

REVIEWS

Hannahs, S. J. *The Phonology of Welsh*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. xiv + 183 pp, £55. ISBN 978-0-19-960123-3.

The reader of this review should keep in mind that the reviewer is not particularly enamoured of most linguistic work produced under the banner of the generative approach to linguistics as this work purports itself to be (xi). However, this is not the place to elaborate comprehensively on what I see as the failings of this linguistic approach as practised, the majority of criticisms which will appear will relate to concrete factual weaknesses in the book.

Broad introduction

Hannahs's book focuses on the still productive aspects of Welsh phonology (6–7) and discusses amongst other themes: segment inventories, prosodic systems, active phonological processes, foot-based phenomena and compounding, as well as initial consonant mutation (ICM). It attempts to be theory-neutral whilst being predisposed to a generativist approach – more specifically Optimality Theory (OT) – in order to maintain a coherent theoretical framework (xi, 5).¹ However, weaknesses appear almost immediately as far as coherence is concerned.

First, the target of the description is stated to be ‘modern colloquial Welsh’ (xii) without any immediate qualification that this reification does not preclude marked registerial or dialectal variation. Only a little later does the author quickly mention the traditional dialects (and a few salient features differentiating northern and southern Welsh) in two separate sections which could have been more profitably consolidated (11, 13–14).² In practice the author only usually contrasts what he terms ‘broad regional varieties’ (150) or, more specifically, ‘the two major dialect areas’ (22) of the north and the south (sometimes represented by the more peripheral dialects of the south-east or of

Pembrokeshire in order to show ‘maximal difference’ (22)). It is the existing dialectal variation and the lack of a standard spoken Welsh which forces the author to qualify an abstract system for the spoken language which is ‘relatively unitary’ (1–2, 4). His assumption is that of ‘a system’ or ‘phonology of Welsh’ or ‘the phonological system of Welsh as a whole’ based on an abstraction distinct from and higher than ‘phonological descriptions of Welsh dialects’ (2–3, 11).

After surveying some phonetic aspects of Welsh, Hannahs concludes that the:

northern and southern varieties of Welsh have differing segment inventories ... [which] to an extent ... reflect a somewhat different phonological organization ... Nevertheless, despite the phonetic differences, one can still speak of a relatively unitary system of Welsh phonology. The following chapters explore this system. (27)

Yet, in recognizing a single composite inventory of the Welsh monophthongs and consonants, the author fails to discuss a very basic phonological mismatch between northern and southern Welsh, namely that the salient phonemicizing factor is *vowel length* in northern Welsh but *vowel quality* in southern Welsh (23). I have dealt with this at some length (Wmffre 2003: 6–15, 121–35) – in a book not referenced by the author – and have recently refined the argument (Wmffre 2013b: 1–8). More broadly, the whole structuralist assumption that any one speech constitutes a ‘unitary system’ is wrong and a dynamic approach to analysis is needed, one which recognizes within any given speech the coexistence of many non-interacting as well as many interacting – and, indeed, directly competing – linguistic systems. Such a polysystemic linguistic amalgamation presents itself as such to speakers who must avail themselves of the various pre-existing linguistic ‘resources’ which have currency and they are themselves able to individually systematize and tailor these ‘resources’ in pursuit of their own purposes of communication.³

Hannahs distinguishes the Optimality Theory (OT) generative approach from other generative approaches previously applied to Welsh which he says are ‘incompatible with current phonological thinking’ (62). Whatever

the merits of the OT approach, an oxygen-starved abstract level of analysis, removed from the observable linguistic facts on the ground, will appeal for the purposes of his argumentation for a ‘single’ Welsh phonological system (an adjective which he carefully eschews preferring the less categorical ‘unitary’), but there is no mention of the – admittedly complicated – coexistence of intermixing of the contemporary literary and colloquial versions of Welsh among the Welsh-speaking populations which is evident to anyone familiar with the contemporary language.

And it is this coexistence of at least two well-defined contemporary versions of Welsh which leads us to the second weakness in establishing a coherent analysis. The description claims to be ‘centrally concerned’ with a synchronic approach as opposed to the diachronic approach of ‘philologists’; an approach which leads the author to prefer, for purposes of analysis, the standpoint of ‘the child learning Welsh’, incognizant of Middle Welsh, rather than the standpoint of an historical linguist (xii). The scenario of a child reading Middle Welsh literature constitutes a *reductio ad absurdum* or ‘straw-man’ argument which would carry weight if accepted at face value, but what the author singularly fails to point out is that, in practice, the child learning Welsh is soon brought into contact with literary Welsh which does contain many linguistic systems which conflict with its own speech community’s systems, including its phonology (and, in fact, even contains many features which can be shown to be medieval hangovers). To declare that the analysis of ‘modern colloquial Welsh’ can ignore medieval Welsh may sound convincing, but to assume that the self-same analysis can ignore modern literary Welsh when describing the colloquial language is to be blind to a complicating factor that faces any analysis which wishes to demonstrate that Welsh is constituted of one phonological system. The author states, no doubt quite correctly, that: ‘Current models of phonology take very seriously the idea that any human language must be learnable without recourse to the history of language’ (5) which is, indeed, what the synchronic approach represents ever since it was formulated by Saussure. But from a purely descriptive point of view of fully describing a speech in use, the banishment of ‘history’ or the rather more neutral term ‘time’ is a practical impossibility for any speaker and the correct approach to describing a language is a dynamic synchronic approach (which is not to be confused with the diachronic or historical approach).⁴

The author quotes Herbert Pilch approvingly: ‘Classifying material according to its etymology does not belong in a synchronic description’ (xii), yet his analysis of *Cymraeg* as *Cymra-* + *-eg* (46–7) makes no reference to the fact that there never was a stem-final *-a* in this word which was originally *Cymro* + *-eg* and which evolved phonetically from trisyllabic **Cymröeg* to **Cymräeg* to disyllabic **Cymraeg*. He states that schwa ‘in the Welsh system’ is not directly related to stress as it is in many other languages (26), although again he neglects to point out – were it even in a note – that historically it originated in unaccentuated syllables which later, through the evolution of Welsh accentuation became the stressed syllable.

The uniformity of Welsh phonology which the study purports to demonstrate on an abstract level is – to my mind – not consummately dealt with in relation to the concrete reality upon which it purports to be based mainly – I think – because of what seems to be a lack of first-hand experience of the colloquial language. And, ironically enough, despite proclaiming the need to dispense with historical explanation, the assumptions of coherence of the study in avoiding recourse to earlier stages of the language are repeatedly violated with the description transgressing the synchronic guidelines which it purports to follow.⁵ The author recognizes this inconsistency but defends any references to earlier states of the language as ‘for the information of the reader ... in order to contextualize the facts at issue’ (6). But, wait, was this not the same author who earlier in the same paragraph and elsewhere (xii) maintained that his phonological analysis was predicated on that of speakers who precisely had no access to such historical knowledge? To have more material than is needed is certainly less of a sin than to not have enough, but is not the aimed-for coherence of a purported synchronic phonological analysis needlessly complicated by repeated references to historical and especially to orthographical evidence?

There is also recurrent reference to the distinction between native words and loanwords (14, 16, 18, 26, 38, 45, 52, 61, 144–5), which is hardly applicable to the language of the child. Indeed, even educated grown-up Welsh speakers are surprised to learn that a word such as *sicr* is in origin an English loanword (albeit, as the late Professor Bedwyr Lewis Jones often used to say when speaking of many an English loanword or non-standard feature, ‘*mae o wedi hen ymgartrefu’n y Gymraeg* / it has long made itself at home in the Welsh language’).

Generativist analyses

A discussion of the phonological status of schwa (52–5) is vitiated by a bias towards stress as the only marker of accentuation even though pitch as an element of accentuation on final syllables gets one mention (42). As a result, the existence in Welsh of schwa in stressed vowels and its prohibition in final unstressed vowels is presented as surprising since the schwa is so often associated with a reduced vowel (52–3). The discussion should have started from accentuation in general and not misleadingly from stress alone. Diachronically and derivationally, of course, the schwa [ə] can be viewed as a reduced vowel, but in synchronic terms it mostly is not: in Welsh it is most usually a fully integrated vowel phoneme found in opposition to other vowel phonemes (except as regards length – for it is always short). However, in pre-stress contexts the schwa is indeed a reduced vowel varying with other vowels, e.g. *pregethwr* **prə'gɛθɔr**, *gobeithio* **gə'bi'θɔ** varying with **pre'gɛθɔr** ~ **prə'gɛθɔr**, **go'bi'θɔ** ~ **gə'bi'θɔ**. Hannahs does not mention such reduced examples of schwa and opts for the phonological ‘solution’ of interpreting Welsh schwa as /ʌ/ in the same way as many dialects of English are analysed as containing /ʌ/ and unstressed /ə/ although he does not implement this ‘solution’ in his book (54–5). I fail to see why the transcribing of /ə/ as /ʌ/ would be ‘useful’ for Welsh (55). Rather it would be more useful for the English /ʌ/ to be transcribed as /ə/ as the English phonetician Geoff Lindsey (2012) has advocated in a well-argued blog. Rather than forming a ‘solution’, Hannahs’s favoured interpretation would reiterate a tendency to import non-phonetic conventions which have been applied to another language to Welsh.⁶ Does it really need pointing out – despite the abusive use of this symbol in highly influential English-language phonetic circles – that IPA [ʌ] has a phonetic value which is not that of [ə] found in Welsh?

The typical generativist labelling distinguishing ‘underlying’ – read important – ‘phonological’ differences as opposed to ‘surface’ – read unimportant – phonetic differences (1–2) gives rise to the statement: ‘two surface [i] vowels must be distinguished within the Welsh vowel system, given their differing behaviour with respect to alternation with schwa’ (61). This deserves commentary: derivationally (and thus generativistically), yes; phonemically, no. A phonemic inventory should not distinguish two identical phones [i] when there is only one indistinguishable sound. I make this point,

which may be obvious to some but which would not be obvious to many, that the author distinguishes generativist underlying input ‘/ə/’ and ‘/i/’, placed between what appear to be phonemic slashes (66) – phonemic and generativist definitions are not equivalent.⁷

Hannahs engages in generativist theorizing which begins by postulating that the underlying form of *mynydd* (surface realization [mənɪð]) is ‘/minið/’, with the ‘/i/’ being based on the standard assumption of the value of unmutated orthographic <y> (59) (again, it will be noticed that the slashes in ‘/minið/’ do not represent a phonemic transcription per se but a postulated theoretical underlying pronunciation⁸). However, the alternation //i// > /ə/ in the derivative plural *mynyddoedd* mə'nəððɪð (60) – recte mə'nəðð – is argued by Hannahs (63) to derive from a single underlying input vowel ‘/ə/’.⁹ An argument with which he supports this interpretation is that ‘Empirically, it is the case that orthographic y in Welsh represents [ə] throughout the language far more than it represents [i]’ (63). Since Hannahs prefers ‘/ə/’ as the underlying vowel of the alternation //i// > /ə/ rather than ‘/i/’, this also implies that the underlying form of the singular is *‘/minəð/’ rather than ‘/minið/’, although, in a note, he has implied that his preferred underlying form for the singular would be *‘/mənəð/’ (59). (Hannahs does not give his actual preferred underlying form of *mynydd* which accounts for my hesitation between two starred versions.) However, we know well enough that none of Hannahs’s underlying forms *ever* existed for this word; witness the generally accepted historical development of the word: ***monið** > ***mɔnið** > ***mənið** > **mənið** (LHEB: 273, 609, 666; McCone 1996: 160; Wmffre 2013b: 93–109), and also the form *mwyny(dd)* **moni** found in western Pembrokeshire (Wmffre 2003: 255–6). Thus none of Hannahs’s underlying forms constitute starred historical forms nor, even – which is more telling – are they based on the actual language itself, synchronically approached, but rather derive from awareness of the written forms. Recourse to written forms vitiates ‘the empirical issue of learnability’ (64) which – presumably – generativists actually care about.

A mystery (‘stranger still’) in the case of the south-north variation in vowel length/quality between words preceding <ll> [ɫ] (e.g. *gwell*, *dall*, etc.), can be explained historically as the northern short-lowered vowel in **gwɛɫ** reflecting the original geminate value <ll> whilst the southern long-raised vowel **gwe:ɫ** reflects the subsequent fricative value of [ɫ] which placed it alongside other fricatives such as [f, θ, χ]. More exceptional, by my reckoning,

is the occurrence in northern Welsh of long vowels before consonant clusters ending with a stop [sC, tC] which cannot be explained by fricativization in the case of [tC].

Hannahs engages in an extended argumentation (62–78) to criticize his own previous use of symbol ‘/u/’ (dating from 2007) for underlying ‘/i/’ since it led to ‘serious questions of learnability’ (62). In conclusion, he advocates here an underlying ‘/i/’ as the surface reflex of non-alternating //i// and an underlying ‘/ə/’ as the surface reflex of alternating //i// (77). Since underlying ‘/ə/’ stands for alternating //i//, what underlying symbol, I wonder, is needed to symbolize non-alternating /ə/ in derivational contexts such as the preposition *yn* **ən** ‘in’ which gives *ynddo* **ənðo** ‘in him/it’ and the first *y* in *mynydd*?

Phonemic and phonetic criticisms

Moving on from generativist questions to phonemic and phonetic ones, the author argues that his generativist approach does not obscure ‘empirical facts’ for he accepts that the theoretical framework he adopts may not last forever (4–5), but a number of the phonetic transcriptions found in the book suggests that less attention was paid to this aspect of the work than to its theoretical aspect. There is, for example, no clear indication of what transcriptional phonetic/phonemic conventions are in use, although they generally appear to agree well with the generally encountered conventions employed by contemporary Welsh linguists (which is not to say that they are either right or wrong). Some aspects of variation in transcription, I assume, are due to the dialect variety being exemplified, or else to the conventions of a particular author who is being quoted. But if some transcriptions were modified for the sake of uniformity – which would be quite understandable – this is not always made clear. What does seem clear is that some transcriptions are original to this book and have been arrived at independently by the author.

Among the many transcriptions which are justifiable (even if I would have other preferences), however, we do encounter some transcriptions which are questionable and others which are indisputably wrong. One of the worst cases of mistranscription is the words *pen-lin*, *mam-gu*, *tad-cu* as ‘**p**ellin, ‘**m**aŋgi:, ‘**t**akki: (81) which are, of course, correctly **p**ɛˈli:n, **m**aŋˈgi:, **t**aˈki: – as the hyphen in their orthographical form implies. This is compounded by the fact that ‘**t**akki:’ is then glossed as ‘typically

northern', despite the fact that the author has read elsewhere that it is a specifically southern form, and yet – as it seems from his own wording in the accompanying footnote – it is assigned a northern provenance and a faulty northern form with /i:/ based on a purported statement from Watkins (1961: 54) who 'characterizes the assimilated pronunciation as being typically northern' – a statement which Watkins emphatically does not make there! The northern equivalent *taid* is glossed as 'the more frequent northern word' (81)! Exclamation marks should really only be used sparingly, but such a degree of misconception could only have been contemplated by an individual wholly unfamiliar with the modern spoken Welsh language (and not necessarily even a dialectologist) for although the book shows abundant evidence of an extensive reading of the phonetic and phonological literature pertaining to Welsh such gross mistakes makes one suspicious of the author's abilities to independently verify statements given by the various 'authorities' in the field.

Some retranscription has been operated in accordance with the *Welsh Dialect Survey* (WDS) (144), which is commendable, but in other cases the author's transcriptional practice has ignored its general findings. Thus the long /e:/ and /o:/ phonemes in monosyllables are transcribed by him in nearly every instance as /ɛ:/ and /ɔ:/, e.g. *stên sɛːn*, *sgrech sɡrɛːχ* (15), *mêl mɛːɫ* (19, 20), *lle lɛː* (30), *hen hɛːn* (103), *teg tɛːg* (152), *sêr sɛːr* (157), *gêr gɛːr* 'gear' (32), *cref krɛːv* (80); *glo ɡɔː* (15), *strôc strɔːk* (31), *pob pɔːb* (31, 98), *tôn tɔːn* (32), *gwahodd gwa' hɔːð* (104).¹⁰ Now, according to the WDS, such lowered qualities are found *as a variant* in many areas in northern Wales but they are far from constituting the exclusive quality found in northern dialects. The WDS comprises 117 inquiry points. Out of eleven words which related to stressed monosyllabic /e:/ (WDS, QS 004, 015, 029, 061, 088, 098, 336 & 338, 480, 564 & 566 & 624, 628–9 & 631–4 & 643 & 647 & 649, 720), no more than twenty instances came up at any one time.¹¹ Out of fourteen words which related to the stressed monosyllabic /o:/ (WDS, QS 006, 019, 034, 053, 063, 083, 092, 100, 108, 110, 111, 392, 571–84, 701), no more than about a dozen instances came up at any one time out of the 117 inquiry points. Anecdotal evidence suggests the lowering of /e:/ and /o:/ is associated most strongly with younger generations and with the north-western counties of Caernarfon and Anglesey and this is pointed out vaguely by the author when he recognizes that 'in some dialects' (i.e. some northern ones) tense

vowels such as /o:/ are lowered to something like [ɔ:] halfway between tense and lax (23). Whatever the exact status of the realizations of [ɛ:, ɔ:] for the phonemes /e:/ and /o:/ it is clear that they are not only dialectally restricted, being unknown in southern Welsh, but are far from exclusive as realizations even in those northern dialects in which they are found. Did Hannahs rely on phonetic material gathered from young people in Caernarfonshire? If so he fails to note the unrepresentativeness of forms which – while they do exist – are hardly typical of Modern Welsh. Upon further scrutiny, however, it seems more likely that the [ɛ:, ɔ:] realizations are unrepresentative simplifications by the author, a suspicion which finds support in his faulty transcription ‘southern *gwell* [gwe:ɪ]’ (31), for southern Welsh *gwell* is always **gweɪ**, never ***gwe:ɪ**, see WDS (Q412). Thus whilst Hannahs aims at eschewing dialectal markedness he has not adopted a methodical approach which succeeds in accomplishing this. The justification for transcribing /e:/ and /o:/ as /ɛ:/ and /ɔ:/ is never given, and it is worth reminding readers that it is exactly the phonetic qualities of the former which are very difficult to realize for English speakers (thus /e:, o:/ tend to be realized [eɪ, oʊ] by English speakers, or – when aware that they are monophthongs – these otherwise tend to be realized [ɛ:, ɔ:] by the selfsame speakers, monophthongs which do exist in contemporary English).

The preference for lowered variants of //i, e, o, u// in stressed penultimate syllables has more justification in so far as lowered vowel qualities are commoner than in stressed monosyllables, e.g. *hebog* 'he**bɔ**g (15), *neges* 'ne**gɛ**s (15), *tegell* 'te**gɛ**l (16), *cefn* 'ke**vɛ**n (39), *ffenstr* 'fe**nɛ**st (87), *llethr* 'le**θɛ**r (92); *diogel* 'dɔ**gɛ**l (16), *pobl* 'pɔ**bɔ**l, *ochr* 'ɔ**χɔ**r (89). However, this is far from being representative, and not at all so for southern Welsh dialects. Hannahs should have referred to Wmffre (2003: 121–35) where the conditions for varying vowel qualities in penultimate syllables are discussed at length. As it is, Hannahs's **keven** – which indeed exists as an occasional variant – is at odds with the evidence of WDS which gives only seven instances of disyllabic *cefn* with [ɛ] in the stressed syllable (WDS, Q300, points 48–50, 52–3, 55, 93) as against sixty-two disyllabic instances with [e] in the stressed syllable. The forms **k(j)evɛn** ~ **k(j)evan** with [ɛ] may be regionally distinctive for a restricted area around the Dyfi estuary, but Hannahs's *cefn* as **keven** seems to derive from a generalized fudging of northern Welsh monosyllabic **kevn** with southern Welsh disyllabic svarabhakti **ke·vɛn**. Clear evidence of Hannahs's

faulty generalization is his retranscription of Awbery's Pembrokeshire **'ke:vən** (Awbery 1986: 95) as **'kevən** (92).

The unrepresentative generalization of the lowered variants of vowels in penultimate syllables become actual mistranscriptions when the author deals with south-eastern dialects in which the medial voiced stop is unvoiced: thus, south-eastern *cegin*, *cadair*, *pysgodyn*, *gwybod* are mistranscribed as [**'kɛkɪn**, **'kɛtɛr**, **pə'sgɔtɪn**, **'gɔpɔd**] rather than the (vocalically) correct [**'ke'kɪn**, **'ka'tɛr**, **pə'sgɔ'tɪn**, **'gu'pɔd**] (151) (although it should be pointed out that the author, on the same page, does transcribe *ateb*, *hapus* correctly as [**'attɛb**, **'happɪs**], with the latter word obviously representing a northern and not a south-eastern variant). This mistake with vowel length in these south-eastern words may have been prompted by the phonemic transcriptions of south-eastern *gwedws* (lit. *dywedodd*), *gwybod* as /**gwɛtɔs**, **gɔpɔd**/ by Ball and Williams (2000: 89) which again should represent [**'gwe'tɔs**, **'gu'pɔd**]. The penultimate /a/ in *addo* is given as **aðð** (148) which seems correct enough for northern Welsh *gaddo* **gaðð** although the half-long quality of /a/ in southern Welsh *addo* **a'ðð** is – in my opinion – under-reported in WDS (Q693). The penultimate /a/ in *naddo* **'naðð**, given as short in contrast to *tad* **tʰa:d** (24), is unequivocally half-long in all Welsh dialects and should be transcribed **na'ðð**.

I should point out here that the phonetic data presented in WDS was subject to editorial simplification before publication, so that original examples of **ke:vən**, **ke'vən**, **kevən** for *cefn* were uniformized as **kevən**.¹² What is certain is that length (albeit half-length) is commoner than no length in southern Welsh in penultimate contexts such as **ke'vən**. In view of Hannahs's generalization of the lowered variant of vowels in the penultimate syllables, he would be hard put to illustrate the opposition in southern Welsh between *geson ni* **ge'sɔ-ni** 'we had' with *geson ni* **gɛsɔ-ni** 'we guessed'. Hannahs statement that vowel length 'is contrastive only in monosyllabic words' (23, 25) is not strictly true, for one can oppose penultimate syllables purely on the basis of vowel length, e.g. *tala* **ta'la** '(you) pay' (imperative 2sg of *talu*) with *tala(f)* **tala** '(the) tallest' (superlative degree of *tal*).

Hannahs's transcription of Welsh long vowel qualities systematically misrepresents the findings of WDS, as does Russell in one page of his otherwise sober treatment of variant historical spellings of labials in his 2003 article '*Rowynniauc, Rhufoniog ...*' (Russell 2003: 44). Russell unfortunately muddles much of the contemporary Welsh evidence which is clear enough

in WDS, first by transcribing **kend̥er** in southern Welsh where WDS (Q426) shows only **kend̥er** is possible. Other examples of [e] for [ɛ] while not strictly correct can be excused as a simplified phonetic transcription which ignores raised-lowered distinctions in vowel-pairs. A series of statements on the same page misrepresents the evidence of WDS as well as the dialectal reality:

- ‘*sofl* (Pembr. [sowl], northern [sovol])’;
- ‘*cefn* (Pembr. [kewn], northern [keven])’;
- ‘WDS ... 294 (*cefn*; where [kewn] is not recorded)’;
- ‘*ysgafn* (Pembr. [əsgawn], northern [əsgafan])’.

The most typical Pembrokeshire form **sowl** – of which three instances are recorded by WDS (Q310) – does show some signs of receding before the general southern Welsh **so·vəl**, but this is categorically not a ‘northern’ form, which is transcribed generally by WDS as **səvl** ~ **səlv**. Likewise **ke·ven** is the general southern Welsh pronunciation which shows signs of expanding at the expense of the form **kəwn**, a particular Pembrokeshire form, and both contrast with the properly unisyllabic northern pronunciation **k(j)əvn** (WDS: Q300). The Pembrokeshire form **iskawn** ~ **əskawn** is contrasted with an absolutely bogus northern Welsh form ‘**əsgafan**’ which is properly **əskavn** (WDS: Q367). Furthermore, evidence obtained by Russell from the archives of *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* is adduced for *ysgon* in northern Cardiganshire, whilst he ignores the clear WDS evidence that this form *ysgon əskən* is found in most of Cardiganshire and eastwards in the upper Wye valley, in the Tywi valley and separately in the Vale of Glamorgan (elsewhere in south Wales we find *ysgawn*, and in north Wales *ysgafn*).

Here, then, are two examples – one by a phonologist and another by an historical linguist – which neglect and misrepresent the specialist findings of a synchronic descriptive linguistic work, as if the variation described in that latter work was of no importance. The Survey of Welsh Dialect Phonology (from which WDS was extracted) was an ambitious fieldwork survey of the phonetic features of Welsh dialects conducted in the years 1991–7, which was funded by the University of Wales’s Board of Celtic Studies. That such a basic source of factual data, which took so much time and money to assemble, can be misrepresented in so cavalier a fashion by subsequent linguists is simply scandalous from the point of view of scholarly standards. By this I do not mean

to assert that WDS is ‘authoritative’ and must be followed in every detail, since numerous aspects of detail of the phonetic transcriptions can be questioned and no editorial commentary was included (weaknesses which I intend to address in the future). However, despite such (unavoidable) failings, WDS most often does give the broad patterns indicating which phonetic – and thus phonological – forms are representative of modern Welsh and all its dialects. Furthermore, despite these qualifications I have mentioned concerning the value of WDS as regards particular aspects of detail, its testimony should be respected until further contemporary factual data can be brought to bear on any aspect described therein.¹³ It behoves those authors who seek to give alternate phonetic/phonological transcriptions to those given by WDS to explain and justify why they are at odds with this primary source, otherwise they might as well be inventing transcriptions for their own convenience. Incremental scientific progress *depends* upon dialogue with previous work in the field, whether to build upon or else to dispute any antecedents.

Throughout Hannahs’s book there are questionable statements concerning vowel quantity and quality such as *math* **maθ**, *chwech* **χwεχ** (17) rather than the correct **ma:θ**, **χwe:χ**. The citation forms of the prepositions *heb*, *o* should be **he:b**, **o:** but because they are proclitics it is hardly surprising that they sometimes tend to be reduced to **heb** ~ **heb**, **o** ~ **ɔ** in most contexts; nevertheless it is incorrect to give **hεb** (15) as a citation form (although *o’r* **ɔr** (40, 158), given in context, with a short vowel is acceptable even if I hear mostly **o r**). Hannahs’s tentative statement that there are no long vowels preceding [ŋ] due to these deriving from English as loanwords (31) overlooks one native example *gwrêng*. He also states that stressed monosyllables checked by /χ/ are long (26) but what about counter-examples such as *moch* **mɔχ**, *rhòch* **hrɔχ**, *lâch* **lax** which exist in Cardiganshire Welsh? Likewise his statement that ‘orthographic < i > and < u > ... in stressed syllables ... when followed by /l, n, r/ are always long’ (26, 31, 32) is contradicted for < u > by *chlul* (st. *cnul*), *tun* (< E. *knell*, *tin*) and *dùr!* (< native *Duw*). Hannahs (31–2) confuses orthography with reality in one instance: the difference between *tâl* /**ta:l**/ vs *tal* /**tal**/, which are more narrowly phonetic [**ta:l**] vs. *tal* [**tall**] (or [**tal:**]), can also be explained as due to a longer consonant in the second word. Thus he is wrong in stating that a single < l, n, r > can be preceded by a long or short vowel and that ‘Vowel length in such words must therefore be a lexical [and not a phonological] property of those words’ (31). The single orthographical

<ɫ> of Welsh is not necessarily a single phonetic [ɫ], a fact occluded by the orthographical use of <ll> for a distinct sound – both Siôn Dafydd Rhys and Edward Lhuyd distinguished [ɫ] (or else [l:]) from [l] as <ll> against <lh>, respectively.

As I have mentioned above, Hannahs (23) does not seem aware of a fact known to most practising dialectologists of Welsh that there is a fundamental mismatch between the vowel systems of northern Welsh and southern Welsh; phonemicity in vowel-pairs in the former being governed by the salience of length and in the latter being governed by the salience of quality. Working, as he does, with primary sources which reflect either system of saliency, it is perhaps unsurprising that he sometimes comes unstuck. Examples of this are the contrasting transcriptions of <i> in *melin* 'mɛlɪn (32), *drycin drækkin* (41) against *ysgrif* 'əsgrɪv (49). Phonemic considerations mean that the transcription **pir** for *pur* cannot be allowed in a paragraph in which **brin** is given for *bryn* (65): either the difference in length must be emphasized to give **pi:r** or the difference in quality must be emphasized to give **brɪn** (or both transcriptional strategies, which is the solution I would advocate). The vowel-phoneme pairing of /i:/ & /ɪ/ only represents southern Welsh, with the corresponding northern Welsh vowel-pair best represented as /i:/ & /i/.¹⁴ This phonological mismatch between the northern and southern vowel systems is so fundamental that it is perhaps insurmountable as far as crafting one 'economic' phonological transcription which would satisfy all Welsh dialects.

Coming to the 'phonological' analysis, of 'wad/ uad/ 'slap' [wa:d]' (38), I see no justification for an underlying form /uad/ for what should simply be /wad/ (the 'surface' form being [wadd] or [wad:]); likewise as regards the /i/ in an underlying form /iaɪθ/ for [jajθ] since, as regards the /i/ or the first [j], it contains – as far back as we know, historically speaking – a non-syllabic [j] and not a syllabic [i], and thus there is no reason to interpret it as /i/ except on grounds of 'economy'. The affirmative responsive *ie* [i:ɛ] is different from *iechyd* [jɛ.χɪd], *iet* [jɛt], 'phonological' transcriptions such as /iaɪθ/ adopted by Hannahs would confuse such basic differences. His stricture 'Note that [iɔ] and [io] may also be transcribed as [jɔ] and [jo] (sic for [jɔ]), respectively, depending on how one views the composition of the diphthong' (25) is quite misleading, in that the two latter realizations indicated by him represent an anglicized pronunciation which – if heard sporadically among some Welsh speakers – remains completely unrepresentative of any existing Welsh dialect.

The derivational extrapolation of the yod in *nofio*, *peidio* from the ‘2PerSg.’ *nofi*, *peidi* (as with the labial [w] in *enwog* from the syllabic [u] in *enw*) in the same section is false (38), since the *i* in the 2sg of the future tense in these two words is a suffix and not part of the root (the author must have confused the 2sg of the future tense with the 2sg of the imperative mood which is often – but not always – the verbal root).¹⁵ The pronunciations indicated for *mwynhad* **mwɪn’ha:d**, *mwynhau* **mwɪn’hai** (46) are possible but are not as general as the pronunciations **muɟn’ha:d**, **muɟn’haj**. The initial vocalic quality in his transcriptions (24) of the diphthongs [ɔɪ, əʊ] (rather than [ej, ow], respectively) – although found in the work of a few other dialectologists working on Welsh – are *wrong*, see WDS (QS 183–4, 188, 190, 192, 200, 241–3, 256, 258, 266, 270, 286, 317, 355, 383, 414–15, 458, 466, 554, 560, 660, 667, 669, 670). Likewise, the initial vocalic quantity in his transcriptions (25) of the northern Welsh diphthongs [aʊ, ɛʊ] is a mistake for [a:w, e:w] as is his [ai, ɔi, ɔi] for [a:j, o:j, u:j].¹⁶

The discussion of the distribution of allomorphs of the definite article *yr* (40, 158) should note that it is [r] rather than [ɔr] which constitutes the most usual colloquial initial pre-vocalic form, e.g. *yr afon r a:vɔn*. It is true that schwa does not have a long counterpart (26) but it would be worth qualifying this by noting that it is lengthened in its citation form as a letter of the alphabet. It is also correct to say that the definitive article can be emphasized by means of being stressed (*Caffi Morgan ydy Y lle i fynd* ‘Café Morgan is THE place to go!’) (51), but what is not mentioned is that such emphasis in some cases leads to a lengthened vowel on the definite article. This lengthening almost certainly betrays the influence of the English emphasis of the strong form of *the* as **ði:** (ordinarily **ðə**), more especially so as the same lengthening can not be as easily applied in Welsh to the fuller form of the definite article before vowels as in *ydy yr afal*. It also seems to me that the placing of the stress on the definite article is also due to the influence of English, as I do not believe that it is the practice of the most traditional speakers in my rural home area of west Wales. I am reliably informed that in contemporary French there is a tendency to emphasize in a way that was hitherto not possible in that language, e.g. *c’est LE moment* ‘it’s *the* time’, *JE m’en fous* ‘I don’t care’ rather than the traditional *c’est bien le moment* ‘it’s *the* moment’, *moi je m’en fous* ‘I don’t care’ (the emphasized *le* and *je* being pronounced with a stressed and lengthened [ø:]) and not as the ordinary unstressed realizations

[$\emptyset \sim \text{æ} \sim \text{ə} \sim \emptyset$]). This no doubt reflects the growing influence of English prosodic emphasis strategies impinging on a neighbouring language which is increasingly acquiring a dominated status. In Welsh, this is a question which could do with more research.

I disagree strongly with the syllabic division which Hannahs (159) and Pilch (1958) assert exists in Welsh in *fy mrawd*, *fy mhen*, *fy nhad* as **əm | raod**, **əm | hən**, **ən | hɑ:d**. The only syllabic division in such contexts are as follows: **ə 'mrawd**, **ə 'hmən** (or else **ə 'm̥ən**), **ə 'hna:d** (or else **ə 'nɑ:d**). One need only attempt to differentiate *fy nhad i* ‘my father’ from *fy had i* ‘my seed’ to see how colloquial Welsh cannot distinguish originally different consonants (*fy* colloquially pronounced **ən**). The purported [**mair hi:s**] for *mae Rhys ...* ‘Rhys is ...’ is a chimera, only the syllabic division [**ma' hri:s**] (northern) or [**ma' (h) ri:s**] (southern) would reflect the natural colloquial flow of the language. This mistake may have arisen because of a confusion of the fluctuation of /**hr**/ and /**r**/ in the context of the proclitic – and thus unaccentuated – definite article with all other instances of /**hr**/ and /**r**/ at word boundaries. Before vowels and before /**h**-, the full form of the unmarked article is *yr ər*, but more often than not it is simply *'r r*. The weak accentuation of the definite article as a proclitic which leads to the elision of its vocalic component aids the reanalysis of words beginning with vowels or with /**h**, **r**, **hr**/ preceded by it; to give examples from mid Cardiganshire Welsh: *aser* (< *y*) *raser* ‘razor’, *heina* (< *y rheina* ‘those’), *ribach* (< *yr ebach* ‘nook’), *rhuddyg* (< *yr huddygl* ‘soot’). After discussing *ymlaen əm 'la:in*, *yn ɔl ən 'o:l*, *ymhell əm 'hɛl*, Hannahs (43) emphasizes ‘that [la:in, o:l, hɛl] satisfy word-minimality’, however it is **m̥la:jn**, **no:l**, **hmɛl** which surface as reduced forms (a fact buttressed by a word of similar composite origin, *ymhɛl* ‘to interfere’; Hannahs’s favoured reduced form ***hɛl** – rather than **hmɛl** – would suggest a wholly different meaning *hel* ‘to hunt’).

For our author, dialects either have or do not have [**h**] (18), although half of the Welsh-speaking area, from southern Montgomeryshire to the borders of Glamorganshire, have a variable realization [**h** ~ \emptyset]. The extended discussion on /**h**/ (102–15) fails to mention these distributional differences in the realization of the consonant which divide the Welsh-speaking area into three great dialectal zones, for which see Wmffre (2003: 286–91); and although a fleeting mention of the lack of /**h**/ in south-eastern Welsh is made elsewhere the regional distribution is vaguely and misleadingly defined as ‘many southern varieties’ (14). The existence of doublets *parhau* ~ *para*, *gwahodd*

~ *gwadd* (24), which puzzles the author, is due to the second forms of each pair being the traditional forms in all the dialects and the first being literary imports wherever they are found (and certainly the forms which speakers with pretensions at education attempt to use). The existence of derivatives *parhad* ‘continuation, permanence’, *parhaus* ~ *parhaol* ‘continuous, permanent, eternal’, which derive regularly from the older (now literary) form *parhau*, probably owe their existence in part to religious usage. The amount of prompts in connection with the word *parhad* in WDS (290) should make one suspicious, and in fact reflects the fact that it is both an abstract word and a word that was not often used.

The discussion on pre-stress elision, inspired by the work on Pembrokeshire Welsh by Awbery (1986: 99–100, 111–13) fails to note that pre-stress elision occurs in all Welsh dialects only with pre-stress syllables which have no initial consonant or which only have /h/. The elision of the pre-stress syllables containing other initial consonants such as *Nadolig*, *cwpanaid* becoming *'Dolig*, *'panaid* (116) are thus particular in the examples given in being specifically northern pre-stress elisions (a phenomenon even more marked in north-eastern Welsh where *ceffylau* is usually *'ffylau*). The explanation for exceptions such as *hanesion*, etc. (117), which do not display pre-stress elision despite fulfilling the requisite phonetic conditions, is likely to be due to their relative infrequency compared to words which do show this feature, as was suggested to the author by colleagues (119).

The dismissal of *[pə'sɪbɪl] for *posibl* (96) is quite correct, but attention should have been drawn to the existence of this svarabhakti vowel in its derivative *posibilrwydd* **pəsi'bilrɔjð**, which is much of the same as **lə'vərgəl** in southern Welsh for *llyfrgell* in opposition to **ləvrɛ** for *llyfrau* (root word *llyfr*) with svarabhakti vowels arising because of a restriction on clusters as complex as [-**blr**-] or [-**vrg**-]. The same phenomenon is found in Irish between *leabharthaí* ‘books’ and *leabhrán* ‘booklet’ which represent a previous distinction operating in the language since the root in both words are nowadays pronounced identically: **lə'rhi**, **lə'rán** (Donegal dialect). The discussion on the difference in reduction of the same final consonant cluster [**bl**] in *pobl* **pɔbəl**, *posibl* **pɔsɪb** could be contrasted usefully with the identical reduction of the Breton cognates *pobl* **pɔp**, *posubl* **pɔsyp**. The apparent exception of words such as *anadl*, *banadl* giving **a'nal**, **ba'nal** rather than ***a'nad**, ***ba'nad** in southern Welsh (98) is well known to be the result of

attested intermediary forms *anaddl*, *banaddl*, a development to which I have previously devoted a chapter (Wmffre 2003: 314–33). In that chapter I also show that the form **banad** is actually attested in northern Welsh and that the remaining exception **anadl** is to be explained as literary influence since the usual word for ‘breath’ is *gwynt*, in the Bangor area at least (WVBD: 11).

Some phonological facts presented are wrong, such as the phone /**hn**/ being solely a nasalization of /**t**/ (19); this is contradicted by *nhw hnu*: a dictionary word no longer linked to its historical origin as the product of the nasalization of /**t**/. It is also wrong to say that some ‘dialects’ allow *pobl*, *gwobr* as ‘**pəbəl**’, ‘**gwəbr**’ rather than ‘**pəbəl**’, ‘**gwəbr**’ (92) for this fails to disentangle unrepresentative reading pronunciations from the usual colloquial forms of dialects (the actual variation attested between ‘**gwəbr**’ and ‘**gwəbr**’ in WDS (Q312) reflects the fact that this is a book word which is otherwise usually *preis* **prejs** ‘prize’ in the colloquial language). The same can be said for the purported Aberystwyth Welsh ‘**sikr**’ (collected by Pilch) (39) which is in fact literary Welsh and contrasts to a more colloquial Bangor Welsh ‘**sikkir**’ (collected by Fynes-Clinton).

For Hannahs, the participation of the loan phones /**tʃ**, **dʒ**/ in mutation means that ‘they have become integrated into the system of Welsh phonology’ (16). However, this neglects the capital point that the integration of these loan phones into the Welsh mutation system is only *partial* as evidenced in data in WDS. Lenition of /**tʃ**/ > /**dʒ**/ in *ei tships o/e* is shown to be fairly common but not invariant, even in north-western Welsh where it is strongest (WDS, Q518). Nasalization of /**tʃ**/ > /**hnʃ**/ in *fy tsiocled i* is sporadic in north-western Welsh (WDS, Q500) and the spirantization of *ei tships* was not picked up (WDS, Q523). Lenition of /**dʒ**/ is unknown in *ei jam o/e* except for a single far-from-assured example **i zam o**: from Staylittle near Llanidloes (WDS, Q519) and there are only two instances of nasalization of *fy jam i* as **və nʒam** (WDS, Q501).

The spirantization of *tsiocled* to give *ei thiocled i* **θjəkləd** (144) is claimed for some northern Welsh dialects by a number of dialectologists (Thomas and Thomas 1989: 48) and grammarians (Thorne 1993: 76; Thomas 1996: 685), and so cannot be questioned out of hand; nevertheless it seems very sporadic and – to my mind – unrepresentative of the majority of traditional dialects which usually give either *ei tsiocled hi i* **tʃəkləd (h)i** or *ei siocled hi i* **fəkləd (h)i**.¹⁷ No example of the spirantization of /**tʃ**/ to /**θj**/ was picked

up in *ei tships hi* ‘her chips’ WDS (Q523). However, what is particularly relevant, is that the form *ships* **ɟɪps** was picked up for *tships* in three southern areas by WDS (Q278), a fact that reminds us that the initial /tʃ/, dominant in loanwords in twentieth-century Welsh, had been preceded by an initial /ʃ/ (still remembered as productive among the preceding generation by older speakers in mid Cardiganshire). Thus the form *siohled* **ɟɔkled**, which must have been current in the nineteenth century, could not conceivably have given such an irregular mutation as [θj] which makes [θj] – implicationally – a relatively late and (doubtlessly uncommon) mutation pattern motivated by the interpretation of the initial [tʃɔ-] as a degenerate affricate pronunciation of [tʃɔ-]. Watkins (1961: 19) pointed out long ago that the consonant cluster [θj] as a regular spirantization of *tsiohled* giving **ei thsiohled* ***i θjokled** would be unlikely. But, perhaps, a more basic reason for a spirantization **i θjokled** would be that an initial consonant cluster [tj-] – despite being uncommon – would be much more comfortable in Welsh – since it would fit more easily alongside long-standing pre-existing clusters derived from comparable pre-stress reductions such as *tueddu* **tjɛði** < **tɪ**’ **ɛði** (WDS, Q166),¹⁸ *dioddef* **djoðɛ** < **di**’ **oðɛ** (WDS, Q340), *diawl* **djawl** < ***di**’ **aol** (WDS, Q339).¹⁹ That said, I am not aware of any other word in the class of disyllabic words with initial [tj-] originating as English loans which have back-formed to give [tj-], e.g. *tsiampion* ‘excellent, excellent’, *tsiarjio* ‘to charge’, *tsiatio* ‘to chat’, *Tsieina* ‘China’, *tsietio* ‘to cheat’, *tsiopio* ‘to chop’, *tsipio* ‘to chip’. Doubtlessly, the reason in many cases is that they contain a monosyllabic root which is realized in the language, e.g. *tsiarj* ‘a charge’, *tsiat* ‘a chat’, *tsiop* ‘a chop’, *tsip* ‘a chip’, and which would prevent the back-formation [tj-]. Other disyllabic words such as *tsiampion*, *Tsieina* are not semantically predisposed to be marked by possessives to the same extent as *tsiohled*.²⁰ It is clear that the loan of the English phones /tʃ, dʒ/ into Welsh have led to conflicting treatments in spoken Welsh: in some cases they are treated mutationally as if they simply began with /t, d/ but in most cases as if they were separate sounds from /t, d/. The fact that the overwhelming reaction of Welsh dialects is not to integrate /tʃ, dʒ/ into the mutation system is ignored by the author and that all the attention is given to those instances in which they are integrated (albeit to different degrees) makes for an unbalanced description of Welsh phonology as a unitary system. However, this is not solely a matter concerning the integration of English phones into Welsh, it is also relevant

to the long-standing phonological argument as to whether /tʃ, dʒ/ constitute consonant clusters or else single phonemes.

Fynes-Clinton (1913: 81, 82–4) distinguished *di-* in *di-achos*, *di-allu*, *di-anaf*, etc. (all with initial vowels) from *di-* in *diddosi*, *digalon*, etc. (with initial consonants). Hannahs interprets this as illustrating a stress contrast of 'di:' **axɔs** against **di'galɔn** (50) although it is probably more correct to transcribe the difference noted by Fynes-Clinton as ,di:' **axɔs** against **di'galɔn**. It is difficult to justify two main stresses (when he follows Pilch) in words such as *bolaheulo* 'bɔla' **hɔilɔ** (51) and others when the first syllable of composite words usually have secondary stress just as in regular non-compound words such as *paragraffau* ,para' **grafa** (47). The transcription of stress given for the proclitic element *rhy* in *rhyfawr* 'rʰi' **vaɔr** (50) is certainly wrong for a more correct unstressed proclitic **hri'vawr** (ignoring the difference in transcription of the <rh> for the moment which is not relevant to our interest in stress patterns). Beyond the regular main stress which is usually on a penultimate syllable, other instances of stress or accentuation in Welsh are more open to the vagaries of sentence intonation. The transcription 'kɔkte:l (26) is a mistake for *coctel* **kɔk'te:l** (although *coctel* 'kɔktel is known in Cardiganshire).

Discussion of secondary accentuation is in some cases weakened by the use of unrepresentative loanwords such as *racŵn* **ra'ku:n** (26) and *ablawt* (30) which are hardly suitable for demonstrating the actual language.²¹ Similarly, *podledu* **pʰɔd'lɛdi** is a rather recent neologism (45) and would be better represented by *teledu*, itself a 1950s neologism which at least has established itself to the extent that the reduced form **tlɛdi** is not unknown. Hannahs emphasizes that in loose compounds 'the vowel of the first element of the compound is long, which is a characteristic of monosyllabic words, not of polysyllabic ones'. (50). However, the composite *ôl-ystrif* 'o:l' **əsgriv** 'postscript' (49) is a bad example to illustrate such loose compounds as it is hardly a word known to most Welsh speakers. The whole question of secondary accentuation and sentence intonation in Welsh is in need of conclusions based on empiric data rather than on the questionable generalizations of individual linguists which constitutes much of our 'data'. Careful formulation sometimes slips: it is not 'the post-stressed syllable' which has a higher pitch (42) in Welsh but the final syllable, as Hannahs otherwise correctly states on the following page (43) – these syllable contexts often overlap but they are not equivalent. Hannahs points out that the existence of schwa in monosyllabic

function words (as opposed to content words) are ‘superficially’ word-final but are in fact ‘non-final’ (26, 64). However, empiric findings show that function words do not always remain proclitic; Hannahs would need to take count of the common enough response *mae fe yn!* **ma·-vɛ ɔn !** ‘he is!’, disliked by purists who prefer the more traditional equivalent *mae fe!* **ma·-vɛ !**. Diachronistic or puristic excuses are of no avail to brush such examples away since a synchronic phonological study must take as its subject the language as it is found ‘warts and all’.

Schwa fully stressable in Welsh is made to stand in contrast to schwa in English which only occurs in unstressed syllables (26). But this is not as stark a contrast to English as Hannahs would have us believe, for whilst this is true for southern England – where weak forms such as **bət** can contrast with strong forms **bʌt** or **bɛt** for *but* – it is not true for the educated speech of northern England (Wells 1982: 352) or for Welsh English (Wells 1982: 380–1) where schwa is also fully stressable, e.g. *butter* **bətə**, *but* **bət**. Hannahs (54–5) makes an interesting point that in many varieties of American English the symbols written /ʌ/ and /ə/ are not phonetically distinct from one another, only phonologically linked to stressed and unstressed syllables, respectively. Hannahs states that ‘Schwa does not occur in monosyllabic content words’ (26), but later in the book mentions exceptions in ‘loanwords’ such as *syr* **sər** (38). There are other words of this kind such as *bys* **bəs** ‘bus’ pronounced virtually everywhere with this vowel except Pembrokeshire which has *bws* **bos** (WDS, Q65). In giving an optimality account of a vowel derivation, he states that an underlying form **brən** for *bryn* violates the ‘highest constraint in the hierarchy’ (65); it would be worth mentioning, even if it only occurs in a restricted geographical area, that forms such as **brən** do exist as regular forms in mid Cardiganshire Welsh. This fact should be well known from my own contribution describing the feature (Wmffre 2003: 257–63, 281–3).

In chapter 6, focusing on initial consonant mutations, the author admits he is disregarding ‘the productive aspects’ of Welsh phonology only because the workings of such mutations ‘provokes recurring interest’ among linguists and because he is absorbed in finding a ‘phonological’ (read generative) representation of the words which experience these mutations (7). His representation of the ‘pattern extraction trees’ of these mutations seems useful (137–48) but he neglects to deal with exhalation (a term I prefer to aspiration) for the unvoicing of initial vowels, of sonants <*l, m, n, r*> and approximants

<*i*, *w*> as in *ei mham* ‘her mother’, etc., which occur in all Welsh dialects which have /**h**/ but which for reasons hard to fathom is not recognized by the modern literary standard. That said one can broadly agree with the author’s conclusions that the initial consonant mutations are largely – although not wholly – acquired by speakers as phonetic patterns in response to particular sequences rather than being learnt individually for each item (149). It is tiring to have to point out once again that the possessive sequences *ei gi*, *ei chi*, *eu ci* (123) do not represent modern colloquial Welsh (although such forms can exist among learners and among those native speakers affecting a conscious ‘literary’ register).

Syntax and lexis

Coming to syntax, the thrice-repeated exemplary phrase borrowed from Robert Borsley et al. (2007): *mae yn yr ardd gi* for ‘there is a dog in the garden’ (130–1, 143), is an unlikely construction as it stands and would only be plausible if the action which the dog was carrying was to be emphasized by extending it with a relative clause, e.g. *mae yn yr ardd gi sy’n cuddio asgwrn* ‘there is a dog who is burying a bone in the garden’.

Typographic infelicities are less serious than recurring systematic mistakes; nevertheless they are worth highlighting. Phonetic typos include: **fa**_μ**l**_μ for **ta**_μ**l**_μ representing *tal* (32), [**j**] for the glide [j] (38). Orthographical typos include: *wrŵan* for *rŵan* (11), *penygamp* (51) for *penigamp*; *euriad* (56) for *euraid*, *ffenster* (92) for *ffenster*, one case of *bragdŷ* for *bragdy* or rather *bracty* (153).²²

Representativity should also be a factor in the exemplars given. The term *llyndref* ‘lake village’ (59) hardly exists and *ffermdy* (49) is a literary form calqued on English *farmhouse*: *tŷ-ffarm* is usual. The term *ysmygu* (116) is also a purely literary form not attested before 1783 when it appeared in John Walters’s dictionary: *smoc(i)o* is usual in all the traditional dialects and is attested a century earlier than *ysmygu* (GPC s.v. *smociaf*, *ysmygaf*). That said, the reduced form *smygu* is found and it does seem to adequately illustrate pre-stress elision in a word of suspected literary origin since it is by all appearances a late fudged form of E. *smoke* and W. *mygu*. The existence of an initial <y-> can be attributed to the workings of analogy referring to well-known models of variation such as *ysgol* > *’sgolion*. I know of no word

fecso (146) unless it be a recent loan from English ‘to vex’ with the same meaning. Although *fecsi* is found in northern Welsh (GPC s.v. *fecsi*af), I have never noticed *fecsi*(i)o in use in contrast to an older loan *becsi*(i)o, from the same source commonly used with the intransitive meaning ‘to worry’. The modern *modrwy* ‘ring’, certainly derives from *mawd* (OW. *maut*), the older form of *bawd* ‘thumb’, but the second element is not *aerwy* ‘band, torque’, but a long-obsolete word *rhwy* (GPC s.v. *rhwy*²) which has been confused by GPC with a related word *rhau* (GPC s.v. *rhau*², *rhoi*²) of the same meaning which is dialectally *rhau* in south-western Welsh. The root of *drudwns* ‘**dridon**z’ (18) is *drudw* not *drudwen*. Watkins is misquoted as transcribing **zam** for *jam* (18), in fact he gives **dzam**.

Summing up

If a generative approach, more specifically an OT approach, is to be convincing then it has to be based on reliable phonetic and phonemic facts. I cannot judge how good an OT approach is compared to other generative approaches,²³ but what is clear to me is that if this book is to convince the reader then it must be unimpeachable as regards the underlying ‘surface’ facts on which the analytical model is built. I am not offended in the slightest that the book was written without reference to my own easily accessible and extremely relevant work dating from 2003, *Language and Place-Names in Wales*, only sorry for the author that he missed an opportunity to expand on some of his statements and to have been in a position to tackle yet more phonological phenomena which are not addressed.²⁴ Shorn of the many factual mistakes I have highlighted – and it is otherwise correct enough in many places – the book might yet be a solid contribution to the phonological analysis of Welsh, but it really needs to come to grips with the contemporary spoken language in all its variation, both geographic and registerial, and to place historical and literate considerations well on the sidelines.

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Notes

1. Optimality Theory (OT), inaugurated in 1993, has become the most popular non-derivational phonological approach which relies on ‘constraints’ rather than on rules. For an accessible résumé of the theory see Hannahs’s own collaboration with Mike Davenport, *Introducing Phonetics and Phonology* (most especially, the third edition of 2010).
2. The listing of traditional regional dialects is also repeated needlessly (11, 14) and could have been improved by reference to chapter 4 on dialects in Wmffre (2003: 64–77) by recognizing *Deheubartheg* for central southern Welsh as distinct from *Dyfedeg*. *Pywyseg* is the dialect of north-central Wales but not that of north-eastern Wales.
3. A fairly comprehensive account of the dynamic approach to descriptive linguistics is to be found in my *Dynamic Linguistics* (2013), with chapter 9, especially, discussing structuralist terminology and the accompanying reifications of the phenomena studied.
4. Again I refer the reader to my *Dynamic Linguistics* (2013) which elaborates on the dynamic synchronic descriptive approach.
5. There are recurring references to historical facts (21, 22, 35, 42–3, 46, 61, 80, 83, 86, 121–4, 131, 139, 146–7, 151–2) which do not, of course, vitiate the explanations, only the avowed synchronic approach adopted by the author. The short historical background is not at all relevant to the aims of the author (7–10) and stands in marked contrast to the complete lack of diachronic references in Richard Wiese’s *The Phonology of German* in the same Oxford series *The Phonology of the World’s Languages*.
6. Some similar consideration led David R. Parry, the doyen of Welsh-English dialectologists, to opt to transcribe Welsh-English colloquial variants (including Welsh words) with [ʌ] rather than [ə] in his 1979 *The Survey of Anglo-Welsh Dialects: Vol. 2 the South-West* (Swansea, author) and in his 1999 *A Grammar and Glossary of the Conservative Anglo-Welsh Dialects of Rural Wales* (Sheffield, The National Centre for English Cultural Tradition, University of Sheffield).
7. The underlying ‘/ə/’ and ‘/i/’ stand, respectively, for the phonemic alternations //i// > /ə/ and the non-alternating phonemes //i//, with the archiphonemic //i// standing for the phonemic vowel-pair consisting of /i:/ and of /i/ (the

latter being also transcribable as /ɪ/). For a discussion of the concept of the archiphoneme, see Wmffre (2003: 7–8, 29; 2013a: 228–30; 2013b: 3–6).

8. For this reason all Hannahs's underlying input symbols which are between slashes are placed by me between citation marks. This may seem pedantic, but the truth is that the ambiguity in the phonological meaning of the use of slashes – as to whether it represents an actual phoneme or else a theoretical underlying sound – is not addressed by the author. Some kind of bracketing other than slashes would be in order for unambiguously representing underlying sounds.
9. Exemplary of the inconsistency in the transcription of the language is the usual transcription of the *au* plural as colloquial [a] – *cyfyngderau* ,kəvəŋ' dɛra (45) (although there is ,kəvəŋ' dɛrai (49) in one instance) – as opposed to the usual transcription of *oedd* as literary-influenced [ɔið] – in *lleiafrifoedd* ,ləia'vrivɔið (45), cf. *blynyddoedd* found as blə' nəðɔð all over Wales (WDS: Q613).
10. The word *mêl* is given once as me:l (24) and elsewhere nW. *holllt ho:lt*, *gwellt gwe:lt* are given although nW. *gwe:lt* is also given a few lines above (37). The form *tref tre:v* (18) is literary-influenced as the usual form in every Welsh dialect is *tre:*.
11. Two words, *gêr* (WDS, 337, points 3, 38, 54, 60, 64, 71, 92, 93, 98–100, 102) and *sêr* (WDS, 049, points 61, 110–11) had to be excepted as they showed a wider distribution of a lowered value due to: (1) retracting tendencies before [r], and to (2) the fact that their plural *gêrs*, *sêrs* with <s> would tend to shorten their values in the direction of [ɛ]. The words *sech*, *gwleb* (WDS, 481, 483), the feminine forms of the adjectives *sych*, *gwlyb*, were not common enough to be diagnostic.
12. The data presented in WDS was never clearly explicated in an introduction. I hope to return with a short article giving some of the background pertaining to that work along with advice as how to interpret the data contained therein.
13. It would also be better if *Welsh Dialect Survey*, as a fundamental source of primary data, was quoted as WDS rather than as Thomas 2000, since it is more of a reference tool than one reflecting the analysis of one particular scholar.
14. Or, as I have recently proposed (Wmffre 2013b: 47–9, 56–7), as /i:/ & /ɪ/. The latter symbol, [ɪ] (Unicode character 0131) represents a lowered high *front* unrounded vowel as opposed to [ɪ] which represents a lowered high *medial* unrounded vowel.
15. The 2sg imperative forms of these particular verbs (*nofia*, *paid*) actually demonstrate this variation with the first 2sg imperative form sporting a

suffix on the original root *nawf* whilst the second 2sg imperative form is the verbal root simplex *paid* (although a suffixed variant form *peidia* is also quite common).

16. Readers may wonder why I remain silent as regards the transcriptional difference evident between us as regards the second element of the diphthongs. The transcribing of the final element of falling diphthongs as what appears as a syllabic vowel (whatever further explanation given by their transcribers) is a bane of English-derived phonetic transcriptional practice and too common a fault to merit a developed criticism here. I have given some of my reasons against such transcriptions of falling diphthongs in Wmffre (2003: 15–19), and since 2003 the development of my knowledge on the pronunciation of other languages and on the transcriptional practices of phoneticians has done nothing to persuade me otherwise. Expect more on this question in the future.
17. The similar *fy nhioctled i* ‘my chocolate’ previously noted by dialectologists (Thomas and Thomas 1989: 48; Thomas 1996: 684) was only picked up by WDS (Q500) in Pentre-dŵr near Llangollen. Otherwise variations of *fy nhioctled* were picked up in six areas of north-western Welsh by WDS – and previously noted for Pen-y-groes (Caerns.) by R. O. Jones (1967: 191). Elsewhere the majority of forms picked up by WDS gave variations of the unmutated *fy tsiocled i* with a sprinkling of the more old-fashioned *fy siocled i*.
18. The WDS reduced northern forms *tueddu tjeði* (Q166) and *tua tja* (Q445) may be mistakes for **tjeði** and **tja**. Depalatalized forms **tēði** and **ta** are also known in northern Welsh as is an affricated form **tja** for *tua*.
19. GPC gives *siocled* as the literary form of this word but *tsip* as that of ‘chips’.
20. Nor does the monosyllabic nature of *tsips tɟɪps* lend itself to a back-formation **tiip *tɟɪp*, unlike the back-formation **tiocled *tɟɪklɛd* which can be hypothesized to underlie mutations such as *fy nhioctled*, *ei thioctled hi*. The earliest attestation of the forms (*fyn nhiips* and *i thiips* known to me are those attributed vaguely to some undefined northern dialects by Thomas and Thomas (1989: 48) but, as we saw above, **ei thiips hi* is not evidenced by WDS.
21. The word *balŵn ba'lu:n* would certainly be an improvement on *racŵn*.
22. Hannahs uses the pronunciation [ˈbragdi] to show that internal provection ‘is no longer’ productive in Welsh (154); this pronunciation, however, reflects a learned pronunciation based on a widespread spelling *bragdy* found in current dictionaries (153). The regular traditional pronunciation **brakti** (or else **brakdi**) is still known in the dialects.

23. See the claims to novel solutions in the foreword (xiii) and the conclusion (159–60).
24. Despite a later mention (13) at the beginning of the chapter on phonetics, a preliminary summing-up of the most recent linguistic work on Welsh in the foreword (xi), which points out that the phonology of Welsh has escaped a book-length monograph, curiously neglects to mention Ball and Williams's 2000 *Welsh Phonetics*. Despite its title, Ball and Williams's book has much to say on phonological matters (in contrast to the many books on grammar and syntax mentioned). This probably points to the uneasy relationship between those linguists who choose to describe themselves as 'phoneticians' or else as 'phonologists'.

Abbreviations

- LHEB Jackson, K. H. (1953) *Language and History in Early Britain*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- WDS Thomas, A. R. (2000) *The Welsh Dialect Survey*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.
- WVBD Fynes-Clinton, O. H. (1913) *The Welsh Vocabulary of the Bangor District*. Oxford: author.

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García Alonso, Juan Luis (ed.), *Continental Celtic Word Formation. The Onomastic Evidence*. Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 2013. Pp. 1–234, €50. ISBN 978-84-9012-378-2.

This volume is comprised of the proceedings of a conference held in Salamanca 2–4 September 2011 and follows on a series of other volumes that discuss the linguistic analysis of Continental Celtic onomastic data (Parsons and Sims-Williams, 2000; de Hoz, Luján and Sims-Williams, 2005; García Alonso, 2008).

Manuel Salinas de Frías, ‘Personal onomastics and local society in ancient Lusitania’ (17–35), examines the names of Lusitanian leaders, many of which may have Celtic connections, from the period of the Roman conquest with those attested afterwards, and finds that there is little overlap. He suggests that this may have been the consequence of military defeat and political assimilation.

Patrick Sims-Williams, ‘The Celtic composition vowels *-o-* and *-io-*’ (37–50), studies compound personal names in native epigraphy and embedded in Latin contexts focusing upon the fate of thematic *-o-* and its spread to other stem classes in some detail before turning to compounds in *-io-*. He finds that, unlike Insular Celtic, they were fairly robustly retained, but that those tokens in which other orthographic vowels occur are the result of vowel harmony and similar phenomena. Given that composition vowels likely were often reduced to [ə], a phone that is highly susceptible to coarticulatory effects triggered not only by vowels in neighbouring syllables, but also by flanking consonants (van Bergem, 1994), I am entirely in sympathy with his view that unexpected composition vowels signal attempts to represent genuine linguistic information, and are not simply errors.

Javier de Hoz, ‘A Celtiberian inscription from the Rainer Daehnhardt collection and the problem of the Celtiberian genitive plural’ (51–62), examines a Celtiberian inscription on a tessera hospitalis whose three lines read:

- (1) **Kamaśiośuen**
iKenionKe
śeTanTunoś

Noting that previous attempts to analyse the inscription have failed to yield a satisfying result, he proposes that the final character of the second line should be read as following the end of the third line. This results in a text that can be read as the Celtiberian onomastic formula, nominative singular idionym + genitive plural family name + genitive singular patronym + the abbreviation of the word for ‘son’:

(2) **Kamašioś uen|iKenion śeTanTunoś | Ke**

This looks good,¹ but raises problems in that we would expect the genitive plural desinence to appear as **-um** = /u:m/. The Indo-European genitive plural desinence is now reconstructed as **-oh_xom* on the basis of Ved. *-ām* and GAv. *-āṃ*, both of which often scan as disyllabic, Germanic trimoraic **-ōn*, and Greek circumflex *-ōv̄*. De Hoz does not believe that this evidence is decisive and prefers to set up Indo-European gen. pl. **-om*, which resulted in **-ōm* in thematic stems after contraction of putative **-o-om*. But, by any standard, the comparative evidence is fully decisive and, in any event, Jasanoff (1983: 143) has shown that there is no good evidence for a genitive plural **-om* in Indo-European. In Celtic outside Celtiberian, we do need to set up gen. pl. *-om* as evidenced by Transalp. Celt. *neđđamon* ‘of neighbours’ (RIG L–50) and OIr. *fer* ‘of men’ < **uiron*, but these were generated by a shortening of long vowels before final nasals prior to the raising of IE **/o:/* to Celt. **/u:/* in final syllables outside the part of the speech community that was to become Celtiberian (Eska 2006). De Hoz finds such a rule ad hoc, but it is well known to have occurred independently in Latin and, perhaps less well known, in Slavic (Jasanoff 1983: 144). He would rather posit that a short vowel variant was generalized outside the Celtic of the ancient Iberian Peninsula, while the long vowel variant continued in ancient Iberia. This leads him to think that pIE **/o:/* may have been preserved in Hispano-Celtic in coin legends in forms such as **KonTePaCom** (MLH A.75) and **luTiaKoś** (MLH A.76), which he takes to contain putative gen. pl. *-/o:m/* and nom. pl. *-/o:s/*, respectively, contrary to thematic nominative singular neuter and masculine, respectively, which is the current communis opinio. Since there is but a single word in these coin legends, they are not probative of either view. What de Hoz does think is strong evidence for his view, however, are tokens of the Celtiberian onomastic formula in Latin inscriptions in which the genitive plural family

name terminates in -CVM, -QVM, -VN, -V, -OM, -ON and -O, rather than -ORVM — though forms such as ABILIC|ORVM (CIL ii 2698 do occur beside forms such as ABLIQVM (CIL ii 5783). It does not seem likely to me, however, that we should view -CVM, etc. as tokens of Celtic inflexional material in inscriptions that are otherwise entirely Latinized in language. It is well known that the Latin of the ancient Iberian Peninsula was conservative and that it contains many tokens of archaic gen. pl. -/om/ and -/um/ < *-/o:m/ (Carnoy 1906: 216). As attractive as it would be to find the Celtiberian onomastic formula in this inscription, I cannot but wonder whether the final **Ke** of the second line, in fact, belongs with that line,² and that we have to deal with another obscure form in -**Ke** beside **manKe** (MLH K.8.1), **ἠῆΤοῖKe** (MLH K.9.7) and **nišKe** (MLH K.1.3 i 36).

Patrizia de Bernardo Stempel, ‘The phonetic interface of word formation in Continental Celtic’ (63–83), very reasonably argues that we should not analyse every Continental Celtic form that we encounter as entirely phonemic at face value, but should allow for the kind of phonetic variation that is found in all human languages. Some examples are that the idionym DOIROS (RIG L–133) can be related to Latinized gen. sg. DORIONIS (Celt. nom. sg. **Doriū*) via a process of palatalization of /r/ followed by the development of a palatal on-glide to the /r/ and subsequent loss of the original conditioning /j/, and that *Culunia* is clearly related to *Clunia* via the insertion of an intrusive vowel.³ In an article that covers a tremendous amount of ground, there are inevitably a number of points with which many readers will disagree with the author. For example, Transalp. Celt. δεκαν|τεν ‘tithe’ (e.g. RIG G–183) certainly does not continue putative ***dekantjom*, for the word for ‘tithe’ is simply the *ā*-stem of the ordinal numeral – cf. OIr. *dechmad*, Lat. *decima*, and Gk. δεκάτη – with shortening of the vowel before a final nasal and subsequent fronting of the vowel,⁴ and I see no reason to posit a post-tonic gemination to account for forms such as ἀγωννος (RIG G–156) that occurs only in onomastic material. This clearly is affective gemination of the type also attested, for example, by Gk. Φιλιννος and Κόριννα (Masson 1986). Readers will need to decide which of de Bernardo-Stempel’s proposed phonetic effects and sound changes that they can accept for themselves.

Alexander Falileyev, ‘Going further east. New data, new analysis’ (85–98), deals with some ethnonyms and toponyms containing the suffix -isk- whose Celticity is questionable. He is particularly concerned with

whether the ethnonym *Boisci*, the name of a people who lived near the Danube delta, is related to Celt. *Boii*. *Boisci* is attested in the work of the fifth-century CE historian Priscus and the sixth-century CE historian Jordanes in lists of peoples whom the Huns attacked. One of the peoples is called the *Itumari*, whose name Falileyev derives from Celt. **itu-* (< the nil-grade of **peih_x-* ‘swell up’) and **māro-* ‘great’. The remainder of the article uses historical and archaeological evidence to assess whether Celtic peoples might have inhabited such an eastern location. In the end, Falileyev concludes that while *Boisci* and *Itumari* are linguistically Celtic, it is not possible to determine their precise geographical locations or whether these peoples were Celtic speakers.

In the first part of ‘Two Continental Celtic studies. The vocative of Gaulish, and *Essimnus*’ (99–122), David Stifter argues that, in the Iberian inscriptions of southern France, the Celtic thematic stem idionyms borrowed into Iberian – e.g.g. **aseTile** (MLH B.1.42; cf. Transalp. Celt. gen. sg. *ad̄dedillj* [RIG L–100]) and **ešKinKe** (MLH B.1.268; cf. Latinized Celt. gen. sg. *EXCINGI* [CIL xiii 2613]) – were borrowed from Celtic voc. sg. *-e*. Untermann (1980: 48), on the other hand, suggests that Iber. *-e*, instead, represents an accommodation to Iberian grammar in view of his identification of native idionyms in *-e*, viz., **balKe** (e.g. MLH B.1.60), **bosTe** (e.g. MLH B.1.64), and **ur̄Ke** (MLH B.1.15), which seems sensible to me. Stifter believes that his case is clinched by the fact that Latin names in *-ius*, which make their vocative singulars in *-ī* < **-iġe*, make their counterparts in *-i* in Iberian, e.g. **Kai** (MLH C.7.6) = Lat. *Gaius*, but there are counterexamples, e.g.g., **Kaie** (MLH B.1.327) = *Gaius* and **liKine** (MLH E.7.1) = *Licinius*. In view of the fact that there are also native Iberian idionyms in *-i*, viz., **ar̄Ki** (e.g. MLH B.1.14), **selKi** (MLH B.1.24) and **uni** (e.g. MLH B.1.22), it seems much more likely to me that the names borrowed into Iberian from Celtic, Latin and Greek that ended in *-os/-us/-oç* and *-ios/-ius/-ioç* were accommodated into Iberian grammar with some variation than that Indo-European vocative forms were borrowed as Iberian nominatives.

In the second, and considerably longer part of his article, Stifter argues, on geographic and orthographic grounds, that the idionym *Essimnus*, though a good Celtic etymology can be set up – **eks-imno-* ‘not alike’ – is much more likely to be Raetic or Cammunic in linguistic affiliation.

Pierre-Yves Lambert, ‘Some Gaulish participial formations’ (123–9), first references Transalp. Celt. *ανιατειος* (RIG G–13), which Michel Lejeune

(1985: 40) convincingly interprets as a verbal of necessity in *-tejo-* ‘not to be borrowed’ engraved upon a bowl in a proprietary inscription, and then suggests that a second token perhaps is to be identified in the idiom *ανεχτ[[ο]]λοιαττης*.⁵ He is concerned about the geminated (τ), but it is likely to be a token of affective gemination as so often found in idionyms. He then examines the form *τοουτιους* (RIG G–153), in which Michel Lejeune (1985: 208) took the second (υ) to be a dittography, the resulting *τοουτιος* then being readily translated as ‘citizen’ or ‘tribesman’. After some interesting discussion, Lambert suggests that Lejeune’s emendation should be dispreferred in favour of positing a calque formed on the basis of a Greek magistrate’s name in *-εως*. He cannot offer a possible source form, however, so, though I am always reluctant to favour emendation in an inscription, Lejeune’s analysis still seems highly worthy of consideration to me. Finally, Lambert hesitantly proposes that the theonym *COMEDOVIS* (CIL xii 2446) may be an active perfect participle.

José María Vallejo Ruiz, ‘Celtic personal names in the province of Aquitania. Derivation and composition’ (131–54), surveys the evidence for Celtic onomastics in the Roman province of Aquitania. His article concludes with a valuable appendix of Celtic onomastic elements attested in compound idionyms followed by a substantial list of names whose Celticity is uncertain or to be rejected.

Juan Luis García Alonso, ‘Seeing or believing in a realm of Celtic ghosts’ (155–64), rather than following the traditional approach of onomastic research in seeking etymologies, instead studies ethnonyms derived in *-ones* as found throughout ancient Europe. He finds such derivations almost everywhere, but with significantly different frequencies, the Transalpine, northern British and Hispano-Celts making good use of it, though not as much as the Germanic peoples and those from Macedonia and northern Greece, but the Goidels and British south of Hadrian’s Wall (save for in *Brittones*) not employing it.

Carlos Jordán Cólera, ‘The *-anko-* sequence in Celtiberian anthroponymy’ (165–73), argues convincingly that family names such as **aianCum** do not continue **ai-ŋ-ko-* (Transponat) as originally proposed by Hamp (1989), but instead continue a paradigm nom. sg. **-ō(n)*, gen. sg. **-ōnos* > Celt. **-ū*, **-ānos* by regular sound laws, whence *ko-*derivatives to nasal stems are phonemically *-/a:nko/-*. The paradigm reflected by, e.g. nom. sg. **leTonTu**, gen. sg. **leTonTunoś**, would later have replaced distinctly odd **-ū*, **-ānos*,

while *-/a:nko/-* could continue unaltered subsequent to being reanalysed as a unitary suffix.

Xavier Delamarre, ‘Une recurrence de la toponymie vieille-celtique. Les formations en nasale *-(h₃)on-* faites sur en théonyme du type *Vesontīō (locus) ← Vestonis (deus)*’ (175–80), collects sixty tokens of ancient and medieval toponyms which are derived by affixation of the ‘Hoffmann suffix’, which indicates possession, from theonyms.

Blanca María Prósper, ‘Sifting the evidence. New interpretations on Celtic and non-Celtic personal names of western Hispania in the light of phonetics, composition and suffixation’ (181–200), covers a lot of ground in attempting to sort through often linguistically ambiguous onomastic material from the western Iberian Peninsula and refines analyses that she has previously proposed. Along the way, she makes the interesting observation that there is a strong tendency for the composition vowel in compound names to be syncopated following liquids and proposes that the unusual ordinals for ‘third’ attested by Celtib. **TifiloKum** (MLH K.1.3 ii 11) and Transalp. Celt. **TRILICĪ** (CIL xiii 870) and *trilu* (Rezé; Lambert and Stifter 2012, 149 and 157) may continue a collective **tri-ro-* via dissimilation.

Paul Russell, ‘From compound to derivative. The development of a patronymic “suffix” in Gaulish’ (201–14), examines the morpheme most often written as *-(cno)-*, which has been connected to the roots **ken-* ‘arise’ and **genh₁-* ‘beget’, and finds diagnostic evidence in Goidelic that it must have been phonemic *-/gno/-*. He follows Lambert (1997: 50) in thinking that *-/gno/-* was not usually written with Roman character ⟨gn⟩ or Greek character ⟨γν⟩ because they would have been understood as */ɲn/* as for Latin and Greek speakers, but the audience for these inscriptions would have been Celtic speakers, so I do hesitate about to what extent we should follow this opinion. While engravers of Celtic inscriptions sometimes follow idiosyncratic orthographic rules of the language from which the script was borrowed, e.g. */ɲg/* and */ɲk/* are usually written in Greek characters as Hellenic ⟨γγ⟩ and ⟨νκ⟩, respectively, but sometimes as ⟨νγ⟩ and ⟨νκ⟩. If the voiced plosives in ancient Celtic were phonetically voiceless, as they are in the modern Celtic languages, it is likely that both foreign orthographic practice and Celtic phonetics played a role. Russell goes on to describe the use of this suffix as a patronymic adjective, but also, importantly, as a simple idionym; one wonders whether *λουκοτικνος* (RIG M–200) might have meant something, as in contemporary

English, similar to ‘Lukots Junior’. He goes on to make a compelling case for formations containing the morpheme under discussion as having started as compounds and evolved into suffixal derivations. Finally, Russell turns his attention to the non-onomastic forms Transalp. Celt. acc.sg *CELICNON* (RIG L–13; on a stone block that was part of a building) and dat. sg. *celicnu* (RIG L–51; on a drinking vessel), and attractively associates the forms with the Celtic stem **kēl̥iō-* ‘companion’ plus our morpheme, but one wonders why it then does not appear as ***keliocno-*.

Dagmar S. Wodtko, ‘Preverbs and personal names’ (215–34), interestingly studies idionyms compounded with preverbs especially, but also toponyms and non-onomastic material, in an effort to find evidence for preverbated verbs in Continental Celtic. She characterizes her work as a preliminary study, but her collection of data is significant enough to allow other researchers to join her in this area of study.

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Notes

1. We would normally expect a family name to be a *ko*-derivative, but this is a matter that de Hoz addresses.
2. There are epigraphic reasons to think that this might be the case. If the ⟨**Ke**⟩ character at the end of l. 2 does not belong with the rest of the line, there would have been a lot of room left at the end of the line, yet it is clear that the engraver was willing to break forms across two lines. Furthermore, the ⟨**Ke**⟩ character at the end of l. 2 is engraved above and slightly to the left of the ⟨§⟩ character at the end of l. 3, though there is space to the right and not entirely above ⟨§⟩ to engrave the ⟨**Ke**⟩; see de Hoz’ Figure I. I should like to thank Charlene Eska for calling these issues to my attention.
3. De Bernardo Stempel calls this an epenthetic vowel, but they are employed solely for repairing phonotactically disallowed sequences of phonemes; such tokens clearly represent the insertion of an intrusive vowel.
4. Note also that the name of the dedicator in this inscription is $\epsilon\kappa\iota\lambda\iota\omicron|\varsigma \rho[\text{?}]\omicron\mu\alpha\nu[\text{1}]\omicron\varsigma$, with unaltered *-/jō/-* in both elements of the name.
5. The character in double square brackets may well be a decorative mark.

Abbreviations

- CIL *Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum.*
- MLH A Untermann, J. (1975) *Monumenta linguarum Hispanicarum i, Die Münzlegenden.* Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert.
- MLH B Untermann, J. (1980) *Monumenta linguarum Hispanicarum ii, Die Inschriften in iberischer Schrift aus Südfrankreich.* Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert.
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Ahlqvist, Anders, *Grammatical Tables for Old Irish*. Sydney: The University of Sydney. Celtic Studies Foundation 2013. Sydney Series in Celtic Studies 11. Pp. viii +132. ISBN 978-1-74210-306-8.

Elucidating the Old Irish language is a never-ending, asymptotic journey. Every generation can hope to get closer to a description of its grammatical system, although, owing to its nature as a corpus language, some niches will always remain unsolvable and in the dark. The present book, for which the abbreviation GTOI will be used henceforth, is a good illustration of this asymptotic principle. A first glance into it fills the reader with a sense of familiarity. And indeed, in the preface (vii) its ‘compiler’, as the author humbly refers to himself, spells out expressly where this familiarity has its origin: ‘The present work is fundamentally nothing more than an attempt to modernise [*Old-Irish Paradigms* by Strachan and Bergin].’ In the structure, in the layout, and in the choice of examples for the paradigms this model is obvious. In two important respects the present work does differ from its precursor: ‘references to more recent vital scholarship’ have been added, and there is no section containing glosses. Given the great availability for students today of Early Irish texts of a most diverse nature, this latter lack is not greatly felt. Otherwise, OIP is the measuring stick by which the qualities of GTOI have to be assessed. Since even OIP itself bears witness to the asymptotic movement referred to above, with four revised editions, reference here will be made only to the last of these, undertaken by Osborn Bergin in 1949 and still being reprinted by the Royal Irish Academy.

In perfect alignment with its precursor, the goal of GTOI is to provide a compact, *in nuce* survey of Old Irish morphology; syntax receives only a bare minimum of treatment. Like so many other handbooks of Old Irish (or perhaps all of them), GTOI developed out of handouts for the classes that the author taught, first in Galway, then in Sydney (vii). With regard to model paradigms, additional examples and variants, GTOI is slimmed down in comparison with OIP. Usually only a single paradigm illustrates a class, resulting in a work that serves better as a quick reference guide. Whereas OIP at its time was still meant as a mini-grammar of Old Irish, the intended character of the present book as a companion implies that there are far fewer explanations and notes now in GTOI.

The book opens with a section on ‘Spelling and reading’ (9–14), followed by one on ‘Initial mutations’ (14–16). This is an important improvement on OIP where such sections are missing altogether. In one point, I disagree with the author where he talks about ‘Eclipsis’ (15) and states that this initial mutation of *g*, *b* and *d* results in /n:/ (! obviously a typo for /ŋ/), /m/ and /n:/. While this is clearly true for later Irish, in my view there can be little doubt that in Early Old Irish *ng*, *mb* and *nd* were still biphonemic sequences, word-initially and word-internally.

The sequence of the following chapters adheres to the traditional order. The ‘Grammatical tables’ start with ‘The noun’ (17–28). Compared with OIP, the mutational effects of the inflectional categories are much more clearly presented by superscript L and N following the word. Remarkable is the inclusion of *persan* ‘person’ as an irregularly inflecting \bar{a} -stem (19), although the question may still be asked whether the word does not rather fluctuate between regular \bar{a} - and *n*-stem inflection. The dative and accusative singular in *-ain*, and the genitive and accusative plural in *-an* and *-ana* respectively are a natural hinge between the two classes. The presentation of the various forms of *tech* ‘house’ (27) would have profited from taking on board McCone’s (1994: 79) suggestion about the original distribution of gen. sg./pl. *tige* vs. dat. sg. *taig*. I think it was not a fortunate decision overall to indicate the vocatives in this chapter without the preceding leniting particle *a/á*, without which vocatives are fundamentally never found in the texts. Typologically one could argue that the formation of the vocative in Old Irish involves a circumfix of which the particle is the first and – in the case of the *o*-stem singulars – palatalization is the second component.

Any grammatical description of Old Irish must take into account some amount of synchronic variation. The decision that needs to be taken by each author is how significant a variation is to warrant inclusion in the inflectional tables. In the case of feminine \bar{i} -stem ‘short’ forms of the dative and accusative singular, e.g. dat. sg. *rígain* (MI. 65d13), adverbial *ndadaig* ‘that night’ < **ind adaig* (GOI 161), whatever the diachronic explanation is of the short variant (influence of \bar{a} -stems?, inheritance?), the variation as such is a synchronic fact that would deserve to be mentioned. On the other hand, the intrusion of the ending *-u* into the accusative plural of preponderantly animate consonant stem nouns on the expense of inherited *-a*, which I discussed in a *Festschrift* in honour of the present author (Stifter

2013), is too marginal in the Old Irish period proper to be mentioned in a work like the present one.

Unless it was done with tongue in cheek to demonstrate how prescriptive a grammarian of an obsolete language can be on occasion, reconstructing a full paradigm covering all thirty possible cases of all genders of the consonant-stem adjective *tee té* ‘hot’ (31) is slightly excessive: OIP 21, more soberly, restricts itself to the only two case forms of this adjective that are actually attested. And, after all, all forms of all other known consonant-stem adjectives taken together do not even fill the palm of one hand (McCone 1994: 122).

‘The adjective’ (28–32) is followed by concise sections devoted to various pronominal elements (29–44) and numerals (44–5). Before the big chapter on ‘The verb’ (47–115) begins, the reader finds a page (46) that demonstrates the various types of relative clause constructions of Old Irish, involving a wide variety of formal means of indicating relativity. The formal and semantic types are illustrated by examples from the Old Irish glosses, without identification of the source, but with reference to the paragraph in OIP where the formations are discussed. I must admit that I was not able to see the usefulness of including this section in the book. Without doubt, the relative system is one of the most complicated aspects of Old Irish grammar. A list of various relative constructions, where the readers have to figure out for themselves what kind of constructions the sentences represent, will leave ordinary students bewildered.

Among the verbs, the author avoids choosing any of the previous classifications by using descriptive labels such as ‘weak verb in *-ā-*’ or ‘thematic strong verb’. Again, the overall layout is very practical and purposeful, offering a secure path through the jungle of Old Irish verbal morphology. For the present indicative of *ā*-verbs (47), the 1sg is cited as (·) *marbu* (·) *marbaim*, creating the impression that the ending *-u* is something like the regular or preponderant allomorph and *-aim* a mere variant, which it surely is not. In this case, the discussion would have profited from greater explicitness. If the author has a collection of forms in *-u*, this would be very welcome. As far as I am aware, however, the three examples mentioned by Thurneysen (1921), viz. *marbu*, *ar-choimtiu* and *·caru*, are actually all the examples attested in the Early Irish corpus. I have argued elsewhere that each of the three has its own story and its very own *raison d’être*, which is

not grammatical but stylistic; and that *ar-choimtiu* doesn't even belong to this class (Stifter 2012: 379). The only legitimate 1sg form of the \bar{a} -verbs is *marbaim*.

Staying with the \bar{a} -verbs, only the palatalized pattern *mairbfeá*, etc. is listed for the *f*-future of this class (65). While this is clearly the inherited and preponderant formation in the classic sources of Old Irish, the analogically depalatalized type *íccfaid* is very well established in the same sources also, and should be mentioned as a frequent variant. In the *t*-preterite, the ending of the 3pl is given as *-atar* (74). Again, while this probably accounts for the majority of instances, the short form *-at* (e.g. *do-bertat*) is not a rarity, and would merit mentioning.

My next remark is speculative and relates to the very useful tables of the copula on pp. 80–2: it seems to have gone unnoticed so far that a relative absolute 1pl present indicative of the copula is *possibly* attested in MI. 83c3. In the sentence *innanninnise .i. ámminnim dibataini 7 ammindilachtaí con recam les fortach* [leg. *fortachtae*] *a deo*, the second part has been translated by Stokes and Strachan (1901–3: 280) as ‘.i. we are destroyed and we are orphans, so that we need help from God’. In this analysis, *ammin* is merely the younger allomorph of the 1pl of the copula with the additional *-n* that crept in from the suffixed pronouns. However, this analysis ignores the fact that the variant *ammin* is otherwise absent from Milan and almost entirely absent from Würzburg (eleven examples without *-n* against one with it). Instead, the clause in Milan could be read as explicative to the preceding *innanninnise*, a gloss on Lat. *quales* ‘such’. If it is explicative, it could be a nasalizing relative clause, with an independent relative 1pl copula *ammi* followed by nasalization on the following adjectives, ‘[we are of] these kinds, i.e. [namely] that we are destroyed and that we are orphans, so that we need help from God’.

Like OIP, the present book finishes with very useful tables of some of the most common and – at the same time – most difficult verbs (86–115). The prototonic 1sg present subjunctive of *con-icc* ‘can’ is given as *·cumais*, but no palatalized final consonant is actually expected. Rather, *·cumas* might be expected, and this is probably borne out (at least as regards the second syllable) by *coemos* in *Anecd.* iii 73.19 (quoted after eDIL).

The fact that in the preceding review I have mostly spoken about where I disagree should not detract from the overall value of GTOI. My remarks are simply meant as another step in our common asymptotic approximation

to Old Irish grammar. GTOI contains a lot of very fundamental information about Old Irish and, as such, it can be recommended to every student of the language for quick reference.

David Stifter
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Abbreviations

- GOI Thurneysen, R. (1946) *A Grammar of Old Irish*, Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.
- OIP Strachan, J. (1949) *Old-Irish Paradigms and Selections from the Old-Irish Glosses*. Fourth edn., revised by O. Bergin. Dublin: Royal Irish Academy.

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De Vries, Ranke, *A Student's Companion to Old Irish Grammar*.
San Bernardino: CA. 2013. Pp. ix + 173. ISBN-10: 0615783104

This little book, as the foreword and the back cover indicate, has grown out of teaching material used over several years in Old Irish grammar courses. The presentational style of oral teaching has been retained throughout, including many encouraging addresses to student readers.

The book is intended to be used as a 'companion' to more detailed descriptions of Old Irish grammar (e.g. GOI, McCone 2005) which are systematically referred to in all chapters. Here, students are presented with a basic overview that should be supplemented by the other works mentioned.

After a foreword (viii f.) and an introduction (1–13), there are nine chapters of grammar, a short chapter for 'Further reading' (166f.) and a useful index of the grammatical features discussed (168–72).

The introduction is divided into 'Phonological and orthographical concepts' (1–9) and 'Syntactical concepts' (10–13). The first of these paragraphs gives some hints to the sounds of Old Irish, their spelling and the phenomenon of initial mutations. While these are basic for further study, they are notoriously complex, and only a cursory treatment is attempted here: for fuller descriptions, students must turn to their tutor or other reference works.¹ The second paragraph shortly mentions a few grammatical terms like 'subject', 'verb', 'adjective', again in very simple terms; the book thereby addresses the growing number of victims of educational systems with no knowledge whatever of any language, linguistic analysis or terminology. Needless to say, this discussion must again be eclectic and supplemented by additional comments in teaching.

The following nine chapters, the core of the book, treat grammatical categories in a rather traditional way under the following titles: I 'The article' (14–21), II 'The noun' (22–47), III 'The adjective' (48–58), IV 'Numerals' (59–65), V 'Pronouns' (66–84), VI 'The deictic particle *í* and demonstratives' (85–8), VII 'The verb' (89–141), VIII 'Relative clauses' (142–54), IX 'The verbs "to be": copula and substantive verb' (155–65). Apart from chapter VIII on relative clauses, syntactical information is integrated in the relevant chapters that deal with morphology as well; remarks on the syntax of the verbal noun are found in chapter VII on the verb. The classification of nominal

and verbal stem-classes mostly follows GOI, but references to other works are added where appropriate.

For many, if not all categories, paradigms are provided and additional examples are often adduced. Examples are sometimes taken from original Old Irish texts, but are often artificial (in the style of e.g. Quin 1975) in order to illustrate grammatical features in a simple and clear manner. In some cases, teachers of Old Irish will supplement the grammatical explanations by further illustrations. Occasional references to Modern Irish are helpful for students with a basic knowledge of that language; all beginners will benefit from cross-references to phenomena already discussed in previous chapters and some short repetitions.

The general presentational style is, as already mentioned, intentionally informal; grammatical information is given in a descriptive and prescriptive way. Historical developments are mentioned, when it is felt that they may contribute to the understanding of synchronic facts, but no attempt is made to adduce them systematically; readers will turn to (e.g.) GOI for further explanations. Nor is any attempt made to provide a consistent linguistic approach, e.g. by distinguishing between ‘sounds’ and ‘letters’. The book aims at conveying a basic grammatical overview for practical use.

Like most books, this one contains some typing mistakes, oversights and omissions. These can be confusing for beginners when they occur in Old Irish forms,² but can easily be corrected by a tutor or a short additional list of errata.

The strength of the book lies in its simple style, conciseness and indefatigable display of good humour and encouragement. Students will doubtless profit from working through this ‘Companion’ and be grateful for the directions it provides on the long road to Old Irish grammar.

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Notes

1. The so-called h-mutation, which is often invoked in nominal paradigms in chapters II and III, must surely strike readers as one of the most esoteric grammarian constructs.

2. E.g. p. 25 acc. sing. *chenél*, p. 39 *rega*, p. 41 *dá náimtib*, p. 72 *ní chara*, p. 81 *sibh fadeisne*, p. 111 *no berainn*.

Abbreviation

GOI Thurneysen, R. (1946) *A Grammar of Old Irish*. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.

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McCone, K. (2005) *A First Old Irish Grammar and Reader. Including an Introduction to Middle Irish*. Maynooth: Department of Old and Middle Irish, National University of Ireland.

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Il medioirlandese/Middle Irish. A Translation into Italian of the Gaelic Text An Mheán-Ghaeilge by Liam Breatnach. Translated from the Gaelic with Notes by Elisa Roma. With a Foreword by Ruairí Ó hUiginn. Lewiston/Queenstown/Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2013. Pp. viii + 304, USA list price: \$149.95, UK list price: £99.95 (Hardcover). ISBN-13: 978-0-7734-4472-0; ISBN-10: 0-7734-4472-6.

The original behind the present translation, the chapter ‘An Mheán-Ghaeilge’ by Liam Breatnach in the collective history of the Irish language *Stair na Gaeilge* (Breatnach 1994), is the only existing comprehensive grammar of the Middle Irish language (c.900–c.1200). In being the first to rely almost exclusively on those texts that are preserved in contemporary manuscripts, Breatnach (1994: §1.2) followed the lead of what is still the standard grammar of the preceding linguistic period, (Classical) Old Irish, by Thurneysen (GOI). Some earlier comprehensive treatments of aspects of Middle Irish are briefly referred to by Ó hUiginn in his introduction to the work under review (iv), including what is termed ‘the only [previous] grammar for this period of Irish’ by Dottin (1913) (cf. Breatnach 1994: §1.2); to this might be added the complete analysis of the language of *Aislinge Meic Con Glinne* by Jackson (1990: 73–140). While Thurneysen’s *A Grammar of Old Irish* had appeared first in German and then in its present revised form in English, Breatnach’s equally important standard work of reference for Middle Irish was published in Irish and has thus been less accessible among scholars outside Ireland. For this reason alone, the present, first-ever translation of Breatnach’s grammar is to be welcomed for making it accessible to a wider readership.

Roma makes a further important contribution by appending to her translation 233 notes of her own, and it is these notes that form the main remit of the present review. From the purely formal perspective, ease of consultation would have been enhanced by presenting them as footnotes, not as endnotes (occupying twenty pages, ‘Note della curatrice’, 249–68), and also by numbering them more conventionally in Arabic, not in Roman numerals.¹ As for their content, many of the notes provide useful additional references. The largest group of these are attached to Breatnach’s own cross-references to other sections in the original *Stair na Gaeilge*, most (eighty-two) of them

concerning McCone's chapter 'An tSean-Ghaeilge agus a réamhstair' (1994), and here generally Roma just identifies the corresponding page in her own previously published annotated Italian translation (McCone and Roma 2005).² Other notes provide literal translations of Irish words or phrases,³ such as note xviii glossing *mallrugud* (§3.2) as 'Lett. "ritardo, attardamento"', or note lxxix rendering *nech is līa seóit ⁊ moíne ⁊ indmassa andú-sa* 'qualcuno che ha più beni, tesori e ricchezze di me' in §6.16 as 'Lett. "qualcuno che sono più numerosi i beni... di me"'. In these, Roma invariably displays an accurate understanding of the structure of the Irish originals and thus lends most valuable assistance to the reader, with very few exceptions: in the last-quoted note lxxix, for example, the construction should have been explicitly identified as continuing the genitival relative as described in GOI §507 (cf. section (b) for the present case, where Old Irish, however, would still show the plural copula *ata* agreeing with the original subject *seóit ...*), and the translation clarified accordingly to, for instance, 'qualcuno di cui sono ...'.⁴ Regarding '*ba fó līth luidi* "ba ámharach a chuaigh sé", SR 3143' (Breatnach 1994: §12.61), which Roma translates as 'andò sotto buon auspicio' and in note clxxxix explains further as 'Lett. "fu sotto buon auspicio che andò"', there appears to be a misunderstanding of *fó*: this is not simply the preposition *fo* ('sotto'), and while formally *fó* could represent the combination of *fo* 'under' and *a* 'his', in this particular context it may be better taken as the adjective *fó* 'good',⁵ thus literally 'it was good luck by which he went' or 'it was luckily that/how he went'.

Various notes provide welcome explanations of linguistic and other terms and phenomena, such as 'macron' (§1.14), 'Cioè it trattino sovrascritto' (n. vi), or a more extended consideration of the use of the Irish terms *caite* (*simplí*) 'simple preterite' and *foirfe* 'perfect' (referring to §12.27) and their Italian equivalents *passato* (*semplice*) and *perfetto*, as well as their partially different application to Old Irish and Middle Irish, respectively. In a few of these, the reader might have benefitted from appropriate references. Thus, note viii deals with *comhardadh* 'rhyme', but instead of referring to only to Knott (1957), who is concerned with the Classical Modern Irish period, Murphy (1961) would have been more apposite for the somewhat different rules of Middle Irish. Further highly useful notes, but without references, are, for instance, nos. x identifying *Fánad* as a place-name, xvi on the rhyme type *rinn ⁊ airdrinn*, xxii on the metrical term *cheville*, clxxxviii on (Primitive

Irish) vowel lowering, cciii on the idiomatic construction *cid t̄athar dam-sa* ‘why is one/are people angry with me?’ (without mentioning the crucial fact that this involves, or at least reflects, a nasalizing relative construction, as explained in GOI §§779.2), and ccv on the comparative construction with *indás*. By contrast, various other notes do provide, or consist entirely of, very useful additional references, such as note xxiv on epenthetic vowels in certain consonant groups (where ‘nelle varietà irlandesi moderne’ might have been enlarged to include Scottish Gaelic), or cxvi on the Old Irish *mad tú* construction exemplified by *dia mbāmur mad tū leis*, ‘when we, I and thou, were with him’ (as translated in GOI §402 n.).

While some of these notes are appropriately limited to brief explanations, many others go into more detail. Thus, Breatnach’s references to other chapters in the original *Stair na Gaeilge* (other than McCone’s, see above) are invariably enlarged in Roma’s notes to include summaries and some discussion of the respective authors’ arguments; compare, for instance, nos. xiv on the right-shift in the pronunciation of some vowels and diphthongs observable from Middle Irish onwards, xxi on the change *gáe > ga* etc.,⁶ or xxxi on post-verbal object lenition. In the latter, the reader will welcome Roma’s summary of the detailed rules laid down in the Early Modern Irish *Irish Grammatical Tracts* as reported by McManus (1994: §3.2 (a)). However, since these are more schematic than those observable for (Old and) Middle Irish, the reader would have been even better served by a summary also of Hessen’s (1914) findings for Old Irish. Further detailed explanations include note lxxvi on *de/-te* ‘thereby’ after a comparative (see GOI §§247 (b), 378; as for ‘forma perciò in origine tonica’, add a reference to Breatnach 2003); cxix on the use of object infixes to express some persons of the passive: here Vendryes (1956: 188–90) should be compared, who derives this usage not from a formal assimilation of the subject of the passive to the object of active verbs, but from an alternative impersonal function of the passive capable of governing a direct object. In the brief note cxlix referring to ‘la sostituzione della forma deuterotonica con quella prototonica’ already in Old Irish, when vowel-final preverbs (mainly *to-* and *ro-*) stand before a vowel at the beginning of the stressed part of the verb, this phenomenon could have been differentiated more clearly from the generalization of all prototonic stem-forms that began to spread only in Middle Irish. It is for this purpose that Schrijver (1997: 113, n. 1) prefers to avoid the term ‘prototonic’ for the former

(e.g. clause-initial Old Irish *tuc* alternating with *do-uc* ‘has brought’) and proposes ‘contracted deuterotonic’ instead. And while the detailed note ccxxi on *os* (pl. *ot*) ‘and’ before a stressed pronoun, as ‘forse una forma accorciata della congiunzione *ocus*’, includes an appropriate reference to DIL, mention should also be made of Binchy (1983: 78–9), who argues that *os* cannot have been ‘shortened’ from *ocus* but must be of different origin.

Finally, there is a range of notes in which Roma offers valuable corrections and further suggestions of her own. Some of these address formal oversights and other matters of detail, see xxvii and ccxx on forms misplaced in a list, xxviii, clxvi and cc on slightly inaccurate or accidentally mistyped terminology and cxxvii concerning an overly narrow definition, and note lxxiv argues for preference of ‘possessive pronoun’ over ‘possessive adjective’. Note lxxxi offers an interesting proposal to explain the observation that while there is an overall tendency in Middle Irish to generalize spellings with single *n* for the original article forms *ind* and *in* (*n*-), ‘it is remarkable how rarely historical *nd* and *nn* are confused in spellings of the article’ (my translation from Breatnach 1994: §7.7). Roma suggests that due to the proclitic nature of the article, the Old Irish leniting form *ind* before vowels and *r*-, *l*- and *n*- (as well as silent *f*- followed by one of the above) was not subject to the late Old to Middle Irish assimilation *nd* > *nn*, but ‘rappresentava probabilmente una sequenza di due consonanti’ – most likely implying that the original *d* was protected in this special pattern when introducing the stressed syllable. Note cvii elucidates the ‘genitival’ use of the infixed pronoun, in the rare Middle Irish example *ros geib sroigled 7 essorcon* [‘he began to lash and strike them’] adduced by Breatnach (1994: §10.3), as a kind of raising of the pronoun from the infinite verb to the finite verb and helpfully compares the Italian *comincia a colpirli* > *li comincia a colpire*.

Roma’s thorough approach is further illustrated by note ccxxv, in which she comments on Breatnach’s (1994: §14.2) single example of a singular verb agreeing with a plural subject, *at-ráigestar fir Hérend uile*, meaning ‘all the men of Ireland were afraid’ according to Breatnach’s Irish translation: here she points out not only that this isolated case might simply be the result of a spelling mistake for pl. *at-ráigestar*, but more importantly that the context of this sentence actually favours the alternative rendering (of the full phrase *atráigestar fir Hérend uile do thíchtain dá saigid*) as ‘he feared that all the men of Ireland would come and attack [him]’ (O’Rahilly 1967: 93, 229). Her

final remark, ‘l’assenza di accordo di numero caratterizza le fasi successive dell’irlandese’, however, might have been supported by a reference. Note xx perceptively comments on one of Breatnach’s examples for late Old and Middle Irish contraction of hiatus, ‘*láid* > *lád* “chuireadh”’ (1994: §3.2), in suggesting that unless this is meant to be an imperfect form, ‘chuireadh’ appears to be an oversight for intended *cuireadh* to translate either a perfect passive or, as translated more completely in ‘*lád* “cuireadh sé”’ (ibid.: §11.14), an imperative. And note ci deals with the suggestion – as reported by Breatnach (1994: §9.3) – that the nasalizing variant of preverbal *ma(d)*- ‘well’, namely *ma n-*, ‘may derive from confusion with *imme n-*’ (Greene and Kelly 1976: 47, n. 3). Roma rightly points out that, regardless of whether ‘*imme n-*’ is intended for the preverb *imm-* in a nasalizing relative clause or in fact for the reciprocal prefix *imma n-* (see GOI §841 n.), it is difficult to define the semantic foundation for this assumed analogy. Instead, therefore, she proposes to derive Middle Irish *ma n-* from a formal confusion of two constructions of similar meaning, *maith* + nasalizing relative in cleft sentences (GOI §383) and proclitic *mad-* before verbs. Semantically, this is clearly preferable; however, since these two constructions originally also involved different verbal forms – cf. the construed examples *is maith do-ghní ...* ‘it is good how he does ...’, ‘it is well that he does ...’, with a relative verb, vs. with dependent verb *mad-dénai ...* ‘he does ... well’ –, it would still need to be defined in more detail how and when the proposed analogy could operate in spite of this structural difference.

The present reviewer is happy to report that any inaccuracies or oversights in this book are truly few and far between. Note lxxxv explains the structure of the composite numeral *cōiciur ar cethri fichtib* [‘eighty-five people’] (Breatnach 1994: §8.5) as ‘cinque persone ... su quattro ventine’. However, *ar* in this use lenites (left unmarked in the present example) and can therefore not be taken as a form of *for* (regardless of how this were to be envisaged as having been reduced to Old Irish *ar*) to justify the literal translation ‘su’ (also found in note lxxxviii) = ‘on’. In this, Roma may have been subconsciously influenced by the Modern Irish reflex of this preposition, *ar* ‘on’. However, while the corresponding usage in British and other languages confirms that ‘on’ is a viable option to construe such numerals (Greene 1992: 499, 541, 545, 547), *ar* at various stages of Goidelic means literally ‘in front of’ (ibid.: 503f.). Concerning the two forms of the 3 sg. imperative of *téit* ‘goes’, namely

téiged and *táet*, listed by Breatnach (1994: §12.24), note clxxiii comments that *táet* ‘è la forma (irregolare) originaria’; true, but of a different verb, i.e. *do-tét* ‘comes’, while the original form for *tét* is *tét*. Equally minor, and rare, are any typographical errors I have noticed: for ‘spiede’ on 30 (§3.9), *leg.* spiedo; for ‘in’, 268, n. cccxxviii, *leg.* *i n-* or *iⁿ*; for ‘*kne*’, 195 (with note clxxxvi confirming ‘*sic ms.*’), *leg.* *kl-ne* (Breatnach 1994: §12.73, and *sic MS*); and in the bibliography in the entry for Sommerfelt 1922, for ‘195’ *leg.* 175 (and the title of the article should be completed by prefixing ‘Carl Marstrander :’).

It is clear from the foregoing remarks that by providing this annotated translation of Liam Breatnach’s ‘An Mheán-Ghaeilge’, Elisa Roma has not only made the standard reference work on the Middle Irish language available to a wider audience, but by adding a substantial set of thorough and important notes she has produced what amounts to a highly reliable fresh edition in Italian. Some shortcomings in detail outlined above cannot detract from this overall entirely positive assessment. The price of \$149.95/£99.95 listed on the publisher’s website⁷ will come as a shock to most potential buyers – contrast the widely quoted standard price for Roma’s similar translation of the previous chapter in *Stair na Gaeilge* (McCone and Roma 2005) of €31 (soft-cover) – but this is quoted specifically for the hard-cover version, while the sleeve attached to the soft-cover copy reviewed here states reassuringly that ‘soft-cover copies are priced at \$49.95 (US)’.

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Notes

1. On occasion, this even leads to visually awkward clashes such as ‘*no*^{ccxix}’ (p. 129), in which n. cxxix – found on p. 260 – serves to explain that the suprascript ‘ⁱ’ denotes lenition; cf. similarly notes *cix* and *ccxxiii*.
2. Beginning with n. ii. Some further notes point directly to McCone and Roma (2005), unfortunately without giving the corresponding references to McCone’s original (1994), such as n. xi.
3. Some short translations are instead inserted directly into the main text and marked by inclusion in ‘[]’, as explained in n. iii (on §1.6; cf. §3.2 on p. 26, where in addition, n. xix is directly attached). It is not clear why these were not

equally relegated to notes, especially since, as they stand, they are not visually differentiated from Breatnach's own additions in '[]', such as in §3.4.

4. In n. clv, the genitival relative construction is correctly translated, but again, reference could have been made to GOI §507 (c) n., where in fact the example under discussion is cited.
5. See DIL s.v., especially 175.41–4.
6. With a rare instance of misrepresentation, in that McManus (1994, §4.13) had assigned words like *ga/gaoi* not to the 'flessione dei nomi in *-io/-iā*', = his section A dealing with *céile*, etc., but to an entirely separate class of monosyllabic words ending in a vowel or diphthong (section B).
7. <https://mellenpress.com/mellenpress.cfm?bookid=8817&pc=9>.

Abbreviations

- DIL *Dictionary of the Irish Language. Based Mainly on Old and Middle Irish Materials (and Contributions to a Dictionary of the Irish Language)*. Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1913–75 (compact edition 1983).
- GOI Thurneysen, R. (1946) *A Grammar of Old Irish*. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies (reprinted with supplement 1975).
- Stair na Gaeilge* McCone, K., McManus, D., Ó Háinle, C., Williams, N. and Breatnach, L. (eds.) (1994) *Stair na Gaeilge in ómós do P[h]ádraig Ó Fiannachta*. Maigh Nuad: Roinn na Sean-Ghaeilge, Coláiste Phádraig, Maigh Nuad.

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Simon Rodway, *Dating Medieval Welsh Literature: Evidence from the Verbal System*. Aberystwyth: CMCS Publications. 2013. Pp. ii + 344, £30. ISBN 978-0-9557182-5-0.

In view of the fairly general title of Simon Rodway's book I think it is important to define at the outset what readers will get, and what they won't get: as Rodway himself points out, they won't get 'a list of texts with dates' (169) – what they get instead is a highly valuable and wide-ranging account of appropriate methodologies and philological tools for dating texts, or a tour of the 'philological institution', as Rodway calls it (169). This is based on data from two corpora, the datable poetry of the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Poets of the Princes and the undated prose texts in thirteenth-century manuscripts. There is a one-page list of the approximate dates of linguistic developments in the language of the court poetry, with well-considered caveats (166), and a discussion of the date of a single prose text, namely *Culhwch ac Olwen* (168–70). For this text, Rodway had suggested a date in an earlier publication (Rodway 2005), and on careful reconsideration based on the evidence of the morphology of the regular verb he is still inclined to place it in the mid- to late twelfth century (169). He points out, however, that significant uncertainties remain about the linguistic features that would have characterized the original version and that the date of *Culhwch ac Olwen*, as well as of the other Middle Welsh prose tales, needs to be left undecided for the time being (170). In his view, the dating of texts rests on 'balances of probability' (170), and the balanced and sceptical explication of the manifold methodological and philological problems of dating texts marks his approach in his book throughout. Readers will find a wealth of information on how to obtain and assess these 'balances of probability', a substantial introduction to methods for the dating of texts (1–34), a survey of the corpora used (35–41), in-depth philological analyses of the verbal forms attested in the corpora (42–84), of the distribution of absolute and conjunct forms (85–116), of *-ydd* as an ending of 3 sg. pres. indic. in Old and Middle Welsh (117–27), of the distribution and development of 3 sg. pret. *-wys/-ws* (128–53), and of the origin and spread of *-awdd* (154–65), as well as a conclusion (166–74). Appendix 1 then provides a comprehensive catalogue of the verbal forms in the corpora sorted by morphological category and by attestation in poetry or

prose (175–282), and Appendix 2 organizes these forms under the appropriate 1 sg. pres. indic. (283–318). A bibliography (319–44) concludes the volume.

In the first chapter, Rodway surveys methods appropriate for dating texts. His competent and sensible treatment will become required reading, and further profits from instructive sidelights on related problems of the dating of medieval Irish texts, which evinces Rodway's impressive command of Irish philology and literary studies. The obscure object of desire is the date of the composition of the 'earliest written version of a text' (2, n. 4), and the two major difficulties for its delimitation are missing, or uncertain, attributions to an author and the fact that many texts are generally older than the manuscripts in which they are transmitted. Dating criteria in such cases may be either external and historical, or linguistic. Reliable external criteria include, according to Rodway, 'an early attribution to a historically identifiable author, a dedication to a known patron, or unambiguous references to contemporary events. "Submerged" (or "drowned") references [to the author's time] should be placed much further down the pecking order' (9). Since 'languages are closed systems which follow observable rules' (10), the major advantage of linguistic data for dating purposes is that it is 'open to a level of proof entirely lacking in the case of so-called "historical" data' (33). But Rodway duly reminds readers that chronology is not necessarily the only potential explanation for linguistic variation, other factors include dialect, register (particularly relevant in the case of poetry with alleged difficulties for comprehension) and the fluidity of medieval texts.

The two corpora used by Rodway for his study consist of the court poetry of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as well as of the prose texts in manuscripts dating to the thirteenth century. The former provides the chronological yardstick, since most of the poems are attributed to known and datable poets. In order to chart linguistic developments within the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in more detail, this poetic corpus is further divided into four groups, each roughly spanning fifty years (see 35–8 for the groups and 38–41 for the thirteenth-century manuscripts and the texts transmitted in them). To the list of editions of such texts may be added Mittendorf 1996, the tenth miracle of the Virgin Mary from Peniarth 14, the story of Mary of Egypt, with corrigenda to Jones's edition.

The third chapter takes readers into the philological institution proper, with in-depth analyses of verbal forms and their origin and development in order to

establish their historical value and their relevance for dating purposes. Here, all finite verbal forms (excluding only forms of the irregular verbs *bot*, *mynet*, *dyuot* and *gwneuthur*) in the two corpora are considered. Verbs from the editions in *Cyfres Beirdd y Tywysogion* are given in the edited forms, but philological problems arising from such normalization are duly discussed wherever necessary, whereas verbs from the prose texts are given as transmitted in the manuscripts. The assessment of verbal forms in rhyming position presents its own ambiguities: on the one hand they may be less likely to have been tampered with by scribes, but on the other they may have been specifically chosen for rhyming purposes. Rodway also points to the possibility of a predisposition of individual poets to employ unusual forms (for example 55 on *Cynddelw* and *Dafydd Benfras*, and also 71, n. 221, on *Dafydd Benfras* again). Rodway's up-to-date survey of etymological research on Welsh verbal endings will become an indispensable work of reference. He remains agnostic with regard to the historical status of the much discussed impersonal form *-(h)awr* (62–4), and refers in his discussion of the absolute-conjunct distinction in the following chapter to a later development in Welsh, 'whereby the ending *-awd* (like the related (but not necessarily absolute) endings *-(h)awnt* (3 plural) and *-(h)awr* (passive)) came to be considered as a future form ... supported by the occurrence of *-awd* in prophetic poetry from fifteenth-century manuscripts' (114). With regard to absolute forms more generally, Rodway suggests that these may have survived into the twelfth century (115), and they appear to have lingered on even longer in prophetic and gnomic poetry (see 108). Note that instances of 'subject-initial' (99, 104) are later re-classified as *nominativus pendens* (109).

In the fifth chapter, Rodway surveys the distribution in Old and Middle Welsh of 3 sg. pres. indic. forms with the ending *-ydd*, originally a relative form with an enclitic relative marker. Based on detailed philological discussions of the altogether twenty-eight forms which may show this ending, of which he rejects twelve in the end as probably not being 3 sg. or verbal forms at all, he suggests that 'as late as the closing decades of the thirteenth century, poets were occasionally using the old relatives in *-ydd*, still in relative clauses, but now following relative particles, *a*, *y*, *ny* or *na*, and sometimes attached to historically compound verbs' (127), and he considers such forms to be 'fake archaisms' used for exotic effect and/or rhyme (*ibid.*)

Chapter 6 treats the complex and confusing distribution and development of 3 sg. pret. *-wys* and *-ws*. Rodway argues that *-ws* was the original form and

that *-wys* was a secondary development, which was borrowed into poetry for the purpose of rhyme (133, 137, 141). The chronology of *-ws* > *-wys* would be different from that of passive *-wyd* > *-wd* (144). Finally, Rodway suggests that the form *eglys* may be a separate lexeme beside *eglwys*, and not a reduced form of the latter, adopted from VLat. *eclīsia* or French *église* (152).

In chapter 7 Rodway revisits the origin and spread of the 3 sg. pret. ending *-awdd*. He summarizes the convincing arguments advanced for *lladdawdd* 's/he killed' as the form from which this ending was extrapolated. By around 1300 it began to spread in both poetry and prose, as his comparison of the incidence of the competing endings *-w(y)s* and *-awdd* in the two corpora indicates. He notes, however, that this picture is complicated by the high number of forms in *-awdd* (19 per cent) in the mid-thirteenth-century manuscript Llanstephan 1, and the probability that its exemplar of between c.1200 and c.1250 already contained 'a sizable minority' (163) of such forms. Further complications are caused by the high incidence of *-w(y)s* in two (early) fourteenth-century prose manuscripts, Cotton Cleopatra B.v, Part I and Peniarth 45, and Rodway airs the possibility that this ending may here be a dialect marker (see 165).

In the final chapter Rodway addresses the vital question of the application to prose texts of the list of datable developments in the language of court poetry he is able to supply as a result of his investigations. Taking the text in the 'earliest manuscript of *Llyfr Iorwerth* [i.e. Cotton Caligula A.iii] to be a typical specimen of mid-thirteenth-century Welsh prose' (167), he concludes on the basis of a comparison of its verbal system with that of thirteenth-century poets of group III and IV respectively that the two systems are very similar, but that 'a certain amount of conservatism is detectable in the poetry, with changes in some case lagging behind prose to the tune of thirty or forty years or so' (168).

Where do we stand now at the end of this extended guided tour of the philological institution? The dating of medieval Welsh texts without attribution to named and datable authors remains a challenge, and the number of relevant variables is high. Simon Rodway's careful analysis of variables from the verbal system impressively attests to the manifold insights to be derived from corpus-based, quantitative studies, for the task at hand and beyond. Such studies have two prerequisites, the availability of suitable corpora of texts and philological competence for their analysis. Various corpora of Welsh

texts of different genres and dates have become available over the years, and some more will become available soon, but in order to be exploited to their full potential these need the specific philological mastery that Simon Rodway brings to this task in *Dating Medieval Welsh Literature*.

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