

# Back Into the Fields and Into the Woods: Old Irish *íath* ‘land, field’ and *fiad* ‘wild; deer; uncultivated land’ revisited\*

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Old Irish *íath* u, n. (later m.) ‘land, field’ from *\*peytu-* and Old Irish *fiad* u, m. ‘wild (animal); uncultivated land’ from *\*weydh<sup>h</sup>u-* have been interpreted by Paul Widmer (2004) as acrostically inflected and internally derived possessive adjectives based on *\*pitu-* > Old Irish *ith* u, n. (later m.) ‘grain, corn’ and *\*wid<sup>h</sup>u-* > Old Irish *fid* u, m. ‘tree; wood; forest’, respectively. Since this would constitute a quite unique derivational pattern, it is argued that one should rather follow the old view that both *íath* and *fiad* are *vṛddhi* formations. For the lack of the expected stem-final thematic vowel \*-o-, three different strategies are proposed.

Paul Widmer’s remarkable monograph *Das Korn des weiten Feldes*<sup>1</sup> is basically about the mutual relationship between the two Old Irish substantives *ith* u, n., later also m. ‘grain, corn’, evidently from *\*pitu-*, and *íath* u, n. (later m.) ‘land, field’, evidently from *\*peytu-*. Widmer’s claim is that the latter started out as an *internally* derived and *acrostically* inflected *possessive* adjective based on the former, which would further show that in PIE, acrostically inflected adjectives with possessive meaning could be formed from proterokinetically inflected substantives via the principle of internal derivation (see Widmer (2004: 183-185)). Widmer, however, was unable to come up with more than a single plausible parallel, which is constituted by the pair Old Irish *fid* u, m. ‘tree; wood; forest’—evidently from a Proto-Celtic stem *\*wid<sup>h</sup>u-* attested also in

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<sup>1</sup>Widmer (2004). The most detailed review of this book I know of is Nikolaev (2008).

all of the other branches of Celtic— and Old Irish *fiad* u, m. ‘wild; wild animals, deer; uncultivated land, a waste spot, a wild woodland’, evidently from *\*weyd<sup>h</sup>u-*.<sup>2</sup> According to Widmer (2004: 187f.), the latter member of this pair likewise started out as a *possessive* derivative of the former (with the original semantics “‘mit Baumwuchs, Wald versehen: waldig, unbebaut, brach, überwachsen, wild, ungezämt [sic] etc.’”).

Now the fact that this special kind of allegedly PIE derivational pattern would only be preserved in one single branch of Indo-European, viz. Celtic,<sup>3</sup> and quite possibly even only in one single sub-branch of Celtic, viz. Goidelic, should arouse suspicion, especially since it is received doctrine among those who accept the principle of internal derivation for PIE that by that principle, derivatives of precisely the opposite kind were formed, i.e., proterokinetically inflected adjectives in *\*-u-* were based on (*\*o/e-*)acrostically inflected abstract nouns in *\*-u-*.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, it is quite unnatural to derive an adjective denoting ‘wild’ that could take on the specialized meaning ‘deer’ from a *possessive* formation with original semantics such as ‘having trees, being provided with wood’; the more natural alternative is rather to reconstruct an adjective of *appurtenance* with the basic meaning ‘in the woods, belonging to the woods, of the woods’, as has generally been done before Widmer.<sup>5</sup> As for the seemingly parallel

<sup>2</sup>The latter Old Irish *u*-stem has a clear cognate in Middle Welsh *gwyd* ‘wild, untamed, savage, untilled, uncultivated, woody, overgrown, desolate, desert’, but it is possible that this British adjective actually started out as an *\*o*-stem. Note that even if a preform *\*weyd<sup>h</sup>wo-* with the second *\*-w-* preserved ought to have resulted in forms other than that actually attested for British (as obviously advocated by Widmer (2004, 186f.), such a form *\*weyd<sup>h</sup>wo-* could have easily undergone dissimilatory loss of the second *\*-w-*; for possible parallels, see, e.g., Szemerényi (1974, 29 = 1987, 1438 with further references).

<sup>3</sup>To be sure, some (other) instances of remarkable archaic ablaut grades are preserved (only) in Celtic; see, e.g., Schmidt (1980); Widmer (2001); Ködderitzsch (2002).

<sup>4</sup>Widmer (2004) is, of course, well aware of this fact and tries to cope with it by an argument that is in my view speculative and arbitrary on the whole (as amply shown by Nikolaev (2008)).

<sup>5</sup>Cf., e.g., Darms (1978, 437): “\*‘zum Wald gehörig’.” This kind of semantics was, of course, required by the analysis of this term as *vřddhi* formation, which indeed was the standard general approach for the term

\**peytu-*, locative-genitival “\*(place) where the corn is, (consisting) of corn” would make as good sense etymologically as possessive “\*having/providing grain”.

Accordingly, it makes perfect sense and is indeed best to derive both Old Irish *íath* and Old Irish *fiad* from preforms that had the same semantics as the *vrddhi* adjectives of appurtenance. As for the morphological details of the preforms, their root ablaut must also have conformed to that of the *vrddhi* type, so that they would have differed from the classical type of *vrddhi* formation only in the absence of stem-final \*-o-.<sup>6</sup> But then the obvious morphological solution for the two Old Irish words will be to take them for the outcomes of perfectly regular *vrddhi* adjectives of appurtenance, while assuming that their (certainly already pre-historical) athematic inflection was due to some inner-Celtic or maybe even only inner-Goidelic development. As far as I can see, there are even three different reasonable strategies available in order to account for the Proto-Celtic or at least Proto-Goidelic \*-u- instead of expected \*-wo-:

(1) One could toy with the idea that \*-wo- was replaced by \*-u- analogically on the model of *vrddhi* formations in \*-o- that were (at least synchronically felt to be) derived from \*-o-stems, so that an analogical proportion “basic substantive in \*-o- :: derived *vrddhi* adjective in \*-o- = basic substantive in \*-u- :: x, x = derived *vrddhi* adjective in \*-u-” could have been deduced. As a kind of typological parallel

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before Widmer.

<sup>6</sup>To be sure, one can derive *íath* and *fiad* also directly from expected \**o*-stems \**peyto-* and \**weydhwo-* (at least by assuming for both a dissimilatory loss of the \*-w-; see fn. 2 above; ; as for *íath*, at least Old Irish *ceithir* ‘4 (m., n.)’ seems to indicate that Proto-Celtic \*-*VtwV*-resulted in Old Irish -*Vth*(-) by sound law, but as far as I can see, one could toy with the idea that in Proto-Goidelic \*-*w*- was lost after a \*-*t*- as a result of a syllabification \*-*\$twV*-, and that furthermore that \*-*ētw*- there was regularly syllabified as \*-*ēt\$w*-, whereas the numeral ‘4’ showed *irregular* syllabification \*-*e\$tw*- in Proto-Goidelic as much as in Proto-Tocharian, for which see Tocharian B *stwer*, *stwāra*, Tocharian A *stwar*, all from Proto-Tocharian \**śü\$tw*-) and take their inflection as *u*-stems as due to a secondary switch from the *o*-stem pattern to the *u*-stem pattern. Actually this strategy was adopted by many scholars before Widmer (see Widmer 2004, 186f.) for *fiad* only, but has to be considered completely arbitrary.

one may quote the two Young Avestan *athematic* substantival forms *haosrauuah-* (the name of a mythical figure) and *dəuš.srauuah-* ‘bad fame’ aptly and thoroughly treated by Rau (2008), which show insertion of an additional Iranian *\*a* as a marker of substantivization, but do not show the concomitant thematization that is expected on the basis of the one example given for the morphological process of substantivization of athematic adjectives via insertion of an additional PIE *\*e* by Schindler (1994: 399).<sup>7</sup>

Of course such an explanation would require that in Proto-Celtic times there existed *vrddhi* adjectives in *\*-o-* that could be synchronically taken as being based on substantives in *\*-o-*. As a matter of fact, in Darms (1978: 364f.) there are only two possible formations of this sort, and the second one quoted beside Old Irish *sám, sáim* ‘calm, pleasant’ is probably better analyzed differently, viz. the Proto-Celtic adjective *\*dōmo-* ‘pertaining/belonging to the house(hold)’ that was basic to Old Irish *dám* ā, f. ‘retinue, company’/ Welsh *daw*, etc. ‘client; son-in-law’. For a long time that *\*-o-* stem was analyzed as a *vrddhi* derivative of a PIE *o-* stem *\*domo-* ‘house(hold)’; see the references given in Bammesberger (1999: 25f.) (and in addition McCone (1992: 194f.)). However, as Bammesberger, l.c.,<sup>8</sup> rightly pointed out, it may be safer to derive that Proto-Celtic *\*dōmo-* from the respective PIE root noun *\*dom-/\*dem-*.<sup>9</sup> This means that for Goidelic *\*peytu-*, *\*weyd<sup>h</sup>u-*, in Proto-Celtic there hardly could have existed many possible models with thematic base nouns. On the other hand, beside *\*dōmo-* I only know of a single other Celtic *vrddhi* formation based on an athematic stem, viz. the *vrddhi* adjective *\*kewno-* that according to a suggestion by the late Jochem Schindler (in class) was reflected by Old Irish *cúan* ā, f., later *o*, m. ‘litter (of pups or other young animals); pack (of dogs, wolves, etc.);

<sup>7</sup>“*\*h<sub>2</sub>wéh<sub>1</sub>-ŋto-* zum Ptz. *\*h<sub>2</sub>wéh<sub>1</sub>-ŋt-*”, and note also the type of thematic adjective abstracts with *vrddhi* discussed in Rau (2008, 166, fn. 30).

<sup>8</sup>Followed by Widmer (2004, 35); both Bammesberger and Widmer assume that *\*dōmo-* is also attested in Celtiberian.

<sup>9</sup>See McCone (1992) for another probable reflex of that root noun in Celtic.

family; band, company' and which, of course, was based on the root noun *\*k̑won-/ \*k̑un-* 'dog'.<sup>10</sup>

It may have been precisely the rarity of all of these *vrddhi* formations that did the trick, that is, precisely because there were so few thematic *vrddhi* formations available as a formal model, speakers of Proto-Celtic or Proto-Goidelic may have concluded that in *vrddhi* formations it is only the principle of upgraded root ablaut alone that matters, and not thematic inflection as well—note that in Avestan, in fact, only a few thematic models seem to have been available as synchronic models for the formation of *haosrauuah-* and *d̑uš.srauuah-* (see Rau 2008: 167).

(2) There may have been a Proto-Goidelic sound change *\*-wo- > \*-u-* in word-final syllables. The problem with setting up such a sound change is that there is no further compelling evidence in its favor,<sup>11</sup> and that actually quite a few Proto-Celtic noun stems in *\*-wo-* such as *\*ekwo-* 'horse' and *\*marwo-* 'dead' resulted in Old Irish *o*-stems rather than *u*-stems (see Old Irish *ech* and *marb*, both still *o*-stems); in the Proto-Celtic ancestor form of the Old Irish *o*-stem *ard* 'high', viz. *\*ardwo-*, the *\*-wo-* was even preceded by a dental. Accordingly, such a sound change could only have been optional or sporadic. As a matter of fact, a typologically parallel Proto-Goidelic optional sound change of *\*-yo- > \*-i-* in morpheme-final syllables has been tentatively suggested by Uhlich (1993: 366) and was evidently accepted by Uhlich's reviewer Peters (1996: I-31f).<sup>12</sup> The idea of such a sound change was subsequently

<sup>10</sup>Note that Schindler's *\*k̑ewno-* forms a perfect parallel to the Proto-Balto-Slavic *vrddhi* formation *\*g̑<sup>h</sup>ewro-* 'cruel' based on the PIE root noun *\*g̑<sup>h</sup>wēr-* 'wild animal' that was so brilliantly reconstructed by Young (2002). (Note that the summary of Young's paper at its beginning is quite misleading—the morphologically weird lengthened-grade proto-form "*\*g̑<sup>h</sup>ēwr-*" there must be a typo.)

<sup>11</sup>But see the end of this paragraph.

<sup>12</sup>I do not understand the statement by Balles (1999, 7, fn. 6) claiming that "Uhlich äußert sich nicht explizit, doch geht er wohl von einer Kontraktion von *-Cjos* zu *-Cis* aus. Die *yo-* und die *i*-Stämme wären dadurch bereits im Frühirischen ununterscheidbar zusammengefallen." As a matter of fact, Uhlich was quite explicit at the end of his paper (on p. 366). Similarly McCone (1995, 6 and especially 2006, 270) seems to

rejected by Balles (1999), but I do not think that her alternative accounts of the forms that seem to me to be Uhlich's two finest examples, *bóchaill* 'herdsman' and *cain* 'beautiful', fare any better. As for *bóchaill*, Balles (1999: 9) sets up the following Goidelic sound law: “-l'yV- > -l'V- > -L', wenn ein unbetonter Vokal vorausgeht [...]: \**alalyos* > \**alal'l'a(h)* > air. *alail*, *arail* (danach auch *aill*), \**bōχalyah* > \**bōχal'l'a(h)*”. As a matter of fact, the Old Irish outcome of what according to her own reconstruction had been Proto-Goidelic reduplicated variants of non-neuter \**alyos*, \**alyā* 'other' (> Old Irish *aile*), viz. \**alalyos*, *alalyā*, was precisely *al/raile*, whereas *al/raill* is only attested as a neuter form, with *-aill* perfectly matching the non-reduplicated neuter form *aill*, and it is quite arbitrary to claim (as Balles seemingly does) that on the one hand the reduplicated non-neuter *al/raile* owes its *-le* to non-reduplicated *aile*, and on the other hand the non-reduplicated neuter *aill* owes its *-ll* to reduplicated *al/raill*. As for *cain*, Balles (1999: 14) sets up a Proto-Celtic “\**kani-*” that she says underwent “Thematisierung im Britannischen”, but at the same time she is honest enough to admit that one should have expected a Proto-Celtic adjective in \*-*yo-* instead: “Das eigentliche Problem hier ist der *i*-Stamm anstelle des durch gr. *καλῶς* jung, frisch, neu' bezugten und daher erwarteten *yo*-Adjektivs. Es handelt sich ja um eine Ableitung von einem *i*-Stamm \**kōnh<sub>1</sub>i*-Jugend, Neuheit, Frische' [...] mittels *-o*.”<sup>13</sup> Therefore,

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think that for Old Irish forms such as *bóchaill* 'herdsman' that evidently do not continue an immediate proto-form in disyllabic \*-*īyo-*, Uhlich had only suggested preservation of more archaic \*-*yo-* and not as well reduction of that \*-*yo-* to \*-*i-*.

<sup>13</sup>As for the Venetic form *kanei* that Balles refers to *l.c.*, this is in all likelihood a *feminine* dative singular form of an adjective (see Lejeune 1974, 301, 331) and a form that descriptively belongs to an \*-*i*-stem. However, pace Balles Venetic *kanei* cannot be used as evidence for a respective inherited adjective in \*-*i-*, because for Venetic assuming a sound change \*-*C(i)yos* > (\*-)*Cīs* is unavoidable (see Lejeune 1974, 114-120), and a Venetic nom.sg. \**kanīs* from former \**kanyos* could have easily been reanalyzed as a nom.sg. form of an old \*-*i*-stem. As for Ogam Irish *QUNOCANOS* seemingly quoted by Balles as additional support for her setting up a Proto-Celtic adjectival \*-*i*-stem \**kani-* that had the same meaning as the \*-*yo-* stem attested by Greek *καλῶς*, it is certainly true that both this Ogam form and also Ogam *DUCOVAROS* are to be taken as

accepting the sound change  $*-yo- > *-i-$  suggested by Uhlich seems to me still an attractive way to cope with at least the two words *bóchail* and *cain*,<sup>14</sup> which then may provide welcome support for assuming a sporadic sound change  $*-wo- > *-u-$  to have occurred in the same proto-language.<sup>15</sup>

Note, however, that there can be little doubt that such a sound change  $*-yo- > *-i-$  would have to be taken for an import from the more informal styles into the more formal styles<sup>16</sup>—as a matter of fact, in her 1999 article Balles herself felt obliged to resort to a very similar strategy, viz. that of an “Annahme einer vulgärsprachlichen Synkope”,<sup>17</sup> in order to come to grips with various British forms that did not meet her expectations about the original distribution of Proto-British  $*-iyo-$  and  $*-yo-$ , which was the main target of her paper.<sup>18</sup>

gen.sg. forms of Goidelic  $*-i-$ stems, and not for forms belonging to  $*(y)o-$ stems, but the compound in  $*-i-$  that is evidenced by *QUNOCANOS* may have started out as a bahuvrihi compound with a respective *abstract*  $*-i-$ stem acting as second member; and even if we should have to do with an old determinative compound in this Ogam form, neither *QUNOCANOS* nor *DUCOVAROS* could prove the existence of respective Proto-Celtic adjectives in  $*-i-$ ; actually the existence of these two forms could as well be taken as an argument in favor of setting up a Proto-Goidelic sound change  $*-yos > *-is$ , as correctly and quite explicitly stated by Uhlich (1993, 366).

<sup>14</sup>To be sure, with respect to the question of the general distribution of  $*-iyo-$  and  $*-yo-$  in PIE, I certainly rather side with Balles than with Uhlich, and I also subscribe fully to her claim that in Proto-Goidelic PIE  $*-iyo-$  and  $*-yo-$  had fallen together in monosyllabic  $*-yo-$  (for this claim, see now also McCone 2006, 266-270).

<sup>15</sup>See what Lejeune (1974, 114) wrote on the outcome of  $*-wos$  in Venetic, and note that Venetic *.e.kvopet-* was subject to a sporadic syncope that turned the word into *.e.kupet-*, *ECVPET-*, *EQVPET-* (and eventually *.e.p.pet-*, *.e.pet-*); see Lejeune (1974, 120f.). In addition, note that in Anatolian beside *i-*stem forms attested for PIE stems in  $*(i)yo-$  (see, e.g., Kimball 1999, 179 with ref.) a *u-*stem for ‘horse’ (de Vaan 2009, 198 with ref.) is found.

<sup>16</sup>As per Peters (1996, I-31f.).

<sup>17</sup>Balles (1999, 17f.).

<sup>18</sup>As for this issue, in contrast to her I doubt that the PIE distinction made between  $*-iyo-$  and  $*-yo-$  fared any better in Proto-British than in Proto-Goidelic (see Peters 1996, I-31f. with ref.), and I also doubt that she was more successful in establishing rules for the distribution of Proto-British  $*-iyo-$  and  $*-yo-$  than Schrijver (1995, 280-324) has been. She also did not

Now given that words denoting ‘herdsman’ and ‘beautiful’ constitute the most plausible examples for that sound change, that is, words that may have been used quite often in the vocative, one may toy with the idea that *\*-yo-* > *\*-i-* had started out precisely in the vocative, a case known to undergo irregular reduction quite often.<sup>19</sup> But if one is

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take into account the evidence from Continental Celtic. As it seems, the PIE disyllabic suffix *\*-iyo-* forming adjectives of appurtenance (that could even be derived from abstract root nouns, which is the source of the *ἄγιος* type) could take on the shape *\*-yo-* also in that branch of Celtic: (1) there are some ethnics of obvious Celtic origin attested in the Northeast of Spain in both literature and inscriptions that end in *-rvo-* which clearly comes from *\*-ryo-* and ultimately PIE *\*-riyo-*, as per Prósper (2008); Prósper (2010, 536); (2) in Gaulish personal names, one finds variations such as *-bogio-/ -boio-*, *Cagius/ Caia*, etc. (see most recently McCone 2001, 180; Lambert 2003, 46; Prósper 2008, 40), and it is tempting to derive at least the variants with mere <i> from preforms with *\*-gy-*; actually this is a solution hinted at already by Lambert, l.c. (“le nom des *Boii* [...] remonte très certainement à *\*Bogii* [...], ce qui serait une évolution très ancienne (devant /y/)” and also by McCone (1996, 85) (“this Gaulish loss of *g* might perhaps be compared with Lat. *maius* < *\*magyos*”); five years later, however, it seems that McCone rather opined those variants without <g> would suggest “that *g* had previously been lenited to *γ* intervocalically” (McCone, 2001, 180), and although there is indeed some other evidence for a weakening of intervocalic (*\*)-g-* at least in the context of *-u-* (Gaulish *Catuenos*, *Mouno*, Celtiberian *tuater-* ‘daughter’, *Seurni*, *Seuso*, see Prósper 2008, 40, 51 and also Prósper 2010, 536, 538) and maybe also in the context of syllabic *-i-* itself (cf. Gaulish personal names with *rio-* that varies with *rigo-*), I think it is rather unlikely that in the course of any weakening process an antevocalic *-i-* would have remained syllabic and not have turned into *-y-*. Finally, especially on the evidence of Gaulish *teuoxtoni[o]n* from Vercelli it is quite attractive to join Schrijver (1995, 282) in explaining what is obviously a Common Celtic *-n-* in the Celtic noun for ‘mortal, man, person’ by setting up a Proto-Celtic preform *\*d<sup>h</sup>ǵ<sup>h</sup>omyo-* > *\*d<sup>h</sup>ǵ<sup>h</sup>onyo-* that would have had Proto-Celtic *\*-yo-* as a substitute of PIE disyllabic *\*-iyo-* (differently Balles (1999, 18f.), without mentioning the Gaulish form).

<sup>19</sup>See, e.g., Dressler (1985, 329). One could then further speculate that the Middle Welsh plural ending *-ydd* (which has been derived by Schrijver (1995, 393f.) from *\*-iyes* < *\*-eyes*) that is actually also found precisely in the most archaic plural form of Middle Welsh *bugeil* ‘herdsman, shepherd’ (evidently from a proto-form in monosyllabic *\*-lyo-*), viz. *bugelydd*, is in fact the lautgesetzlich result of morphologically more plausible disyllabic *\*-iyi* (as per Uhlich 1993, 354 with ref.) and spread exactly from this word, by assuming that in Proto-British times the word for ‘herdsman’ had disyllabic *\*-iyo-* in the elevated styles of the upper classes, and that for pragmatic reasons those upper classes used the

indeed willing to accept such a scenario, *\*-yo-* > *\*-i-* could hardly be called a fitting parallel for suggested *\*-wo-* > *\*-u-* anymore, since neither *íath* nor *fiad* are likely to have been used in the vocative at all, at least as far as every-day speech is concerned.

On the other hand, it should also be borne in mind that to Goidelic adjectives in *\*-u-* British rather regularly responds with what seem to be adjectives in *\*-wo-*; see, e.g., Old Irish *tiug* ‘fat’ < *\*tegu-* vs. Middle Welsh *tew*, Breton *tev* ‘fat’ < *\*tegwo-* and the full list in Balles (1999: 14f.). According to Balles, l.c., the British state of affairs is merely due to secondary thematization in British, but things may not be that simple. Since according to the Schindler-Nussbaum doctrine the PIE pivotal primary-looking and proterokinetically inflecting *\*u-* adjectives started out as possessive denominals *internally* derived from (*\*o/e-*)acrostatically inflected *\*u-* stem abstracts, there would be nothing wrong with the co-existence of *externally* derived variants of those *\*u-* stem adjectives formed with the possessive suffix PIE *\*-ó-*, i.e., ending in *\*-wó-*, and indeed such thematic variants can also be found in other branches such as Greek and Baltic.<sup>20</sup> To be sure, this consideration opens the way for a third kind of possible explanation for the athematic inflection of Old Irish *íath*, *fiad*.

(3) If one is willing to assume that Proto-Celtic had a variation *\*-u-/\*-wo-* in a certain amount of primary-looking adjectives such as *\*tegu-/\*tegwo-* ‘fat’ (cf. Old Irish *tiug* vs. Middle Welsh *tew*, Breton *tev*), either for the reasons suggested immediately above at the end of the preceding paragraph or for some other reason, such as sporadic thematization, it is not unreasonable to suspect that (maybe already in Proto-Celtic times) on the model of this variation, inherited thematic *vṛddhi* formations *\*peytwó-*, *\*weydhó-* analogically acquired athematic by-forms *\*peytu-*,

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term almost exclusively in the plural, with the exception of the vocative, where irregular reduction of a lautgesetzlich form could easily take place; see the argument made immediately above on behalf of the Old Irish cognate *búachaill*.

<sup>20</sup>See the detailed argument in Widmer (2004, 96-99).

\**weyd<sup>h</sup>u-* (whereas other adjectives in \*-*wo-* such as \**ardwo-* ‘high’ and \**marwo-* ‘dead’ would not have done so). Since from the basic hypothesis it would follow that Goidelic retained the variants in \*-*u-* and abandoned the ones in \*-*wo-*, one should then also expect that in Goidelic inherited \**peytwó-*, \**weyd<sup>h</sup>wó-* were bound to be given up, and innovated \**peytu-*, \**weyd<sup>h</sup>u-* were bound to be generalized.<sup>21</sup>

As far as I can see, none of these three possible strategies is clearly superior to any of the others, and as a matter of fact, they are not mutually exclusive either. At any rate, I hope to have shown that the two Old Irish words revisited in this paper should be taken for old *vrddhi* adjectives denoting appurtenance, and that their stem-final \*-*u-* can be accounted for as due to an inner-Celtic, or even inner-Goidelic innovation for inherited \*-*wo-*.

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<sup>21</sup>As for the possible status of the Middle Welsh cognate *gywd* as an old \*-*o*-stem, see footnote 2 above.

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