < $*\underset{\smile}{u}indna$- (with two infixes) and in Vedic *vindati* 'to find'. One therefore must presume influence from verbal forms upon the adjective. Still, such an etymology would usually be expected to yield **fend*, with lowering, unless one makes this an exception to the rule.

The word *rind* 'star' has a dat.pl. *rendaib* – with lowering – whereas *find* has a dat.pl. *findaib*. However, this does not break the rule, as *find* < $*\underset{\smile}{u}indos$ has an original *i*, while *rind* < *rænd*- < *rand*- has an underlying *a*.

The article *in* is famously never lowered to **enna* or **anna*. Schrijver reconstructs the article as *simde-os*, with an original *i*. This and *find* are the only two certain examples of original *i* in this context.

The word *mind* 'diadem, crown' has been given some thought by David in his third mythical article, on the word for 'star'.[2] eDIL says it is an o-stem neuter, but there is no evidence for its claimed o-stem inflection (the gen.sg. is unfortunately unattested). Moreover, the preform *mindo*- is also an unsupported, automatic assumption, given that it has not successfully been linked to any earlier root. David rather agrees with Thurneysen who notes that it is a u-stem neuter (which are very difficult to distinguish from o-stem neuters, outside of the gen.sg.). However, this implies that the vocalism of the preform is relatively uncertain: *mVndu*-, where the first vowel can be either *a, e,* or *i*. In late Proto-Celtic times, the *e* and *a* of *mendu*- and *mandu*- would both have been raised early on before a nasal followed by a consonant (*enC* > *ɪnC* and *anC* > *ænC*). Once raised, both *æ* and *ɪ* would then have behaved the same in Irish (but not in British!), namely as if they were original *e*, and they would then have been raised to *i*. This is one of the many examples of the vocalic complications caused by nasals in Celtic.

David does not actually agree with eDIL's given meaning for *mind* either. It rather means 'badge, mark of honour' and more basically just 'sign, symbol' and not specifically 'diadem, crown'. David connects it with Welsh *man* 'spot, place' and suggest that the basic meaning was 'spot', which could then develop into either 'place' – as in Welsh – or – as in Irish – 'mark, sign'. It can then also be connected with Latin *mendum* 'blemish', reconstructing Italic *mendum* and Celtic *mandum* < Proto-Italo-Celtic $*m\underset{\circ}{n}d^{o}/_{u}$- and connecting it with PIE *men*- 'to remember', perhaps with *deh₃*- 'to give' after it.

Now, whereas, as mentioned before, *rind* < *rænd*- < *rand*- lowers, as expected, for the dat.pl. *rendaib*, *mind* does not lower for its dat.pl. *mindaib*, like *find* < $\underset{\smile}{u}ind$-. Does this mean that it originally contained an *i* after all? Not necessarily, for there were quite a few words ending in -*ind*, such as *rind* i-stem and *rind* u-stem.[3] For the i-stem *rind* one would have expected acc.pl. *rindi* and dat.pl. *rindib* and the for u-stem acc.pl. *rind/rend* and dat.pl. *rendaib*. However, *rendaib* is also found as the dat.pl. of the i-stem *rind* and a similar analogical confusion occurs for *lind* "pool" and *lind* "liquid, ale". Therefore, it would seem that the vocalism of the attested forms is problematic anyway and does not conclusively allow to establish the preform.

Lars asks where Old Welsh *minn* 'mark of honour, crown, garland' fits into this scheme. The word is attested in the Martianus Capella glosses, c. 850–900 AD. Is it perhaps a loanword from Irish? David was not aware of this word, which can't be reconstructed as *mand*- for Welsh, if it is a native word.

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[2] David: "Which is pretty well advanced. If I had a few days on my own I could finish it."

[3] Others are *mind, find, ind, lind, bind*.

The Irish noun *mennar* 'spot, blemish, fault' can be reconstructed as **mand-no-* and is therefore unproblematic.

All in all, this paragraph should be split up and we should have separate paragraphs devoted to *mind* and *rind*, discussing the problems involved. Moreover, part of the discussion on lowering should also be included in the treatment of the *o*-stems, as part of that synchronic paradigm.

It is asked whether *-mb-* and *-ng-* would also block the lowering of *i*. We cannot think of any examples of original *i* in this position. Old Irish *ingor* < **angur-*, *imb* < **amban* < **ŋgᵘen-*, etc.

"*u* is occasionally retained by analogy before neutral vowels; e.g. **cruthach** 'shaped, shapely' (suffix *-āko-*), from **cruth** 'shape'; **dula**, gen. of **dul** 'going'…" *Cruth*, W. *pryd* < **kᵘritu-* (via **kruθu-*). If we had **kᵘritāko-* > Old Irish *crethach* and not *cruthach* would be the expected form. However, **-āko-* was not the only adjectival suffix; there was also plain **-k-*, which David suspects was the more common suffix with u-stems. And if one reconstructs **kᵘrituko-* one does get Old Irish *cruthach*. Similarly the word *currach* (cf. Hiberno-Latin *carruca*) must be < **karruko-*.

As to *dul*, the etymology of this word is not very certain. Early attestations include *daul*, implying **dalu-*; if so, the synchronic inflection of *dul* is analogical in Old Irish.

Lowering of *u* to *o* before *e* (§74)
We now turn to the perennial problem of the acc. form of *croch* 'cross'. This is an issue which has been discussed time and again in the seminars on the Poems of Blathmac. In spite of David's pronounced dislike of discussing this issue, he once again takes up his cross.[4]

The facts are that the word *croch* is an *ā*-stem fem., derived from Latin *crux*, presumably by means of *crucem*. As such, the reconstructed paradigm and its expected outcomes in the singular would have been as follows:

nom.	**krukā*	>	*croch*
gen.	**krukii̯ās*	>	*cruchae*
dat.	**krukī̆*	>	*cruich*
acc.	**kruken*	>	*cruich* (Maynooth) / *croich* (Utrecht)

Schrijver (Utrecht) suggests that **ŭ* > *o* before a short *ĕ*. David (Maynooth) does not like that sound law. And the scribe is caught in the middle.

Blathmac has a gen. *croiche*, dat. *croich*, which must be explained by (a later, scribal?) analogical spread, influenced by the form of the nom.

Würzburg has acc. *croich* (David would say that this is also a case of analogical spread). The Stowe Missal Tract on the Mass has *croich* for the dat. and *cruche* for the gen. Milan has dat.sg. *croich*. Blathmac has acc. *cruich* (once secured by rhyme, although written *croich*).

Could these differences perhaps also reflect dialects? David did not want to use the D-word, but it is possible, although it should be noted that there is mixing going on within the same texts.

Romanas adds that we may not be dealing with **krukem*, but rather with Vulgar Latin **krokem* as the source. However, the *-k-* should not allow for raising of *o* to *u*. David stresses that he said 'should', because it is not quite certain. Although there are examples of this restriction, there are also some words for whose etymology raising may be conceivable. For example, David would like to link *cluiche* 'game'

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[4] Romanas: "And every time David says he doesn't want to discuss it. And then we talk about it for half an hour." [DS: Lars has now agreed to take the cross from me and discuss this problem, together with all concomitant issues, in his PhD thesis. How courageous!]

to *ar·clich* 'to ward off'. The verb must go back to a root *klek-*, which – due to ablaut rules – would yield a noun *klokii̯om*, which would give *cluiche* if one allows for raising. There is also the W2b verb *do·scuchai* < *-skokei̯eti*.

Returning to the original problem of lowering or non-lowering in *croch*, the word *cú*, acc. *coin* is the same. The acc. may be reconstructed as *kunen*, which is consistently attested as *coin*. Schrijver considers this prime evidence for his rule, whereas David considers this to be bollocks.[5] David would rather reconstruct the form as *kᵘonen*, solving the problem that way. Welsh *ci*, pl. *cŵn* is not helpful, as it could either be derived from *kun*, or from *kon* with raising before a nasal. Hispano-Celtic may have a form *kones*.

All in all, it is noted that Schrijver always adds a little question mark after this sound law when teaching it to students. David adds that all the things he has said on this issue should be seen as a big question mark also, although he really does not want to easily allow for this lowering rule, because of counter-examples.

Other pieces of evidence are *con·boing* and *fo·loing* < *bungeti* and *lungeti* respectively. However, Stüber (*Celtic Nasal Stems*, 1998) has argued that this lowering is caused by a more specific rule: $*u >$ o before $*nC_{[-pal]}$.

It is raised that raising is more common in nasal environments in languages in general, but it is countered that there are also counterexamples where instead lowering occurs before nasals, such as in French.

"It is at all events certain that the vocalism of the prefixes **su- du-** … **ro-** … **fo-** … and **to-** … has become completely confused." No, this is not exactly the case. It is true that *du-* 'bad' and *su-* 'good' show a distribution that cannot be reconciled with regular sound laws, but the other preverbs by and large behave as we would expect them to. David has written something about this in his article about 'the history of the preverb *to-*'.[6]

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[5] David: "But I'm basically continuing to fight old battles between McCone and Schrijver." [DS: This was only said in jest! And did I really use the word 'bollocks'. I don't believe it and distance myself from it if I should have used it.]

[6] https://www.academia.edu/19947057/The_history_of_the_Old_Irish_preverb_to