Abbreviations and references

Abbreviations are those of the *Dictionary of the Irish language* and *Contributions to a dictionary . . .* (Royal Irish Academy, Dublin 1913–75) (abbreviated *DIL*) and the *Bibliographie linguistique/. . .* (Utrecht–Bruxelles (etc.) 1939–), with the addition of the following:

*AU*²: *The Annals of Ulster (to A.D. 1131)*, ed. S. Mac Airt and G. Mac Niocaill (Dublin 1983).
CGH: *Corpus genealogiarum Hiberniae*, vol. 1, ed. M. A. O'Brien (Dublin 1962, 1976).
CGSH: *Corpus genealogiarum sanctorum Hiberniae*, ed. P. Ó Riain (Dublin 1985).
CIIC: *Corpus inscriptionum insularum Celticarum*, 2 vols, ed. R. A. S. Macalister (Dublin 1945, 1949).
ECMW: *The early Christian monuments of Wales*, V. E. Nash-Williams (Cardiff 1950).
EIHM: *Early Irish history and mythology*, T. F. O'Rahilly (Dublin 1946).
GOI: *A grammar of Old Irish*, R. Thurneysen (Dublin 1946).
GPC: *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* (Caerdydd 1950–).
GPN: *Gaulish personal names*, D. E. Evans (Oxford 1967).
Hamp 1983–4: E. Hamp, 'Miscellanea Celtica: Welsh *gŵydd* "wild" and IE guṇa'. *SCelt.* 18/19, 128–32.
IEW: *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, 2 vols, J. Pokorny (Bern, München 1959, 1969).
Jackson 1950: K. H. Jackson, 'Notes on the Ogam inscriptions of southern Britain', in C. Fox and B. Dickins (eds), *The early cultures of north-west Europe, H.M. Chadwick memorial studies* (Cambridge 1950), 199–213.
Jackson 1950–1: K. Jackson, 'Primitive Irish *u* and *b*', *EC* 5 105–15.
JCHAS: *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*.
Korolev: A. A. Korolev, *Drevnejšie pamjatniki irlandskogo jazyka* (Moskva 1984).
LEIA: *Lexique étymologique de l'irlandais ancien*, J. Vendryes (etc.) (Dublin, Paris 1959–).
LHEB: *Language and history in early Britain*, K. Jackson (Edinburgh 1953).
MacNeill 1909: J. MacNeill, 'Notes on the distribution, history, grammar, and import of the Irish Ogham inscriptions', *PRIA* 27 C, 329–70.
MacNeill 1931: E. MacNeill, 'Archaisms in the Ogham inscriptions', *PRIA* 39 C, 33–53.
McManus 1986: D. McManus, 'Ogam: archaizing, orthography and the authenticity of the manuscript key to the alphabet', *Ériu* 37, 1–31.
Motta 1981: F. Motta, 'Note su alcuni testi ogamici posteriori al CIIC', in E. Campanile (ed.), *Nuovi materiali per la ricerca indoeuropeistica* (Pisa 1981), 125–38.
Pokorny 1918: J. Pokorny, 'Zur Chronologie der Umfärbung der Vokale im Altirischen', *ZCP* 12, 415–26.
PRIA: *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* (Dublin).
SIE: *Studies in Irish epigraphy*, 3 vols, R. A. S. Macalister (London 1897, 1902, 1907).
Thurneysen 1912: R. Thurneysen, Review of MacNeill 1909, *ZCP* 8, 184–5.
Thurneysen 1937: R. Thurneysen, 'Zum Ogom', *PBB* 61, 188–208.
VGKS: *Vergleichende Grammatik der keltischen Sprachen*, 2 vols, H. Pedersen (Göttingen 1909, 1913).

OLD IRISH *BÉ* 'WOMAN'

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There are two reflexes of the PIE word for woman in Old Irish. The first, directly cognate with Gk. *γυνή* (Boeot. *βανά*), Go. *qino*, OCS *žena*, OPr. *genna*, Arm. *kin*, Toch. B *śana*, and perhaps Ved. *jáni-*, is the irregular feminine noun *ben*, gen. *mná*, dat.–acc. *mnaí* (archaic also *bein*), pl. nom.–acc. *mná*, gen. *ban*, dat. *mnáib*. Indo-Europeanists and Celticists need no introduction to the Old Irish declensional forms, which supply the decisive proof, if any were needed, that the corresponding PIE lexeme was not an ordinary eh_2-stem ('*ā*-stem') like the majority of derived feminines, but an ablauting proterokinetic h_2-stem with nom. sg. $*g^{u}\acute{e}n\text{-}h_2$ and gen. sg. $*g^{u}n\text{-}\acute{e}h_2\text{-}s$.[1]

Separate from this word, though obviously related, is the invariant neuter (later feminine) *bé* (*n*-).[2] Unlike *ben*, which is freely employed in all contexts where the meaning 'woman' or 'wife' is required, *bé* is a term of very restricted use, occurring mainly in poetic and legal language (cf. *Bé Find* (also *Bé Bind*) 'White Woman' (name of the mother of Fróech), *bé bithmaith* 'ever-excellent woman' (epithet of St Bridget), *bé c[h]arna* 'harlot', etc.). Since Meid 1966 (pp 271–2) and even earlier, it has been usual to refer *bé* to a PIE root noun, further evidence for which is sometimes adduced from the Hittite word for woman, nom. sg. *SAL-(an-)za*, gen. *SAL-(na-)aš*, acc. *SAL-(na-)an*. Various paradigms, some with ablaut, have been proposed for this word in the protolanguage. Szemerényi (1963, 48), without explicit reference to Irish, envisages an original $*g^{u}\bar{e}n/*g^{u}enos$; Meid (*loc. cit.*) and Hamp (1979) assume a neuter $*g^{u}en/*g^{u}en\text{-}s$; Schindler (1972, 33) sets up an animate $*g^{u}\acute{o}n/*g^{u}\acute{e}n\text{-}s$, with $*g^{u}\acute{o}n$ later replaced by $*g^{u}ŋ$ (> $*g^{u}en$) in the nom. sg. under the influence of the neuter *n*-stems (cf. *ainm* 'name' < **-men* < **-mŋ*, gen. *anm(a)e* < **-mens*). The fullest and most recent discussion of *bé* is by Harðarson (1987, 115–37), who agrees with Schindler's PIE

[1]Here and below I follow the terminology of Eichner 1973, save that I use 'amphikinetic' for Eichner's 'holokinetic'. Outside Old Irish, it is just possible that the original alternation between $*g^{u}\acute{e}n\text{-}h_2\text{-}$ and $*g^{u}n\text{-}\acute{e}h_2\text{-}$ is preserved in Ved. *jáni-* vs. *gnás(pati)-* 'husband of a divine wife' (cf. GAv. *gənā-* 'woman'), although *jáni-* could also be a true *i*-stem with derivational ties to GAv. *jāni-* 'woman' and Go. *qens* 'id.'. The Greek forms independently suggest an ablauting paradigm, inasmuch as *γυνή* and *βανά* point respectively to preforms $*g^{u}en\text{-}\acute{e}h_2$ and $*g^{u}ŋn\text{-}\acute{e}h_2\text{-}$, the latter with the 'Lindeman's Law' treatment of the weak stem (cf. Lindeman 1965).

[2]A dative *bein* is sometimes claimed for this word, e.g. by Hamp in the work cited below. Since *bein* < $*g^{u}enan$ is also the archaic accusative of *ben*, however, I see no reason not to regard its dative use as analogical, just as *mnaí*, the inherited dative form, also serves as the ordinary accusative from the ninth century onwards.

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reconstruction but sees the transformation of *$g^{u}\acute{o}n$/*$g^{u}\acute{e}n$-*s* to a neuter *n*-stem as a late, perhaps purely Goidelic development.

This approach, which we may call the 'root noun' theory, is not entirely satisfactory. In general, suffixed noun/root noun doublets like the putative *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$-h_2 : *$g^{u}en$- were a rarity in Proto-Indo-European. The parent language had no root nouns *$\hat{g}hes$- 'hand', *peh_2- 'fire', or *der- 'tree' beside the familiar suffixed *$\hat{g}h\acute{e}s$-$(\bar{o})r$, *$p\acute{e}h_2$-$\underset{\wedge}{u}\underset{\wedge}{r}$, and *$d\acute{o}r$-$u$; cases like Hitt. *wed-* 'water' beside suffixed *$\underset{\wedge}{u}\acute{o}d$-$\underset{\wedge}{r}$ are altogether atypical.[3] Even on the assumption that a h_2-stem and a root noun meaning 'woman' once existed side by side, it is hard to believe that Old Irish, a language of the early Middle Ages, would have been able to keep the two stems distinct, despite their near homophony and virtual synonymy, for a period of over four thousand years.[4] The Schindler–Harðarson version of the root noun paradigm, though perfectly reasonable from an IE point of view, raises a more specific question as well: if the continuant of the nom. sg. *$g^{u}\acute{o}n$ (> late PIE *$g^{u}\bar{o}$) in fact escaped replacement by the continuant of *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$-h_2, why was it ultimately treated so differently from the similarly formed *$\hat{k}u\acute{o}(n)$ 'dog', which gave OIr. *cú*?

Hittite, for its part, offers only the shakiest support for the reconstruction of a root noun. The nom. sg. *SAL-(an-)za*, with its sigmatic ending, is obviously secondary, and its immediate antecedents cannot be uniquely determined.[5] A weak case form like the gen. sg. *SAL-na-aš* could, it is true, go back to a virtual *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$-*os*; but there are other, less dramatic alternatives, such as the possibility that it reflects a preform *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$-h_2-*os* (> **kwannaš*?), with analogical generalization of the strong stem *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$-h_2-. The Luvian word for woman, represented by Cun. Luv. *wana-* and *wanatti-* and by Hier. Luv. *FEMINA-nati-* (cf. Starke 1980), is itself problematic, but clearly does nothing to strengthen the case for a pre-Anatolian *$g^{u}en$- beside *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$-h_2.

In fact, the hypothesis of a PIE root noun meaning 'woman' is completely superfluous; as we shall see, both OIr. *bé* and Hitt. *SAL-(an-)za* can be adequately, and indeed elegantly, explained on the basis of the familiar proterokinetic stem *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$-h_2-/*$g^{u}n$-$\acute{e}h_2$-. The key to a correct understanding of *bé* and *SAL-(an-)za* is the nom. sg. *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$-h_2. It is usually taken for granted that this form would first have developed to

[3]The only systematic exceptions are cases like *$\underset{\wedge}{u}et$- : *$\underset{\wedge}{u}et$-*es*- 'year', *h_3ek^{u}- : *h_3ek^{u}-*es*- 'eye', *$kr(e)uh_2$-*s*- : *$kreuh_2$-*s*- 'gore', etc., which bear witness to a formerly productive pattern of deriving neuter *s*-stems from root nouns.

[4]It goes without saying, of course, that *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$-h_2- may have been derived from a root noun at some remote stage of pre-Proto-Indo-European, although there is certainly no reason to think that all suffixed nouns originated in this way. What is important is that *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$-h_2- already meant 'woman' in the parent language; the idea that it was a collective or an abstract in late Proto-Indo-European, and thus contrasted semantically with the hypothetical root noun, finds no support in the actual data.

[5]Indeed, given our still very imperfect knowledge of the conditions under which laryngeals were vocalized in Anatolian, the possibility cannot even be excluded that a secondarily sigmatized preform *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$-h_2-*s* would have given *SAL-(an-)za* directly.

*$g^{u}\acute{e}n\check{a}$ in the European branches of the family, and that *$g^{u}\acute{e}n\bar{a}$ or *$g^{u}\acute{e}n\bar{a}$ (the latter with substitution of *-$\bar{a}$ for *-$\check{a}$) was the direct source of *ben* and most of its extra-Celtic counterparts. This assumption, however, is no longer tenable. As noted by Nussbaum (1986, 129f.) with reference to Szemerényi (1970, 155), there is good reason to believe that the final laryngeal in PIE sequences of the type *-*VRH#* was not vocalized in the IE daughter languages, but was lost within the parent language with compensatory lengthening of the preceding vowel. Herein lies the explanation for the *-*VR#* sequences so characteristic of PIE neuter collectives: in origin, forms like Gk. *ὕδωρ* 'water', GAv. *aiiārə* 'days', OCS *ime* 'name' (< *-$\bar{e}n$) and Go. *hairtona* 'hearts' (< *-$\bar{o}n$ + secondary *-$\bar{o}$ < *-$\bar{a}$) have the same etymological *-h_2 as ordinary thematic neuter plurals of the type *$\underset{\wedge}{i}ug$-$\acute{e}$-h_2 'yokes' (=Ved. *yugā́*, Gk. *ζυγά*). The change of *-*VRH#* to *-*V̄R#* in collectives corresponds exactly to the treatment of *-*VR-* sequences before original final *-*s* in the nom. sg. of animate nouns. Here too the result is an apparent lengthened grade, as, e.g., in *ph_2-$t\acute{e}r$ < *-*ter-s* 'father' (Gk. *πατήρ*), *$h_2\acute{e}k$-$m\bar{o}(n)$ < *-*mon-s* 'stone' (Ved. *áśmā*, Gk. *ἄκμων*), *$dh\acute{e}\hat{g}h$-$\bar{o}m$ < *-*om-s* 'earth' (Hitt. *tēkan*, Gk. *χθών*), etc.[6]

The late PIE nom. sg. of *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$-h_2- / *$g^{u}n$-$\acute{e}h_2$-, then, was *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$. To the extent that the daughter languages point to preforms of the type *$g^{u}\acute{e}n\check{a}$ or *$g^{u}\acute{e}n\bar{a}$, these are invariably due to analogy with other forms within the paradigm. Thus, Balto-Slavic, Germanic and dialectal Greek created a non-ablauting hybrid stem *$g^{u}en\bar{a}$- (later extended to *$g^{u}en\bar{a}$-*n*- in Germanic) by blending the weak stem *$g^{u}n\acute{a}$- with the *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$- of strong cases like the acc. *$g^{u}\acute{e}n\check{a}m$ < *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$-h_2-*m*. The Common Tocharian nom. sg. *$\acute{s}\bar{a}n\bar{a}$ (> A *śāṃ*, B *śana*) reflects a virtual *$g^{u}\acute{e}n\bar{a}$, which was evidently back-formed from the acc. sg. *$g^{u}\acute{e}n\check{a}m$ on the model of the derived feminines in *-$i\check{a}$, acc. sg. *-$i\check{a}m$ (ih_2-stems, the '*devī*'-type of Indo-Iranian; cf. B *lāntsa* 'queen', *tallauntsa* (fem.) 'miserable', etc.).[7] Similarly, the *-*s* of Ved. *jániḥ* makes it likely that this form, if not simply an old *i*-stem (see note 1), was created as a pendant to the acc. sg. *jánim* < *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$-h_2-*m*. This must have been the origin of OIr. *ben* as well: after the Common Celtic shortening of long vowels before final nasals, the inherited acc. sg. *$g^{u}en\check{a}m$ (> OIr. *bein*) would have come to resemble the acc. sg. of a normal *ā*-stem (type *teutā*: *teutām* < *-*ām*, OIr. *túath*: *túaith* 'tribe'), and a new nom. sg. *$g^{u}en\bar{a}$ was substituted for the anomalous reflex of *$g^{u}\bar{e}n$.[8]

[6]Cf. Szemerényi 1970, 109. As I have pointed out elsewhere (Jasanoff 1988, note 3), independent evidence for lengthening before original final *-*s* is furnished by the ending of the 3 pl. perfect. This morpheme appears in the zero-grade as *-*ṛs* (cf. GAv. -*ərəš* and Ved. -*úḥ*); the corresponding full-grade, however, is not the expected *-*érs* but *-*ḗr*, with loss of *-*s* and lengthening (cf. Lat. -*ēre* (< * -*ēr* + *i*), probably also Hitt. -*er*). The absence of *-*s* in YAv. -*arə*, -*arə* (< *-*ṛ*) is due to the influence of *-*ḗr*.

[7]Subsequent to the creation of the nom. sg. *$g^{u}\acute{e}n\bar{a}$, the pre-Toch. weak stem *$g^{u}\acute{e}n\bar{a}$- (i.e., *$g^{u}\acute{e}n\bar{a}$- × *$g^{u}n\acute{a}$-) was extended to the acc. sg. also, whence Toch. B obl. *śano*.

[8]As we shall see directly, *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$ had probably become *$g^{u}en$ by this time, so that the creation of *$g^{u}en\bar{a}$ consisted simply in the addition of *-$\bar{a}$ to an already existing form.

Let us now follow the fortunes of *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$, first within Proto-Indo-European itself, then in Anatolian and Celtic. According to the general view, the *-*n* of the nom. sg. of animate *n*-stems was lost within the parent language, thus producing the distinctive inflectional pattern of Ved. *áśmā*, gen. *áśmanah*, OIr. *cú*, gen. *con*, and Lat. *homō* 'man', gen. *hominis*. As Harðarson remarks, however (1987, 119ff), several IE languages appear to show the loss of *-*n* after *-*ō*- but not after *-*ē*-. He cites as examples the contrast between Lat. *homō* and *liēn* 'spleen' and that between Hitt. *ḫāraš* 'eagle' (< *-*ō* + *s*) and *šum(m)anza* 'cord' (< *-*ēn* + *s*; cf. Gk. *ὑμήν* 'membrane'), apparently unaware that the same observation, together with the same analysis of *šum(m)anza*, was made earlier by Melchert (1983, 9f.). Harðarson, however, goes further than Melchert, for while the latter expressly refrains from projecting the pattern *-*ō*: *-*ēn* back into the parent language, Harðarson attaches the label 'uridg.' to his preforms *$h_2\acute{e}r$-*ō* (> *ḫāraš*) and *suh_1-*mén* (> *šum(m)anza*). Since the point is an important one, and since Harðarson's formulation is less than fully explicit, I think it may be useful to state my own views on the matter. The PIE rule of final *n*-loss, I believe, in fact applied only after *-*ō*-; the absence of *-*n*- in *homō* and *ḫāra*[*š*], and its presence in *liēn* and *šum(m)an*[*za*], faithfully reflect a genuine late PIE difference between amphikinetic *-*ō* and hysterokinetic *-*ēn*.[9] Latin and Hittite are by no means the only languages that preserve this pattern. Animate *n*-stems in Old Irish may end in (leniting) -(*i*)*u* or -*φ*, which point to *-*ō* (cf. *cú* 'dog', *toimtiu* 'opinion', *brithem* 'judge'), or in (geminating) -(*a*)*e*, which goes back to *-*ens*, i.e. *-*ēn* + *s* (cf. *menmae* 'mind'). Slavic has masculine *n*-stems in -*y* < *-*ō* (type OCS *kamy* 'stone', with the same ending as Lith. *akmuõ* 'id.'; cf. Jasanoff 1983, 139–42), and neuter *n*-stems, originally collective, in -*ę* < *-*ēn* (type OCS *imę* 'name'; cf. also Proto-Slavic **korę* (masc.) 'root'). Even Indo-Iranian appears to preserve a trace of *-*ēn* in the Avestan neuter plurals in -*ąn* (cf. GAv. *dāmąn* 'bonds', YAv. *nāmąn* 'names'), which are difficult to explain by analogy but which can be directly equated with the Slavic *imę*-type.[10]

Emerging from Proto-Indo-European with its nasal still intact, *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$ was inherited into the nascent daughter languages as the nom. sg. within

[9]Rather than link the loss of the *-*n* directly to the timbre of the preceding vowel, of course, we could relate it to the position of the accent. Since amphikinetic stems were accented on the root syllable in the nom. sg. (**dhéĝh-ōm*, etc.) while hysterokinetic stems were suffix-accented (**ph₂-tḗr*, etc.), it is possible that there was once a pre-PIE rule

$$n \rightarrow \phi \; / \; V \underset{\left[\substack{+\text{long} \\ -\text{stress}}\right]}{\_} \; \# \; .$$

Under such an interpretation the absence of *-*n* in **ḱu̯ṓ* 'dog' would be analogical.

[10]As Alan Nussbaum (pers. comm.) reminds me, the existence of an Indo-Iranian class of *n*-stem neuter plurals in *-*ān* would make it much easier to understand the analogical processes that led to the creation of the familiar Sanskrit type in *-āni*.

a paradigm that also incorporated the normal strong stem *$g^{u}\acute{e}nh_2$-, the weak stem *$g^{u}náh_2$-, the 'Lindeman' weak stem *$g^{u}n̥náh_2$-, and the 'weakest' stem *$g^{u}n̥h_2$-. It is not surprising, given this degree of allomorphy, that the old nominative was eventually replaced in the majority of IE traditions. It survived, however, in Anatolian and Celtic, where it gave rise to the forms that have been misinterpreted as reflexes of a root noun. In Hittite the treatment of *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$ was exactly the same as that of *suh_1-*mén*: *-*s* was added as an ancillary mark of the nominative on the model of the other animate stem types, and the resulting complex *-*ēn-s* was converted by regular sound change, or by a combination of sound change and analogy, to *-anza* [-ants]. The case forms *SAL*-(*na*-)*aš*, *SAL*-(*na*-)*an*, etc. are read [gwantsanas], [gwantsanan] by Harðarson (1987, 122), who convincingly argues for an oblique stem **kwanzan*-, parallel to the *šum(m)anzan*- that serves as the oblique stem of *šum-(m)anza*.[11]

It was in Celtic that *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$ had its most remarkable development. Here there were two relevant early sound changes: the general raising of *$\bar{e}$ to *$\bar{\imath}$ seen, e.g., in the word for 'king' (OIr. *rí*g-: Lat. *rēg*-); and the shortening of long vowels before final nasals, as seen, e.g., in the acc. sg. of *ā*-stems (cf. OIr. *túaith* < **tōtăn* < **teutām*). Strictly speaking, we have no independent evidence for the relative ordering of these rules, since we have no certain instances, other than *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$ itself, of the final sequence *-*ēm* or *-*ēn* in Celtic. But we do know that shortening before nasals was earlier than the Common Celtic change of *$\bar{o}$ to *$\bar{u}$ in final syllables, since the ending of the gen. pl. (pre-Celtic *-*ōm*) failed to induce raising or *u*-epenthesis in Old Irish (cf. *fer* (*n*-), rather than **fiur* (*n*-), 'uirorum'). Now the change of *$\bar{e}$ to *$\bar{\imath}$, the raising of *$\bar{o}$ to *$\bar{u}$ in final syllables, and the lowering of *$\bar{o}$ to *$\bar{a}$ in other environments (cf. OIr. *dán* 'gift' < **dō*-) were all aspects of a single process—the reduction of the PIE system of five long vowels to the simpler $\bar{a}$: $\bar{\imath}$: $\bar{u}$ system of early Common Celtic. There is thus good reason to suspect that these rules were at least roughly contemporaneous, and that the raising of *$\bar{e}$ to *$\bar{\imath}$, like the more restricted raising of *$\bar{o}$ to *$\bar{u}$, was a later change than the shortening of *-*V̄N*# to *-*V̆N*#. This chronology is in fact confirmed by the behaviour of *$g^{u}\acute{e}n$, which developed via *$g^{u}\check{e}n$ to the attested *bé*.

The reinterpretation of *$g^{u}en$/*bé* as an invariant neuter was due to the phonetic accident that its final *-*en* happened to coincide with the reflex of *-*n̥* in the nom.–acc. sg. of neuter *n*-stems (cf. *ainm* < *-*men* < *-*m.n̥*). Thanks to this identity, the introduction of the analogical nom. sg. *$g^{u}en\bar{a}$ did not completely eliminate the older *$g^{u}en$; rather, the latter form became the trigger for the creation of a new gen. sg. *$g^{u}ens$ (> OIr. *bé*) and dat. (< loc.) sg. *$g^{u}en(i)$ (> OIr. *bé*) on the model of the neuter

[11]So too *ištanza*, *ištanzan*- 'person'. The oblique stem in -*nzan*- presumbly arose through contamination of the nom. sg. in -*anz*(*a*) with the oblique cases in -*ani*, -*anaš*, etc. The forms are curiously reminiscent of the Luvian plural cases in -*nz*- (e.g. nom. pl. -*nzi*, abl.–instr. pl. -*nzati*), which are based on the acc. pl. in -*nz*(*a*) < *-*ns*.

n-stem gen. sg. **anmens* (>OIr. *anmae*) and dat. sg. **anmen(i)* (> OIr. *ainm*).[12] The result was the emergence of two separate paradigms, one (*ben*, *mná*, etc.) consisting entirely of inherited forms secondarily equipped with a new nom. sg., and the other based on the inherited nom. sg. *bé* (< $*g^{u}en$ < $*g^{u}\bar{e}n$ < $*g^{u}\acute{e}n\text{-}h_2$), secondarily provided with the morphological trappings of a neuter *n*-stem.[13] The relevant history can be summarized in the following table, in which analogically created forms are shown in italics.

	PIE I	*PIE II*	*Pre-OIr. I*	*Pre-OIr. II*	*Pre-OIr. III*	*OIr.*
Nom.	$*g^{u}\acute{e}n\text{-}h_2$	$*g^{u}\bar{e}n$	$*g^{u}\bar{e}n$	$*g^{u}en$, $*g^{u}en\bar{a}$	1. $*g^{u}en\bar{a}$	1. *ben*
Gen.	$*g^{u}n\text{-}\acute{e}h_2\text{-}s$	$*g^{u}n\acute{a}h_2s$	$*g^{u}n\bar{a}s$	$*g^{u}n\bar{a}s$	$*g^{u}n\bar{a}s$	mná
Dat.	$*g^{u}n\text{-}\acute{e}h_2\text{-}(e)i$	$*g^{u}n\acute{a}h_2(e)i$	$*g^{u}n\tilde{a}i$	$*g^{u}n\tilde{a}i$	$*g^{u}n\tilde{a}i$	mnaí, *bein*
Acc.	$*g^{u}\acute{e}n\text{-}h_2\text{-}m$	$*g^{u}\acute{e}nh_2m$	$*g^{u}enam$	$*g^{u}enan$	$*g^{u}enen$	bein, *mnaí*
Nom.					2. $*g^{u}en$	2. bé
Gen.					$*g^{u}ens$	*bé*
Dat.					$*g^{u}en(i)$	*bé*
Acc.					$*g^{u}en$	*bé*

The analysis presented here is more economical than the root noun theory, which attributes the *ben* : *bé* contrast to the supposed existence of a pair of doublets, one a h_2-stem and the other a root noun, in Proto-Indo-European. Rather than simply taking the two Irish words at face value and mechanically projecting them back into the protolanguage, we have explained *ben* and *bé* as a pair like NE *shade* and *shadow* or Lat. *deus* and *dīuus* — secondarily differentiated forms abstracted from the morphophonemic variants of a single underlying stem. The suggested derivation of *bé* from nom. sg. $*g^{u}\bar{e}n$ < $*g^{u}\acute{e}n\text{-}h_2$ has wider consequences: it strengthens the case, already substantial, for positing a PIE $*\text{-}VRH\# \rightarrow *\text{-}\bar{V}R\#$ rule; and it adds to the evidence that $*\text{-}\bar{e}n$, unlike $*\text{-}\bar{o}n$, retained its final nasal in the parent language. More prosaically, it also reaffirms a conclusion which few scholars have doubted in recent years — that *bé*, no less than the more transparent *ben*, is an important and archaic word with an instructive history of its own.

[12]The formula $*\text{-}en(i)$ in the dat. sg. is prompted by the apocope rule (Cowgill 1975), according to which Insular Celtic $*\text{-}i$ in absolute final position was lost before the operation of the normal Irish *Auslautsgesetze*. The 'short' dative *ainm* may equally well go back to PIE $*\text{-}en$ or $*\text{-}eni$.

[13]The elaboration of the *n*-stem paradigm, however, was confined to the singular — a fact which explains why *bé*, rather remarkably, has no old plural distinct from that of *ben*. The identity of *bé* and *ben* in the plural is properly taken as evidence for a single source paradigm by Ahlqvist (1980, 157), but in the context of a reconstruction (nom. sg. $*g^{u}\text{-}\bar{o}(n)$, with 'root' $*g^{u}$- as in $*g^{u}\hat{o}us$ 'cow') that is not otherwise acceptable.

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