



# Thurneysen-Colloquium 2024 in Bonn

## – Abstracts –

### **A joy of breeze: Rudolf Thurneysen and intra-Celtic loanwords**

Bauer, Bernhard

(Graz)

The end of the 19th/beginning of the 20th centuries saw the emergence of an interest in intra-Celtic loanwords, i.e. borrowings between the Insular Celtic languages. Rudolf Thurneysen's contemporaries published extensive lists, e.g., John Rhÿs (1895), Holger Pedersen (1909), or Cecile O'Rahilly (1924). In contrast to this, Thurneysen did not devote a specific study to the question to intra-Celtic borrowings. His oeuvre, nonetheless, contains scattered mentions of loanwords between Irish and the British Celtic languages. Examples are, e.g., OIr. *nós* 'custom, tradition' and MW (*g*)*naws* 'nature, disposition' in his 1892 article "Zu den irischen verbalformen sigmatischer bildung", MIr. *ahél* 'breeze, breath' and W *awel* 'breeze, light wind' in his 1918 article "Irisches" (both in the *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung*), or OIr. *ilach* 'a cry of exultation, a shout of victory' and MW *elwch* 'joy, gladness' in his *Grammar of Old Irish*. The paper will review and analyse Thurneysen's mentions of intra-Celtic loanwords in his publications.

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### **Rudolf Thurneysen and mediaeval Welsh literature**

Blom, Alderik

(Marburg)

In diesem Konferenzbeitrag wird die Tätigkeit Rudolf Thurneysens auf dem Gebiet der kymrischen Philologie vorgestellt. Neben der Auswertung des kleinen Korpus seiner Veröffentlichungen auf diesem

Gebiet wird ggf. auch auf seine Beschaffenheit als Doktorvater eingegangen, insbesondere auf seinen Promovend Griffith Price Williams, der 1908 in Freiburg bei Thurneysen über das Kornische promoviert hat.

## **Reactions to the Anglo-Norman Invasion: the figure of Brian Bóroimhe in bardic poems of the 13th century**

Fischer, Leonore

(Rodenkirchen, Germany, and Mountshannon, Co. Clare, Ireland)

The late 13c saw a burst of bardic poetry. While Brian is only briefly mentioned in two thirteenth-century poems written for the O'Brien kings, he is the subject of a long poem probably written by Muiredach Albanach. He is moreover explicitly referenced for his martial deeds in three further poems written variously in Connacht and Ulster. The apparent reluctance of his own descendants to invoke him during this time, versus the deliberate use of him as a warlike model by the northern septs appear to reflect the differing policies vis-a-vis the Anglo-Normans adopted by Thomond and by Connacht/Ulster.

## **Old Irish orthography: a re-examination**

Griffith, Aaron

(Utrecht)

The basic rules for writing Old Irish have been well-known for quite some time (for a summary see *GOI* pp. 18–26 §§23–35; pp. 55–57 §§84–88; pp. 61–67 §§97–105). A proper understanding of these orthographic rules serves as the basis of our knowledge of Old Irish grammar, and advances in one area can lead to advances in the other. As a case in point, work on the writing of nasalisation of nouns (see Quin 1979–80) allows more precise work on the grammatical categories of which nasalisation is a marker (see Roma 2018, 2020 on nouns; see Stüber 2010–12 and Uhlich 2020 on verbs). This talk will take stock of where we are in our understanding of Old Irish orthography and what advances may look like and what they may allow us to do.

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## Von Basel nach Bonn: Rudolf Thurneysen – ein Gelehrtenleben

Hemprich, Gisbert

(Bonn)

Der Vortrag zeichnet das Leben von Rudolf Thurneysen nach, insbesondere seine akademische Karriere und die wichtigen Lebensstationen. Darüberhinaus wird die Person Rudolf Thurneysen selbst in den Blick genommen: Was war sein familiärer Hintergrund? Was wissen wir über sein Familienleben, seine Kinder, seine Nachkommen? Auf diese Weise soll ein abgerundetes Bild des Gründervaters der Bonner Keltologie entstehen.

## Der „Geister-Klub“ an der Universität Bonn: Rudolf Thurneysens informelle Vernetzung mit Bonner Professoren

Krätzer, David

(Bonn)

Einen wichtigen Bestandteil des universitären Lebens von Professoren stellten bis in die Nachkriegszeit die zum Teil interdisziplinären „Kränzchen“ dar, in denen Gelehrte informelle Kontakte knüpfen (Neudeutsch: netzwerken), sich über die aktuellen Forschungen ihrer Kollegen informieren oder einfach zwanglos die Gesellschaft Gleichgesinnter genießen konnten.

Rudolf Thurneysen lehrte von 1887 bis 1913 in Freiburg im Breisgau und regte bereits im Jahr 1891 zusammen mit einem Kollegen, dem Archäologen Franz Studniczka, die Gründung eines eigenen, philologischen, „Kränzchens“ an, des sog. *Stephaniskos*.

Als Thurneysen im Jahr 1913 den Ruf an das Sprachwissenschaftliche Institut an der Rheinischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn annahm, brachte er diese Freiburger Tradition mit und gründete mit dem Juristen Josef Partsch ein neues, interdisziplinäres „Kränzchen“. Dieser sog. Geister-Klub, auch als „Geist-Klub“ bezeichnet, bestand auch nach Thurneysens Tod 1940 bis in die 1970er Jahre weiter.

Der Vortrag soll dazu dienen aufzuzeigen, welche Rolle Thurneysen im Geister-Klub gespielt hat, welche Besonderheiten der Klub aufwies und mit welchen Bonner Professoren er dort Umgang pflegte.

## Thurneysen's influential review and the recent narratological research

*(Lecture cancelled)*

Kurzová, Irena

(Prag)

Rudolf Thurneysen published in *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* VIII (1912; 185-189) a review of Mary Williams' dissertation, "Essai sur la composition du roman gallois de Peredur" (Paris, 1909). Thurneysen's review proved to be very stimulating for further research on the narrative structure of Middle Welsh prose *Peredur vab Efrawc*, one of the so-called "three romances" (*Y Tair Rhamant*). Thurneysen divided *Peredur* into four sections following a manuscript capitalization. Any further attempt to define the narrative structure of this text had to cope with Thurneysen's division. After Thurneysen, various scholars (Mühlhausen, Jean Marx) tried to find narrative unity of *Peredur*. Others presented a different approach with an aim to reconstruct the "original" form of the tale (Brown, Nitze, Loomis). Glenys Goetinck, the

editor of *Peredur*, splits the tale also into four parts but with a different arrangement than Thurneysen. For the purpose of this talk, the division proposed by Lloyd-Morgan has the decisive importance; her concern is with the actual narrative structure of the story, rather than of its possible origins. The influence of Thurneysen's review is widely discussed by Ian Lovecy. Recently, Anthony M. Vitt, the editor of two manuscript versions of the text, adopts Thurneysen's division.

The aim of this talk is to evaluate the outlined discussion stimulated by Thurneysen's review and to explain how this research can be useful in a comparative narratological project that includes an analysis of the narrative structure of the text *Peredur*.

## **The syntax/semantics of phrasal comparatives: an addendum to the *Grammar of Old Irish* and Thurneysen (1936) on *indaas***

Lash, Elliott

(Göttingen)

Thurneysen's grammar of Old Irish introduces a distinction between comparatives marked with the dative case (ex. *máa alailiu*) and comparatives marked with a combination of a preposition or article and the substantive verb (*oldaas, indaas, adaas*). The first is called here the 'phrasal comparative', the second the 'clausal comparative'. Thurneysen (along with his student Hertz) investigated the syntax and morphology of clausal comparatives in a 1936 article in ZCP. Some of the results from that article were incorporated into the translation of his *Handbuch* (GOI, Thurneysen 1946). While the complexity of the clausal comparative certainly justifies its central place in Thurneysen's description of Old Irish comparative syntax, one looks through GOI and Thurneysen (1936) in vain for an explicit discussion of the contrast between phrasal and clausal comparatives. From the information provided, one must conclude that either the two types are entirely free variants or, at the very least, that phrasal comparatives are poetic and perhaps 'archaic', because they contain independent datives ungoverned by a preposition. This talk reports on a corpus study that uses the data found in the Corpus Palaeohibernicum, POMIC, and the Würzburg Glosses to investigate the syntax and semantics of phrasal comparatives. The study reveals that the semantic profile of standard of comparison tends to be much more restricted in phrasal comparatives than in clausal comparisons. Moreover, the semantic restriction appears to be related to quantification, a condition on phrasal comparisons that has been reported for some other older Indo-European languages (e.g. Old Norse). The results of the study are interesting beyond their usefulness for clarifying Old Irish grammar and may have implications for the cross-linguistic study of the syntax and semantics of comparisons generally.

## **Orthography and other chronological criteria in tracing the development of TBC-II**

Mac Gearailt, Uáitéar

(Baile Átha Cliath / Dublin)

Thurneysen's extraordinary legacy covers almost every facet of Early Irish studies. His two most celebrated volumes, dealing with language on the one hand and literature on the other, display a unique ability to make landmark observations and integrate them in a comprehensive, easy to follow synthesis. This paper will pursue specific seams of his seminal contribution to the study of the Táin and will attempt to broaden and deepen the scope of more recent approaches to understanding the work of its authors, redactors, revisers, and scribes.

## Rudolf Thurneysens irischer Schülerkreis

Ó Catháin, Brian

(Maigh Nuad / Maynooth)

Rudolf Thurneysens wissenschaftlicher Ruf im Ausland war sehr gut, und das gilt insbesondere im Bereich der Keltologie. Dementsprechend kamen Schüler aus aller Welt nach Deutschland, um bei Thurneysen zu studieren. In diesem Beitrag möchte ich einen Überblick über Thurneysens irischen Schülerkreis geben. Der erste Ire, der bei ihm studierte, scheint Richard Henebry / Ristead de Hindeberg (1863–1916) gewesen zu sein. 1896 studierte Henebry zwei Semester bei Thurneysen in Freiburg, bevor er anschließend zwei Semester bei Heinrich Zimmer in Greifswald absolvierte. Der letzte 'offizielle' irische Schüler Thurneysens scheint Tomás Ó hAilín (1914–2000) gewesen zu sein, der 1937–38 bei ihm in Bonn lernte.

Zu den anderen Iren/Irinnen, die dazwischen bei Thurneysen studiert – und promoviert – haben, gehören u. a.: Osborn Bergin (1873–1950; Dr. phil. 1906), Tomás Ó Máille (1880–1938; Dr. phil. 1909), Nancy ('Annie') Power / Áine de Paor (1889–1963; Dr. phil. 1921), Myles Dillon (1900–1972; Dr. phil. 1925) und Kathleen Mulchrone (1895–1973; Dr. phil. 1924). Hierbei ist hervorzuheben, dass die Anzahl der Iren/Irinnen, die sich bei Thurneysen in der Keltologie promovierten, größer ist als die Anzahl der Deutschen. Ferdinand Sommer (1875–1962; Dr. phil. 1896), Hans Hessen (1889–1915; Dr. phil. 1912), Leo Weisgerber (1899–1985; Dr. phil. 1923) und Rudolf Hertz (1897–1965; Dr. phil. 1925) sind m. W. die einzigen Deutschen, die bei Thurneysen in der Keltologie promoviert wurden. Nebenbei sei angemerkt, dass m. W. die einzig anderen in der Keltologie bei Thurneysen promovierten Schüler beide Waliser waren: G[riffith] P[rice] Williams (1874–?; Dr. phil. 1908) und Thomas Parry Williams (1887–1975; Dr. phil. 1913).

Betrachtet man alleine die Namen der obengenannten Iren/Irinnen, so kann man feststellen, dass Thurneysen die junge irische Keltologie maßgeblich beeinflusste, und zwar nicht nur fachlich, sondern auch institutionell, denn die meisten der obengenannten Iren/Irinnen wurden im Laufe der Zeit in Irland zu den führenden keltologischen Gelehrten ihrer Zeit.

## *Verba Scáthaige and Táin Bó Cúailnge*

Ó hUiginn, Ruairí

(Baile Átha Cliath / Dublin)

The prophetic poem known as *Verba Scáthaige* is put in the mouth of Scáthach, Cú Chulainn's trainer in martial skills. In it, she foretells what awaits her pupil in the events that are to unfold in *Táin Bó Cúailnge*. The text of *Verba Scáthaige* has been transmitted to us in two versions, a shorter one consisting of 32/33 lines and a longer one of 80 lines. In this paper we will discuss aspects of its development and of its relationship to *Táin Bó Cúailnge*.

## Thurneysen und seine Übertragungen mittelalterlicher irischer Texte

Poppe, Erich

(Marburg)

In meinem Vortrag werde ich versuchen, Thurneysens Praxis der Übertragung mittelalterlicher irischer Texte in Relation zu ihren Verwendungskontexten und ihrem intendierten Publikum auszuloten und seine eigenen Äußerungen dazu auszuwerten. Entsprechend wird typologisch vorläufig differenziert zwischen Übertragungen, die wissenschaftliche Editionen begleiten, wie z.B. von *Echtra clérech Choluim Cille* und

*Compert Con Culainn* (letztere auch im Vergleich mit der paraphrasierenden Übertragung in *Die irische Helden- und Königsage*), oder sich an ein wissenschaftliches Publikum, wie die von *Scéla Cano*, bzw. an ein allgemeines Publikum, wie die in *Sagen aus dem alten Irland*, richten. Eine spezifische Fragestellung betrifft die Behandlung ‚sprechender‘, also semantisch durchsichtiger Namen als eine konzeptionelle und methodische Herausforderung bei der Übertragung unter den Stichworten ‚Anpassung‘ bzw. ‚Verfremdung‘.

#### Rudolf Thurneysen and his translations of medieval Irish texts

In my paper I will attempt to survey Thurneysen’s strategies in translating medieval Irish texts in relation to their contexts of use and to their intended audiences as well as his own statements about translational procedure. I distinguish tentatively between translations which accompany scholarly editions, such the translations of *Echtra clérech Choluim Cille* and of *Compert Con Culainn* (the latter also in comparison with the paraphrase of the text in *Die irische Helden- und Königsage*), and translations which are intended for a scholarly audience, such as the translation of *Scéla Cano*, and for a general audience, such as *Sagen aus dem alten Irland*, respectively. A specific issue to be addressed concerns the treatment of semantically transparent names as a conceptual and methodological challenge in the process of translation as instances of ‘accommodation/domestication’ or ‘foreignization’.

### **Introductory narratives in early Irish law: a change in style in the late Old Irish period?**

Qiu, Fangzhe

(Baile Átha Cliath / Dublin)

Many early Irish law tracts contain narratives which serve various legal or intertextual functions. However, it seems that the prefixation of an introductory narrative which states the situation of the making of the tract – often pseudo-historical – is generally later than the compilation of the canonical tracts themselves. Narratives prefixed to *Senchas Már*, *Bretha Étgid*, *Cóic Conara Fuigill*, etc. are quite different from those found in *Cethairslicht Athgabálae*, *Din Techtugud*, *Bechbretha* and *Bretha Nemed* in terms of language, style, and content. Judging from the language, one may say that the introductory narratives are all produced in the late Old Irish period whereas the others are probably part of the 7th or 8th century canonical texts; they differ from the earlier narratives which are usually concerned about the origin of a rule rather than the legislation process; the later introductions tend to use certain formulars (such as the *accessus ad auctores*) and focus more on kings and saints than on poets and sages in the earlier narratives.

Is there a change in style in the late Old Irish period how legal narratives are written? If yes, what could have influenced or triggered such a change? This paper will look into the intellectual and historical environments of the 9th century, in Ireland and beyond, to examine possible interactions between the Irish and other juristic traditions.

### **Rudolf Thurneysen as a “Sabellicist” and the Umbrian neuter plurals**

Rigobianco, Luca

(Venezia)

My paper aims to highlight the figure of Rudolf Thurneysen as a “Sabellicist”. Although Thurneysen is best known for his contributions to Celtic studies, he devoted several works to Sabellian languages. First, I intend to present a brief review of these works, describing their topics, methods, results, and impact on

contemporary and later research. Secondly, on the basis of Thurneysen's observations (1893, 1898), I will focus on the question of the use of masculine/feminine endings for marking nominative and accusative plural of Umbrian neuter stems. Specifically, Thurneysen has shown that such a phenomenology is quite widespread in Umbrian and, thus, cannot be overlooked by assuming that it is due to a random gender shift (Bréal 1875; Bücheler 1883). More precisely, leaving aside some ambiguities of the Umbrian writing systems concerning back vowels, Thurneysen claims that all the Umbrian nominative plural forms in *-or* (-[ō]r) and accusative plural forms in *-uf*, *-of* (-[ō]f) would be neuter forms (-[ō]- < -[ā]-) with the addition of the masculine/feminine endings *-r* and *-f* – alongside with regular forms in *-u*, *-o* (-[ō] < -[ā]). On the contrary, the masculine nominative and accusative plural forms would exclusively end in *-us* (-[ū]s) > *-ur* (-[ū]r) and *-u(f)*, *-u(f)* (-[ū]f), respectively. Initially, such a hypothesis has encountered some resistance and, in later studies on Umbrian language, has been sometimes neglected or only partially accepted. Nevertheless, phonetic and morphosyntactic evidence can be adduced in favour of Thurneysen's hypothesis, which should nowadays be considered as confirmed.

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## **Thurneysen and the Brittonic Languages (*Lecture cancelled*)**

Rodway, Simon

(Aberystwyth)

Rudolf Thurneysen is, of course, most famous as an exceptional scholar of Old Irish. However, he took an active interest in the other Celtic languages too. In this paper I shall look at some of his publications on the Brittonic languages. I shall attempt to evaluate his contribution to the study of these languages, and to summarize subsequent work on the issues that he tackled.

## **Syntactic issues in the *Grammar of Old Irish***

Roma, Elisa

(Pavia)

This paper will discuss some relevant syntactic observations among those which are scattered throughout Thurneysen's masterpiece *Handbuch des Altirischen / A Grammar of Old Irish* (such as e.g. the use of cases, functions of pronominal elements, the distribution of the article, relativisation and subordination, functions of prepositions), and compare them with treatments of syntactic issues in more recent overviews of Old Irish grammar, in particular McCone's chapter dedicated to Old Irish in *Stair na Gaeilge* (1994) and Stifter and Griffith's chapter in the *Cambridge Handbook of Ancient Indo-European Grammars* (to appear).

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## **Thurneysen's Tyrsenian equation – on the semantics of Etruscan *zinace* ~ Raetic *pinaxe***

Salomon, Corinna

(Maigh Nuad / Maynooth)

In the 1930s, when fervid, partly politically motivated discussions about the ethnicity and linguistic affiliation of the fragmentarily attested Raetic language of Iron Age Northern Italy were led between



Italian and Continental scholars, the most relevant and enduring contribution came from Rudolf Thurneysen ('Italisches I. Die etruskischen Räter', *Glotta* 21, 1933). Thurneysen came out in support of the view that the Raetians were related to the Etruscans of Central Italy, and adduced the first major lexical equation by isolating and comparing the Raetic form *pinaxe/pinake* with the Etruscan finite verb *zinace/zinake*. When the genetic relationship between Raetic and Etruscan as members of the Tyrsenian language family was finally demonstrated beyond doubt in the 1990s by Stefan Schumacher and Helmut Rix, Thurneysen's equation was put into context as proof that Raetic shares not only lexical bases, but also the preterite ending *-ke* with Etruscan, and remains one of the most convincing lexical and morphological parallels.

From an improved understanding of the Raetic inscriptions, however, emerges a hitch concerning the *zinake*-equation: Etr. *zinace*, appearing in workmen's inscriptions such as Ve 3.44 *mi[ni] zinace velθur anciniēs* 'Velθur Anciniēs made me', is generally translated as 'made, produced'. In Raetic, all ten attestations of the verb occur on votive objects – pieces of antler and bronze objects which were produced specifically for donation. We would not expect any of these inscriptions to say "I made this", but rather expect a verb referring to the act of dedication 'gave, donated' – e.g., MA-9 *pitale lemāis pinake* 'Pitale donated for Lemai(?)'.

My talk will present the relevant Etruscan and Raetic inscriptions with their contexts and interpretations, and discuss options for explaining or resolving the semantic discrepancy with the help of historical semantics, typological parallels or alternative readings, with regard to our current knowledge about the relationship between the Tyrsenian languages.

## ***Aíbind sin, a Ériu ard* by Gilla na Náem Ua Duinn: a mid-twelfth century poem on the dynasties of Ireland**

Smith, Peter

(Derry)

Gilla na Náem Ua Duinn, lector of the monastery of Inis Clothrann, died in the year 1160. He bequeathed to us a large body of historical poetry amongst which is *Aíbind sin, a Ériu ard*, a poem of 93 verses on the origins and location of the Irish dynasties. This poem, which will form the focus of Peadar Mac Gabhann's talk, is of particular interest because it provides us with a 'snapshot' of how the Irish saw their origins just before the Norman invasion of Ireland in 1169. Furthermore, the language of the poem offers us insights into twelfth century Irish.

## **Where do we go from here?**

Stifter, David

(Maigh Nuad / Maynooth)

Rudolf Thurneysen's epoch-making grammar of the Old Irish language has been a beacon for Old Irish, Celtic and Indo-European studies since its first publication as *Handbuch des Alt-Irischen* in 1909, and even more so since its moderately revised English translation as *A Grammar of Old Irish* in 1946. In the intervening century our understanding of the Old Irish language, the number of sources available to us and our understanding of them, the scholarly and technical tools, and the very way how we speak about language has undergone profound transformations. In the morphology of Old Irish – nominal, pronominal and of course verbal – much more variation is recognised than was apparent at the beginning of the 20th century. Syntax has assumed a much more prominent position in the description of languages. Perhaps

unsurprisingly, given the centrality of phonological change to historical comparative linguistics in the past, phonology has proved to be the most stable area of the linguistic system. However, even in historical phonology a lot of crucial progress has been made.

Is Thurneysen's grammar therefore still an adequate reference work at all in the 21st century? That it was not meant for eternity is evident from the carefully chosen indefinite article of its English title. Taking a bold and speculative peek into the future, will Thurneysen's grammar still hold the pride of place in 2046, at the hundredth anniversary of the publication of its English translation? What will future grammars of Old Irish look like? What can be salvaged from, or profitably used of, Thurneysen's *Handbuch* for future generations?

## Esunertos, ein Brite aus Gallien?

Zimmer, Stefan

(Bonn)

Im März 2023 wurde in Hampshire eine Goldmünze mit der Inschrift ESUNERTOS gefunden. Numismatiker datieren sie zwischen 30 und 40 v. Chr. Auf den ersten Blick scheint alles klar: *Esunertos* = *Esunertus*, ein vielfach bezeugter altkeltischer Personennamenname mit der Bedeutung „Kraft durch/von Esus (besitzend)“, also ein klassisches Bahuvrīhi-Kompositum.

Bei näherer Betrachtung ergeben sich jedoch allerhand Fragen. Der Vortrag geht einigen davon nach, u. a. nach der Stammbildung des Hinterglieds (vgl. altgermanisch *Nerthus* fem.) und der Etymologie und Bedeutung des Vorderglieds.



In Zusammenarbeit mit / *In collaboration with*



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