



Varia II

Author(s): Kim McCone

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VARIA II

1. OIr. *broimm* 'fart', Skt. *brāhma* 'pious effusion, prayer, spirit'

As Pokorny's *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* indicates, the most usual but by no means universally accepted etymological connection of the Sanskrit *n*-stems *brāhman-* (n.) 'prayer' and agentive *brahmān-* (m.) 'performer of prayer, priest' is with Latin *flāmen* (m.) 'priest' by deriving both from an assumed Indo-European **bhlagh-men-*. In view of Latin *fig-mentum* it is more than doubtful whether loss of *g* < **gh* before *m* in *flāmen* can be sustained, although postulation of a prior development to **bhlagh-smen-* at some sub-Indo-European stage is barely possible as a way out of this phonetic difficulty. Even so, one would be left with an IE root **bhlagh-* of extremely undesirable shape, containing as it would a vowel *a* not susceptible of explanation in terms of the colouring effects of a laryngeal (H_2) upon a following *e*. The equation of *brahman-* with *flāmen* is thus problematical, to say the least, and it is hardly surprising that some scholars have preferred to connect *flāmen* with Germanic words such as Gothic *blōt-an* 'worship' on the assumption of a preform **bhlād-(s)men-* that leaves the Indic *brahman-* isolated (see Pokorny's entry for *bhlagh-men-*).

In his *Sanskrit-English dictionary* Monier-Williams made the eminently reasonable suggestion in line with the native etymology that *brāhman-* 'pious effusion or utterance, prayer' had originally meant something like 'growth, expansion, swelling of the spirit' and was derived from the root *br̥h-* 'grow/make big, increase, expand'. This immediately brings us into the sphere of the widely attested IE root **bhergh-/*bhregh-* (see Pokorny under *bheregh-*) seen in Skt. *br̥h-āt-* 'high, great, vast etc.' and the fem. *br̥hātī*, a woman's name ('exalted one' or the like) with a widely recognized cognate in OIr. *Brigit* (both < **bhr̥gh-nt-īH₂*), Goth. *baurgs* 'town, tower' or OHG *burg* 'town', OIr. *brī*, gen. *breg* (< **bhr̥k-s*, **bhr̥gh-ós?*) 'hill', or *bre* 'hill' in the Brythonic languages, and so on. A basic meaning something like 'burst forth, expand, protrude' for the Indo-European root would seem to offer a reasonable starting point for the semantic development of the various attested derivatives and descendants.

I suspect, however, that female saints (or pagan goddesses, cf. *Peritia* 1 (1982), p. 110) and hills were not the only eminences or effusions to which this root gave rise in the Celtic branch and that Old Irish *braigid* 'farts' belongs here too. This can be related to **bhregh-* with no more or less difficulty than that posed by indubitable derivations like *laigid* 'lies' (3pl. *legait*) from **legh-*, *saidid* 'sits' (3pl. *sedait*) from **sed-*, or *daig* 'flame, fire' (gen. *dego*) from **dheg^{wh}-* (Skt. *dāh-ati* 'burns' etc.). The occurrence of this *aC'/eC* alternation in the nominal as well as the verbal system vitiates Thurneysen's (*GOI* 354) explanation in terms of a shift from BII to BI present inflection, and a phonetic reason for the alternation in certain BI verbs and other forms must be invoked. I posit a basic rule whereby stressed *e* became *a* before a voiced palatal fricative (in practice, *d* or *g*) except where this change was impeded by certain preceding

consonants such as *w* (e.g. *feidid* < **wedeti*) and possibly *r* (e.g. *ad·reig* at Wb. 13^a12 < **reget*). However, although this does seem to be the oldest attestation, *at·raig* (e.g. LU 8191 beside 3pl. *ata·regat*) is otherwise the normal form of this verb, and it may be that an original asymmetry between pres. *at·raig* and *t*-pret. *at·recht* (*Bethu Brigitte* 341) was corrected more or less simultaneously in two directions to produce *–reig* beside *–regat*, *–recht*, or *–ragat* (e.g. LU 8843), and *–racht* (e.g. LU 8420) beside *–raig*, with the latter set ultimately predominating. At any rate, our rule will derive *braigid* from **bregeti* quite straightforwardly on the assumption either that *r* did not impede this change or that *br* behaved differently from *r* alone. It is to be noted that a thematic present of this type is the most probable option for a primary verb (cf. pret. *ro·bebraig* in Ferm. 34^b4) like *braigid* and that the rule changing *CeG'(-)* to *CaG'(-)* must have operated after raising of *e* (e.g. *–midethar* < **–mōīpor* < **mediyetor*) and palatalization of non-initial consonants but prior to palatalization of initial consonants.

Once **bhrégheti* had tended towards specialized reference to emissions of air, quite possibly as early as the IE period itself, the subsequent semantic development in the prehistory of Irish would be no more remarkable than that underlying the current English euphemism ‘break wind’. Neither *braigid* nor its verbal noun *broimm* ‘fart’ is well attested in early material, but the latter is obviously a neuter *n*-stem of a type quite often used to form verbal nouns (see GOI 453) and a nom.–acc. sg. **braigm* < **breg–men* < **bhrégh–mŋ* can be reconstructed with confidence. The conditions governing loss or retention of *g* or *d* before *m* in Old Irish are somewhat obscure, and much seems to me to depend upon the quality of the *gm*, *dm* groups and/or that of the preceding vowel. Certainly some such differentiation (I assume that similar reductions of *gm*, *dm* in British occurred independently, such simplification of clusters being by no means unusual typologically) seems preferable to Thurneysen’s (GOI 453) rather ad hoc postulation of **–men* to account for retention versus **–smen* to explain loss of preceding *d* or *g*. I can see no objection to positing regular reduction of palatal *–gm(-)* to *–m(m)(-)*, whereas non-palatal *–gm(-)* seems to have been retained after a back vowel at least, to judge from *ogum* < **ogmos* and *Ogmae* < *Ogmios* (cf. De Vries, *Keltische Religion*, 65). That being so, we can proceed to **braimm* and then to *broimm* in line with a known Old Irish tendency to round vowels in the vicinity of labials, whence for instance *do·moinethar* or *do·muinethar*, etc., rather than expected *do·mainethar* (cf. Sg. 5^a6) < **mŋ–ye–tor* as a rule.

It is at once clear that an IE **bhrégh–mŋ* meaning something like ‘emission (of air)’ will yield Sanskrit *bráhma* ‘pious effusion or utterance, prayer, spirit’ (then the masc. agentive *brahmā* ‘priest’) with no phonetic and very little semantic difficulty, assuming an oral specialization of meaning in the far East rather than the anal one just documented for the far West. Moreover, the development of spiritual connotations by words denoting moving air in general or breath in particular is a widespread phenomenon, not least in the Indo-European family. Thus IE **dhuH–mós* ‘smoke, vapour’, a meaning retained by Lat. *fūmus*, Skt. *dhūmāḥ* and OCS *dymŭ*, for example, becomes *θŷmós* ‘spirit, soul’ in Greek, the intermediate stage of ‘breath’ being still

apparent in Homeric usages such as *θυμὸν ἀποπνεΐων* ‘breathing forth the spirit, giving up the ghost’ (Il. 4, 524). In classical Greek *πνευμα* ‘wind’ can also mean ‘breath’, and by the later Hellenistic period develops the sense ‘spirit’ that culminates in the Holy Spirit (*πνεῦμα ἅγιον*) of the New Testament. Latin *animus* ‘spirit’, *anima* ‘air current, air, breath, life, soul’ show a similar development in comparison with Greek *ἄνεμος* ‘wind’, Skt. *ániti* ‘breathes’, OIr. *anaid* ‘takes a breather, stays’. In the light of such processes, the most feasible approach to Latin *flāmen* ‘priest’ may be to relate it to a subsequently lost neuter **flā-men* ‘gust of air, spirit’ derived from *flā-re* ‘blow’, much as *brahmān-* ‘priest’ stands to neuter *bráhman-*. Lat. *spīritus* basically means ‘breath’, as *spīrāre* ‘breathe’ testifies, but then acquires the broad sense of ‘life force, spirit’. Moreover, the contrast between *spīritus* and Old Norse *fīsa* ‘fart’ from the same **(s)peys-* root provides us with a semantic configuration very similar to that posited above for Skt. *bráhma* and OIr. *broimm*.

In both India and Ireland the practitioners of the descendants of IE **bhrégh-mn̥* enjoyed different professional statuses in line with the semantic divergence just documented for these two branches. The Indian *brahmā* or Brahman constituted a priestly caste at the pinnacle of society, whereas the humbler talents of the Irish *braigetóir* ‘farther’ were deemed sufficiently entertaining to secure a livelihood and rather low status near the bottom of the professional *aés dáno* as enumerated in the Old Irish legal tract *Uraicecht Becc* (CIH 1617, 17).

2. OIr. *Olc*, *Luch-* and IE **wǵkʷos*, **lúkʷos* ‘wolf’

The basic Indo-European word for ‘wolf’ was **wǵkʷos* on the widespread testimony of Skt. *vṛkaḥ*, Av. *vəhrka-*, Goth. *wulfs*, ON. *ulfr*,¹ Lith *vilkas*, OCS. *vlikŭ* and so on, with a feminine **wǵkʷiH₂s* ‘she-wolf’ found in Skt. *vṛkīḥ*, ON. *ylgr* and (with a slight change of suffix reminiscent of *vātis*, *vātēs* ‘seer’ plus a shift of meaning to the wolf’s smaller cousin) Lat. *vulpis*, *vulpēs* (fem.) ‘fox’. A less widespread metathesized variant of the masculine, **lúkʷos*, is also to be posited for IE on the strength of Gk. *λύκος* and Lat. *lupus*,² whether taboo or, as is perhaps more likely, the notorious tendency of liquids to more or less sporadic metatheses (cf. the change of IE **tawros* seen in Gk. *ταῦρος*, Lat. *taurus*, Lith. *taūras*, etc., to the Celtic **tarwos* underlying OIr. *tarb*, W. *tarw* ‘bull’?) is invoked as an explanation.

There are no secure attestations of this IE word’s survival in Celtic as a normal expression for ‘wolf’, for which Old Irish uses *faél* (probably meaning ‘howler’ originally),³ *cú allaid* (literally ‘wild dog’) or *mac tíre* (literally ‘son of

¹See Krause, *Handbuch des Gotischen*, p. 119, on this Germanic assimilation of *kʷ > p* (or *hʷ > f*) in the vicinity of *w* or *p*. To judge from *ylgr*, this development may post-date the operation of Verner’s Law.

²Like a number of other words in Latin such as *vulpēs*, *popīna*, *bōs*, apparently borrowed from a nearby Sabellic dialect that labialized IE labiovelars.

³See Pokorny, *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, 1110–11.

the land'). Nevertheless it has been claimed, albeit not without controversy,⁴ that a reflex of *wǫkʷos does survive into Old Irish as *olc* in certain personal names and, more doubtfully, in very common adjectival usage meaning 'bad, evil'. The main problem is that a derivation of *olc* from *wǫkʷos does not tally with conventional assumptions about the historical phonology of Irish, which lead us to expect something like *flech from such an input.

Olc only becomes a viable outcome of *wǫkʷos or *lúkʷos if this can be plausibly transformed into *ulʷkʷos at some intermediate stage in the prehistory of Irish. Following Szemerényi's demonstration in *KZ* 71, p. 199ff, that Illyrian attestations of *ulc-* could be derived from *wǫkʷos by positing vocalization of the syllabic ǫ to *ul* there and then dissimilation of *wul- to *ul-, Pokorny (*Idg. etym. Wbuch*, 1178) suggested borrowing from Illyrian as the source for *ulc-* words in Celtic, to which the phonetic developments posited by Szemerényi for Illyrian were apparently not directly applicable. More recently Ó Cathasaigh has submitted the whole *Olc* question to the most thorough scrutiny to date on pp 33–7 of *The heroic biography of Cormac mac Airt* (1977), and tentatively upholds the 'wolf' connection by suggesting a remodelling dictated by taboo. Ó Cathasaigh has greatly advanced the semantic case by stressing the canine or lupine associations of two mythical bearers of the name in early Irish literature, namely *Olc Aiche* and *Olc Aí*, whom he ascribes to 'a widespread class of canine guardians of the Otherworld'.⁵

The semantic side of the argument can be further corroborated by the birth tale of Saint *Olcán* as related by ll 1869–79 of the Tripartite Life of Patrick:⁶ 'Patrick came after this to Dál nAraidi and Dál Riata (i.e. Antrim). It is then that King Doro came to the Carn of Sétnai to the North and heard the screaming of the infant from the ground. The carn is scattered, the grave is opened. A smell of wine comes around them from the grave. They see the live son by the dead mother, a woman who had died of the palsy. She brought him along over the sea to Ireland and brought forth the infant after her death. He lived, it is said, for seven days in the mound. "That is bad (*olc sin*)!" said the king. "That shall be his name", said the druid, "*Olcán*", and Patrick baptized him. He is Bishop *Olcán* of the community of Patrick in Armoy, a free monastery of Dál Riata.' *Olcán* is, of course, a diminutive of *Olc*, attested in an earlier form as the genitive *Ulccagni* on an ogam inscription and so on,⁷ and we might suppose that the labio-velar often still distinguished as *q(q)* in ogam had been precociously dissimilated to a plain velar in the vicinity of *u* rather as happened in Greek independently. Since this story of posthumous birth in a carn finds a striking parallel in the account given by the saga *Aided Chelthchair maic Uthechair* of the birth of the three great mythical hound guardians of Otherworld hospitallers in Irish tradition, namely Mac Da Thó's Ailbe, Culann's Hound and Celtchar's Daél-chú, it seems distinctly probable that

⁴See under *olc* in Vendryes' *Lexique etymologique de l'Irlandais ancien*.

⁵*Olc Aiche's* smith-hospitaller status and name will be discussed below.

⁶*Bethu Phátraic*, ed. K. Mulchrone (1939).

⁷Details in Ó Cathasaigh, op. cit., 33.

Saint Olcán is a Christianized version of such a hound guardian like Saint Ailbe of Emly, whose associations with hounds and wolves have been discussed elsewhere.⁸ I have argued in the previous issue of *Ériu*⁹ that large savage hounds of this type correspond to the likes of Cerberus, Orthrus and the Hydra in Greek myth, were the archetypal embodiments of the martial ethos, and served as mascot to a social set or grade of warriors known as *díberga* or *féindidi* 'fian-members' in early Irish ideology. This class was represented as oscillating between responsible and irresponsible or antisocial behaviour in the literature, two poles symbolized on occasion by the faithful fierce hound and the unfaithful rabid hound respectively. Not surprisingly, hound and wolf were closely associated in this symbolism,¹⁰ the latter with the wilder side of warrior life in particular. For instance, when in *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* the sons of Donn Désa run amok and engage in *díberg* with three hundred young aristocrats, they are said to be 'wolfing in the territory of Connacht' (*oc fáelad i Crích Connacht*).¹¹ An intriguing piece preserved in the ninth-century Codex S. Pauli and published in *Thes. II* 293.3–7 seems to be a charm to bring prosperity, and concludes, 'if this be destined for me, may it be grain and milk yield (*ith 7 mlicht*) that I see. If it be not destined for me let it be wolves (*coin altai*) and deer and traversing of mountains and young men of a *fian*-band (*oaic féne*)¹² that I see', a clear contrast between agricultural prosperity within society and life in the wild beyond, where wolves and *fian*-members are intimately connected in the symbolism. Indeed, *mac tíre* may originally have referred to warriors of this type who lived off the land during the summer season at least, as it clearly does in the case of the seven *meic thíri* serving as hostages for the preservation of the king's peace at BDD² II 603–5, and then have been transferred to the wolf mascot closely associated with them.

In the admittedly doubtful event that Olc Aiche's name can be legitimately explained as a corruption or modification (perhaps suggested by *achad* 'pasture' – cf. the variant Olc Acha) of *Olc Aithche, 'wolf of the night', there is a strong temptation to compare this mythical Irish smith-cum-herdsman with the Norse character Kveld-ulfr, 'evening wolf', depicted in *Egilssaga* 27 as a retired berserk warrior turned man of property who was given to nocturnal change of form and wanderings to earn his name. In that case, there would be good reason to derive Olc, like Ulfr, from IE *w^lk^wos.

⁸Kenney, *The sources for the early history of Ireland*, 314, and McCone, 'An introduction to early Irish saints' Lives', *Maynooth Review* 11 (1984), 26–59.

⁹McCone, 'Aided Cheltchair maic Uthechair: hounds, heroes and hospitallers in early Irish myth and story', *Ériu* 35 (1984), 1–30.

¹⁰Cf. Ó Cathasaigh, *op. cit.*, 34, n. 127.

¹¹The significance of Connacht for activity of this kind emerges from Mac Cana's important discussion of *Irua(f)th* on pp 89–93 of his 'The influence of the Vikings on Celtic literature', in *The impact of the Scandinavian invasions on the Celtic-speaking peoples c. 800-1100 A.D.*, ed. Ó Cuív (1962).

¹²The etymological connections, on which see Pokorny (*op. cit.* in n. 3), 510–11, of OIr. *oac* prove that 'young' was its primary sense, and I have suggested in the appendix to *op. cit.* in n. 9 that *fian*-activity or *díberg* may have been a phase or age grade particularly associated with youth. Hence, in all probability, the not infrequent collocation *oaic féne* and development of the secondary meaning 'warrior' by *oac* (see *DIL* entry for *óc*).

The attributes and associations of key figures with the name *Olc(án)* do, then, combine to make a connection with the IE ‘wolf’ root an attractive one semantically. If so, the adjective *olc* ‘evil, bad’ probably is an outgrowth from it, rather as ‘bitch’ has developed pejorative associations that far transcend the canine sphere in English. Moreover, if *mac tíre* could refer to both wolf and vagabond warrior, *olc* could perfectly well have developed a similar range, and it has been shown¹³ that the Church and her supporters from at least the middle of the seventh century onwards regarded practitioners of *díberg* or *fīanas* as the very personification of evil. That being so, *olc* could easily have developed via a substantive meaning ‘evil-doer’ that is attested (e.g. at Wb. 6^a9 and 30^c26, where the *uilc* glossing Lat. *errantes* conceivably reflects an awareness of vagabond associations) to a more general adjectival application.

Since the semantic case for deriving OIr. *olc* from IE **wǵkʷos* is plausible but not proven, we must now turn to the phonetics, where it must surely be agreed that the equation would be greatly strengthened if it did not require such special factors as borrowing from Illyrian or taboo-inspired modification in order to work.

A simple solution would be to posit an early metathesis, prior to or in association with the vocalization of syllabic liquids to *li, ri* or *al, ar*¹⁴ in Celtic, of syllabicity in groups of *w-* plus syllabic liquid to give *u-* plus consonantal liquid. As a result **wǵkʷos* would become **ulkʷos* (later dissimilated to **ulkos*), whence *olc*, gen. *uilc* without the slightest difficulty. However, if this hypothesis is to be considered more than ad hoc, further likely examples are required. The problematical relationship between OIr. *fri* ‘against’ < **wǵt* and forms such as OW *gurth*, MW *wrth* ‘facing etc.’ pointing to British **gwurth* < **wurt* may be relevant. The Irish form must reflect a normal development of **wǵt* to **writ*, and it has been argued by Thurneysen (*GOI* 515) and Jackson (*LHEB* 337) that the British forms are due to a nonce metathesis of this to **wirt* in the first instance. Perhaps, however, Zupitza’s suggestion in *KZ* 35, 253, that the British forms reflect a metathesis of **wǵt* to **urt* is not as devoid of merit as Jackson (loc. cit.) suggests, since such a form might have developed to **wurt* by post-vocalic sandhi or by contamination from the doublet **writ* indicated by OIr. *fri*.

The IE word for wool was **wǵHneH₂*, on the clear evidence of forms like Skt. *ūrṇā* and Lat. *lāna*, and there can be little doubt that the OIr. *ā-*stem *olann* and Welsh *gwlan* plus related Cornish and Breton forms, all meaning ‘wool’, must derive ultimately from such a prototype. Quite how has long been something of a problem. If we can posit metathesis of *wǵ-* to *ul-* at an embryonic Celtic stage when the following laryngeal was still preserved more or less as such,¹⁵ we obtain an **ulHnā* from which **ulanā* and thence OIr. *olann* would descend

¹³By Sharpe, ‘Hiberno-Latin *laicus*, Irish *láech* and the Devil’s Men’, *Ériu* 30 (1979), 80–7. Cf. appendix to op. cit. in n. 9.

¹⁴A dual treatment discussed by L. S. Joseph, ‘The treatment of **CRH-* and the origin of CaRa- in Celtic’, *Ériu* 33 (1982), 45–7.

¹⁵Although I must confess to some discomfort in positing so late a sub-IE survival, others (including Joseph, op. cit. in previous note) are less squeamish. At least this possible explanation of *olann* might be worth bearing in mind regarding the pros and cons of such survival.

quite regularly. On the evidence of OIr. *lán*, W. *llawn* ‘full’ < *p[H₁-no- (Skt. *pūrṇā-* etc.) and OIr. *lám*, W. *llaw* ‘hand’ < *p[H₂-meH₂ (Gk. *παλάμυ* etc.), unmetathesized *w[Hnā should have produced Celtic *wlānā, and perhaps the *wlanā underlying the British¹⁶ ‘wool’ words reflects contamination of this from a metathesized doublet *ulanā. On the other hand, a neater solution might be to posit a peculiar vocalization of *w[- to *wul- (and perhaps of *wɾ- to *wur-) at a suitably early stage, whence *wulanā to give W. *gwlan* etc. directly and OIr. *olann* through a prehistoric loss of w- before u that would also give *olc* < *wulk^{wos} and a close parallel to what Szemerényi proposed for Illyrian.

The foregoing is, of course, highly uncertain in view of the paucity of unambiguous evidence and the apparent lack of regularity in the change posited, particularly if OIr. *flaith* ‘lord(ship)’, W. *gwlad* ‘territory’ are ultimately < *w[H-tis,¹⁷ but the possibility of doublets due to different treatments may be pleaded on the ground that metathesis of liquids is prone to caprice or that fusion of population groups once characterized weakly by these divergences in the remote past is not inconceivable. For present purposes it must suffice that OIr. *olann* < *w[HneH₂ offers serious support for a derivation of OIr. *olc* < *w[k^{wos}, however obscure the precise details may be.

As far as I know, possible survivals of the *luk^{wos} variant in early Irish material have not been considered before. § 17 of the Salamanca Life in Latin of Saint Mochtae of Louth¹⁸ tells of the discovery of a boy alone in a small dwelling, of his naming ‘Luchar’ and education by the saint until such time as he was promoted to the episcopate and sent forth to find a place suitable for himself with the words: ‘build a church for yourself in that place between mountain and sea where a wolf (*lupus*), laying aside its ferocity, shall approach you gently’. Although the calming of wolves by saints was a hagiographical commonplace in the Irish Lives, the same cannot be said of the involvement of a wolf in the foundation of a church. Accordingly Luchar’s connection with the wolf in this abbreviated narrative is almost certainly significant and may well be a pagan mythological survival. Perhaps Luchar, like Saint Ailbe of Emly (see n. 8), was supposed to have been brought up by wolves and then taken back into human society. Be that as it may, it can hardly be a coincidence that Luchar’s name and lupine association in the story converge to indicate a derivative of *luk^{wos}. Likewise the man responsible for taking Ailbe from the wolf at the beginning of his Salamanca Life (see n. 18) and then giving him to a British family to be brought up is called Lochán, which seems likely to be < *Lukagnos just like Olcán < *Ulkagnos discussed earlier through precocious dissimilation of k^w to k in the vicinity of u.

In a tale already referred to, *Aided Cheltchair*, the hero’s second adversary is the *Luch-donn* (probably to be read as one word – cf. *DIL* entry for *luch* ‘mouse’), a huge and savage hound found in the wild as a whelp and nurtured by

¹⁶See Joseph, op. cit., 54, on the difficulties otherwise.

¹⁷So, for instance, Joseph, op. cit., 48 and 54.

¹⁸Ed. Heist, *Vitae sanctorum Hiberniae ex codice olim salmanticensi nunc bruxellensi* (1965), 394–400.

a widow, whom it subsequently killed along with her stock before running wild and wreaking havoc in Ulster from a remote lair. Meyer's translation 'Dun Mouse' is hardly the most apposite imaginable, and a stereotype meaning (at least originally) something like 'wolf-brown' (*-donn*) or rather 'wolf-skin' (*(t)honn*), precisely analogous to Old Norse *ulf-heðinn* 'wolf-skin', an alternative designation for a berserk warrior, would seem far more appropriate. Moreover, *DIL* points to further instances, some with minor spelling variations and most with martial connotations eminently compatible with lupine or canine symbolism, as argued earlier. Thus *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* (BDD² 484–7) refers to 'Luchton Cáinte . . . in Emain Machae' and to 'the scream of the Luch-donn in Temair Lúachra' as possible candidates along with Conaire's champion Mac Cécht for the making of a mighty noise. It may be noted that the Christian author of the legal text *Bretha Crólige* (*Ériu* 12, 1ff) associates druid, satirist (*cáinte*) and *díbergach* as a trio of pagan undesirables at §51, and that *Cóir Anmann* §240 (*IT* iii, 384–5) refers to the 'dog's head on a satirist (*cáinte*) as he barks' in what seems to be a reference to his garb while satirizing. In a *rosc* poem based on stress and alliteration in *Fled Bricrenn*, Medb refers to the major Ulster warrior Lóegaire Búadach ('the victorious') as *in luch-thonn lám-derg Lóegaire* (*LU* 8615), where 'mouse-brown' or the like would be singularly out of place and something like 'the wolf-skin, hand-red L.' quite in order. *Luch-donn* and variants are, then, probable survivals of **luk^wo-*.

It is true that *Loch-án*, *Luch-* poses tricky problems (unless, perhaps, it had become a *u*-stem) regarding the precise circumstances in which *u* was liable to lowering over *ch* < **k^w*, but then so does *luch*, gen. *lochad* 'mouse' from an undoubted **lukot-* stem as *GOI* 206 points out. Certainly there is no alternative to original *u* vocalism that would not make the phonetic problem far worse.

Since doubts have been expressed about whether Lat. *lupus* really does derive from IE **lúk^wos* (cf. Pokorny, op. cit., 1179), these OIr. *luch-* forms provide welcome support for the IE status of this metathesized variant of **wǵ^wos*.

KIM McCONE

St Patrick's College, Maynooth