

On some Celtic terms for the divisions of the year



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ON SOME CELTIC TERMS FOR THE DIVISIONS OF THE YEAR¹

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the names of seasons and festivals in the Insular Celtic year, beginning with the winter cycle (winter and spring) and concluding with the summer cycle (summer and autumn). Etymologies are proposed or refined for OIr *fuin*, traditionally seen as the second element of *Samain* ‘November first’; OIr *Imbolg* ‘February first’; OW *guiannuin* ‘spring’; OIr *Beltine* ‘May-Day’; OIr *Fogamar* ‘autumn’; *Brón Trogain* ‘1 August; autumn’. These etymologies are supported by evidence from other old Indo-European languages. Next, it is argued that names for divisions of a later twelve-month cycle were originally derived from the older seasonal terms, e.g., ‘beginning of summer’, ‘midsummer’, ‘end of summer’, rather than from counting terms as in the second half of the Roman calendar. Finally, an internally consistent general model for the Proto-Indo-European year is presented, drawing on A. Nussbaum’s (1986, 1998) theory of decasuative (case-form based) nominal formations.

INTRODUCTION: THE WHEEL

AT LEAST BY THE mid-fourth millennium BCE, the Indo-European² year was conceived as a wheel, with which speakers were familiar from their wagons (Anthony 1995; West 2007: 370–1). We know that wheeled wagons were in use

¹It is a pleasure to thank Brian Drayton, José Luis García Ramón, Stephanie Jamison, H. Craig Melchert, Alan Nussbaum, David Stifter and Michael Weiss for valuable comments on some of these notes. Special thanks also to the anonymous reviewer for *Celtica* whose perceptive comments made this a much stronger paper. Remaining speculations and errors are of course mine. An abridged version of this paper was presented to the East Coast Indo-European Conference, Carrboro, NC on 23 June 2023.

²The last thing we need is a new set of terms to distinguish stages in the development of the Indo-European mother language, although such stages certainly existed. I will use Pre-Proto-Indo-European (PPIE) to refer to the language that included the ancestors of Anatolian and Tocharian. Indo-Anatolian would be preferable to the well-established Indo-Hittite as an alternative to PPIE. Proto-Indo-European (PIE), or more loosely, Indo-European, will refer to the later period in which Anatolian and the other dialects taken together were no longer mutually intelligible.

throughout the Indo-European world,³ both from linguistic⁴ and from archaeological⁵ evidence. The development from literal wheel to metaphorical cycle (the ‘wheel of the year’) is based upon both specific texts and etymologies and typological comparanda. West has documented the metaphor in Vedic (RV+) and Greek (e.g., Hesiod: αὖτις δὲ περικλομένου ἐνιαυτοῦ | φαίνονται *WD* 386–7 ‘they [the Pleiades] appear again with the revolving of the year’ [identical genitive of time at Theogony 184]; Euripides: ἐπτὰ σχεδόν τι καρπίμους ἐτῶν κύκλους *Helen* 112 ‘Almost seven years have gone full circle, with their harvests’ [trans. E. P. Coleridge], ἐνιαυτοῦ κύκλον *Phoen.* 477 ‘for a full year’, lit. ‘for the circle of a year’). Aarne (1918–20: 74ff.) compiled a vast collection of traditional riddles that included questions about wheels and wheeled vehicles, the answer to which was ‘year’; let an early example from the *Mahābhārata* (3.133.21) stand for many: ‘The greatest sage is he who knows the meaning of that which has six naves, twelve axles, twenty-four joints, and three hundred and sixty spokes.’

Within Italo-Celtic, Stifter (2017) makes a strong case for deriving OIr *amm* ‘time’ and Gaul. *amman* (hapax, Coligny) from *h₂etmno- ‘year as a cycle; time’ = L. *annus* (Untermann 2000: 74–5, de Vaan 2008: 43–4, and Weiss 2020: 182, 501 all take *akno- < *atno- to be the immediate preform of the Sabellic cognates Osc. loc. *akenei* ‘in anno’, Umbr. acc. pl. *acnu* ‘annos’; cf. Goth. dat. pl. *aþnam* ‘for years’; *LIV*² 273 n. 1). De Vaan (2008: 43) in particular supports the interpretation of the year as a cycle: he glosses the root *h₂et- as ‘“to go, wander”, hence “going around” > “year”’. Typologically, Stifter compares OCS. *vrěmę* ‘time’ < *uert-men- ‘turning’ = Ved. *vártman-* ‘track or rut of a wheel; course’ (224). Dočkalová and Blažek (2011: 436) cite an Egyptian parallel: Egypt. *rnp.t* ‘year’: Copt. *ranpi* ‘circle’.

³Except possibly in Anatolia (Anthony 2007: 64–5); what we have is Hitt. *hurki-* ‘wheel’, including a proverb, ‘the rear wheel does not overtake the front wheel’, *KBo* 11.14 ii 22–3, which would appear to imply a four-wheeled vehicle rather than, e.g., a two-wheeled chariot in which the wheels would have been side by side. The root is *h₂uerg- ‘turn around’ (Tichy 1983: 286–8; *LIV*² 290).

⁴*k^wek^wlo- ‘wheel’: Ved. *cakrá-*, Av. *čaxra-*; Gk. κύκλος Hom.+; Toch. *A kukäl*, B *kokale* ‘wagon’; OE. *hweol*, OIcel. *hvél* ‘wheel’. *roteh₂ ‘wheel’, *roth₂o- ‘wagon’ (*‘has wheels’): Ved. *rátha-*, Av. *raθa-* ‘wagon, chariot’; L. *rota*; OIr *roth*, W *rhod*; OHG. *rad*; Lith. *rātas*, Latv. *rats* ‘wheel’; Alb. *rreth* ‘hoop’ (*LIV*² 507); *h₂eks- ‘axle’: Ved. *ákṣa-*; Myc. *a-ko-so-ne*, ἄξων Hom.+; L. *axis*; W *echel*, MBr *ahel*; OE. *eax*; OHG. *ahsa*, OIcel. *qxull*; Lith. *ašis*, OPruss. *assis*; OCS. *osъ*. For additional evidence see Anthony (2007: 35, Table 2.2).

⁵Indirect, of course, since these early finds do not include written texts. They include the wagon image on the Bronocice (Poland) clay cup, c. 3400 BCE; and the ceramic wagon model from Baden grave 177, c. 3200 BCE (Milisauskas et al. 2002; Anthony 2007: 311ff.). Wagons and carts were buried with both horses and oxen. Chariot burials are first attested from 2800–2700 BCE in the oldest Sintashta fortified metal-working settlement: grave 30 includes chariot wheel impressions, horse bones, and cheek pieces for bits (Anthony: 371ff.). For representations of Bronze Age chariots with spoked wheels, see Kuzmina (2007: fig. 34).

On the spread of domestic horses from the Western Eurasian steppes, see most recently Librado et al. (2021). Thanks to David Stifter for this reference. The original situation in the Bronze Age may have been that oxen were used to pull wagons (Milisauskas et al. 2002: 312) and ploughs, while horses were herded for meat and milk. Horse riding and chariotry would thus have been secondary innovations.

My general model, which I hope is no longer controversial, is that the Celtic year had four divisions,⁶ and that the later division into twelve months represents an innovation. It is beyond my competence to discuss lunar, lunisolar and solar calendars. My interest is solely in the terms that the Celts and the Indo-Europeans used to name the divisions of their year. I will begin by summarizing current views on the four Irish festivals that marked these four divisions,⁷ Samain, Imbolg, Beltine and Lughnasad, and developing a few new ideas about the names of the first three: a new etymology of OIr *fuin* for Samain; clarification of the semantics of Imbolg; a new interpretation of Beltine; and I will discuss the various words which meant or may have meant ‘autumn’. Then I will show that in Insular Celtic at least, the four divisions of the year were subdivided into BEGINNING, MIDDLE and END + SEASON NAME, a nomenclature that survived as a relic in Middle Welsh and in Irish (into the Modern period), and was still the norm in Manx (in 10 out of 12 month names). Finally, I will bring together remarks on the morphology of individual season names into a proposed system of r-locatives going back to the proto-language.

I. OLD IRISH *SAMAIN* ‘NOVEMBER FIRST’

As is well known, the two halves of the Celtic year are expressed in OIr *gaimred* ‘winter cycle’ < *gemi-rātos < *gēm-i-,⁸ MW *gaeafrawd* < *gijem-i-, (Schrijver 1995: 108–10, 286) : OIr. *samrad* ‘summer cycle’ < *samo-rātos (Olmsted 1992: 193); cf. OIr. *rāithe* ‘trimester’ < *rātijā (*LEIA* R-5; root *ret- ‘run’, *LIV*² 507; on the two halves of the year, see McCone 1980: 139–41). Zavaroni, in his discussion of the Coligny Calendar (2007), rightly rejects Olmsted’s claim that SAMONIOS originally referred to the period from July through December. He concludes (15), as I think we must, that the opposition SAMONI- : GIAMONI- proves that SAMONI- is based on the word for ‘summer’. However, that leaves us with the paradox that the *gaimred* starts with *Samain*.

The most ingenious solution that I am aware of is that of Carey (1988b: 70–2), which he proposes in his discussion of *Echtra Nerai* ‘The Adventures of Nera’. When he is about to return to Rath Crúachan, Nera asks his Otherworld wife how he will be able to prove that he has been in the *síd*. She tells him to take *toirthe samraid* ‘the fruits of summer’ with him, since it is winter in our world; as Carey (72) puts it, ‘winter “here” is summer “there”’. He then suggests that

⁶Specifically, the four-season year of a Bronze-Age temperate-zone culture, for which the Sredni Stog site on the Dnieper may be taken as typical (Anthony 2007: 90ff., 239ff. with lit.; Greenfield 2001). Anthony discusses in detail how linguistic evidence is used to delimit the potential range of the Indo-European homeland. For the use of tree names specifically, see Friedrich (1970), also with a discussion of methodology and with extensive older literature.

⁷As is completely in keeping with early Irish tradition: as Carey (1988b: 71 n. 19) has shown, *cetharlith* ‘four festivals’ is a way of expressing ‘year’ in the poem *Ba mol Midend midlaige*, ed. Meyer (1912: 308).

⁸The change to *gami- had already taken place in Primitive Irish: Ogam 191 GAMICUNAS ‘of the winter wolf’ (McManus 1997: 105).

since a primary feature of the Otherworld is reversal, Samain is indeed the first day of summer, but summer on the other side:

That the Irish should have named one of their most important festivals with reference to supernatural rather than natural time is striking testimony to the central position which the paradoxes of the Otherworld occupied in their vision of reality. (*loc. cit.*)

The advantage of Carey's proposal is that it allows us to keep the common-sense connection between Samain and SAMONI-, a connection that has great face validity. Despite that, several eminent Celtic scholars, notably Pokorny (*IEW* 905) and Vendryes (*LEIA* S-22) have asserted that it is illusory, and this is accepted by Matasović (2009: 322), who does not discuss the implications of the pair SAMONI- : GIAMONI-. They propose instead that in its well-established meaning 'assembly and festival on the first day of winter' (cf. Kelly 1997: 461), Samain < *samoni- < *sm̥Honi- agrees instead with Ved. + *sāmāna*- 'assembly, festival', old instr. *samanā́* 'together; at the same place or time'; Goth. *samana*, Oícel. *saman* 'together'. For this meaning in Irish, see *óenaig na samna* in *Serglige Con Culainn*, 3.⁹ Jouet (1996: 272) made the bold proposal that the assembly was specifically a reunion with the dead/ancestors (which we call Hallowe'en). For a fuller discussion (with a possible Greek parallel) see Delamarre (2003: 267).¹⁰ We are left with a situation where we have two homophonous formations: *semH- 'summer' (*sm̥H- in Celtic, Germanic and Armenian; Schrijver 1995: 460) and *semH- 'unity' which we cannot distinguish on formal grounds, and which cannot be readily reduced to a common origin.

The traditional Irish etymology of *samuin* (so spelled) is *samuin* [.i.] *samfuin* .i. *bas in tsamraid* 'death of summer', *Fél.*² clxvi. While this is probably not correct linguistically,¹¹ it is certainly correct culturally ('étymologie populaire', Delamarre 2003: 267). It also finds an exact semantic comparison in Gk. φθιν-όπωρον, literally 'perishing of late summer' Hdt., Thuc.; φθιν-οπωρίδ- 'autumnal' Pind., so it may preserve a very old idea.

Fuin 'setting, sinking, end' itself has no agreed-upon etymology, but *VKG* 2.526 points us in the right direction: it is a compound of *wo- and nes- 'return home' (*LIV*² 454). Let us be more precise: West (2007: 201ff.) has shown in

⁹I cannot agree with Zavaroni (2007: 13) that we should reject Le Roux's (1957: 338) comparison of Coligny TRINUX SAMONI with the description of Samain at the beginning of *Serglige Con Culainn*: *tri lá ria sam-fuín 7 tri laa íarma 7 lathe na samna feisne* 'three days before Samain and three days after it and the day of Samain itself'.

¹⁰Speaking of ghosts, the *bech-samain* 'swarms of bees' cited by Pokorny (*IEW* 905) is a ghost word based on the nom. pl. *ile bethamain* gl. *beich* 'many are the swarms, that is, bees', Stokes (1905: 34 l. 3, cited in *LEIA* B-45). Pokorny himself recognized this and gave up the connection (1963: 526). In fact, Ir. *betham** finds an exact cognate in MW *bydaf* 'colony of bees' < Common Insular Celtic *bitamon (Charles-Edwards and Kelly 1983: 41) with the same *bhi-t- that we see in Baltic: OPruss. *bitte*, Lith. *bitė*, Latv. *bite* 'bee' (*IEW* 116).

¹¹I respectfully disagree with Minard (in Koch et al. 2006: 1558): 'In the Celtic languages the name *Samain* is clearly related to that of "summer".' Substitute 'traditionally' for 'clearly' and I would be in complete agreement.

detail that the Indo-European sun circles through the sky and returns under the sea (the ‘solar wheel’), via a chariot in the sky by day and a boat at night. The literal meaning of *wo-nes- ‘returning under (the sea)’ fits that mythic paradigm perfectly. A neuter i-stem *wo-nes-i would become *wonē, yielding *fuin* directly, like conjunct 2 sg. *-bir* ‘you bring’ < *beresi (thanks to David Stifter for this decisive comparandum). Michael Weiss kindly points out to me (personal communication, 29 September 2022) that this analysis is supported by Ved. *astam-áyana-* ŚBr. 13 ‘sunset’ < *ṇs-tom-h₁ej- (lit. ‘going home’). What I would propose is that ‘setting and returning’, which originally applied to the sun, was later attached to the ‘setting’ of the sunny half of the year. While I would not press this point, it is even possible that Carey was right, and that summer returned home to the Otherworld at the beginning of winter.

II. OLD IRISH *IMBOLG* ‘FEBRUARY FIRST’

In this section, I will clarify the semantics of Imbolg, but that depends upon first reviewing the phonology. Ó Máille (1926–8:110) showed that *Imbolg*, with voiced -g supported by rhyme (*urd* : *imbulc*, Meyer 1894: 49) should be written as such, and is not *Imbolc*, as it appears in much of the literature. This focuses the etymological field on roots with the shape *belg- rather than *belk- in Celtic. Hamp (1979) connected *Imbolg* with the rare word *ommolg* in the phrase *bai occ omulc* ‘cows being milked’ (Kelly 1997: 522 §1, in the OIr tract on distraint), as if it were a compound of *h₂melǵ- ‘milk’ (Matasović 2009: 263).

There is another possibility. Carey (1988a) demonstrated that Celt. *bolg- is likely to contain the root *bhelǵh- ‘swell’ (*LIV*² 73), and he cited many examples of both heroes and monsters swelling up in battle-frenzy. Cf. OE. *bolginn* ‘swollen with anger’, *bolgenmód* ‘furious’; and the ModIr idiom *Shéid sé na boilg* ‘he flew into a rage’ (Ó Dónaill 1977: 123). This allows us to reconcile the family of words for ‘bag’ with the *furor heroicus* (Henry: 1982). Like Carey, I am agnostic on the question of whether Fir Bolg and Belgae refer to bags or to heroic inflation.

Craig Melchert kindly directs me to Goedebyeure’s brilliant reassessment (2020) of the Hittite-Hurrian parable of the Disrespectful Deer and the mountain (*KBo* 32.14). Without going into the details of her analysis, she shows that in Anatolian, the root * $\text{uerH}\dot{\text{g}}$ - carries all three of the meanings ‘fat; strong; furious’, united by the basic meaning *‘swell up’ (e.g., Hitt. *warka-* ‘fat’; Luw. **warku-* ‘fat; angry’; Hitt. *warganu-* ‘fatten’, *warkešš-* ‘become furious’; Hitt. *warkant-* = Palaic *wakkant-* ‘fat’).

More familiar to readers will be the Greek cognates $\delta\omicron\rho\gamma\acute{\eta}$ ‘passion, anger, ferocity’, $\delta\omicron\rho\gamma\acute{\alpha}\omega$ ‘swell with lust; swell with ripening’, $\delta\omicron\rho\gamma\alpha\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$ ‘orgasm’ : Skt. *ūrj-* ‘strength; food’ (Frisk 1973: 2.411). Goedebyeure (131) explicitly draws the semantic parallel between these forms and our *bhelǵh-. It does not affect that comparison that OIr *ferg* ‘anger’ < Celt. **wergā* does not show the laryngeal that we see in *ūrj-* (laryngeal loss in $\delta\omicron\rho\gamma\acute{\eta}$ and its derivatives is regular by the ‘Saussure effect’: *H > $\emptyset$ /oRHC-; Goedebyeure: 133). Zair (2012:

186–7, 267) accepts the etymology (as does Matasović : 414); he proposes that laryngeals were lost in Celtic in this environment: * $\text{uer.H}\hat{\text{e}}\text{-ch}_2$.

I would suggest that Imbolg, the beginning of spring, means ‘around the swelling’, and refers both to the pregnancy of sheep (lambing season in Ireland begins in February – and has become a tourist destination!), and the swelling of buds.

III. OLD WELSH *GUIANNUIN* ‘SPRING’

In their erudite and comprehensive 2011 paper on year and season words in Indo-European, Dočkalová and Blažek derive OW (Ox.) *o guiannuin* gl. vere ‘in spring’ = OCo *guaintoin* gl. ver ‘spring’ (VKG 1.74; Graves 1962: #461) from *wes-nt-einV-, though technically, these continue *wes-nt-ēnV- (Falileyev 2000: 67–8; *LHEB* 361; Schrijver 1995: 240; this will become important below). They compare Gaul. (Coligny) SIMUISSONNA < *semi-wes-ont-ā (‘half spring’ or the like;¹² so also Delamarre 2003: 274).

Unfortunately, this otherwise attractive reconstruction cannot be correct, given the overwhelming evidence that *-nt- was preserved as such in Gaulish. Most instances are -ant- (see footnote),¹³ but there are also instances of -ont- which contradict SIMUISSONNA:

contoutos ‘compatriot’ (Delamarre 2003: 125; across a compound boundary);

dugiiontiio (153)

tigontias (296, Larzac); *toncsiōntiō* ‘who may swear (an oath)’ (298, Chamalières); *tricontis* ‘thirty’ (302)

Uocontii (326, tribal name)

Vesontis (divine name in VESONTIS MARS CIL 3.2038; Besançon < *Vesontiū (Delamarre 2017: 43)

With -nd-, *Brigindoni* (Ellis Evans 1967: 314).

There are no unambiguous exceptions. Of course, geminate -nn- is attested in Gaulish, the clearest sources being Celtic *dn, *gn, *sn, *tn (reconstructed forms are Celtic, not PIE unless otherwise noted):

¹²If we retain this root etymology (as I do below), I would prefer ‘halfway to spring’ because I identify this month with December, the halfway point between Samain and Imbolg.

¹³*aganntobo* (Delamarre 2003: 34); ANAGANTIO- (44, month name, Coligny); *arganto-* ‘silver’ (58); *auantia* ‘river’ (61); *brigantion* ‘height’ (87); *cantalon* (103); *canti-icanto-* ‘together with’ (231); CANTLOS (104, month name, Coligny); *canto-* ‘100’, *cantedon* ‘area of 100 paces square’ (104); *conto-* ‘100’; *cantos* ‘circle’ (105); *carant-* ‘beloved’ (107); *carbanton* ‘chariot’ (105); *cintu-* ‘first’ (117); *craxanto-* ‘toad’ (129); δεκαντεμ ‘tithe’ (138); *diligentir* ‘they belong by right’? (144–5, Larzac); *elantia* ‘doe’ (161); *entar* ‘between’ (163; = Celtib. *entara*); *iantu-* ‘desire’ (32); *iouantu-* ‘youth’ (191); *mantalon* ‘road’ (216; Ital. *Mantua*); *manto-* ‘mouth’ (216; cf. L. *mandō* ‘chew’, de Vaan 2008: 361); *namanto-* ‘enemy’ (231); *nantu-*in*anto-* ‘valley’ (231); *nitixsintor* ‘they enchant’ (236, Larzac); *panto-* (246); *petidsiont* (249, Larzac); *Santones* (tribal name; Delamarre 2017: 93); *senant* (270); *sentice-* ‘companion, spouse’ (271); *sentu-* ‘route’ (271); *suante* ‘at the wish of’ (284)

ando-unna ‘spring’ < *udnā* = L. *unda* ‘wave’ (Delamarre 2003: 48)
banna ‘summit’ < **bandnā* (66)

couinnos ‘war chariot’ < **wegno-*,¹⁴ PIE root **ueǵh-* ‘convey’ (Delamarre 2003: 127) : OE. *wægn* ‘wagon’ < Gmc. **wagnaz* (*LIV*² 661)

brunnio- ‘breast’ < **brusnio-* (Delamarre 2003: 92)

dunno- ‘brown, dark’ < **dusno-* (154; only in personal names)

onna ‘ash’ < **osnā* (242; only in toponyms)

prenne ‘arborescens’ (Endlicher), *prinni* (Coligny) < **k^wresno-* (or a neuter i-stem?; 252) = WCoBr *prenn* ‘tree’ : OIr *crann* for which the handbooks (*LEIA* C-223; *VKG* 1.44) reconstruct **k^wrsno-*. However, McManus (1992: 205–6) has argued convincingly that *crann* can also be derived from **k^wresno-*, and it is desirable to reconstruct a single preform for Celtic.¹⁵

linna ‘mantle’ < **litnā* (Delamarre 2003: 203)

There are also forms which have no certain etymology beyond Celtic *-nn-:

donno- ‘noble’ (Delamarre 2003: 147)

penno- ‘head’ < **k^wenno-* (249)

tanno- a kind of tree, in toponyms, e.g., Glatigny (Manche, Oise) < **glasto-tanno-* (289).¹⁶

SONNO-CINGOS (Coligny) has been interpreted as ‘march of the sun = year’, but this is justly disputed (278): since the weak stem of the l/n-stem ‘sun’ was **sHun-*, we would have to explain both the lowering of **u* to *o* and the origin of the geminate (cf. Goth. *sunno*, OE. *sunne*?). *Ando-unna* ‘spring’, *brunnio-* ‘breast’ and *dunno-* ‘brown, dark’ show that there was no lowering in this environment: *sonno-* cannot continue **sHuno-* (or **sūno-* after laryngeal metathesis and lengthening).

The divine name *Vesontis* is especially important for our discussion because it shows -nt- preserved against the -nn- of SIMIUISSONNA. I believe that the correct solution was proposed by de Bernardo Stempel (2010: 75) in her work on posttonic gemination in Continental Celtic: she reconstructs **sēmi-uēson-ā* (glossing **uēson-ā* ‘spring’ without explaining the origin of the lengthened grade). Delamarre (2017: 43), in his analysis of *Vesontis*, derives the word for ‘spring’ from an r/n stem, for which he reconstructs nom. **uēs-ŕ*, gen. **uēs-en-* (I would prefer **uēs-n-* at least for PPIE). Alan Nussbaum kindly informs me (personal communication, 10 January 2022) that he believes that

¹⁴If *couinnos* is lautgesetzlich, we should consider a lengthened grade Celt. **ko(m)-wēg-no-*; lengthened grade is well attested in Indo-Iranian and Germanic. While Coligny *prinni* could point to a raising rule, there is no raising in *penno-* ‘head’.

¹⁵Thanks to the *Celtica* reviewer for this reference.

¹⁶The superficially similar Germ. *Tannenbaum* ‘fir-tree’ cannot be cognate because the Germanic forms presuppose a voiced dental (Kluge and Mitzka 1967: 769).

in Italic, or perhaps even just in Latin, the lengthened grade was generalized from the nominative, whence loc. *vēr-i ‘in spring’ > delocalival *vēri-no- > *vērnus* ‘of spring’.¹⁷ I believe that a similar generalization of *ē explains *uēson- (though without the generalization of -r-, which is the product of Latin rhotacism). For Nussbaum’s larger theory of ‘decasuative’ (case-form based) nominal derivatives in Indo-European, see his 1986 book and 1998 paper.

Vesontis, Old Welsh *guiannuin* and Old Cornish *guaintoin* stand a good chance of being based on an inherited (though secondary) nt-stem. Compare:

Skt. *vasantá-* ‘spring’.

Arm. gen. sg. *garman* ‘of spring’ < *wes-r-ont+/-nt+; (the old nominative *wes-ŕ is directly preserved in Gk. ἔαρ; cf. Gk. εἰαρινός Hes.+ ‘of spring’).¹⁸

This gets us as far as *wesant- as the source of British words for ‘spring’, but what is the suffix -ēnV(-)? I would tentatively suggest that it continues the familiar Celtic diminutive suffix *-igno- (VKG 2.27). Schrijver (1995: 215) derives MW *colwyn* ‘whelp’ < Proto-Celt. *koligno-. According to Schrijver, *-iyn- > *-iġn- merged with *-ēn- > -wyn. Similarly, W *morwyn* ‘maiden’, OCo *moroin* gl. *virgo*, *puella* continue *morignā (cf. Skt. *mārya-* ‘youth’; IEW 738–9). Curiously enough, Ogam 362 CUNIGNI ‘of a whelp’ contains the same suffix as *colwyn* (and is probably a British rather than an Irish name [McManus 1997: 63]). As for the semantics, I would propose that just as *colwyn* means ‘young dog’ and *morwyn* means ‘young girl’, so *wesantigno-/ā meant ‘young spring’, that is, ‘early spring’. Whether or not that is correct, the preform *wesantigno-/ā is at least consistent with British phonology and noun morphology.

¹⁷Nussbaum notes that an archaic locative *uēs-en- could also be the source of *vērnus*. For a different account of the origin of L. *vēr*, see Frotscher (2012: 86), who acknowledges that his explanation is ad hoc.

¹⁸Armenian has mixed r- and nt-stems in some season words (Olsen 1999: 128; for the mixing of nom. -r and oblique -n-, cf. L. *iecur iocineris* ‘liver’):

gen. sg. *jmeran* ‘of winter’ < *ġhim-er-ont+/-nt+

gen. sg. *amaran* ‘of summer’ < *smH-r-ont+/-nt+

I do not know which of these was the model for the other, but the comparative evidence (following favors ‘winter’. The other candidate for inherited nt- enlargements in season words is ‘winter’:

Skt. (RV+) *hemantá-* ‘winter’. Nikolaev (2009: 474) breaks down the derivational chain as follows: loc. *ġheim-en ‘in winter’ → *ġhim-en-t- ‘that which is in winter’ (namely, winter itself) → *ġheim-en-t-o- ‘wintry’ (but see his n. 39 and Nussbaum’s [1998] simpler *ġheim-en-to- with adjectival *-to-).

Gk. ἀχειμαντος ‘having no snowstorms’ (semantically = Osset. *saw-zym* ‘black winter’, when you can still see the black earth because no snow has fallen; Dočkalová and Blažek 2011: 425)

Arm. gen. sg. *jmeran* as above.

Of course, any of those could have been created in the daughter languages; still, the pattern is striking.

Turning to Old Irish, Matasović (2009: 417) reconstructs *wesrako- for OIr¹⁹ *errach* ‘spring’ (following Pedersen, *VKG* 1.82). This forces him to postulate **ferrach* > *errach* in lenition environments (without citing any parallels). I would expect *wesrako- to become **féorach* in Old Irish (like *téoir* ‘three (fem.)’ = Gaul. *tidres*, MW *teir*; Cowgill 1957). David Stifter (personal communication, 31 December 2021) has an attractive alternative explanation for *errach* which I will leave it for him to publish.

Matasović goes on to suggest that his Ir. *wes-r- : Gaul. *wes-ont-, Brit. *wes-nt- (presumably renewed from *wes-n- in his view) may continue an archaic r/n-stem.²⁰ Compare Gaulish *Samaro-* in a place name and in dialectal French (Delamarre 2003: 266) : Coligny SAMONI-. This would be a different explanation for *wes-r- from the one that I will advance below, but it should be considered seriously if the problems with the Irish can be resolved.

IV. OLD IRISH *BELTINE* ‘MAY-DAY’

There are two competing explanations for this word (and I will add a third), based on the ambiguity of Irish *b-*: it can continue *bh-, the rare phoneme *b-, or *g^w-. The traditional etymology derives *bel-taine from Celt. *belo-tanijon ‘bright fire’ or the like (we will see ‘propitious fire’ in *Tochmarc Emire* below), first member *bhel- ‘bright’. We could also think of the root *bel- ‘strong’ (L. *dēbilis* ‘weak’, etc.; de Vaan 2008: 162–3) if we were to credit the native tradition that the Beltine fires were intended to strengthen the cattle against disease.

Finally, D’Arbois de Jubainville (1882: 132; *LEIA* B-31) equated OIr *Beltine* with Lith. *Giltinė* ‘goddess of death’. The root may be *g^welh₁- ‘throw; die’ (*LIV*² 207; Joseph 1980: 99; Matasović 2009: 61; Zair 2012: 218); Lith *gėlti* ‘pierce, stab’ with acute is probably the best evidence for a laryngeal. It is easy to derive *bel- from the nasal present *balnati < *g^wl-na- (attested in both Irish and British), with full grade *bel- e.g., from the subjunctive stem. Derivatives in *-t+ are also attested in Germanic: OE. *cwield* ‘death’ < *g^wel-tī and OIcel. *kveld* ‘evening’ (*‘death of day’) < *g^wel-to-.

The semantics would flow directly from the division of the year into two halves: *in samrad o beltine co samfuin 7 in gemred o samfuin co beltine*, Meyer (1901: 245.26–7). Taking the traditional etymology of *samfuin* literally for the moment, the halves of the year are marked by November 1 and May 1, ‘summer cycle (summer and autumn) from Beltine to ‘death of summer’ and winter cycle (winter and spring) from ‘death of summer’ to Beltine.’ Structurally in this system, *Beltine* can only mean ‘death [of winter]’, with ‘winter’ understood, and

¹⁹Matasović’s ‘Middle Irish’ is a slip: *errach* is attested in the Glosses at BCr 37a1 (= *Thes* ii, 26); in the Old Irish text on distraint edited by Binchy (1973: 80); in Cormac’s Glossary; and in the contemporary entry at *AU* s.a. 878.

²⁰Michael Weiss kindly points out to me that r-forms are also attested in Lith. *vasarà*, which however means ‘summer’, and MPers. *vahār*.

the word divinized as ‘goddess of death’ in Lithuanian, as D’Arbois de Jubainville proposed. I prefer this etymology on semantic and structural grounds; the phonology is compatible with all three reconstructions.

V. OLD IRISH WORDS FOR ‘AUTUMN’

Fogamar

Stokes (1906) made the obvious connection *fo* + *gam* + and compared Czech *podzim* ‘autumn’, also < ‘under winter’.²¹ This word is interesting because it presupposes a *gemar- ‘winter’ which it would be attractive to equate with Toch. A *śärme*, a hapax which may mean ‘winter’ < *gh̥iem-ro- (de Vaan 2008: 285; we would have to assume *mr > rm metathesis). However, Michael Weiss kindly informs me (personal communication, 24 October 2021) that *gh̥iem-ero-, as well as *gh̥im-ro- and *gh̥im-ero- with zero grade of the root, would also be possible for Tocharian, so a full word equation is not certain. The r-derivative is also present in L. *hibernus* ‘wintry’ < Italic *geimrinos (with the secondary full grade, which is also attested in Greek χειμερινός ‘in winter’ Hdt.+; note the locative meaning). The similarities are close enough that we can postulate a pair *gh̥iem-ro- ‘winter’ : *samaro-/samero- ‘summer’ (attested in Gaulish, Germanic and Armenian). While an m-stem for ‘winter’ goes back to the earliest Pre-Proto-Indo-European, the ro-stem pair would appear to be also of Proto-Indo-European date.

Semantically, *fogamar* cannot be separated from OCo *kyniaf*, MW *kynhayaf*²² ‘autumn’ < *‘before winter’ (Graves 1962: #463; the word is not attested in Breton). As Graves points out, *kyniaf* ultimately continues Celt. *kintu-g̥iamo-, so it does not quite match OCo *goyf* < Celt. *gijamo-. Late Co *kidniaz* (Lhuyd) looks as if it continues *kinnu- with regular preclusion before the nasal (thanks to David Stifter for clarifying this point).

I cannot yet explain why *fogamar* and not *sam* (or *gaim*) shows the *r that appears to be old in the word for ‘summer’, given Arm. *amān* and the Germanic words for ‘summer’ (including *summer* itself), which continue *sumera- < *sm̥H-ero-. Gaulish must also have had a word *samaro-, given the place name *Samaro-briva*, the ‘Bridge Over the Somme’ at Amiens (and the Somme itself < *Samaro-; Sims-Williams 2006: 32–3; Matasović 2009: 321), dialectal French *samará* ‘June’, and OFr., Prov. *somart* ‘fallow’ (Loth 1923; Delamarre 2003: 266).

Fogamar < *wo-g̥iem-ro- is completely regular, because an *e that is retained in this environment does not palatalize, as in *calad* ‘hard’ < *kaleto (Greene 1973). The introduction of an anaptyctic vowel in old *-θr# post-dates syncope, as is shown by absol. *gainithir* ‘is born’ < *gan’iθ’r’ < *ganit-r-es : conj. -*gainethar* < *gan’iθr < *ganitro, *arathar* ‘plough’ < *araθr < *aratron, etc. (Jasanoff 2003: 54). Similarly, *wo-gem-ro- would give *fogamar* directly,

²¹Cf. Lith. *pa-vasaris* ‘spring’ : *vasara* ‘summer’ (but etymologically, spring). Once again, I thank Michael Weiss for calling my attention to these forms.

²²Still well attested in ModW beside *hydref*, though the usual meaning is now ‘harvest’ rather than ‘autumn’.

without invoking the influence of *samaro- (though these words clearly influenced each other; Weiss 2012: 152). That *-μr# would have become *-mar* is strongly suggested by similar forms in *-βr# such as *gabor* ‘goat; horse’ : Romano-Brit. *Gabrosentum* (Moresby Roman Fort, Cumbria; *LHEB* 278) lit. ‘the track of the goat/horse’ : OBr *gabr* ‘goat’.

In addition to clarifying the Tocharian phonology above, Michael Weiss also suggests to me that we could start from an r-locative for several season terms in *(V)r(V). At least for Common Indo-Iranian, the locative ending was simply *r: YAv. *zamarə-guz-* ‘hidden in the ground’,²³ Ved. *vasar-hān-* (of Vāyu) ‘striking at dawn’ RV 1.122.3,²⁴ *vanar-šād-* ‘sitting in the woods’ 2.30.1, *vanar-gú-* ‘going in the woods’ 1.145.5 (of Agni). For the best recent collection, see Lundquist (2014: 91). It is even possible that the *gemar assumed above for *fogamar* continues *ġiem-r ‘in winter’. Even if it continues *ġiem-ro- as proposed above, this could still reflect the thematization of an old r-locative.

Of course, *fogamar* does not continue the Indo-European word for ‘autumn’, which can be reconstructed as *h₁ós-r. Schindler (1975) preferred to reconstruct r/n-stems only if the forms were attested on the surface, but he recognized that more speculative reconstructions might be correct. His example was precisely ‘autumn’:

N. *h₁ós-r (Dočkalová and Blažek: 419, reconstruct *(h₁)os(H)-r)

G. *h₁és-n-s.

The *r is seen in Gk. ὀπώρα ‘end of summer’ < *op-oharā < *-h₁os-r-eh₂. The *n of the oblique stem *h₁és-n- is seen in Goth. *asans* ‘summer’ (the seasons may have been divided between ‘early summer’ and ‘late summer/autumn’), OIcel. *qnn* ‘agricultural labor’ (*‘autumn work’), OCS. *jesenъ*, OPruss. *assanis* ‘autumn’. The root, with different suffixes, appears in Arm. *ašown* ‘autumn’ < *osjonto- (Dočkalová and Blažek: 429), with the same *-nt- that appears in

²³ It would take an entire paper to justify why I accept the traditional view that the Vedic hapax *jāmaryeṇa* RV 4.3.9 modifying *páyasā* means ‘with milk on the ground’ (see Lundquist 2014: 92–3, for a discussion of the admittedly attractive alternative **jām-ar-* ‘nourishing offspring’ to **h₂el-* ‘nourish, nurture’ as in *alma mater*). In the Old Irish legal tract on distraint discussed below (Watkins 2009: 229), we learn that during a raid, three milch cows escaped, and *flojacubsat a laegu: laith find for tellraig* ‘they left their calves: white milk on the ground’ (after Watkins). An even more remarkable comparison comes from the Middle Irish tale of King Suibne, who went mad at the Battle of Mag Rath. After Suibne had wandered in (partial) bird form for years, ‘St. Moling ordered a collation for him for that hour, for he told his cook to give him some of each day’s milking. Muirghil was her name; she was wife of Mongan, swineherd to Moling. This was the extent of the meal the woman used to give him: she used to thrust her heel up to her ankle in the cow dung nearest her and leave the full of it of new milk there for Suibhne. He used to come cautiously and carefully into the vacant portion of the milking yard to drink the milk’ (trans. O’Keeffe, §77; for the Irish, see his 1931 edition, 75). ‘The milk on the ground’ indeed! In cultures which use dung as fuel or manure (Kelly 1997: 229), they are not opposites: both dung and milk are seen as valued products of the cow. On cow dung as both polluting and purifying, see Douglas (1966: 9). Based on the strength of these parallels, I would cite Ved. **jamar-* : YAv. *zamarə-* ‘on/in the ground’ as more evidence for a Common Indo-Iranian r-locative.

²⁴ Stephanie Jamison (personal communication, 9 November 2021) suggests reading *vasar-hās* ‘moving at dawn’, and takes *vasar-* as secondary to *uśar-*, modeled on *vanar-*, which seems plausible.

so many seasonal words (Hitt. *gimmant*-; *ham(m)eshant*- beside *ham(m)esha*- ‘spring’; OCo *guaintoin* as discussed above).

Brón Trogain ‘August First; autumn’

In *Tochmarc Emire* ‘The Wooing of Emer’ §55, when Emer is specifying what Cú Chulainn must do before he can ‘rest his weapon in her sweet country’, she includes going without sleep for a whole year, from Samain to Samain. She describes the course of the seasons, which gives the scribe an opportunity to display his word-lore.

... cen cotlud ó samuin .i. sam-fuin .i. fuin in tsamraidh and. Ar is de roind no bíd forsin mblíadain anall, .i. in samrad ó beltine co samain 7 in gemred ó samain co beltine. Nó samfuin .i. sam súain .i. is and sin feraid sam súana .i. sam-sōn.

‘[Going] without sleep from Samain, that is, summer’s death, that is, the death of summer then. For it is from a division that will be over the year from then on, that is, the summer half from Beltine to Samain and the winter half from Samain to Beltine. Or *samfuin*, that is, summer of sleep [understand “sleep of summer”], that is, it is then that summer yields to sleep, that is, summer’s sleep.’

Co h-oimolc .i. taite ind erraig .i. imbe a folc .i. folc in erraig 7 folc in gemrid. Nó oí-melc .i. oí isind écsi ainm na cóerach. Is de asberar oíba, ut dicitur conba, echba, duineba, amal is ainm do bás -ba. Oímelc dano is sí aimser andsin i tic ass cóerach 7 i mblegar cóirig, unde oisc .i. of sesc .i. cóera sesc.

This paragraph revolves around *oí* being the poetic/learned word for ‘sheep’. I have tried to capture that by rendering it with *ovis*:

‘Until Oimolc, that is, the beginning of spring, that is, its wet [weather] around it, that is, the wet of the spring and the wet of the winter. Or *ovis*-milking, that is, *ovis* in poetry is the name of the sheep. It is from that that *ovis*-death [murrain] is named, just as dog-death is said, [and] horse-death, [and] human-death, as if -ba is the word for ‘death’. Oimelc then is the time when sheep come out [give birth?] and when sheep are milked, whence *oisc* ‘ewe’, that is, dry *ovis*, that is, dry sheep.’

Co beltine .i. bil-tine .i. teine soínmech .i. dá tenid dognítis druídh co tinctlaib móraib 7 doléictis na cethrai etarru ar tedmannaib cacha blíadnae. Nó co bel-dine .i. Bel dano ainm dé ídail; is and doaiselbthea díne cacha cethrae fo selb Beil. Beil-díne íarom beltine.

‘Until Beltine, that is, *bil-tine*, that is, propitious fire, that is, the druids used to make two fires with great incantations and they used

to let the herds pass between them against pestilence every year.²⁵
Or until Bel-dine, that is, Bel was the name of an idol god;²⁶ then
the young of every herd were exhibited under the protection of Bel.
Bel-dine then [became] Beltine.’

Co brón trogain .i. lugnasad .i. taite fogamuir .i. is and dobróini
trogan .i. talam fo thoirthib. Trogan ainm do thalmain.

‘Until Brón Trogain, that is, Lugnasad [August 1], that is, the
beginning of autumn, that is, it is then that the earth sorrows, that
is, earth under fruits. *Trogan* is a name for “earth”.’

As *LEIA* (T-147) poetically put it, ‘car la terre gémit sous les fruits.’ That is, the
earth is not sorrowing because summer is over, ‘it is groaning under the weight
of its fruits’. Two examples from early Irish:

mess for crannaib/craob do scīs/scīs do áss. (*Cath Maige Tuired*
822)

‘mast on trees/branch to weariness [from the weight of the acorns]/
weariness to fruitfulness.’

Trí bróin ata ferr fáilti: brón treóit oc ithe messa; brón guirt apaig;
brón feda fo mess. (Triads 68; Kelly 2004: 6)

‘Three burdens which are better than joy: the burden of a herd that
is eating mast; the burden of a ripe field; the burden of a wood
under mast.’

Once we recognize that the common meaning of ‘sorrow’ and ‘fruitful burden’
is ‘heaviness’, the etymology imposes itself: *brón* = W *brwyn* ‘sorrow’ < Celt.
**brugno-* is based on the **g^wr-u-* that we have in Skt. *gru-* ‘heavy’ (Ved. *agrū-*
fem. ‘virgin’ < *‘not gravid’; *gru-muṣṭí-* ‘having a heavy handful’), Sabellic
brūtus, Latvian *grūts* ‘heavy’. The details of the laryngeal metathesis in **g^wrH-*
u- : **g^wr-uH-* require further discussion,²⁷ but the Celtic stem is unambiguously
**bru-*. The complex suffix **-gno-* is well attested (Lewis-Pedersen 1961: 32),
including in the place name Beligna, a neighborhood of Aquileia, the site of the
principal sanctuary of Belinos (as in Bel-tine; Birkhan in Koch [2006]: 195)!
As for *trogan*, it surely refers to the earth as the fruitful one, given OIr *trog* ‘par-
turation; offspring’, *trogaid* ‘gives birth’. Thus *brón trogain* means ‘heaviness
of fruition’, a very apt term for autumn.

²⁵Binchy (1958: 129) reported that at that time, native speakers still used the phrase, *idir dhá theine lá Bealtaine* ‘between two fires on the day of Beltine’.

²⁶As indeed he was: Belos is attested as a variant of Belinos/Belenos. For a recent discussion of Belinos, including the possibility that his name refers to hallucinogenic henbane, see Birkhan in Koch (2006: 195); debunked by Prósper (2017). Note that henbane is toxic to cattle (though not to pigs), so a henbane god would be unlikely as a protector of the herds.

²⁷Szemerényi (1976) also derived *brón* from a compound of this root: **g^wru-g^whn-o-* ‘heavy wound’, but his etymology explains only the emotional meaning, not the fruitfulness.

Autumn as ‘cutting, reaping’

In Northern Hemisphere temperate zone cultures, autumn is the season of reaping. This is a commonplace, but even commonplaces have their place. In Celtic we have the following names for September: W *Medi* ‘reaping, harvest’ (= MBr *midiff* ‘reaping’, ModBr *med* ‘coupe d’herbe’ : L. *metō* ‘reap’ [see below]); and according to O’Davoren, September is *mí búana* ‘month of reaping’ (Kelly 1997: 237) to *bongid* ‘cuts, reaps’, cf. *bacc buana fínime* gl. ligo ‘a sickle for pruning vines’ Sg. 62b10, and one of the most famous phrases in early Irish, *cesu femmuin mbolgaig-mbung* ‘though I reap blistered seaweed’ Corm. Bodl. 34.26. It has long been recognized that *apaig* ‘ripe’ continues *ad-bougi- (GOI 92) ‘ready for reaping’, and that this matches MW *aeduct*, Co *athves*, OBr *admet* gl. uvae passae (LEIA A-79; Fleuriot 1964: 54), with the root *met- with which we started.

Further, in Italic, we have the Umbrian month name **Çersia-** ‘month of cutting’ Tab. Ig. Ila16 (Weiss 2010: 35; 2017: 273) < *kersi̯o- : Gk. ἀκερσεκόμης ‘having untrimmed hair’, Hsch. κορσόω ‘shear’; Hitt. *karšzi* ‘cuts’.

Since words meaning ‘cut, reap’ are so well attested in autumn month names, I would tentatively reconstruct *fo-com-beni̯o- for *fochmuine*. Let us start from past subj. passive *-fochmaide* in *Bretha Crólige* §53, a passage that explains that a son’s status is not reduced even if his father is dead or loses rank:

Cid marb dono int at[h]air no cia rotreth(n)athar a grad,
direnar-som amal ni **fochmaide** miad a tuisteda, ar ni **fuben** ni
imom nennac mignim ind anenaicc

‘Moreover, though the father should die, or though he should have been cast down from his rank, he [the son] is paid *dīre* as if the status of his progenitor had not been *f.*; for the misdeed of the guilty does not *f.* for the innocent.’ (following Binchy 1934: 43)

Binchy translates ‘had not been diminished’ and ‘does not entail any diminution’, which is certainly accurate, but the literal meaning ‘had not been undercut’ and ‘does not undercut’ fits just as well and opens up an interesting possibility for *fochmuine*. Note that *fo-ben* is one of those verbs in which the perfective is made with *com-* rather than *ro-* (GOI 344): perfective stem *fo-com-ben-.

Now, the ‘official’ verbal abstract of *benaid* is of course *béimm*, but *bíth* is also well attested, as is *-be* in compounds such as *fubae*, Sg. 26a8 to *fo-ben* (GOI 448). There is also a *bine* ‘injury’ < *beni̯o- derived from the present stem. While the basic meaning of *benaid* is ‘strikes, cuts down, slays’, like *bongid* it can also mean ‘reaps’: *benaid* (leg. *benait*) *in gort uile* ‘they reap the whole field’, Marstrander (1911: 116.14). So one possible meaning of *fo-ben* would be ‘undercut’ in the literal sense of ‘cut under, reap’.

While it is speculative to combine the perfective *fo-com- with *beni̯o-, *fo-com-beni̯o- would become precisely *fochmuine*, which I suggest refers to the time of reaping, like *mí búana*. This makes for a poignant metaphor in ‘The Nun of Beare’: old age has reaped her.

VI. DIVISIONS OF THE SEASONS

We can make two general statements about how the Celts thought about the seasons. First, several languages have more than one name for autumn, but in Irish (*fogamar*), Middle Welsh (*kynhayaf*) and Cornish (OCo *kyniaf*), autumn was ‘pre-winter’ as well as harvest-time. The languages looked ahead to winter, as it were. Similarly, W *gorffennaf* ‘July’, lit. ‘end of summer’ (which it is in the Celtic system) < **gor-* + *penn* + *haf* looks back at summer for its name.

Second, two poles of the year, midwinter and midsummer, express this by using compounds of ‘half’ or ‘mid-’ (just as in English): Coligny SIMIUIS-ONNA (if my identification of this month with December is correct) and MÍr *mithem*, MW *meheuin*, MCo *metheven*, Br *mezheven*, Vann. *méhéven* ‘June’. For Germanic we can compare OE. *on middes winteres* (still inflected separately, later univerted); OFris. *midwinter*, ON. *miðr vetr*; OE. *midsummer*, ON. *miðsumar*. This leads me to suggest that the original naming practice for subdivisions (months) was ‘beginning of season’, ‘middle of season’, and ‘end of season’, though some months also had other names, at least some of which referred to agricultural practices. This was still how the months were named in Manx: where the seasons were prefixed with *Toshiaght* ‘beginning’, *Mean* ‘middle’, and *Jerrey* ‘end’ (Minard 2006: 331). Only March and May no longer show this pattern.

<i>Fouyr</i> ‘autumn’	<i>Toshiaght Fouyir</i> beside <i>Luanistyn</i> ‘August’ <i>Mean Fouyir</i> ‘September’ <i>Jerrey Fouyir</i> ‘October’
<i>Geurey</i> ‘winter’	<i>Toshiaght Geurey</i> beside <i>Mee Houney</i> , <i>Sauin</i> ‘November’ <i>Mee veanagh y gheuree</i> beside <i>Mee ny Nollick</i> ‘December’ <i>Jerrey Geurey</i> ‘January’
<i>Arree</i> ‘spring’	<i>Toshiaght Arree</i> ‘February’ <i>Mayrnt</i> ‘March’ (* <i>Mean Arree</i> does not appear to have survived) <i>Jerrey Arree</i> beside <i>Averil</i> ‘April’
<i>Sourey</i> ‘summer’	<i>Boaldyn</i> ‘May’ (I have not found * <i>Toshiaght Sourey</i>) <i>Mean Sourey</i> ‘June’ <i>Jerrey Sourey</i> ‘July’

While Welsh and Breton have adopted the Latin-derived *Mai*, *Mae* for May, and Irish uses the festival name *Bealtaine*,²⁸ as does Manx *Boaldyn*, both Welsh and Irish also preserve the original name for ‘May (-Day)’: MW *kintevin* = OIr *cétamain* < **kintu-samīno-* ‘beginning of summer’ (LEIA C-58). MW *kintevin*, *mehefin*, *gorffennaf* make a complete set, and together with Manx constitute the strongest evidence for the hypothesized pattern. In addition, we see the same

²⁸ Although in OIr we find *mí Maí* at *Fél*. May 31 (restricted to poetry and religious literature, *eDIL* s.v. *Maí*).

pattern in the Modern Irish names for September and October: *Meán Fómhair* ‘middle of autumn’ (which September is in the Celtic system) and *Deireadh Fómhair* ‘end of autumn’. We can even see a trace of it in the traditional Irish etymology of *Samain* as *Sam-fuin*, ‘end of the summer (half)’. Although we no longer accept that etymology, it still shows how the Irish thought about the naming of seasonally related terms.

VII. R-LOCATIVES IN INDO-EUROPEAN SEASON TERMS

While many details remain to be clarified,²⁹ we are now in position to postulate a total system of r-locatives:

*ǵiem-ŕ ‘in winter’³⁰

OIr *fogamar*

L. *hibernus*

Arm. gen. sg. *jmeran*

perhaps Toch. A *särme*

*h₁ós-ŕ ‘in autumn’

Gk. ὀπώρα

*wes-ŕ ‘in spring’

Ved. *básri* = YAv. loc. sg. *vaŋri*

MPers. *vahār*, Dimlí³¹ *wesār*

Gk. ἔαρ

L. *vērnus*

Toch. A *yusār*³²

*smH-ŕ ‘in summer’

Gaul. *samaro-

Gmc. *sumera-

Arm. *amañ*

²⁹For example, was the original root vocalism of the r-locative R(e) or R(z)? There has clearly been paradigm leveling. Also, are derivatives in *-ro- and *-ero- part of the same process? Were all four of the season terms originally r/n-stems? That is certainly likely for ‘spring’ and ‘autumn’, as discussed above.

³⁰There is a parallel derivate with *n: the Sanskrit ‘n-stem’ corresponding to Gk. χεῖμα is attested only in loc. sg. *hēman* ‘in winter’ TS+. Dočkalová and Blažek recognize (421) that this can be endless locative *ǵhéim-en with postposed *-en ‘in’; cf. e.g., Paelignian *pritrōm-e* ‘in proximum’. I believe that this is correct, and that an endless loc. *ǵhéim is even older than the locative *ǵh(i)jém-i reconstructed by Oettinger (1982: 238), despite Hitt. *gimmi* ‘in winter’ < *ǵh(i)jém-n-i. Friedman (2003) in his very thorough analysis also concludes that the r-locative of a root noun is probably the best explanation for the word for “winter”.

³¹Usually Zazakî, but this is a pejorative term like Eskimo (vs. Inuit), so the self-designation Dimlí is preferred. For the forms see Kümmel (2015).

³²Toch. A *yusār* ‘spring’ < *en Ʒesōr ‘in spring’ (Hilmarsson 1991: 190).

ABBREVIATIONS

In addition to the standard abbreviations used in *Celtica*, I have used the following:

- Fél.* STOKES, WHITLEY 1905: *Féilire Óengusso Céili Dé: The Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee* (London).
*Fél.*² STOKES, WHITLEY 1880: *On the Calendar of Oengus* (Dublin).
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