JUAN LUIS GARCÍA ALONSO (ED.)

CONTINENTAL CELTIC WORD FORMATION. THE ONOMASTIC DATA

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TWO CONTINENTAL CELTIC STUDIES: THE VOCATIVE OF GAULISH, AND *ESSIMNUS**

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1. THE VOCATIVE OF GAULISH

The gaulish corpus, both epigraphic and in manuscripts, contains several instances of the vocative case (*pace* Lambert 2003: 52). The best example is in the phrase *nu gnate ne dama gussou* 'now, son, do not yield to violence' on the plate of Lezoux (L-66, 7), with *gnate* clearly being the vocative of **gnătos* 'son'. The immediately following imperative *ne dama*[1], which implies that a person is directly addressed, lends structural support to the vocatival interpretation of *gnate*. A similar situation obtains in a hitherto unnoticed inscription of three words on a piece of moulded pottery from La Graufesenque: *Decibale n[| ateuane* (L-143a, Stifter 2010-12: 212-217). On circumstantial evidence, it can be dated quite precisely to 117 or 118 A.D. The second word is broken off, so no full interpretation of the text is possible, but the last word *ateuane* is again an imperative of a verb consisting of the preverb *ate-* 'back, again, *re-*' and the Celtic verbal root **gʷan* 'to strike, hit'. The verb therefore means something like 'strike again, strike back', and the person so addressed is identified in the first word, the vocative of *Decibalus*, the name of the last king of the

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[1] Taking *dama* as the 2 sing. imperative of a secondary weak verb. Alternatively, the form could be analysed as the 2 sing. '*a*-subjunctive' of a strong verb **damᵢeti*, representing a form **damās* with a 'conjunct' ending after the negative particle, and loss of *s* in auslaut, meaning 'you should not yield'; cp. OIr. 2 sing subj. *dama*, cited without reference in the *Dictionary of the Irish Language D-degóir* 24.21 (http://www.dil.ie/).

Thracians, who died in 106 A.D. Unlike the plate of Lezoux, where the overall Gaulish linguistic context is undeniable, it is not entirely excluded that the Decibalus-fragment features code-switching, with the first or possibly the first two words being in Latin and only the verb being in Gaulish.

The Gaulish manuscript tradition preserves two likely instances of vocatives. One is found in *Endlicher's Glossary*, where *nate* is glossed as *fili*, that is, again the word for 'son', but this time with loss of the initial *g*, probably under Latin influence (Stifter 2007: 229, Blom 2011: 175). A plausible literary source for this gloss is extant in the *Vita Sancti Symphoriani*, probably written in the early 5th century, which tells of the martyrdom of Saint Symphorianus of Autun on 22 August 178. While Symphorianus was being led to his execution, his mother reputedly encouraged him in his steadfastness by shouting '*nate, nate Synforiane, mentobeto to diuo*' (Thurneysen 1923: 10-11). This sentence, 'son, son, Symphorianus, remember your God', is a curious mixture of Proto-Romance and Gaulish, and it is quite uncertain whether it really reflects the vulgar language of Central Gaul of the late second century, which it purports to do, rather than that of the early fifth when the *Vita* was written. In any case, *nate* could be a genuine instance of a Gaulish vocative, but a case of code-switching between Latin, Vulgar Latin and Gaulish is again not ruled out.

As for vocatives of feminine words, several of those are found, largely on spindle whorls. The unambiguous examples are *Matta dagomota [...] enata* [L-115], *nata* (L-112, 118, 121), *genetta* (L-114), *gnatha* (L-119), *cara* (L-140), *Taurina* (L-113), *Taurilla daga* (L-141), *uimpi* (L-112-113, 118, 121-122, 140). The first ten are *ā*-stems, and the last one is perhaps an *i*- or *ī*-stem. In the case of the *ā*- and *ī*-stems, it is not possible to tell whether they were formally distinct from their nominatives, for example, by having short-vowel endings against long vowels in the nominatives. Still, the *o*-stem vocatives in *-e* demonstrate that Gaulish did have a morphologically separate and marked vocative. But what did the vocative of Gaulish consonant-stem words look like?

The Proto-Indo-European vocative singular consisted of the naked stem of the word, without the addition of the nominative marker *-s*.[2] Even though Old Irish still retains the vocative as a living category, it is not possible in many consonant-stem classes to say whether a vocative like *a rí* 'king!' continues *s*-less *$ {*}rīg$* rather than *$ {*}rīgs$*, the form of the nominative. In some sub-types, it would be possible to distinguish phonemically between the reflexes of the inherited form of the vocative and the nominative: in the *r*-stems, for example, the original vocative *$ {*}ph_2ter$* would yield **$ {*}{*}a$ athar* (not attested) while the attested vocative *a athir* apparently continues the old form of the nominative *$ {*}ph_2tēr$*; in the *n*-stems, the vocative of *Deirdriu* ought to be **$ {*}{*}a$ Deirdre* if it continued the bare stem *$ {*}-i̯on$*. In those cases where a formal distinction resulting from the inherited morphology could be made, the Old Irish consonant-stem vocatives do not seem to be formally separate from the nominatives.

There is also evidence for the vocative of consonant-stem nouns in Gaulish, but not in its native transmission, but in *Nebenüberlieferung*. A considerable corpus of inscriptions in the Iberian script has survived from southern France, from the area of overlap between speakers of Iberian and Gaulish, edited in *Monumenta Linguarum Hispanicarum* II (Untermann 1980). Several hundred Iberian inscriptions were found in the oppidum of Ensérune (near

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2 Citing only recent literature: Szemerényi 1990: 169; Beekes 1995: 173; Meier-Brügger 2000: 183, 185; Tichy 2000: 67; Fortson 2004: 104, 113-114; Clackson 2007: 93-98.

modern Nissan-lez-Ensérune, dépt. Hérault), including a large number with names that to all extents and purposes do not look like Iberian names, but rather like Gaulish ones. Foreign names in the Iberian corpus are recognisable not only on the basis of parallels or etymons in other languages, but sometimes also by sound combinations that are foreign to Iberian (Untermann 1980: 47; e.g., *u* before a vowel, the clusters *śk* and *śn*). Two factors complicate the identification of foreign names: first, sound substitutions. Iberian had no sound *m*, but substituted *b* or whatever sound is represented by the digraph *m̄b* for it; second, the unsuitability of the semi-syllabic Iberian script for writing consonant clusters. To overcome this, consonants were either omitted in writing or empty vowels had to be employed. These factors have to be borne in mind when trying to identify Gaulish loan names into Iberian.

The following names in the Iberian corpus have been proposed to originate in Gaulish (following Ruiz Darasse 2010: 342-346 and Untermann 1980, unless otherwise stated). The first reading is that of Untermann in MLH II, and the second one the one that results from applying to the inscriptions the dual system of the Iberian script by which voiced and voiceless consonants can be distinguished (Ferrer i Jané 2005). The first group of names is those ending in -*e*:

> *anetilike* (dual system: *anedilige*) [B.1.39]: cf. *Aneχtlus** (CIL 13, 1165, Vienne)
> *aśetile* (d.s.: *aśedile*) [B.1.42]: cf. *Addedillos** (L-100, Chamalières)
> *aśune* [B.1.45]: cf. *Axiounus** (CIL 12, 3215, Nimes)
> *auŕtem̄baŕe* (d.s.: *auŕtem̄baŕe*) [B.1.258]: cf. -*māros*; unclear first element: **adu̯rit-*?
> *betukine* [F.17 2,B]: cf. *Medugenos*? (my suggestion)
> *betule* (d.s.: *bedule*) [B.1.33]: cf. *Betullus* (CIL 5, 4252)
> *eśkinke* (d.s.: *eśkinge*) [B.1.268]: cf. *Excingus** (CIL 13, 2613, Châlon-sur-Saône)
> *itutilte* (d.s.: *idutilte*) [B.1.9]: cf. *Indutillus** (DAG 713, Treveri?)
> *kaŕate* (d.s.: *kaŕate*) [B.1.33]: cf. *Carantus* (CIL 13, 4732, Sion)
> *kasike* (d.s.: *kasike*) [B.1.33, .117]: cf. *Cassicus** (CIL 12, 3369, Nimes)
> *katubaŕe* (d.s.: *katubaŕe*) [B.1.373]: cf. *Catumarus* (CIL 3, 4263, Sopron)
> *katuŕe* (d.s.: *katuŕe*) [B.1.51]. cf. *Caturus** (AE 1967, 219b, Lusitania)
> *kobakie* (d.s.: *gobagie*) [B.1.53]: cf. *Comagius* (CIL 5, 5690, Fino)
> *latubaŕe* (d.s.: *latubaŕe*, difficult to read) [B.1.364]: cf. *Latumaros** (LexLep VB·3.1, Ornavasso)
> *]mbaŕe[* (uncertain) [B.1.174]: cf. -*māros*
> *ośiobaŕe* [B.1.59]: = unattested *Oχsiobarros* or *Oχsiomāros*?
> *śenikate* (d.s.: *śenigade*) [B.1.286]: cf. *Senicatus* (CIL 13, 3503, Amiens)
> *śeŕtubaŕe* (d.s.: *śeŕtubaŕe*) [B.1.257]: cf. -*māros*; unclear first element
> *śuate* (d.s.: *śuate*) [B.1.67]: cf. **su̯ādus* 'sweet'?
> *śunuke* (d.s.: *śunuge*) [B.1.310]: cf. *Sunucus** (CIL 5, 5626, Seprio)
> *uaśile* [B.1.352]: cf. *Vassillus** (CIL 13, 11382, Metz)

Given the caveats besetting foreign names in Iberian spelling mentioned above, not all equations can lay equal claim on certainty. In particular, the proposed reading according to the dual system does not always support the suggested Gaulish etymologies. This may indicate that either some of the etymologies are wrong or that the dual writing system was not used by the scribes in all instances. The unifying feature of the names above is that, with the possible exceptions of **su̯ādus* 'sweet' and *Senocatus,* which are *u*-stems, they are *o*-stems in Celtic, but are rendered with a final -*e* in Iberian. The principle behind this

treatment is that the form in which the names were borrowed into the recipient language is not the nominative, but the vocative instead. While the use of vocatives for nominatives has long been recognised in comparative linguistics, it seems to have served as a kind of last resort when no other more regular means of explanation could be found for the convergence. Correa (1993; re-iterated in Ruiz Darasse 2010: 341-342) does indeed think that a phonetic process of vowel closing is responsible for the treatment of Indo-European *o*-stem names in the Iberian corpus. However, the parallel treatment of Latin and Greek names in Iberian inscriptions clearly clinches the case in favour of the vocative hypothesis: Latin and Greek *o*-stem names regularly appear with *-e* in Iberian, but only very rarely with *-oś*, whereas Latin names in *-ius*, which have their vocatives in *-i*, actually turn up with exactly that *-i* in Iberian.[3] In a forthcoming typological study of the phenomenon (Stifter 2013), I have based myself on a much broader collection of data and arrived at the conclusion that instead of being marginal, using the vocative for the nominative is actually the normal treatment when names are borrowed from a language with morphologically marked vocatives into one without, especially in cases of language contact with not very deep-rooted bilingualism.

The corollary of this observation is that the treatment in Iberian may give us a hint about the native Gaulish vocative in classes outside the *o*-stems. A group of names without the final *-e* have been identified as possible loans from Gaulish, again sometimes more, sometimes less convincingly.

> *atetu* (d.s.: *adetu*; very uncertain reading) [B.1.26]: = **Ateχtū*? cf. *Atectus** (CIL 3, 11481, Feistritz)
>
> *alati* (d.s.: *aladi*) [B.1.34]: cf. OIr. *allaid* 'wild'? or *Allatus* (CIL 12, 720, Arles)?
>
> *auetiŕiś* (d.s.: *auetiŕiś*) [B.1.15]: = **Adueχtirīχs*? cf. *Aduectus** (VTO 309 (1), Vindolanda)
>
> *biuitu* (d.s.: *biuitu*) [B.1.128]: cf. *Biuito** (CIL 13, 5726, Langres)
>
> *iatena* (d.s.: *iatena*) [B.1.46]: = **Iantenā*?
>
> *kaŕtiŕiś* (d.s.: *gaŕtiŕiś*) [B.1.28]: cf. *-riχs*; for the first element cf. *Cartilius* (CIL 5, 4562, Brescia)
>
> *katu* (d.s.: *katu*) [B.1.92, B.1.245]: cf. *Cato* (Osw. 66, Lezoux)
>
> *kiśa* (d.s.: *giśa*, difficult to read) [B.1.52]: = **Cissā*? cf. *Cissus* (CIL 5, 6864, St. Bernhard)
>
> *koti* (d.s.: *godi* or *goti*) [B.1.122]: cf. first element of *Cotilius* (CIL 13, 4706, Malaincourt)
>
> *ruta* (d.s.: *ruda*) [B.1.65]: cf. *Rutatus* (Osw. 271, Vichy), or from *rud-* 'red'?
>
> *smeraz* (in Etruscan letters) [B.1.2]: = **Smerants* (De Hoz 2008)
>
> *tiuiś* (d.s.: *diuiś*) [A.1-5, B.1.331]: = **Dīuiχs*? cf. *Diuicus** (CIL 13, 755, Bordeaux)
>
> *untikoŕiś* (d.s.: *undikoŕiś*) [B.1.333]: cf. *-riχs*; first element unclear

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[3] The following Lat. names have been identified: *[.]uke koŕneli* [C.1.1] = *Lucius Cornelius* (*-e* for *-ius*!), *balante* [B.1.125] = *Blandus*, *kai* [C.7.6, C.11.5] = *Caius*, *luki* [A.6–11, D.1.1] = *Lucius*, *m̄basi* [B.1.125] = *Massius*, *m̄baske* [B.1.269] = *Mascus*, *seśte* = *Sextus* or *sextus* (a monetary unit)? (Ferrer i Jané & Giral Royo 2007: 96), *tibeŕi* [A.12-17] = *Tiberius*. In one case, fragmentary *]itoŕ* [F.11.8] seems to correspond to Greco-Lat. *Isidorus* in a bilingual text (on the picture of the inscription (http://www2.uah.es/imagines_cilii/fotos_cilii/14/cilii14,0301.jpg), I can only make out the final *ŕ*). This rule of morphological correspondence seems to pertain to anthroponyms only. The sole possible exception would be *seśte* if it stood for the monetary unit *sextus*, which is far from certain.

These are mostly *n*-stems, *ā*-stems and guttural stems. The endings reflect those of the nominative singular of the donor language: Ib. -*u* in the case of the *n*-stems (Gaul. nom.sg. -*ū* < *-*ō(n)*), -*a* for *ā*-stems (Gaul. nom.sg. -*ā*), -*ś* for guttural stems (Gaul. nom.sg. -*χs*), Etr. -*z* = /ts/ for the *nt*-stem (Gaul. -*nts*). The two forms in -*i* are the odd men out. If they are *i*-stems, which they may well be, the *s*-less form could reflect the inherited *s*-less vocative, as in the case of the *o*-stems.

Furthermore, there are several possible loan-names from Gaulish into Iberian ending in -*o* whose status in the scheme is not so clear:

> *aboko* (d.s.: *atako*?) [B.1.21]: without exact parallel, perhaps the adaptation of a name like *Adbogius* (CIL 13, 7031, Mainz)
>
> *bikilako* (d.s.: *bigilako*) [B.1.13]: = *brigi-*?
>
> *kabiŕilo* (d.s.: *gabiŕilo*) [B.1.272]: cf. *o*-stem *Gabrillus* (Osw. 129, Pont-des-Rêmes), *n*-stem *Gabrillo* (AE 2001, 1395, St-Etienne-Roilaye), or Καβιρος (G-118, Cavaillon)?
>
> *kanio* (d.s.: *kanio*) [B.1.328]: cf. *Cania* (AE 1999, 1071, Corseul)
>
> *touto* (d.s.: *touto*) [B.1.74]: cf. *Touto** (CIL 12, 852, Arles)
>
> *uerilo* [B.1.243]: cf. *Verilla* (CIL 13, 2781, Autun)

In a few cases, forms in Iberian ending in -*oś* are found that Untermann (1980: 48) explains as retaining the Gaulish nominative directly:

> *anaioś* [B.1.36, .37]: cf. the Latin(ised) gentilic *Annaeus*
>
> *biulakoś* [A.33-13]: ?
>
> *botilkoś* [A.100-10,-11]: cf. Gaul. *Bodilicus*?
>
> *noukoś* (d.s.: *nougoś*) [B.5.1]: ?

The final group is either fragmentary or mysterious, and does not add to the solution of the present question:

> *kobar** (d.s.: *gobar**) [B.1.337]: cf. *Combarillus* (CIL 12, 3883, Nimes; CIL 12, 2807, Aramon, Gard; CIL 13, 458, Auch)?
>
> *taski*[(d.s.: *daski*[) [B.1.134]: cf. names in *tasco-* and *tasgo-* (DLG 292-293)
>
> *toutoŕ** ? (d.s.: *toutoŕ**) [B.1.332]: the first element is certainly Clt. *toṷtā* 'people, petty kingdom', but the final portion seems to be incomplete.

It can be concluded that in the case of the *o*-stems where there was a morphologically distinct vocative in Gaulish, the latter was borrowed as such into Iberian to form a new nominative. The same may be true for *i*-stems, but the evidential basis for this is very small. *U*-stems appear to have been treated as if they were *o*-stems. Since the form of the Gaulish nominative in the other stem-classes was borrowed into Iberian, it may be inferred that it must have served as the case of address in the donor language and that there was no *s*-less vocative in the consonantal-stem declension, i.e., it did not consist of the plain stem.

II. *Essimnus*[4]

The name *Essimnus*, with the variant spellings *Eximnus* and *Essibnus*, is attested in Central Europe, and is therefore of potentially Celtic origin. It is missing from most Celtic onomastic handbooks, such as Evans's *Gaulish Personal Names*, Schmidt's *Komposition in gallischen Personennamen*, Delamarre's *Dictionnaire de la langue gauloise* and *Les noms personnes celtiques*, and Raybould & Sims-Williams's *Corpus of Inscriptions Containing Celtic Personal Names*, even though in his lexicon of Celtic personal names, Xavier Delamarre (2007: 100) does include the superficially similar name *Exsibuus*,[5] twice attested in the Bath tablets (TS 37.6, 57.1), a name which at first sight looks as etymologically intractable as *Exibnus*. Holder's *Alt-celtischer Sprachschatz* (I 1474.43) contains one attestation (*Essibnus*), as the others were still unknown in his time. Only in recent years has the name attracted more attention. Diether Schürr 2003 devoted an entire study to it in which he assigned it to a prehistoric Alpine language he called Euganean. In contrast to this, Corinna Scheungraber proposed a Celtic etymology for *Eximnus* during her work on *Non-Mediterranean Names in Noricum* (NNN),[6] an etymology which she then presented at a conference and developed further for the proceedings (Scheungraber, forthc.; see fn. 4 of the present article).

Scheungraber's proposal is the starting point for the present thoughts. Starting from the observation that the name looks like a compound with privative *ex-* as first member, she proposed an analysis as Proto-Celtic *exs-$imno$-, the second element being derived from the Indo-European nominal root *$h_2iem(H)$- 'imitate'. A direct cognate of the formation *$h_2im(H)no$- is Hittite *himma-* 'imitation, substitute, replica' (Kloekhorst 2008: 343–344; without the internal laryngeal), further related to Latin *aemulus* 'rival'[7] and *imitari* 'to imitate' (De Vaan 2008: 26). The underlying meaning of the Celtic name is 'without a rival, without a like' according to Scheungraber (2011: 8-9; forthc.).

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[4] This study was written parallel to and in close co-operation with Corinna Scheungraber, who presented her ideas about *Essimnus* at the *Arbeitstagung der Indogermanischen Gesellschaft* in Halle/Saale on *Das Menschenbild bei den Indogermanen* (31.3.-1.4.2011), and elaborated on them in great detail for the conference proceedings (Scheungraber forthc.). Consequently, there is a considerable amount of overlap and agreement between our two articles. However, because there is a different slant to the arguments, and because we arrive at different conclusions about the same material, it was decided to publish the two treatments separately.

[5] It is mentioned as a possible example of ‹xs› for /χs/, without further explanation, in Sims-Williams (2003: 24 fn. 10). I will not treat this name in the following study, but for what it is worth, I want to mention the possibility that the spelling ‹exsibuus› *could* represent *-$i\mu\mu os$ or *-$i\beta\beta os$, assimilated from earlier *-$i\mu nos$ ‹-imnus/-ibnus›. Alternatively, *Exsibuus* could be a variant of *Aesibuas* (Scheungraber forthc.), also from Bath (TS 37.9) and from the very same period (c. 175-275 a.d.), which Mullen & Russell explain as being built on the divine name *Esus* (http://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/personalnames/details.php?name=37, visited 15.6.2012). Mullen & Russell do not make the connection with *Exsibuus*.

[6] NNN, online at: http://www.univie.ac.at/austria-celtica/personalnames/, is a database of non-classical personal names from the Roman province of Noricum, initiated under my direction as part of the research project *Old Celtic Language Remains in Austria* (P20755-G03; funded by FWF – *Fonds zur wissenschaftlichen Förderung*). The model for the site was Paul Russell's and Alex Mullen's database of *Celtic Personal Names of Roman Britain* (http://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/personalnames/). However, we do not restrict ourselves to Celtic names alone, but aim at including every non-Mediterranean name, with a high level of morphological analysis of the names covered. The database is still work in progress.

[7] With full grade I or *Schwebeablaut*!

II.1. *Celtic *imno-*

The Proto-Celtic etymon **imno-* 'like', which has thus been set up provisionally, can be compared with several words in medieval Celtic languages. One is the OIr. word for 'pair, triplet; twin', *emon*, gen. *emuin*. It has been traditionally derived either from Proto-Celtic **i̯emno-* (thus implicitly IEW 505; De Vaan 2008: 256) or **i̯emono-* (Matasović 2009: 435), with full grade in the first syllable.[8] However, nothing precludes the derivation of OIr. *emon* from Proto-Celtic **imno-* with a zero grade that better befits the suffix *-nó-*. This must have resulted in an erstwhile alternating paradigm OIr. nom. *emon*, gen. **imuin*, but the case of OIr. *slemon* 'smooth, polished, slippery', gen. *slemuin*, equative *slemnithir* < PC **slimno-*[9] shows that in a word of this inherited phonetic shape the OIr. *e*, which was originally confined to contexts with lowering, could be generalised from the nominative to the whole paradigm.

The other potential cognate of **imno-* is found in South-West British. In Breton, OB *eunt · aequus* (Oxford, Bodl. Auct. F. 4. 32, fol. 8a; see Fleuriot 1964: 111 for an explanation of the unhistoric *-t*), MB *effn* 'even, straight'; in standard MoB, this has become *eeun*, with vocalisation of the labial fricative before a sonorant (Jackson 1967: 631-637). Perhaps this mid-high rounded vowel resulted from the sporadic alternation of [y] and [ö] in Breton (Jackson 1967: 141-144), or it is due to the influence of the otherwise lost and unattested **i̯æːn*, the expected Breton outcome of PrBrit. **i̯ɔ̄n* < Celt. **i̯āno-*, as reflected in Welsh *iawn* and perhaps Late Gaul. *iono* (L-93.8).[10] The dialects reveal a more variegated picture: [ˈɛøn], [ˈɛyn], [ɛɥn], [ɛwn], [ɛ̃wn], [eãn], [jãn], [ɛvn], [ɛvən], [ɛmn] (Favereau 2000: 212). Some of the dialectal variants, especially delenited [ɛmn] in the dialect of Trégor-Goëlo, prove the old labial nasal in this position.

[8] In laryngeal theory, the PIE root underlying the words for 'twin' has been variously set up as **i̯emH-* (e.g., Matasović 2009: 435; De Vaan 2008: 256), **h₂i̯em(H)-* (e.g., Schaffner 2000: 504 fn. 88), or *i̯em-* (EWAia II, 399-400 with further literature). Under the premises that Latin *geminus* actually belongs to this root (but see Schrijver 1991: 94 for a derivation from **gemh₁-*), and that the roots for 'twin' and 'imitate, rival' are identical, which is semantically plausible, **h₂i̯emH-* with a final laryngeal is inevitable. In order to putatively explain Celtic *Essimnus* and South-West British **eu̯no-* (see below), the loss of the interconsonantal laryngeal in **h₂imHnó-* has to be assumed for Proto-Celtic (similarly, Zair 2012: 185). OIr. *emon*, on the other hand, can also be derived from Proto-Celtic **imano-* with a vocalised laryngeal, but the other Celtic words discussed here would then have to be separated from it.

[9] Or **slibno-*. Since PC **b* and **m* had probably merged before **n* in an approximately nasal, fricative sound that can be rendered with *m* in phonetically less explicit reconstructions, or, more explicitly, with *μ* as the conditioned allophone of *m* and *b* before *n* (Stifter forthc.), it is impossible to say whether PC **sli̯u̯no-* continues pre-Celtic **slim-nó-* (cognate with MHG *slīm* 'slime') or **slib-nó-* (< **slei̯b-* 'to make smooth, to glide', LIV 566). The original **i* of **slimno-* is secured by MW *llyfn*.

[10] Despite other claims in the literature (e.g., Jackson 1967: 129), alleged OB reflexes of this word, *ion* and *iun*, do not exist. The etymon is present only in Breton as the second element of the dvandva-compound adjective MB *guirion* 'true, just'. The alleged instances of the adjective are all found in Ang. 477 A, but do not stand up to a close scrutiny. The form *iun* is a ghost altogether: in *l. iun fiunt a purlanuou et totidem a purtreou* (Ang. 477 fol. 62a) it is a scribal error for the Roman numeral *luii* '57', to be read together with the preceding *l*. The two instances of *ion* are in fact plural endings. In *cemintion · ratione* 'amount' (Ang. 477 fol. 56a), it stands in a rare plural formation of *cemint* 'amount', probably in imitation of the Lat. plural *quanta* (Lambert 1984: 191). In *cehition int in numero dierum* 'they are of the same length in the number of days' (Ang. 477 fol. 74b), *cehition* 'equally long' is a predicative adjective that agrees with the plural subject 'they' (Lambert 1984: 198). The construction has a parallel in the plural predicative adjective in a fronted position in the code-switched sentence *guenion sunt in solstitio* 'they are weak in the solstice' (Ang. 477 fol. 67a). By contrast, Fleuriot (1964: 282, 306) understands *cehit* as the conjunction 'like, because' and *ionint* as a 3 pl subj. verb 'to agree' (corresponding to ModBr. *joentran̄*, *juntan̄* 'to join').

OC has *eunhinsic · iustus* 'just' (*Vocabularium Cornicum*). Early MC *evn*, *ewn*, *own*, *ewen*[11] most likely represent monosyllabic /ɛœn/, apparently with the same sporadic vocalisation of the labial as in Breton. The adjective is found once in a rhyme with *nawn* 'hunger' (*Bewnans Ke*, f. 3v, stanza 55), which, because of the difficulties associated with that word, further complicates the problem rather than helps to shed light onto it. In LC, two variants are found: one representing /eːn/ (*en* in *Gwreans an Bys*; *ean*, *eon*, *eun*, *eune*, *ewne* in William Pryce's *Archaeologia Cornu-Britannica* of 1790), from intermediate */ɛɛn/ < /ɛœn/ with unrounding of earlier *æ* in the first quarter of the 16th century. Edward Lhuyd, on the other hand, has <evn> and <eu̯n> = /ɛʊn/, but he may have copied this *eun* from an older manuscript, misunderstanding the value of the *u*.[12] <evn> is particularly tell-tale of being copied from older manuscripts, since **/evn/ is phonotactically impossible in LC. On the strength of Lhuyd's authority, /ɛʊn/ established itself as the standard realisation in the revived language. /ɔʊn-/, the expected outcome, is attested in the stem of the MC verb *ewne*, LC *ou̯na* 'to straighten, correct'.

These Breton and Cornish forms can be used to reconstruct the Proto-South-West-British adjective **eu̯n* 'even, straight'. As Welsh does not retain this word, we do not know whether the vowel *e* continues Proto-Celtic **e* or **i*, but the comparison with OIr. *emon* above speaks in favour of *i*. The vocalisation of **u̯*, clearly present both in later Breton and Cornish, might even be traced back to an earlier date before the separation of the two languages or, as it were, dialects: in the case of the structurally similar adjective **sliu̯no-* 'polished, smooth', where such a vocalisation apparently never took place, OB uses the spelling *limn* with the letter *m* three times (Berne MS 167, fol. 23a, 35a, 80b), as does OW in the derived verb *limnint · tondent* 'they make smooth' (J 44). In the later stages of the languages, the fricative character of the sound is still clearly retained and represented in the spelling: MB *dileffn* 'hard', MoB *levn*, MW *llyfn*, C *leven* 'smooth'. In the case of **iu̯no-*, however, both OB *eunt* and OC *eunhinsic* have *u*. The usual rendition of lenited *u̯* in OB is <m> (LHEB 486). Even in Oxford Bodl. MS Auct. F. 4. 32, the very manuscript that contains *eunt*, there are almost twenty instances of *u̯* written with <m>, preponderantly in the ending of the 1st sing *-am*, but also in the superlative suffix *-ham* and in the adjective *celmed* 'skilled' (Bauer 2008: 172–176), but no other example for the use of <u> is found. In the *Vocabularium Cornicum*, **u̯* is regularly represented by *u* and *f* (LHEB 485), so *eun-* could conceivably stand for /eu̯n/. However, the structurally similar /steu̯(ə)nig/ < **stamnīkā* 'palate' is written as *stefenic*

[11] This is a list of attested variants, put together by Albert Bock: *Pascon agan Arluth* (14th c., copied c. 1450): *evn*, *ewn*, *own*; *Passio Christi* (c. 1400, copied c. 1450): *evn*, *ewen*; *Resurrexio Domini* (c. 1400, copied c. 1450): *evn*; *Origo Mundi* (1st half 15th c.): *evn*, *evnn*; *Bewnans Ke* (2nd half 15th c., copied c. 1575): *ewn*, *own*; *Bewnans Meriasek* (1504, copied after 1550): *ewne*; *Creacon of the Worlde* (1611): *en*; Edward Lhuyd, *Archaeologia Britannica* (1707): *evn*, *eu̯n*; William Pryce (1790): *ean*, *eon*, *eun*, *eune*, *ewne*. Pryce often writes <ea> for /eː/ and sometimes <eo> für /œ/. The latter spelling is also used in placenames like *Porthmeor* = MCorn. [ˌpɔrθˈmœːr].

[12] The information about Late Cornish comes from personal communication with Albert Bock. He remarks about Edward Lhuyd's mode of working that «we may suspect Lhuyd of just copying the word from Middle Cornish manuscripts instead of transcribing it from the terminal speakers' Late Cornish he heard – which he frequently did, thus introducing many anachronisms into his *Geirlyver Kyrnewig*. One reason not to trust Lhuyd too much in this case is that one would expect /ɔʊn/, not /ɛʊn/ in Late Cornish.» As for the verbal stem /ɔʊn-/ 'to straighten, correct', see further in the text.

with *f* and an epenthetic vowel, which again opens up the possibility that *eun-* could actually represent a different phonemic sequence like /eɣn/ or /eœ̨n/ already in OC.[13]

The *Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Celtic* contains no less than two diverging etymologies for this adjective. It is found both under the headword «**yāno-* 'true, noble'» (Matasović 2009: 433), as well as under «**efino-* 'right, correct, equal'» (Matasović 2009: 113). Both are phonologically impossible. The former would have given OB **ion* (unattested despite claims to the contrary, see footnote 9), MoB **ieun*; the other preform would have probably resulted in B ***oan* < **ēno-* < **eino-*. Both suggestions must be rejected on formal grounds. In the entry for **efino-*, Matasović alludes to the possible comparison of MB *effn* etc. with Goth. *ibns*, Germ. *eben*, Engl. *even* etc. Schaffner (2000: 498–499), who also makes the connection with the British forms, derives the Germanic adjectives from a common preform PIE **h₁emnó-* 'even'; the vowel *e* of the first syllable is required by the vocalism of the Germanic words (Schaffner 2000: 502[75]; against IEW 505), and by the further comparison with OInd. *amnás* 'even'. While Schaffner's proposal is valid as such, it should be noted that the South-West British words could also continue a preform with *i* in the first syllable, and if plausible cognates for such a construct can be found within Celtic, precedence should be given to them rather than to external etymologies. Such a connection can be established not only with the Irish *emon*, but also with the Continental Celtic item **imno-* under discussion here – if it exists. In this way, a threefold equation within Celtic is arrived at. Instead of having to set up three formally rather similar, but separate, stems **imno-* (in potentially Continental Celtic *Essimnus*), **emno-* (in South-West British **euno-*) and **iemno-* or **iemono-* (in OIr. *emon*) with rather similar meanings, their number can be reduced to one to explain all attestations. Semantic-wise, 'equal, smooth, even' and 'twin' can all be derived from 'like, equal'.

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[13] I have no immediately convincing explanation for the structurally different treatments of OB *eunt*, OC *eun-*, on the one hand, and OB *limn*, MW *llyfn* and OC *stefenic*, LC *stevnig* (Lhuyd), on the other, even though the phonetic context seems to be identical. The following possibilities present themselves:

1. The different treatment of *eunt* etc. is 'sporadic', i.e., it derives from a non-standard dialect or sociolect and therefore has sound changes that differ from the standard language. An argument in favour of this is the very diverse picture of reflexes of this adjective in the dialects of MoB.

2. The difference is actually due to the phonetic context.

2a. It is due to a difference in the vowel: since **slimno-* definitely had *i*, proven by MW *llyfn*, OB *eunt* etc. must go back to **emno-*. This would have two consequences: the derivation proposed above would be disproved, and, more importantly, the different treatment of the labial sound must have occurred before PC **e* and **i* merged in South-West British.

2b. It is due to a difference in the labial: the etymological value of the labial in OB *limn* etc. is indeterminable (see fn. 8), but the etymon of OC *stefenic* etc. has an *m* (PIE **stomn-* 'mouth, jawbone'; Matasović 2009: 354, Schrijver 1995: 422). By implication, *limn*, etc. would also continue a form with **m*, and *eunt* would presuppose a **b* on the grounds of polarity. The consequences of this option would, again, be that the derivation proposed above in the main text would be disproved, but also that **m* and **b* could not have merged before **n* already in Proto-Celtic, as claimed in fn. 8. However, doubt is cast over this possibility by the fact fact that the etymologically certain **-mn-* was also vocalised in Breton, e.g., MB *staffn*, MoB *staoñ* 'palate'.

2c. The difference lies both in the vowels and the labials, combining 2a. and 2b.

I tentatively lean towards explanation 1. I also want to alert the reader to the discussion of the closely related problems of the historical phonology of labial continuants in Russell (2003: 38-47). He observes contradictory reflexes of these sounds not only in South-West British, but also in Welsh dialects.

II.2. *Compounds with* *eχs-

Morphosemantically, the putative Celtic name *eχs-imnos is a privative compound; the negative semantics are carried by the prefix *eχs- < *eĝʰs 'out'.[14] Semantically, it could be described in relation to its adjectival base *imno- 'equal, like' as endocentric, in which case it simply represents the negated base concept 'unlike, not like'. Or, if the derivational base is instead interpreted as a noun, e.g., substantivised 'likeness' or concrete 'twin', the derivation could be viewed as a prepositional governing compound with the exocentric possessive meaning 'not having likeness, not having a twin'. The privative meaning of *eχs- had developed from an earlier local meaning of such compounds. Occasionally, it can still be grasped in Celtic formations, e.g., Gaul. *exops* 'blind' < 'having one's eyes out' or OIr. *esirt* 'foreigner' < 'being outside the boundary mark' or maybe 'one who has his burial-mound outside'. From the originally exocentric 'being out(side) of X', such formations moved towards carrying purely privative, negative significance 'being without X, not having X, X-less'.[15]

There are two ways of forming oppositional pairs involving privative *eχs- in Celtic. On the one hand, there is the formation where the positive partner in the pair is the uncompounded base form, as in Cib. *ankios* and *esankios*, whatever their meaning, in Botorrita I (K.1.1), or in the present case *imno- vs. *eχsimno-, if the etymological proposal presented here is correct. They presumably belong to a younger layer of word formation, because they already presuppose the established privative meaning of the preverb. On the other hand, there are pairs where it seems that the positive partner is furnished by a compound with *kom- as the first member.[16] These may have taken their starting point likewise from prepositional governing compounds with exocentric meaning. The positive member expressed the idea of 'being with X, being endowed with X', the negative member 'being without X, being X-less'. Such formations presuppose a semantic shift also for the preverb *kom-, because originally the preposition signified 'having something together with somebody', a meaning that is still in the foreground of medieval Celtic equative constructions. A handful of such pairs can be set up for an early period in Celtic.

1. Positive Gaulish *Comnertus/Counertus*, Welsh *cyfnerth*, Irish *comnart* 'strong' versus negative OIr. *énairt* 'weak, unstrong' continue straightforwardly PC *komnerti/o- and *eχsnerti-, derived from *nertom 'strength, power'.[17]
2. The next pair requires a bit of reconstruction: Welsh *ehang* 'wide' continues negative *eχsangu- 'unnarrow' directly; OIr. *fairsiung* 'wide' (see Wodtko 1995: 170-171) is a further derivative that presupposes erstwhile *eissiung 'wide' which is not attested. These are opposed to positive Welsh *cyfyng*, OIr. *cumung* 'narrow' < *komangu-. They

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[14] Cp. Latin formations like *exanimis/exanimus* 'lifeless', *excornis* 'hornless', *expers* 'having no part in', *exsanguis* 'bloodless', *exsomnis* 'sleepless'. Unlike the Celtic examples cited in the main text above, the Latin adjectives are generally *i*-stems.

   The prefix *eχs- can also have a purely local meaning in Celtic nominal compounds, e.g., Gaulish personal names in *eskingo-* '(prob.) warrior < *he who strides out'. The local meaning of the preposition there is surely dependent on related verbal compounds like *eχs-keng-e/o- 'to stride out'.

[15] More about *eχs in compounds: Schmidt 1957: 57; Evans 1967: 202-203; Wodtko 1995: 129-138; Zimmer 2000: 229; DLG 169; Meid 2005: 173.

[16] More about *kom in compounds: Schmidt 1957: 57, 61-63; Evans 1967: 183-186; Wodtko 1995: 139-161; Zimmer 2000: 228-229; DLG 121-122; Meid 2005: 166-177.

[17] The stem-class of the positive member of the pair is probably innovatory in all languages, but OIr. *énairt* still retains the inherited *i*-stem formation.

are probably not simply prefixed versions of a PC adjective **angus* < PIE **h₂m̥ǵʰú-* 'narrow', but are rather derived as exocentric compounds from the substantive noun **h₂émǵʰu-* 'narrowness' (cp. OIr. *ing* 'difficulty, danger, grief'), which in Celtic would have fallen together phonologically except for the accent.[18] Only word formation provides a hint at the exact origin of the word.

3. Good evidence for the next pair comes from Irish, with other languages possibly contributing. *Esert/esirt* is an OIr. legal term for a 'landless, vagrant person'. In native Irish glossaries this term is contrasted with the very rare term *coairt*.[19] Judging by some early attestations, *coairt* referred to an upper class of landowners, but it very soon fell out of use in Old Irish, and was later misunderstood in Middle Irish as a term for lowly persons.[20] The same glossaries connect the words etymologically with *fert*. Even though medieval and early modern etymologies have to be treated with customary caution, it is very likely that the glossators are correct in this instance by analysing it as an exocentric compound, as opposed to modern scholars who have subjected it to a basically verbal analysis 'one who turns away' (Fleuriot 1979: 126-128). *Fert* is not to be understood in its usual sense of 'burial-mound' here, but rather in its technical legal meaning 'boundary mark'. In Welsh, *echwyrth* 'foolish, stupid' has been compared with the negative member of the pair, and in Gaulish the term *exuertinin* on the ring of Thiaucourt (L-172) (DLG 172 with further literature). The positive member of the pair may have a correspondence, though not an exact one, in the Gaul. *o*-stem name *Couertus**,[21] attested in the gen. *Couerthi* and in the coin legend *Couertomotul(os)*[22] (M-122), and maybe also in *Coertutinus* (Delamarre 2007: 76, 69), but a formation from a verbal compound consisting of **kom* + a root **u̯erC* is equally possible for the latter names.

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[18] See Widmer 2004: 96-97 for the different accent classes of *u*-stem adjectives and abstracts.

[19] Cited after Paul Russell's et al. *Early Irish Glossaries Database:* (http://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/irishglossaries/) and DIL E 195.52 ff.

Sanas Cormaic 507: *Esert .i. ess fo diultadh and ⁊fert, es-fert didiu ni coir fert lais* 'esert: ess [is used] as negative here plus *fert* [burial-mound]; *es-fert* therefore [means] 'a burial-mound is not proper for him''.

Sanas Cormaic 546: *Esirt .i. ni cóir fert do. no eas-ard .i. ni ard* 'esirt: a *fert* [burial-mound] is not proper for him; or *es-ard* [un-high], that is, he is not *ard* [high]' (cp. *Dúil Dromma Cetta* 351).

O'Mulconry's Glossary 444: *Esert .i. ni huisi do fert, ar is dó clanta fert, don ti bid caem. coairt imorro coir dó fert. esfert .i. can fert* 'esert: a *fert* [burial-mound] is not fitting for him, because a burial-mound is set-up for someone who is noble; *coairt*, however [means] 'a *fert* [burial-mound] is *cóir* [proper] for him'. *Esfert*: without *fert* [burial-mound]'.

Trecheng Breth Féne 74: *Trí hóenaig eserte: célide hi tig gobann, célide hi tig sáir, dul do chennuch cen áirche* 'Three assemblies of an *esert* [landless man]: a visit in a smith's house, a visit in a carpenter's house, going to purchase without bonds (?)', with the gloss *eisert .i. bochtain lag* 'eisert: a weak pauper'.

O'Davoren's Glossary 967: *tairsci tar fagh n-eserta .i. tar fich no tar tir intí eirges as a fírt* 'trespassing over the estate of an *esirt*: over the area or over the land of he who rises out of the boundary-mark [indicated by his burial-mound]'.

[20] E.g., in §14 of the new edition-in-preparation of *Esnad Tige Buchet* by Dagmar Haunold.

[21] Morphologically and semantically, **kom-u̯ert-o-* 'having the same **u̯ertā*', which could underlie Gaul. *Couertos**, has close parallels in **kom-tou̯t-o-* (Gaul. *Contoutos*, M-117) 'having the same **tou̯tā* 'people'' and in **kom-brog-o-* (W *Cymro* 'Welsh-man') 'having the same **brog-* 'country''.

[22] The meaning would be 'having a penis like a *couertos*'; DLG 230 suggests instead to assume an error by the engraver for **Counertomotul(os)* 'having a powerful penis', which is semantically more satisfying. Another instance of gen. *Couerti* recorded by Delamarre (2007: 76) from Spain (ERLara 124) has been read as *couertis* by later editors (AE 1980, 586; http://eda-bea.es/pub/record_card_1.php?rec=6673).

If those Celtic comparisons are correct, the formation of the polaric pair would be pushed far back into prehistory, with ensuing ramifications for the etymology and original meaning of the term *fert*. The approximate meaning of the pair **ko(m)u̯erti-* and **eχsu̯erti-* must have been 'insider' and 'outsider', respectively, and these must have developed from exocentric prepositional compounds 'having a (common) **u̯ertā* with (others)' and 'having one's **u̯ertā* outside'. Either the idea, existing in Early Medieval Ireland, of delimiting the lands of one's kin by burial mounds (O'Brien & Bhreathnach 2011) was in existence already in Common Celtic times (but is there archaeological evidence for this, as there is for Ireland?), or the meaning of **u̯ertā* was originally 'boundary mark' (perhaps 'turning point', from PIE **u̯ert-* 'to turn'), which was then transferred to the prototypical boundary marks in Ireland, prehistoric pre-Celtic burial mounds. In any case, the exocentric compound **eχsu̯erti-* has a suggestive phrasal parallel in the Celtiberian inscription of Botorrita I, where mention is made of an action that is to take place *es uertai* 'outside of the *uerta*' (K.1.1, A-6).

4. A less certain pair is that derived from the base PC **galā* 'steam, valour'. Whereas OIr. *ecal* 'fearful, timorous' can be straightforwardly reconstructed as the expected privative member **eχ(s)-galo-* 'valourless' of the pair, the formation with the preposition **kom-* visible in OIr. *congal*, ModIr. *conghail* 'conflict, fight, attack' and W *cynial* 'ferocity, anger' does not directly continue **komgalā*. The lenition of the **g* in both languages underlines the secondary character of the compound, perhaps under influence from **kunogalā* 'dog valour'.

Naturally, not all exocentric privative formations require a positive counterpart with **kom-*. For example a formation like ***comops* 'eyed' would not be expected beside Gaul. *exsops* 'blind' for very pragmatic reasons. However, the polaric formation *Suobnus* 'coward (?)' with a different positive prefix is found beside the very popular name *Exomnus* 'fearless'(Delamarre 2007: 175).

II.3. *The attestations of essimnus*

Despite the fact that *Essimnus* fits so well into Celtic morphology and etymology, for geographic and orthographic reasons it is nevertheless uncertain that *Essimnus* is Celtic. At a first glance, attestations of the name are spread over a relatively wide area in Central Europe (see Ill. 1). However, in several instances the places of attestation do not coincide with the places of origin of the persons bearing those names. If the latter are taken into account, there emerges a geographical core area for the name to the name in a relatively circumscribed region in the Eastern Alps, encompassing parts of Southern Bavaria, the North and South Tyrol and the Trentino. This area of distribution coincides almost exactly with the extent of the Fritzens-Sanzeno complex, an archaeologically defined culture which is traditionally identified with the linguistically defined Raetic people. Diether Schürr in 2003 even developed the theory that the name can be ascribed to a language he called 'Euganean', after an early historic Alpine people called the *Eugani*, a designation that encompasses the inhabitants of the Val Camonica, more commonly known as *Camuni*.

Is *Essimnus* therefore a Raetic or even Euganean name? In order to answer this question, all attestations of the name must be scrutinised. The name is found possibly three times in the vernacular Raetic corpus (collected in Schumacher 2004). The most certain case is from Steinberg near the border between the Tyrol and Bavaria: ST-3 *esimnesi*, which consists of the name *esimne* followed by the pertinentive case ending *-si*. From Magrè in Northern Italy there is the sequence MA-14 *esium.ninuśur*, which can be split into *esiumninu* and *śur*. The first word can be analysed as a patronymic in *-nu* from the name **esiumni*. However, both
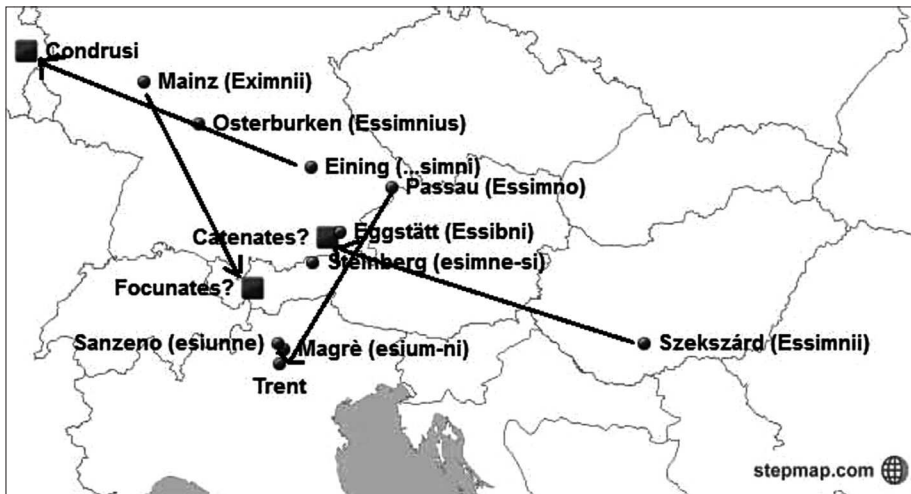
Figure: Ill. 1

the function and meaning of *śur* remain unclear, in particular because patronymics usually follow the individual name in Raetic. Finally, from Sanzeno there is SZ-15 *laspat²ianu esiunne*. *Esiunne* looks like a personal name that is, again, oddly following the patronymic *laspat²ianu*, instead of the other way round. Schürr (2003: 383) makes the observation that Raetic usually does not show consonant gemination. Esiunne could be a scribal error for *esiumne*.

In order to explain the orthographic variation between the three names, Schürr (2003: 383-384) proposed a sound change in Raetic and Euganean whereby *iu* becomes *i*. Alternatively, if the three names belong together, the graphic variation between -mn-, -umn- and -unn- could conceivably conceal a phonetic sequence involving a bilabial nasal fricative like [βn], and the various spellings could be different attempts at rendering a Celtic phonetic cluster that is foreign to Raetic. However, given the current knowledge of Raetic this is far from clear.

In all three cases, the epigraphic and linguistic context is Raetic, and all three locations lie within the Raetic area. Steinberg is located on the very northern edge of the Fritzens-Sanzeno culture (Schumacher 2004: 277), where it borders on the area settled by the probably Celtic *Vindelici* (Waldherr 2010). In the Roman period, the area around Steinberg was apparently settled by the *Genauni* (Anreiter 1997: 9, 173). According to the *Tropaeum Alpium* (CIL 5, 7817), they were not Vindelici because they are mentioned immediately before them. *Esimne* looks like a personal name ending in -e. Such names are rather frequent in Raetic. Some of them are possible loans from Indo-European *o*-stem names, which were borrowed in the form of the vocative singular (Stifter 2013: 52). On the other hand, names in -e are so frequent in Raetic that at least some of them may be autochthonous. At a first glance, the sequence -mn- is reminiscent of the Indo-European middle participle, but again, this sequence occurs also in Raetic names that have no obvious parallels in neighbouring Indo-European areas, like *ritamne*. The upshot of all this is that there are linguistic arguments both for a Raetic/Euganean and a Celtic origin of *Esimne* etc. from a purely internal examination of the Raetic material.

From the area of Northern Italy outside the Raetic environment stem two further inscriptions that have been cited in this context. A fragmentary Venetic inscription from Smarrita (Belluno) contains the letters *es*, a lacuna, and then possibly the letters *ni* (Bl 2: *es[...]niiuikuru*). The lacuna is wide enough for the three letters *ium* or even *iom* (suggestion by Schürr), and possibly too wide to contain just the two letters *im*. Therefore, the inscription from Belluno is rather supportive of a 'Raetic' (if that is what it is) form of the name of the type **Esiumne* than of a Celtic one like **Eχsimnos*. Finally, there is a Camunic rock inscription from Piancogno – Roccia delle Spade PC-16, which Maria Tibiletti Bruno (1990: 93) had read as *esi?msz*. However, in the meantime, Adolfo Zavaroni has proposed two alternative readings (2001: 740; 2005: 1), first *eu³imu³s* and later, correcting the first, *eu³kmu³s*, so its relevance to the present question is very much in doubt. Before I turn to the Roman inscriptions, I briefly want to point out that there is a modern village called *Esine* (*Éden* in the local dialect, first mentioned in 979 or 994) in the Val Camonica, whatever its significance for the current question may be.

The attestations of the name on Roman inscribed stones are more numerous. The earliest datable text is that mentioning a certain Sterio son of Eximnius* (AE 1940, 115 = AE 2004, +1013).

> Sterio Exi|mnii f(ilius) F(ocunas) miles | ann(orum) XL stip(endiorum) | XVI ex c(o)hor(te) | Raet(orum) et Vendel(icorum) | h(ic) s(itus) e(st)[23]

It dates from the period 1–70 A.D.[24] Even though it was found in Mainz (Mogontiacum) in Germania Superior, the text of the inscription asserts that the person originated from the northern slopes of the Alps in Southern Bavaria. Dietz (2004: 591) endorsed the reading given above, whereby the second F after the name, written in smaller letters, is interpreted as an abbreviation for the ethnic name *Focunas*. This is a bold assertion, but justifiable in view of parallel naming formulas for other members of the cohort, who usually have an ethnic denominator after their name (examples in Dietz 2004). Anreiter (1997: 9-10, 173) posits that the Focunates belonged to his Eastern Alpine Indo-European group of peoples, settling the area to the south of the upper reaches of the river Inn. In any case, the initial *f* precludes an interpretation as Celtic. The name of the person, *Sterio*, does not permit either ethnic or linguistic identification. There is nothing diagnostically Celtic about it. Alternatively, the text could be read as *Eximnie f(ilius)* (see Dietz 2004: 591 for further literature on this), in which case no ethnic denominator would be present and the name would contain a metronym, not a patronym.

This is the only attestation of *Essimnus* spelt with an X. The easiest interpretation of the spelling is that the letter reflects the cluster /ks/ or /χs/. In that case, the much earlier Raetic attestations with *s* must be interpreted as phonetic simplifications of the cluster. Whereas the related Tyrsenic language of Etruscan permitted complex clusters, e.g., *Alcstei* < Ἄλκηστις, *Alcsntre* < Ἀλέξανδρος, *Pecse* < Πήγασος, this aptitude of Etruscan towards clusters can be explained by the extended contact with Greek, and by the Etruscan syncope of the 5th c. B.C., which produced quite complex native clusters. With Raetic lacking either of these factors, the simplification of *ks* to *s* could have been one of the strategies of Raetic to

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[23]   Sterio, son of Eximnius, a F(ocunate?) soldier of 40 years, 16 years of service, from the cohort of the Raeti and Vindelici, lies here.

[24]   *Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg*, http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/EDH/inschrift/020949.

adapt foreign names into the language. The later Roman spellings of the name with double SS would then reflect the vulgar pronunciation of X, which in a foreign name like this could have surfaced earlier in writing than in orthographically standardised words. If, however, the name did not originally contain the sequence *ks*, the use of the letter X must be an attempt to render an extraordinary sound, for example some kind of hissing or long Raetic sibilant. I will say more about this later.

The next attestation (CSIR-U-7, 42 = RIU-4, 1029 = AE 1935, 103 = RHP 467) is from the Hungarian town of Szekszárd/Sechshard in Pannonia Inferior and dates to the years 98-99.[25]

> Surius Essi|mni f(ilius) Catte|nas miles coh(ortis) | I Vind(elicorum) ann(orum) | XXXX stip(endiorum) XX | h(ic) s(itus) e(st) | Florus et | Bassus Cere[[26]

The name of the person, Surius, allows no inference about his linguistic provenance, but his military affiliation points to the Eastern Alpine region. The designation *Cohors I Vindelicorum* may be an abbreviation for *Cohors Raetorum et Vindelicorum* and does not as such prove his descent from the Vindelici. However, the epithet *Cattenas* possibly designates one of the four sub-tribes of the Vindelici. In the Tropaeum Alpium, the *Catenates* are fourth in line after mention is made of the *Vindelicorum gentes quattuor* 'the four tribes of the Vindelici'. If the four ethnonyms (*Cosuenates*, *Runicates*, *Licates*, *Catenates*) following that phrase do indeed spell it out, it is possible that our person belonged to the Vindelici and may be Celtic.[27]

While the name has so far appeared as a patronym or, possibly once, as a metronym, in a tombstone from Passau (Bavaria), ancient Boiodurum in the province of Noricum (NIBayern 102 = AE 1984, 707), it occurs as the cognomen in a Roman *tria nomina* formula, suggesting that it was the actual name by which the person was called.

> D(is) M(anibus) | P(ublio) Tenatio Ess|imno negot|ianti uinar|iario domo | Iulia Triden|tum(!) |(obito) anno(rum) LVII | P(ublius) Tenatius Pater|nus patri | pientissimo | fecit[28]

The inscription dates to the century between 151 and 250.[29] While the epitaph does not tell us about the ethnic descent of the wine seller, it informs us about his place of origin, Tridentum, modern Trent in Northern Italy. This town lies in the area generally considered to have been Raetic. His gentilic name Tenatius displays a certain predilection for Northern

[25] *Ubi erat lupa* (http://www.ubi-erat-lupa.org/site/?show=datenblatt/datenblatt.asp?nr=659); the *Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg* http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/EDH/inschrift/023311 provides no date.

[26] Surius, son of Essimn(i)us, a Cattenate soldier of the 1st cohort of the Vindelici, of 40 years, 20 years of service, lies here. Florus and Bassus Cere[.

[27] However, the names of the Vindelician sub-tribes are far from certain. Dietz (2004: 588), in fact, argues that those four ethnonyms are not Vindelician. Further ambiguous and contradictory evidence is furnished by ancient geographers. Strabo (4,6,8) calls the Λικάττιοι, the Κλαυτηνάτιοι, the Οὐέννωνες, the Ἐστίωνες and the Βριγάντιοι sub-tribes of the Vindelici, and the Ῥουκάντιοι and the Κωτουάντιοι sub-tribes of the Raeti. The obvious misspellings (Κλαυτηνάτιοι for *Cat(t)enates*, Ῥουκάντιοι for *Runicates*, Κωτουάντιοι for *Cosuenates*) cast doubt over the overall reliability of the information. In Ptolemy (Geogr. 2,13,1), the Ῥουνικάται and Κωνσούανται are listed under the entry for Vindelicia.

[28] To the ghosts of P. Tenatius Essimnus, a wine trader, from the Julian house in Tridentum, who died aged 57. P. Tenatius Paternus made (the grave) for his loving father.

[29] *Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg*: http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/EDH/inschrift/001818.

Italy, and it is especially frequent in the town of Verona, so one may speculate that the name originated from there. It is vaguely reminiscent of the Raetic gentilic name *Tenagino* (Schumacher 2004: 313). Ultimately, this testimony may point in the direction of Raetic.

The inscription from Osterburken (Baden-Württemberg; CBI 147 = AE 1985, 689) in Germania Superior, dated between 171 and 231,[30] gives no indication about the origin and descent of the deceased. The location of the stone is nevertheless not very far from the area where the name *Essimnus* is otherwise located.

> I(oui) O(ptimo) M(aximo) | et Iunoni | Reginae | T(itus) Essimni|us Tertius b(ene) f(iciarius) co(n)s(ularis) pro | se et suos(!) | u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) l(aetus) m(erito)[31]

From Eggstätt/Bedaium, province of Noricum, comes a grave inscription, dated to 182,[32] that recounts the tragic fate of a family decimated by the plague (CIL 3, 5567 (p. 2328, 201) = ILLPRON 1508 = Legio-II-Ital-Nb 1 = IBR 7 = NIBayern 16 = AEA 2005, +66 = AE 2004, +1089):

> D(is) M(anibus) | Iul(ius) Victor Martial(is) f(ilius) | ob(itus) an(norum) LV | Bessa Iuuenis f(ilia) ux(or) |(obita) an(norum) XLV | Nouella Essibni f(ilia) ob(ita) a(nnorum) XVIII | Victorinus parentib(us) | et coniugi et Victorinae | fil(iae) fecit | qui per luem uita functi sunt Mamertino et Rufo co(n)s(ulibus) | et Aur(elio) Iustino fratri mil(iti) | leg(ionis) II Ital(icae) stipend(iorum) X |(obito) a(nnorum) XXX[33]

Nouella, the daughter of Essibnus, was the wife of the man who erected the stone. Other names attested in Bedaium point to a layer of Celtic there. While the husband seems to have been a local of Bedaium, the same does not necessarily apply to his wife. From the geographical position, a Vindelician or Raetic origin of the name is equally likely, assuming the wife married into Bedaium from somewhere close nearby. This is the only attestation of the name written with *b*. The variation *mn*/*bn* is reminiscent of the same variation in Celtic names like *Dumnorix*/*Dubnorix*. This variation suggests a phonetically Celtic treatment of the name here, even though it does not prove the name originated in a Celtic language. It could have been adapted to Celtic phonotactics after being borrowed into the local Celtic dialect of Bedaium.

Finally, but not in chronological order, there is a military diploma issued between 161 and 168, and found in the Bavarian village of Eining/Abusina in the province of Raetia (CIL 16, 125 = CIL 3, p. 1995 = Wagner 143 = IBR 514 = AE 1891, 172). The inscription is very fragmentary, so no translation will be made of it. Towards the end, only the final part [...]*simni* remains of the father's name of the soldier. This could be another instance of *Essimnus*. The name is followed by the ethnic denominator *Condrusus*. The Condrusi are a people in Belgium who despite their Celtic-looking name are specifically called Germanic

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[30] *Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg*: http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/EDH/inschrift/002063.

[31] To Jupiter Optimus Maximus and to Queen Juno. T. Essimnius Tertius, a beneficiarius soldier of the consul, willingly, gladly and deservedly fulfilled his vow.

[32] *Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg*: http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/EDH/inschrift/042335.

[33] To the ghosts of Iulius Victor son of Martialis who died aged 55, and of Bessa daughter of Iuuenis his wife who died aged 45, and of Nouella daughter of Essibnus who died aged 18. Victorinus made (the grave) for his parents and his wife and for his daughter Victorina, who (all) passed away in the plague in the year when Mamertinus and Rufus were consuls. And for his brother Aurelius Iustinus, a soldier of the 2nd Italian legion, 10 years of service, who died aged 30.

in Caesar's Gallic Wars. After their very brief appearance in the Gallic Wars, they vanished from historiography immediately. They probably left their name in the region of Condroz in Belgium. If the Condrusi were Celtic, this could be taken as a hint that *Essimnus* was a Celtic name after all. However, by the second century soldiers from the Raetic and Vindelician cohorts could already have spread the name from the Eastern Alpine region north to Belgium. For example, the father of this Condrusian soldier could have originally hailed from the Eastern Alpine region. This single and unfortunately fragmentary piece of evidence is too isolated geographically to award it much weight.

> [Imp(erator) Caesar M(arcus) Aurelius Antoninus Aug(ustus) … et Imp(erator) Caesar L(ucius) Aurelius Verus Aug(ustus) …] | [equitibus et peditibus qui militauerunt in alis … quae appellantur … et in cohortibus …] R[a]etor(um) | [et …] et III Thr(acum) c(iuium) R(omanorum) et III / [… et III B]rittann(orum) et IIII [Gallor(um)] | [et …] e[t su]n[t i]n [Raetia?] | [sub …] pr(ocuratore) quin(is?) [et uicenis(?) pluribusue stipendiis emeritis dimissis honesta missione] | [quorum nomina subscripta sunt sunt ciuitatem Romanam qui eorum non haberent dederunt || [Imp(erator) Caesar M(arcus) Aurelius Antoninus Aug(ustus) … et Imp(erator) Caesar L(ucius) Aurelius Verus Aug(ustus) …] | [equitibus et peditibus qui militauerunt in alis … quae appellantur … et in cohortibus …] R[a]etor(um) | [et …] et III Thr(acum) c(iuium) R(omanorum) et III | [… et III B]rittann(orum) et IIII [Gallor(um)] | [et …] e[t su]n[t i]n [Raetia?] | [sub …] pr(ocuratore) quin(is?) [et uicenis(?) pluribusue stipendiis emeritis dimissis honesta missione] | [quorum nomina subscripta sunt ciuitatem Romanam qui eorum non haberent dede]runt [et co]nub[ium cu]m uxo/[ribus quas tunc h]abuis(s)ent cum est [ci]uitas i(i)s | [data aut cum iis qu]as postea dux(i)s[se]nt dum][taxat singuli]s a(nte) d(iem) X[I]II K(alendas) Ian(uarias) | [...]cio L(ucio) Aemilio Front[...] co(n)s(ulibus) | [coh(ortis) III] Britton(um) cui [prae]est | [...]nius Iunio[r] | ex pedite | [...]simni f(ilio) Cond[r]us(o) | [descript(um) et rec]ognit(um) ex tabula ae[re]a | [quae fixa est R]omae in muro post | [templ(um) diui] Aug(usti) ad Min[eruam]

In short, the inscriptions have been unable to bring any more clarity into the matter than any of the other evidence. One person, Surius of the Catenates, could be Vindelician and therefore Celtic, but this is uncertain. Sterio of the Focunates would rather seem to be from outside the Celtic area. Nouella and T. Essimnius Tertius cannot be ascribed to an ethnic background with any certainty. The Tridentinian Tenatius and the Raetic inscriptions would rather anchor the name in the Raetic area. It is evident that the name is locally restricted to a small section of the Eastern Alpine region, if the single outlier among the Condrusi is disregarded.

II.4. *The orthography of X and SS*

Since geography has been unable to decide the matter, palaeography may shed a light on the significance of the variation X ~ SS in the spelling of the name in Roman inscriptions and its possible relevance to the etymology of *Essimnus*. A distinction must be made between the use of ‹s(s)› for etymological /ks/, which reflects a sound change in Vulgar Latin, and writing ‹x(x)› for /s(s)/, which can be regarded as an inverse, hypercorrect spelling in Latin after the operation of the sound change. The examination will proceed in three steps: such variation in Latin contexts, such variation in the context of Celtic onomastics, and finally such variation in Celtic, i.e., Gaulish vernacular texts.

An examination of the orthographic peculiarities collected in the *Indices Grammatici* of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*[34] leads to the conclusion that this variation is a relatively rare phenomenon, usually involving the substitution of the letter ‹x› by ‹s(s)›. It is found with some frequency only at a late date (4ᵗʰ century A.D. or later), often in Christian contexts. The word that, for reasons of token frequency, is most often affected is *uixit* 'lived', which can appear as *uisit* or *uissit*. Inverse spellings are exceedingly rare, with the one exception of the word-final position. Evidence for this is already found in the graffiti from Pompeii (Väänänen 1966: 65), attesting to the very early simplification of auslauting *-ks > *-s in the 1ˢᵗ century A.D. Word-initially, spellings like *xanctus* for *sanctus* can be encountered in Christian epitaphs. This is hardly related to untrained orthography, but must be a deliberate device to introduce the letter X of *Christus* (from Greek Χριστός) into the word for 'holy'. Other examples for this orthographic deviation are very hard to come by word-medially. The only examples recorded in CIL for the provinces west and north of the Alps are two Christian ones (*quiexcit*, CIL 13, 7599, Wiesbaden/Aquae Mattiacorum; *xexta*, CIL 12, 5869, Pact/Vienna), and an undated stamp *of(ficina) Xeuerin(i)* (CIL 12, 5686, 965, Saint-Remy-de-Provence/Glanum).

Delamarre's collection of *Nomina Celtica Antiqua* (2007) allows a focused investigation into the spelling practices of Celtic personal names. His index of stems (Delamarre 2007: 209–237) contains numerous onomastic elements that are of relevance to the problem,[35] and indeed he lists a considerable number of names that show unexpected, i.e., unetymological spellings. This is not the place for a full study of the problem, so a very brief overview of the direction into which such a study would have to go must suffice. Many of the names recorded by Delamarre are open to alternative analyses. For example, *Axantus* from Rome (!; CIL 6, 7437), without any discernible Celtic context, need not be traced back to Delamarre's *ad-santi- at all, but could be derived from *ag-s-. Likewise, *Axsedo* (AE 1974, 426) is very unlikely to be *ad-sedo-, since in the very same inscription Lat. *uxsori* with /ks/ is written with exactly the same sequence of letters. In other cases, it is impossible to say what suffix we are looking at. For example, *Ardomixa* could contain a deviant spelling for the frequent suffix *-issā*, but a complex suffix like *-ik-sā cannot be excluded either. If *x* and *ss* were really more or less free orthographic variants for the same sound, a roughly even distribution between the spellings would be expected, but this is far from what is actually found. Some names with etymological *-ss-* (usually going back to *tau Gallicum*) with a very high token frequency, e.g., those with the elements *messi-/messu-*, *rets-/ress-* and *uasso-*, do not show the variation at all. In others the alleged deviant spellings are very rare, being suspect of having other explanations. For example, Delamarre's only example with *-ss-* for the element *craxso-/crasso-*, namely, *Crassiacus*, may be derived from the Latin name *Crassus*. The sole example with *-x-* of *teðði-/tedsi-/tessi-/testi-/tex-* is the gentilic name *Texatius*, for which a derivation from *teg-s- is also an option. A contrastive perusal of the etymological section of Raybould & Sims-Williams (2009: 120-244) supports this sceptical position, in that several

³⁴ CIL 2, p. 778; 3, p. 2677; 4, pp. 259, 450, 779; 5, p. 1208; 6,6,3 pp. 287, 293; 7, p. 345; 8,5, pp. 312, 314; 9, p. 803; 10, pp. 1175f.; 12, p. 956; 13,5, pp. 175f.; 14, p. 591; 14 s.1, p. 814; 16, p. 212; It should be noted, though, that the printed volumes of CIL reflect a very old state of scholarship.
³⁵ I reproduce Delamarre's headwords: *coxo-* (? > *cosso-*); *craxso-, crasso-; crixso-; dexsu-, dexsi-, desso-; ex-, exo-, ec-, es-, e-; messi-, messu-, meðði-, meððu-, meds-, meϑϑ-; oxi-, oxson-; raxio-; sass-, saxx-, saxs-* (*sag-s-*); *-sto-* > *-sso-, -xxo-; suest-, suess-; teðði-, tedsi-, tessi-, testi-, tex-; tress-, trex-; tusto-* > *tusso-, tuððo-; uis(s)u-, uist-, uest-, uess-* (< *wid-tu/to-*); *uxs(o)-, ux(o)-, uss(o)-, uxsello-*.

of the relevant names are assigned to other etymological elements: while Delamarre (2007: 234) lists *Atressus* under *tress-/trex-* 'strong' < **trek-s-o-*, Raybould & Sims-Williams (2009: 226-227) analyse it as a compound of the verbal root **ret-* 'to run'. Furthermore, a good portion of words with *x* furnished with a Gaulish etymology by Delamarre, are actually best considered Aquitanian, and have been so treated by Gorrochategui 1984. Aquitanian, the oldest attested form of Basque, is a language that is notorious for its sibilant sounds that had no adequate way of being rendered in the Latin alphabet. Frequently <x> is employed to denote one of the sibilants of Aquitanian. Therefore names like *Xubanus*, or several names in *-xxo-* from Aquitania should be left out of the present problem.

Ultimately, only a few good examples for the graphic variation between <x> and <s> in Celtic names remain, like *Dessuaeona* in Spain beside the frequent *Dex(s)iua* in Gaul. The frequency of such instances is hardly higher than that in genuinely Latin words. Pending an in-depth study of the problem that might produce one or the other additional insights, I understand it is, in short, fair to say that graphic variation between <x> and <s> is a marginal phenomenon in Celtic onomastics in Latin epigraphy at best, and I cannot but conclude that its significance for the etymological analysis of Continental Celtic names has been grossly overrated. None of the Gaulish names with an etymological **χs* has an even remotely similar distribution in favour of writings with <ss>, as *Essimnus* does. Etymological **s(s)* is in the vast majority of cases written with an *s*, dental signs or a combination of both, whereas etymological **χs* is quite consistently spelt with <x(x)> or <xs>. If *Essimnus* went back to **eχs-imno-*, its orthographical behaviour would be highly aberrant.

Finally, vernacular Continental Celtic writing practices will now be examined. For practical purposes, only texts in the Roman script will be studied because, of course, only in them writing practices that are aberrant from the standard Roman way of writing /ks/ or /χs/ can be detected. The fact that in the orthographically defective Celtiberian and Lepontic scripts PC **χs* is regularly expressed by a simple <s> (the letter *san* in Celtiberian, *sigma* in Lepontic) does not say anything about the phonetic reality of the sound thus expressed, nor does it have any implications for Roman writing practices. It is probably only an orthographic rule in those writing traditions that does not necessarily reflect the phonetic simplification of **χs* > **ss*.

Pierre-Yves Lambert mentions three examples of the inverse use of the letter <x> for the sound /s/ in the vernacular written corpus of Gaulish (RIG II-2, 381). One is the locatival phrase *in Alixie* on the famous vase from Séraucourt (L-79). This is doubtlessly from the place name *Alisia* and therefore a genuine instance of inverse spelling. The inscription has been dated to the 3rd century on palaeographic grounds (RIG II-2, 205), and it therefore has to be placed within the context of the Late Latin orthographic hesitancy between those letters, around two hundred years after the first instances of *Essimnus* in Roman epigraphy. All other potential evidence comes from the potters' graffiti in Central Gaul, from around the middle of the 1st century A.D. Lambert mentions a potter from La Graufesenque called *Alixan(os)*. This looks like a variant of *Alisanus*, the name of a Gaulish god on the Gallo-Latin inscription from Couchey, Côte-d'Or (L-133). However, the stamps *Alex*, *Alexan*, *Alexf*, *Alexian* on other pottery rather suggest that *Alixan* is an instance of the Romano-Greek name *Alexianus*, with Vulgar Latin variation between *e* and *i*. Lambert's final example of <x> for <s> is even less certain. He suggests reading the ordinal number *cintux* (twice attested in L-29, Mar. 1 and Mar. 4, RIG II-2, 85-86) as an abbreviation for **cintux(mos)*, a variant spelling for *cintusmos** 'first' (RIG II-2, 105-106, 112-113). *Cintusmos** is a syncopated form of **cintusamos*, the superlative of *cintu-* 'first'. The name *Cintusmus* is often attested (Delamarre 2007: 66 records over a dozen instances), always syncopated and always with

‹s›. Delamarre (DLG 117), on the other hand, suggests that *cintux* is an abbreviation for ‹cintuxos› = *cintuχsos, itself metathetised from *cintuscos 'first',[36] but both the morphology of the assumed *cintuscos and the necessary metathesis would be highly remarkable in Gaulish. I do not find either suggestion compelling; moreover, the reading of the letters following *cintux* in both attestations is problematic (RIG II-2, 105–106). I do not have a solution for *cintux*,[37] but I think the uncertainties surrounding it mean it should not be used as a possible proof for the inverse spelling of *s*. It is highly uncertain that Delamarre's examples of potters' marks contain ‹x› for medial ‹s› at all.

Marichal (1974: 95–96) cites a few examples of the spelling variation on pottery from La Graufesenque that are more apposite to the problem. He remarks that in seven instances *parasidi* is written for a type of vessel, vis-à-vis the majority of cases of *paraxidi*. While these can be instances of the simplification of Gaulish *χs* to *s*, the situation may be more complex. After all, *paraxidi* = /paraχsidī/ is the adaptation to the phonotactics of Gaulish of the Greek παραψίδιον or παροψίς, terms for small dishes. However, *parasidi* could also go back to the Vulgar Latin simplification of Greek *ps*, so the case is not so straightforward. The other examples that Marichal mentions are less clear: *Escingo-* beside *Excingo-* could instead reflect the regular outcome of the heavy cluster *ksk (see Stifter forthc.), where the first consonant was lost before the *s* in Proto-Celtic, only to be re-introduced by morphological reanalysis in the individual languages. Finally, his example of the name *Buxus* beside *Bussus* proves nothing, as this could be a two different etymons.

The bottom-line of these considerations, which unfortunately only scratch the surface of the palaeographic problem, is that even though there are occasional examples where ‹x› and ‹s› were confused in Roman epigraphy, be it in Latin or be it in Gaulish inscriptions, examples for this are very rare in the early imperial period. As far as can be gleaned from a rather cursory study of Ancient Celtic onomastics, etymologically 'correct' spellings are the norm, and it is very possible that a significant part of apparently 'wrong' spellings are due to mistaken modern interpretations. No other example of a Celtic name has occurred where etymological *χs was spelt 'wrongly' so consistently as would have to be assumed for *Essimnus* if it went back to PC **eχs-imno-*. The preponderant spelling with ‹ss› is easier to square with the assumption that **s(s)* was actually the original phoneme. The one spelling with ‹x› in *Eximnus* in the 1ˢᵗ century A.D. can be more easily explained as a case of folk etymology than the alternative, to have *χs develop to /ss/ already very early in this one name. These observations, coupled with the possibility that the oldest form of the name was *esiumne with the diphthong *iu*, as supported directly by two Raetic attestations of the name, and indirectly by a lacuna in a possible Venetic attestation, tips the scales for me for the time being towards a non-Celtic origin of the name, despite the perfect Celtic etymology available for it. Whether the language of origin is Raetic or Schürr's Euganean, a.k.a. Camunic, I cannot say.

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[36] Similarly Hamp in *Studia Celtic Japonica* 2 (1989: 41) – *non uidi*.

[37] If *cintux* is an abbreviation for *cintuχsos, which is far from certain, it may be noted that the only other ordinal with such an ending is *suexxos* '6ᵗʰ'. The final part of that ordinal may have been transferred as an ordinal suffixoid to '1ˢᵗ'?

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