

# Warriors' blazing heads and eyes, Cú Chulainn and other fiery cyclopes, 'bright' Balar, and the etymology of Old Irish *cáech* 'one-eyed'

## Zusammenfassung

Feurige Ausstrahlungen aus dem Kopf bzw. den Augen eines von Wut erhitzten Kriegers sind in den Literaturen mehrerer indogermanischer Völker belegt. Die Möglichkeit, derartige und andere feurige Aspekte mit dem anderswo (z. B. McCONE 1996 und 2021) untersuchten kriegerischen Merkmal der Einäugigkeit zu verbinden, begründet einen offensichtlichen bzw. vermuteten etymologischen Zusammenhang zwischen Licht oder dgl. und sowohl den Namen einiger mythischer Zyklopen (z. B. Arges, Steropes und Balar) als auch gewissen Bezeichnungen der Einäugigkeit im allgemeinen wie lat. *luscus* und griech. *κύκλωψ*. Das Schicksal von Balar in der irischen Erzählung *Cath Maige Tuired* wird in Anlehnung an GINEVRA (2020) auf die Rekonstruktion eines uridg. Mythos bezogen, der die Verblendung (und womöglich auch Tötung) eines 'glänzenden' einäugigen Ungeheuers durch eine von einem hinterhältigen Gott bzw. Held geworfene speißartige Waffe darstellt. Zum Schluß werden air. *cáech*, lat. *caecus* usw. auf eine uridg. Wurzel \**keh₂ǵ* 'brennen, leuchten' zurückgeführt.

And as in uffish thought he stood,  
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,  
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,  
And burred as it came!

(*Jabberwocky*, verse 4)

Whether by accident or design, the Jabberwock's 'eyes of flame' in Lewis Carroll's delectable mock-heroic nonsense poem near the end of the first chapter of *Alice through the looking glass* bring to mind those of another fierce monster of the wilds in the only fully preserved Old English verse epic: when the demon Grendel was about to launch a deadly attack, *him of ēagum stōd | ligge gelīcost lēoht unfæger* 'from his eyes (there) issued a horrible light most like fire/flame' (*Beowulf*, ll. 726–7; WRENN 1973: 125). The antiquity of this trope is indicated by the 4th-century AD Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus' depiction of Germanic warriors 'as they raged more than usual and a certain fury shone forth from their eyes (*et elucebat quidam ex oculis furor*)' (xvi, 12, 36) or 'with fury shining from their eyes (*furore ex oculis lucente*)' (xxxii, 13, 10). Ammianus (xvi, 12, 24) also tells of a fierce Germanic army led by Chonodomarius, who had a flame-coloured tuft of hair (*flammeus torulus*) fitted to the crown of his head. A similarly enhanced coiffure distinguished the supreme Irish warrior-hero Cú Chulainn as he went to his final battle (KIMPTON 2009: 19, ll. 264–70)

with ‘a red fiery spear blazing red in his hand ... hair in tresses of three colours upon him, i.e. brown hair against the scalp, blood-red hair down the middle, a golden diadem covering it on the outside. Fair (was) the due arrangement of that head and hair so that three circling streams come from it around his head (and) so that the flashing of each lock of that warrior’s hair was like strands of gold thread over the edge of an anvil under the hand of a special master smith or like buttercups caught in sunshine on a summery day in the middle of the month of May’.

Texts in a range of Indo-European languages associate fiery effects with warriors, especially their heads and/or eyes. Moses of Chorene’s *History of Armenia* (i, 31) describes the hero Vahagn’s birth as follows: ‘A red reed had its birth in the seas; from the stem of the reed came forth smoke; from the stems of the reed came forth a flame; and from the flame came forth a young man. This youth had fiery hair, also a beard of flame, and his eyes were suns’ (translated LINCOLN 1981: 106–7). The Serbian hero Zmaj Ognjen(i) Vuk/Vuče ‘Fiery Dragon Wolf’ ‘is born, on his head wolf’s hair grows, from his mouth living fire gushes, from his nostrils blue flame darts, and his arm is red to the shoulders’ (JAKOBSON 1966: 371). After bestowing ‘might and courage’ upon the Greek hero Diomedes in the *Iliad*, Athene ‘kindled unceasing fire (δαίη ... ἀκάματον πῦρ) from his helmet and shield’ and ‘such was the fire that she kindled (τοῖόν οἱ πῦρ δαίην) from his head and shoulders’ (v, 4 and 7). During the fierce tug of war over Patroclus’ body later in the epic, Athene came to Achilles ‘and the noblest of goddesses encircled his head with a golden cloud (νέφος ... χρύσεον) and kindled a brilliant flame (φλόγα παμφανόωσαν) out of him’ (*Il.* xviii, 205–6) and ‘thus the light reached the sky (σέλας αἰθέρ’ ἵκανε) from Achilles’ head’ (xviii, 214). The corpse was finally rescued as the Greeks took heart and the Trojans fright ‘when they saw the unceasing dread fire (ἀκάματον πῦρ δεινόν) blazing above the head of the stout-hearted son of Peleus’ (xviii, 224–6). Homeric heroes’ eyes may ‘shine/burn (with/like fire)’ or ‘be like shining fire’. Agamemnon’s ‘eyes were like shining fire (ὄσσε δέ οἱ πυρὶ λαμπετόωντι εἴκτην)’ (i, 104) and Hector’s ‘eyes burned with fire (πυρὶ δ’ ὄσσε δεδήει)’ (xii, 466; cf. xv, 607–8 and 623). As for Achilles, ‘the more did anger (χόλος) enter him and his eyes showed forth terribly under the eyelids as if flame’ and ‘his eyes were shining as if light of fire (τὼ δέ οἱ ὄσσε λαμπέσθην ὡς εἴ τε πυρὸς σέλας)’ (xix, 16–17 and 365–6). Finally, Apollodorus (ii, 4, 9) states that mighty Heracles ‘used to flash a gleam of fire from his eyes (πυρὸς δ’ ἐξ ὀμμάτων ἔλαμπεν αἴγλην)’. Pliny (*Nat. hist.* ii, 241) links a flame from the head of young Servius Tullius, traditionally a warrior as well as a king of note, with an unambiguously martial instance after a Roman defeat in 211 BC: ‘Valerius Antias relates that a flame shone forth from the head of Servius Tullius (and) that in Spain after the slaying of the Scipios one flared in similar fashion from Lucius Marcius as he was haranguing the troops and urging them to revenge’. This phenomenon recalls the Avestan *x<sup>v</sup>arənah* (cf. MCCONE 2020: 107–8 and 129), which has been described as ‘the radiant nimbus that marks

kings and heroes' (LINCOLN 1981: 104) or 'the special glory of the warrior, the possession of Khshathra, the patron of Dumézil's second (warrior) function in Iran' (GERSHENSON 1991: 91–2).

When battle frenzy comes upon Cú Chulainn, he undergoes a terrible distortion called *ríastrad*, both depictions of which in *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (O'RAHILLY 1976: ll. 428–34 and 2245–78) have been cited in the previous volume of *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* (McCONE 2021: 218–19) and afford prominence to the rising of a 'warrior's radiance (*lúan láith*)' from his crown or forehead as well as other fiery effects on or above his head. The blazing eyes of a king's son are highlighted in an entry in the *Annals of Connacht* (FREEMAN 1944: 116, §6; Irish citations normalised) for 1256 AD: 'those who have knowledge of that great battle say that the warriors (*lá(i)th gaile*) of the young host of that great battle could not look in the face of the high lord since there were two very large broad-eyed royal candles burning and flashing (*da rí-g-coinnill ro-móra rosc-lethna ar lasad 7 ar lúamain*) in his head'. The very term *láth* (*gaile*) 'warrior' is based upon *láth* 'heat, rutting' (W *llawd* '(sow's) heat'; HENRY 1982: 236) in frequent combination with the gen. sg. of *gal* 'ardour, fury, valour' < PC \**gal-* derived from a PIE root \**ǵʰelh<sub>3</sub>*, for which a basic meaning 'burst into flames, be(come) radiant/furious/strong' applicable to a warrior's invincible burning ecstasy has been inferred from a wide range of cognates (McCONE 2006).

To judge from the Germanic, Armenian, Slavic, Greek and Roman parallels presented above, the emission of fire or fiery brightness from the eyes and other parts of a warrior's head, particularly when he was in the throes of frenzy, was a Proto-Indo-European trope. A natural tendency to liken eyes so visualised to suns, as in the case of Vahagn above, would help to bridge the semantic gap between Old Irish *súil* 'eye' and the PIE word for 'sun' from which it is usually derived. On the formal side, the evidence presented in *NIL* (606–11, notes 5 and 10 discussing the British and Old Irish forms respectively) indicates a PIE neuter noun characterised by *l/n*-heteroclisis and proterokinetic accentuation: sing. nom.-acc. \**séh<sub>2</sub>uļ* versus gen. \**sh<sub>2</sub>uén-s* or (with laryngeal metathesis) \**suh<sub>2</sub>én-s*, which could be subsequently replaced by "amphikinetic" \**suh<sub>2</sub>n-/\*sūn-* or (with homogenisation of the suffix) \**suh<sub>2</sub>l-/\*sūl-* (e.g. in Indo-Iranian: *NIL* 608, n. 2). Introduction of the latter pattern would have yielded gen. \**sūl-os* in Proto-Celtic, and \**sāuāl* would have been the regular PC outcome of the PIE nom.-acc. form. Forms such as OB *houl* and MW *heul* point to British \**sāuļ*, presumably as a result of partial accommodation (perhaps at an earlier Insular or even Proto-Celtic date) of a strong stem \**sāuāl* to its oblique alternant \**sūl-*. The Roman name of Bath, *Aquae Sulis*, indicates that the Minerva presiding over the springs and a temple housing a perpetual fire there according to Solinus (22, 10) corresponded to a native British goddess called *Sūl* (DE VRIES 1961: 78–9). This name and the British word for 'sun' could be derived from a once unitary paradigm \**sāuļ/\*sūl-os* 'sun(-goddess)' by skewing to \**sāuļ(-os)* and \**Sūl(-os)* as separate designations of the sun itself and a sun-/fire-goddess respectively, an obvious parallel being the Latin skew of the original paradigm of a single word

for the daylight sky and its god into two separate ones for ‘day’ and Jove/Jupiter (MEISER 1998: 141–2). In Goidelic, however, \**sūl-* seems to have been replaced by the precursor of OIr. *grían* ‘sun’ after serving as the base for an *i*-stem \**sūl-i-* or a *iā*-stem (\**sūl-iā-* > OIr. *súil*, subsequently remodelled to an *i*-stem with a new gen. sg. *súilo* and so on) preferred on morphological grounds by UHLICH (1993: 356–7) with a meaning ‘eye’ arguably mediated by an inherited trope of the warrior’s blazing sun-like eyes.

Both of the aforementioned descriptions of Cú Chulainn’s fiery distortion or *riastrad* involve his transformation into a virtual cyclops as a result of the near-disappearance of one of his eyes and the increased size or prominence of the other. Moreover, this one-eyed aspect was the very feature chosen by his female admirers for imitation as a sign of their devotion (McCONE 2021: 218), and he was not the only example of a cyclops connected with fire. Hesiod (*Theogony* ll. 139–46) refers to three mighty primeval one-eyed forgers of the great sky-god’s thunderbolt (κεραυνός) called Brontes, Steropes and Arges after thunder (βροντή), lightning (στεροπή) and the bright (ἀργής) gleam of the fiery missile (Aeschylus, *Prometheus* ll. 667–8 and 992) hurled by ‘father Zeus of the bright thunderbolt’ (addressed, for instance, as Ζεῦ πάτερ ἀργι-κέραυνε at *Iliad* xix, 121). Caeculus, the legendary brigand and founder of Praeneste in Latium, was connected still more intimately with fire. Vergil’s representation of him as a hearth-born son of the Roman fire-god Vulcan at the head of a wild one-shoed army wearing wolfskin caps is elaborated upon as follows in Servius’ commentary on the passage in question (*Aeneid* vii, 678–81): ‘There were at Praeneste two brothers who were called divine (*divi*). When their sister was sitting near the hearth, a spark jumped off and struck her womb, which, as they tell, made her pregnant. Later she gave birth to a boy near the temple of Jupiter and abandoned him. Maidens who were fetching water found him near a fire which was not far from the well and lifted him up. That is why he is called a son of Vulcan. He is called Caeculus because he had rather small eyes, often an effect of exposure to smoke. He later collected a band around him, lived as a robber for a long time and finally founded the city of Praeneste in the mountains. During a festival, where he had invited the neighbouring peoples, he started to exhort them to dwell with him and he boasted that he was a son of Vulcan. When they did not believe him, he appealed to Vulcan to prove that he was his son, and the whole crowd was surrounded by fire. Shaken by this sign, all stayed at once and they believed that he was the son of Vulcan’ (translated BREMMER 1987: 49). Caeculus is given two small eyes in recognition of the regular meaning ‘blind’ of Latin *caecus*, but an original single eye can be inferred on comparative and etymological grounds (McCONE 2021: 216–17). The one-eyed Norse god Óðinn with his retinue of berserk *ein-herjar* not only constitutes an obvious Germanic parallel (McCONE 2021: 217 and 219) but was also called *bál-eygr* ‘fire-/bright-eyed’ (GINEVRA 2020: 193–4).

By contrast, a smouldering or smoky image of a cyclops’ eye is encountered on occasion, as in the case of ‘a large red black-broad single eye (*áensúil derg*

*mór duibh-lethan*) in the forehead' (VAN HAMEL 1933: 98, ll. 2–3) of each of the six posthumously born children of Cailitín destined to be instrumental in the sometimes one-eyed Cú Chulainn's death (McCONE 2021: 216). The dark aspect is manifested still more strongly by Ingcél Cáech at the head of a British band of marauders (McCONE 2021: 219) encountered at sea by the recently exiled Irish brigands in *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*: 'An ungentle, big, terrifying, strange looking man was Ingcél. A single eye in his head as broad as an oxhide and as black as a beetle/smoke (*duibithir degaid/dethaig*), and three pupils in it. Three hundred in his brigand band (*fo churp a díbergae*).'<sup>1</sup> The Germanic hero Hagen's single black eye according to *Thidrekssaga* may be compared (McCONE 2021: 223–4), and a reference to Ingcél's 'keen, angry eye (*súil féig andíaraid*)' later in the tale (LU 7564; cf. KNOTT 1936: I, 1176) is discussed by BORSJE (2003: 14–16).

The long description of the guests assembled in Da Derga's hostel opens with the 'bright luminous eye (*rosc nglan ngleordae*)' of the beardless young warrior Cormac Conn Loinges and closes with 'a man blind in the left eye (*túathchoech*) with a destructive eye (*co súil milledaig*) and accompanied by the head of a constantly squealing (*oc sírégim*; LU 7844) pig on a fire' identified as 'Nár Túathcháech, the swineherd of Bodb from Síd ar Femin- every feast that he has attended, blood has been spilt at it' (KNOTT 1936: §75 and §140). He displays obvious affinities with another sinister figure encountered earlier in the tale (§136), namely the one-eyed, one-handed and one-footed Fer Caille (McCONE 2021: 216) bearing a constantly squealing (*oc sírégim*) black burned pig (*mucc ... dub dóthe*) on his back.

*Fotha Catha Cnucha* recounts a conflict between the *ríg-fénnid* or 'supreme *fian*-warrior' Cumall and his successor Goll, the son of Dáire *alias* Morna (NAGY 1985: 83–7): 'Cumall fell at the hand of Goll son of Morna. Luchet wounded him in his visage so that it destroyed his eye so that it is from that the name Goll stuck to him. And it is thence he said: "Áed was the name of the son of Dáire when Luchet wounded him with fairness. After the heavy spear had wounded him, on that account he was called Goll". Goll killed Luchet' (LU 3176–83; McCONE 2021: 219). Here one of the protagonists makes the other 'one-eyed (*goll*)' and, significantly, both bear names associated with fire and/or brightness: the etymology *Aod .i. tene* 'Áed, i.e. fire' in Cormac's late ninth-/early tenth-century glossary (MEYER 1912: 4, no. 33) remains valid (PIE \**h<sub>2</sub>ejd<sup>h</sup>*: IEW 11–12, \**ai-dh* 'burn, blaze'; cf. LIV 230–1, LIV<sup>2</sup> 259) and *Luchet* looks very

<sup>1</sup> *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* according to LU 6865–7 apart from the variant *dethaig* from the YBL version given by KNOTT (1936, ll. 406–8), to the paragraphs of whose edition reference is made hereafter. 'YBL compares the blackness with smoke, because that manuscript always has the variant reading *duibithir dethaig* "as black as smoke" for *duibithir degaid* "as black as a beetle"' (BORSJE 2003: 14, n. 99). Although the latter is evidently the original reading, the substitution in YBL points to a natural connection between smoke and blackness.

much like a zero-grade derivative of the PIE root *\*leuk* ‘shine’ (LIV 376–7, LIV<sup>2</sup> 418–19), the full grade of which is seen, for instance, in otherwise identically formed *lóchet* ‘lightning’ and the *lúan* ‘radiance’ (< *\*leuk-s-no-*) emanating from the frenzied Cú Chulainn’s head (cf. Skt. *rócas(-)*, Av. *raocah-* ‘light’ < *s-*stem *\*leuk-os/-es-* and Gk. *λύχνος* ‘lamp’, Lat. *lūna* ‘moon’ < *\*luk-s-no-/-nā*, as well as Lat. root-noun *lūx*, gen. *lūc-is* ‘light’ < *\*le/ouk*). The formally straightforward derivation of Latin *luscus* ‘one-eyed’ from *\*luk-sko-* ‘shining, bright’ based upon this root is also rendered semantically plausible by the luminosity conventionally associated with the heads and eyes of warriors and cyclopes, whose martial affinities have been demonstrated elsewhere (McCONE 1996, and 2021: 214–17). The most salient point for present purposes was ‘the ferocious glare of the fighter as a means of terrifying his enemies’ and the claim that ‘an obvious function of one-eyedness, particularly in the case of mythical cyclopes with an oversized eye such as Balar, Ingcél, Cú Chulainn or Polyphemus, was to enhance this terrifying aspect of the warrior’s burning frenzy’ (McCONE 1996: 107 and 108). Hesiod’s (*Theogony* 144–5) etymology of Greek κύκλωψ as, in effect, a compound of κύκλο- ‘circle’ and ὤψ ‘eye’ meaning ‘round-eyed’ seems banal in the extreme, and ‘wheel-eyed’ based upon the older meaning of κύκλος only slightly less so. Various possibilities are discussed by BADER (1984: 109–10), who makes the attractive proposal of a compound of *\*oku-* ‘eye’ with *\*kuk-lo-* ‘flaming, shining’, which has a direct reflex in Skt. *śukra-* ‘bright’ and Av. *suxra-* ‘red’ (of fire) as well, probably, as a slightly more indirect one with different suffixation in Gk. κύκ-vo-ς ‘(bright/white) swan’ < *\*kuk-no-* (BADER 1984: 110–12). She explains the semantics in terms of a theory of perception inferred from rather late Greek and Indic sources, but the evidence presented above would make the frenzied one-eyed warrior’s fiery glare a better point of departure (McCONE 1996: 108).

In the Irish saga *Cath Maige Tuired* (GRAY 1982), battle with the invading Fomorians was joined by the Túatha Dé Danann with Lug in the forefront urging them on, ‘and it is then that Lug chanted this incantation below (while going) on one foot and one eye (*for lethcois 7 letsúil*) round the men of Ireland’ (§129, concluding with the rather obscure incantation itself). A fierce and bloody fight ensued (§§130–2). After the killing of Núadu (*Núodai*) and Machae (*Maucha*) by Balar (*lie Balar*; cf. nom. *Balar* in §8),

‘there was an encounter between Lug and Balar of the sharp eye (*di Bolur Birugdere*) in the battle. The latter had a destructive eye (*súil milldagach*). The eye used not to be opened except on the field of battle. Four men used to raise its lid from his eye by its burnished ring through its lid. The host that he used to behold through the eye would not resist the young warriors (*fri hócco*) even if they were as numerous as many thousands. This is why that poison (*nem*) was on it, i.e. his father’s druids were cooking druidry (*oc fulucht draígechtae*, presumably a druidic recipe). He came and looked over / through the window so that the smoke / vapour of the cooking (*dé en*

*foulachtae*) rose under it and it is onto the eye that the poison of the cooking (*nem an foulachta*) came after that. He and Lug then met' (§133).

They then engaged in a rather obscure exchange of words mostly uttered by Lug (§133). "Raise my eyelid, lads/servants (*a gille*)", said Balar (*Balor*) "that I may behold the talkative man who is addressing me". The lid is raised from Balar's eye. Lug then cast a slingstone (*liic talma*) at him so that the eye went through his head and it was his own host that it beheld. He fell on the host of the Fomorians so that three nines of them died under his side' (§135). It follows from Balar's need for his evidently huge 'destructive eye' to be opened in order for him to see Lug that it was his only eye. He was, then, a full-blown cyclops and was deprived of his sight as well as his life by Lug's shot.

A parallel to the episode of Lug and Balar occurs in the medieval Welsh tale of *Culhwch ac Olwen*. Since Olwen's father, Ysbadaden Pen-kawr 'head (of) giant', was destined to die when she took a husband (BROMWICH & EVANS 1992: 1, 504), he was understandably hostile to Culhwch's suit for her hand. At the end of each meeting with Culhwch's men on the first two days he cast one of three poisoned stone spears at them, but on each occasion it was caught and cast back by one of the visitors, wounding Ysbadaden first in the knee and then in the chest (ll. 510–44). When they met again on the third day, Ysbadaden asked:

"Where are my lads/servants (*gweisson*)? Raise up the forks – my eyelids have fallen over the balls of my eyes – so that I may get a look at my future son-in-law". They rose and, as they rose, he took the third poisoned stone spear (*y trydyt lechwayw gwenwynic*) and cast it after them. And Culhwch caught it and cast it in turn as he wished, and pierced him in the ball of his eye so that it went out through the nape of the neck' (ll. 547–53).

Unlike Balar, the giant Ysbadaden had two eyes, but these were huge and heavy-lidded like Balar's single eye and he became a cyclops through the loss one of them to Culhwch's shot. Interestingly, the motif of wounding the thrower of a spear by casting it back at him is also central to two successive boasting contests in *Scéla muicce meic Da Thó* (THURNEYSSEN 1935: §10 and §11). In the first of these, Cet claimed to have taken an adversary's hand off in this way, while a still closer parallel with Culhwch's action is seen in Cet's taunting of Éogan mac Durthacht: 'You cast a spear at me so that it was (sticking) out of my shield. I cast the same spear at you and it went through your head and took your eye out of your head'.

Balar and Nár Túath-cháech figure prominently in BORSJE's (2003: 4–13) discussion of 'the destructive eye' or *súil milledach* characterising both of them. This reaches the following conclusion: 'Balor's single eye has become destructive and poisonous as a result of witnessing the cooking of *druídecht* and it is a weapon of battle ... Nár Túathcháech with his destructive eye and his screaming

pig's head on the fire either causes slaughter or serves as an omen of bloodshed'. This recalls Mac Da Thó's giant milk-fed pig, which 'was, however, being fed on poison (*nem*) so that the slaughter of the men of Ireland might occur for it (THURNEYSSEN 1935: §5, ll. 13–14). Smoke/vapour from cooking got into Balar's eye and made it poisonously destructive, while Nár was accompanied by a pig's head cooking on a fire.

GINEVRA (2020: 189–94) has argued that a PIE root *\*b<sup>h</sup>elH* (e.g. Gk. φαλός 'white' < *\*b<sup>h</sup>l̥H-o-*; ON *bál*, OE *bǣl* 'fire, flame' and OCS *bělъ* 'white' < *\*b<sup>h</sup>ēlH-o-*; OHG *bal* 'shining', Lith. *bālas* 'white' < *\*b<sup>h</sup>olH-o-*) underlies the names of Balar, the Gaulish deity Belinos and the Norse god Baldr 'as reflexes of the same PIE term, namely *\*b<sup>h</sup>ól(H)-r-/\*b<sup>h</sup>elH-n-* "light, splendor", an *-r/n-* heteroclitic of PIE *\*b<sup>h</sup>elH-* "be white, shine"' (GINEVRA 2020: 191). Baldr is described as *svá ... bjartr svá at lýsir af honum* 'so bright (so) that light emanates (lit. 'it lights') from him' in chapter 22 of *Gylfaginning*, and his affinities with Balar may be extended beyond the etymology of his name to the manner of his death in *Gylfaginning* ch. 49 (LORENZ 1984: 315–16 and 548–53). Having responded to Baldr's premonitions by getting Frigg to exact an undertaking not to harm him from all manner of things, the gods were proving his invulnerability by casting various missiles at him. Meanwhile, the disgruntled Loki went in disguise to Frigg and learned that she had left out a young shoot of wood (*viðar-teinungr*) called mistletoe (*mistiltein*) because it seemed too young (*ungr*) to take an oath. Having procured a branch thereof, Loki then persuaded the blind (*blindr*) Hqdr to join in with the others and gave him the piece of mistletoe to cast at Baldr, who fell down dead when it went through him. GINEVRA (2020: 202–3) maintains that Loki was not only Baldr's real slayer through the agency of a mere puppet but also bore a name (< PGmc. *\*luk-an-*) etymologically connected with the name of Balar's slayer Lug (< PC *\*lug-u-*) by deriving both from PIE *\*leuǵ/ǵ* 'release, break' or 'bend' (LIV 373–4, LIV<sup>2</sup> 415–16; IEW 685–6; GINEVRA 2020: 203, n. 35). In addition to a pair of circumstantial onomastic correspondences, a projectile was the instrument of death in both cases and the resourcefulness of Lug *samildánach* 'versed in many arts together' (GRAY 1982: §§53–71) may also resonate with Loki's resourceful nature as a trickster (GINEVRA 2020: 203). In conclusion, 'all these parallels can hardly be coincidental and call for the reconstruction of a common origin for these narratives as reflexes of a single (perhaps only West-) Indo-European myth, in which a god associated with "light" (PIE *\*b<sup>h</sup>ól(H)-r-/\*b<sup>h</sup>elH-n-*) was fatally wounded by a god, referred to as "the *luǵ*-one", by means of a weapon shot from a distance' (GINEVRA 2020: 203).

Direct comparison of Lug's one-eyed status with Óðinn's is questionable: 'the single eye, which is securely attested as a fundamental attribute of the Germanic deity, can so far only be ascribed to his arguable Celtic counterpart on the strength of a brief ritual act in *Cath Maige Tuired* that also involved hopping on one leg ... What Lug actually performs in this manner is, for all its obscurity in detail, a bellicose and imprecatory *cétal* or incantation ... strongly reminiscent of *corrguinecht* ... described in O'Davoren's glossary (§383; STOKES



1904: 257) as *beith for leth-cois 7 for leth-laimh 7 for lethsuil ag denam na glaime dícinn* ('"being on one leg and with one hand and with one eye while performing the *glám dícenn*"'), a particularly lethal kind of satire that is mentioned in various medieval Irish sources' (McCONE 1996: 95; cf. GINEVRA 2020: 204, n. 36, and McCONE 2021: 215). It is hardly a coincidence that Lug had already claimed *corrguinecht* as one of his many arts (*im corrguinech*, GRAY 1982: §63). A further correspondence may be worth noting: the fighting that culminated in Balar's killing by Lug started with the latter's temporary ritual pairing of a closed 'blind' eye with a seeing one, while Baldr's death was encompassed by the fully sighted Loki in a temporary pairing with the completely blind Hödr.

Derivation of Balar's name from the root now reconstructed as *\*b<sup>h</sup>elH-* with a final laryngeal was proposed over 75 years ago by O'Rahilly (GINEVRA 2020: 191), who duly interpreted it in the light of an outdated "solar mythology" to which he still subscribed (McCONE 1990: 57): 'The lightning issuing from the sun was sometimes conceived as a flashing glance from the god's eye. This idea is exemplified in Irish traditions concerning the one-eyed Balar, whose glance brought destruction. *Balar*, earlier *Bolar*, represents a Celtic *\*Bolos*; the IE root is *bhel-*' (O'RAHILLY 1946: 59). Since its most recent editor adopted it in line with the marked preponderance of spellings with *-or/-ur* in the text in which he primarily appears (GRAY 1982: 61, 133 etc.), Balor has been the prevalent English rendering of the name (e.g. BORSJE above and McCONE 1989: 138–9, 1996: 93). In view of the extravagant orthography of the text of the older version of *Cath Maige Tuired* preserved in just one manuscript (16th-cent. Harley 5280; GRAY 1982: 1), O'Rahilly's original *Bolar*, apparently inferred from solitary *Bolur* in the passage (§133) cited above, can be safely discounted as it is hard to see how it would yield otherwise normal *Bal-*. GINEVRA's (2020: 199) tentative suggestion of a stray reflex of *\*bolar-o-* based upon *b<sup>h</sup>ólH-ʔ* also seems quite improbable.

Inherited *Balo/ur* /bal<sup>u</sup>ər/ [bal<sup>u</sup>ør] would derive from *\*bal<sup>u</sup>r* < *\*balro-* through the velarising effect of a directly following *r* (McCONE 2015: 121, 128 and 132), which was lacking in the case of OIr. *galar* /galər/ [galər] 'sickness' < *\*galaro-* (McCONE 2015: 128; MW *galar* 'grief'). *\*Balro-* could be linked via *\*bl<sup>u</sup>-ro-* with *\*bel* 'strong', the PIE root favoured by PRÓSPER (2017: 286–7) as the base of the aforementioned Celtic theonym Belinos.<sup>2</sup> The *Balar* /balər/ variant would then be due to a tendency to replace [ø] with [ə] here after the probably Old Irish loss of distinctive velarisation of consonants (McCONE 2015: 132–5) manifested in alternations such as *riathor/riathar* 'torrent' < *\*reǵaθ<sup>u</sup>r* < *\*reǵatro-*

<sup>2</sup> In view of the evidence presented by Prósper that Belenus is a Latinised local NE Italian variant of Belinos or Belinos (PRÓSPER 2017: 260, n. 13; GINEVRA 2020: 197–8), a direct comparison of Gaulish *Beleno-* with Sanskrit *jvalana-* 'flaming, shining' (McCONE 2020: 156) seems untenable but, even so, PIE *\*ǵuelH* 'burn, blaze' would still match semantically similar *\*b<sup>h</sup>elH* 'shine' in efficacy as a base for Belinos and Balar. That said, the latter's advantage over the former is that it is not only rather better attested but also formally compatible with Norse *Baldr*.

or *saíthor/saíthar* ‘work’ < \**saiθ<sup>u</sup>r* < \**saitro-* (McCONE 2015: 121). That said, it would be rather surprising for Early OIr. *-o/ur* to be so well preserved so late after a neutral (including devalarised) dental or *l*, where [ø] and [ə] had effectively become unconditioned variants capable of encroaching upon each other even within the Old Irish period: e.g., an original paradigm nom./acc. *folad*, gen. *folid*, dat. *folud* ‘substance’ still preserved in Wb. had been largely replaced in Ml. by *folud*, *foluid*, *folud* (McCONE 2015: 132). Spellings such as *Balo/ur* in the orthographically extravagant Harley text of *CMT* are, then, far from reliable as evidence for Early OIr. *Balor* rather than *Balar*, the spelling found in the 12th-century ms. Rawlinson B 502, 162f1 and g20 (O’BRIEN 1962: 330 and 332). In the absence of secure Old Irish examples, certainty is unattainable but, on the available evidence, the case for taking *Balar* as the inherited form is at least as strong as that for *Balo/ur*. That being so, there is no obvious obstacle to GINEVRA’s (2020: 199) etymology based upon a PC preform \**balaro-* (< \**belar-* < \**b<sup>h</sup>elH-* ‘bright’ in line with the rule propounded by JOSEPH 1982: 55),<sup>3</sup> which he further supports with the name *Balarus* of a chief of the Vettones (Silius Italicus, *Punica* iii, 378) and an inferred Gaulish toponymic element \**balaro-* (GINEVRA 2020: 191).

It has been argued (McCONE 1989: 137–9) that the three kings (Bres, Núadu, Lug) of *Túatha Dé Danann* in *CMT* resonate with Israel’s first three kings (the despicable Abimelech, flawed Saul, and admirable David), not least in the depiction of a giant’s (Balar/Goliath) killing in battle by a fair young harpist (Lug/David) with a slingshot. Recognition of this biblical input, however, does not necessarily rule out a significant inherited native component, since ‘we are obviously not dealing here with the slavish imitation of Old Testament models, but rather with the judicious application of appropriate themes. Allusive techniques such as these might be expected from a monastic author with readers

<sup>3</sup> Joseph explains a number of otherwise morphologically problematical forms by positing Celtic CeRa- > CaRa, but only if followed by a further syllable since ‘we need this last restriction to account for do-cer and for *e* in monosyllabic *ā*-stems like OIr. ben ‘woman’ < \**g<sup>w</sup>enā*’ (JOSEPH 1982: 55). It is not clear why CeRa(C) should have behaved differently from CeRa-CV(C), but a further problem posed by the derivation of *ā*-subjunctives like (*at*)-*bela* (not \**-bala*) ‘may die’ < \**bel-ahē-θ* < \**belaset(i)* < \**guelh<sub>1</sub>-se-ti* (McCONE 1991: 85–113) can be obviated by positing analogical *-ase/o-* > \**-āse/o-* (McCONE 1991: 112) as long as “Joseph’s Law” is firmly restricted to CeRā- (and thus also made non-applicable to fem. *ā*-stems). A possible way of deriving *Balar* without recourse to Joseph’s rule would be to posit a “proterokinetic” neuter paradigm of the type nom.-acc. \**h<sub>1</sub>nóm-ŋ* ‘name’, \**h<sub>2</sub>óngu-ŋ* ‘butter’, \**dór-u* ‘wood’ versus gen. \**h<sub>1</sub>ŋm-én-s*, \**h<sub>2</sub>ŋgu-én-s*, \**dr-éu-s* (probably already PIE, even if replacing original “acrostatic” \**h<sub>1</sub>ném-ŋ-s*, \**h<sub>2</sub>éngu-ŋ-s*, \**dér-u-s*; for an excellent thorough discussion see STÜBER 1998: 53–60). Proterokinetic \**b<sup>h</sup>ólH-ŋ*, \**b<sup>h</sup>l̥H-én-s* would have resulted in PC \**bol-ar*, \**bal-ēs*, and remodelling to \**bal-ar* would be quite natural, given the pattern of the only securely attested surviving *r/n*-heteroclitic in Old Irish, namely *arbo/ar*, gen. *arb(a)e* ‘corn’ < PC \**ar<sub>u</sub>-ar*, \**ar<sub>u</sub>-ēs* < \**h<sub>2</sub>ér(h<sub>3</sub>)-uŋ*, \**h<sub>2</sub>ŋ(h<sub>3</sub>)-uén-s* (STÜBER 1998: 55 and 84).

equally versed in scripture in mind, but they do not make for easy determination of the role of biblical parallels in composition. One possibility would be largely coincidental thematic convergence, another the deliberate pointing up of existing traditional narratives to promote affinities with the Old Testament, and a third the rather free creation of new episodes from a biblical base by means of familiar native material and mythopoeisis' (McCONE 1989: 139). The second of these scenarios would follow from Ginevra's comparative analysis as well as from Balar's cyclopism and striking loss of an eye with a lid needing several men to raise it, a parallel for which is provided not by Goliath but by the Welsh giant Ysbadaden despite the latter's loss of an eye to a stone spear as opposed to a slingstone. Although the extant accounts of Ysbadaden's encounter with Culhwch and Balar's with Lug hardly correspond closely enough to make direct borrowing likely, the similarities between them are surely too marked for mere coincidence to be credible. That being so, the obvious alternatives would seem to be (1) separate descent from the same basic Insular Celtic prototype or (2) derivation of the Welsh narrative from an Irish one predating the biblically inspired makeover responsible for the extant *CMT* version. As key parallels with David, Lug's skill with the harp and use of a sling are particularly likely to have been introduced into the latter as part of that makeover. It would follow that the slingstone there had replaced another weapon responsible for knocking Balar's eye out in an earlier version, most likely a spear as in *Culhwch ac Olwen* and, for that matter, the aforementioned account of Éogan's loss of an eye in *Scéla muicce meic Da Thó*.

While there is some resemblance between a spear and the branch of mistletoe that fatally pierced Baldr, the fact that the Norse god neither was nor became one-eyed constitutes a major discrepancy between him and his Celtic counterpart(s) in the myth reconstructed by Ginevra. That said, blindness figures in all three witnesses, but with a noteworthy inverse distribution in the medieval Irish and Welsh narratives on the one hand and the Norse account on the other: the giant is completely or partially blinded by the character responsible for his death<sup>4</sup> in the former two, whereas a blind god (Hǫdr) kills Baldr in the latter. In effect, Balar was undone by (his own) blinding and Baldr by (another's) blindness.

Intriguingly, the wood of another shrub known for its bright berries was instrumental in actually knocking an eye out in an episode from the Irish saga *Tochmarc Étaíne* involving three well-known supernatural figures. This (BERGIN & BEST 1934–8: 146–9, §§9–10; cf. MEID 2020: 46) tells how Midir inter-

<sup>4</sup> Although he does not himself perform it, Culhwch ultimately brings about Ysbadaden's death since, as intimated earlier, the giant's demise is linked to his daughter Olwen's marriage. At the end of the tale, when Culhwch has performed all of the tasks set by Ysbadaden and obtained his grudging acknowledgment that Olwen is now his, the giant declares that the time for his death has come. Culhwch's follower Goreu uab Custennin then takes him away and beheads him (BROMWICH & EVANS 1992: ll. 1235–41).

vened in a quarrel between two groups of boys (*dí macraid*) and a spike/spit of holly (*bir cuilind*) was cast at him, taking one of his eyes out of his head (*a lethsuil asa chind*). Midir then came, with his eye in his fist (*a lethsuil ina durn*), to bewail the shameful blemish (*ainim*) thus inflicted upon him to his host, the Mac Óc, who arranged for the physician Dían Cécht to make him whole again. The holly spike/spit here was presumably a boy's toy weapon similar to the *bunsach* 'stick, toy javelin' plied in a game by Cú Chulainn at a couple of points in his *mac-gnímrada* 'boyhood deeds' (O'RAHILLY 1976: ll. 415–17 and 575–8). When he first encountered Conchobor's *macrad* of one hundred and fifty boys, who were habitually at play (*oc cluchiu*, l. 402), without undergoing the required ceremony, they attacked the intruder by casting 'their thrice fifty toy javelins' (*a trí cóecta bunsach*, l. 423) at him but these, evidently being envisaged as pointed,<sup>5</sup> all stuck in his shield. The *bir cuilinn* thrown at Midir by one of the boys presumably betokened similar vexation at his unsolicited intervention in their fight. Being a boy's toy weapon, it was a rather surprising cause of serious injury like the 'young' branch of mistletoe cast at Baldr.

Evidence from a preferably early source in a language belonging to another Indo-European family might help to resolve the issue of whether or not the victim was characterised by loss of an eye in the presumed prototype. This brings the Greek hero Odysseus into the frame, since he was not only a resourceful trickster in keeping with Ginevra's tentative characterisation of the victim's killer/blinder but also orchestrated the blinding of the giant demigod cyclops Polyphemus (see *Od.* i, 68–73 and ix 528–9 on his fathering by Poseidon) with a spear-like implement in one of the best-known episodes in the *Odyssey* (ix, 166–566). The enormous stature of the monstrous (πέλωρ(ον), 257 and 428) savage (ἄγριος, 215) Polyphemus is mentioned at various points (e.g. 190–2, 214, 240–3). The great size of his eye is clearly indicated by the 'large green olive-wood club' (μέγα ῥόπαλον ... χλωρὸν ἐλαίνεον, 319–20) intended for use when 'dried out' (ἀύανθέν, 321), which was as big as the mast of a broad merchant vessel and was trimmed into shape with a fire-hardened point by Odysseus and his men for thrusting into the cyclops' eye (321–33). It does not follow that Polyphemus' evidently large eye was out of proportion with his generally massive frame, and the same presumably goes for the huge eyes of the giants Balar and Ysbadaden. At any rate, the somewhat oversized cyclops is given a single eye more or less in proportion with the rest of him in the depiction of his blinding on an early seventh-century BC Attic vase (CARPENTER 1991: 233, plate 340) roughly contemporary with the *Odyssey* itself.

It has been argued above that fire and brightness were associated by a number of IE peoples with a warrior's frenzied glare, especially if concentrated in

<sup>5</sup> Cf. the *noí mbera culind* 'nine spikes/spits of holly' vainly hurled one after another by Nad Crantail at the youthful Cú Chulainn, who used their fire-hardened points as supports while he was amusing himself by chasing birds (O'RAHILLY 1976: ll. 1415–23).

the single eye of a ferocious cyclops. While there is no specific description of Polyphemus' eye in the *Odyssey*, fire and burning are very prominent indeed in the detailed account of its destruction by Odysseus and his men (375–400). Once the cyclops had fallen into a drunken stupor through the effect of wine proffered by Odysseus, the latter pushed his makeshift weapon beneath plentiful embers to be heated until the stake (μοχλός) was about to catch fire 'and was glowing terribly' (διεφαίνετο δ'αίνῶς, 379). Odysseus then removed it 'from the fire' (ἐκ πυρός, 380) and with his men thrust the 'stake ... sharp on the tip' (μοχλόν ... οξύν ἐπ' ἄκρῳ, 382) into Polyphemus' eye, twirling the 'fire-sharp stake' (πυρι-ήκεα μοχλόν, 387) until the blood flowed around it. 'The blast singed (εὔσεν) all his flanking eyelids and his eyebrows off as the eyeball burned (γλήνης καιομένης), and his (eye's) roots roared with fire (πυρί) ... Thus did his eye sizzle (ὡς τοῦ σίζ' ὀφθαλμός) around the olive-wood stake' (389–90 ... 394). The blinded cyclops ultimately failed to prevent the escape of Odysseus and his remaining men from the cave in which he had been holding them. Since the pointed stake with its fire-hardened tip should have been capable of blinding the unconscious cyclops without further treatment, there was no obvious practical reason to reheat it so strongly before use that it almost caught fire. In view of the evidence presented above for the association of IE cyclopes with fire and an ocular glare, this feature may well have been primarily motivated by a poetic sense that burning was peculiarly apposite as a means of destroying Polyphemus' single eye.<sup>6</sup>

Inclusion of the Polyphemus episode as a further comparandum tips the scales towards a PIE myth in which a "trickster" hero or god (Odysseus, Lug, or Loki via Hødr) blinds a monstrous 'bright/fiery' cyclops (Balar or Polyphemus), probably with fatal consequences (Balar or Baldr), by means of a ruse and a spear or similar pointed/piercing weapon (except in the case of Lug, whose lack of deceit and use of a sling may well be due to his assimilation to the biblical paragon David).<sup>7</sup> The Norse outcome lacks literal cyclopism but ascribes Baldr's death to a fully sighted and a fully blind figure, a temporary combination that may be related to Lug's likewise temporary ritual cyclopism as a prelude to joining battle and ultimately killing Balar. Fire is inflicted upon, instead of

<sup>6</sup> WEST (2014: 17–21) argues for a Pontic origin of the cyclops episode on the strength of a number of Caucasian parallels. Since, however, the relevant Caucasian folklore records are over two and a half millennia later than the *Odyssey* and there was a powerful Greek presence in the Black Sea area for the first two of these until the end of the Byzantine Empire, it seems more likely that such influences flowed the other way. After all, traffic between literature and folklore is by no means one-way, as demonstrated by BRUFORD's seminal study of 'the development of certain Irish romances from a literary form in the late Middle Ages to Irish and Scottish Gaelic folk-tales still told in the present century' (1969: i).

<sup>7</sup> Culhwch is similarly straightforward, but Ysbadaden does resort to deceit by his already mentioned cast of a spear at his departing visitors on three successive occasions.

emanating from, the cyclops' eye in the *Odyssey*. The spear *vel sim.* is made of varied (stone for Ysbadaden, holly-wood for Midir, 'young' mistletoe for Baldr and 'green' olive-wood for Polyphemus) but invariably unusual material in the relevant sources, and seems more likely to have been hurled in public (as by Hōdr at Loki's instigation, and by Lug or Culhwch) than thrust in seclusion (as by Odysseus).

Proximate *\*kaiko-* 'one-eyed' would be a formally and semantically straightforward Western Indo-European precursor of Old Irish *cáech* (glossing Latin *luscus* at Sg. 24b1), Old Cornish *cuic* (glossing Latin *luscus vel monoptalmus*) and Gothic *haihs* (translating Greek μόνόφθαλμος), all meaning 'blind in one eye'. The derivation of Latin *caecus* 'blind' from the same preform is just as straightforward formally and not much less so semantically. As observed in a thorough study of Irish terms for blindness, 'the words in regular use during the Old and Middle Irish periods to express the state of being "blind" or "one-eyed" were *dall*, *cáech*, *goll* and their derivatives. *Dall* primarily means "blind", that is to say "totally blind in both eyes", while *cáech* and *goll* mean "blind in one of the two eyes"' (MAC MATHÚNA 1979: 27). Moreover, 'a second sense-development, namely "blind in one eye" → "having defective eyesight; blind", is to be seen in Welsh [*coeg*] and in the transition to the modern period in Irish. This loss of specificity may be assumed for Latin too' (MAC MATHÚNA 1979: 43). As noted above, there are reasons for regarding the evidently non-blind Caeculus of Praeneste as a cyclops originally, and proximate PIE *\*kaiko-* 'one-eyed'<sup>8</sup> may be reconstructed on the strength of the similarly formed Sanskrit *keka-ra-* 'squint-eyed' (cf. MAC MATHÚNA 1979: 42–3; note too the early Indian warrior-tribe of *Keka-yāh* [see MONIER-WILLIAMS 1899: 308c]). Although *a* does seem to have existed independently as a rare phoneme in PIE, Pokorny's *\*kai-* 'alone' lacks convincing support and, even if *\*kai-ko-* were derived from it (IEW 519–20), *\*kai-ko-s* should have referred to a solitary person, not to someone with a solitary eye. Since *a* usually arose in PIE as an allophone of *e* through colouring in contact with the "laryngeal" phoneme *h<sub>2</sub>*, probability favours PIE *\*keh<sub>2</sub>iko-* [kah<sub>2</sub>iko-] > *\*kaiko-* as a result of the widespread post-PIE loss of laryngeals.

*LIV* posits a PIE root *\*keh<sub>2</sub>u* 'kindle, burn' (308, *LIV*<sup>2</sup> 345) underlying Greek κείω 'kindle, burn' < *\*kau-īe/o-* < *\*k(e)h<sub>2</sub>u-īe/o-* and another PIE root *\*keīt* 'be bright, shine' (310; *LIV*<sup>2</sup> 347 as *\*keīt-*) underlying Vedic *ceta-ti* 'shines, appears, stands out' < *\*keīt-e-* and *citāya-ti/-te* 'lights up' < *\*kit-éje-* as well as non-verbal forms such as the adjective *citrá-* (Av. *ciθra-*) 'shining, visible' and the noun *ketú-* 'sign'. Since *k<sup>h</sup>* fell together with *k* in "satəm" IE languages, Indo-Iranian reflexes of PIE *\*keīt* are formally indistinguishable from those of PIE *\*k<sup>h</sup>eīt* 'observe, recognise' (*LIV* 341–3/*LIV*<sup>2</sup> 382–3, the latter raising the possibility of a single *\*keit* 'notice, be noticeable': otherwise a *t*-extension of

<sup>8</sup> Having kindly read a draft of this article, Patrick Stiles drew my attention to a historically interesting article on Latin *caecus* and the PIE *ai* diphthong by DE SAUSSURE (1912).

LIV 337–8/LIV<sup>2</sup> 377–8 \**kuej* ‘perceive’; LIV 340–1/LIV<sup>2</sup> 381–2 \**kuejs* ‘behold, observe’ is an s-extension underlying OIr. *ad:cí* ‘sees’ etc., on which see SCHUMACHER 2004: 431–4). Because palatalisation of this *k* to *c* before a front vowel (*e/i*) prior to the merger of *e/o/a* as *a* in Indo-Iranian resulted in an Indic opposition between *ce* < *k<sup>(u)</sup>ei* and *ke* < *k<sup>(u)</sup>a/oi*, *cet-* must continue \**k<sup>(u)</sup>eit* not \**k<sup>(u)</sup>a(h<sub>2</sub>)it* but *cit-* would be the regular outcome of the zero grade of either. GOTŌ (1987: 137–41) acknowledges two formally overlapping but semantically different roots *cit*, one basically meaning ‘observe, recognise’ and the other ‘shine, distinguish oneself’, but argues from attestations in the RigVeda that present *cet-a-* is based upon the former (< \**keit-e/o-* < \**kuejt-e/o-*). If so, there is no obvious obstacle to deriving forms such as *citaya-* *citrá-* and *ketú-* above from \**kait-* ‘shine’ (< \**keh<sub>2</sub>it-*).<sup>9</sup> Pokorny (*IEW* 519) posits \**kāi-*, \**kī-* ‘heat’ underlying, for instance, Germanic \**haita-* ‘hot’ (< \**kai-do-*; OE. *hāt*, OHG *heiz*, ON *heitr*; Goth. *heito* ‘fever’), and Lithuanian *kaīs-ti* ‘become hot’, *kait-rà* ‘fiery heat/glow’ (< \**kai-t-*). If so, the relationship between his \**kai* and \**kait* would be similar to that posited between \**kuej* and \**kuejt* by LIV above, and a PIE root \**keh<sub>2</sub>i* [kah<sub>2</sub>i] ‘be(come) hot/bright’ may be posited.

This would pave the way for a formally and semantically viable derivation of \**kaikos* ‘one-eyed’ from PIE \**keh<sub>2</sub>i-ko-s* ‘blazing’. Underlying \**keh<sub>2</sub>i* ‘be(come) hot/bright, blaze’ would reflect the fearsome cyclops’ igneous attributes, particularly as concentrated in a single eye burning with an intensity that other warrior figures could not match as a rule, notwithstanding their liability to periodic bouts of fiery frenzy. Significantly, a perceived connection with brightness seems also to have played a key role in the subsequent creation of two new words for ‘cyclops’ briefly discussed above: Latin *luscus*, which displaced *caecus* in its original sense, and Greek κύκλωψ, which ousted the inherited term completely.

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<sup>9</sup> I am grateful to Riccardo Ginevra for reading an earlier draft and pointing out that *cīt-* < \**kih<sub>2</sub>t-* < \**kh<sub>2</sub>it-* might have been expected as a result of laryngeal metathesis. If such metathesis was a regular process, *cīt-* could presumably have been replaced by *cit-* to provide a synchronically regular alternant with “*guṇa*” *e*.

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