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9 The "Cowgill particle", preverbal *ceta* 'first', and prepositional cleft sentences in the Old Irish glosses

1 Outline of the problem

1.1 The "Cowgill particle"

The origin of the absolute / conjunct distinction in the Insular Celtic languages has generated more literature than any other phenomenon in the history of the languages. The theory currently enjoying the greatest regard, generally dubbed the "particle theory", asserts that a second-position clitic particle, the "Cowgill particle", was inserted in most sentences and is ultimately responsible for the variety of verbal endings, as well as numerous other phenomena, such as mutations or the lack thereof.[1] In the spirit of the particle theory, one can offer the following simplified derivations for the absolute / conjunct distinction (where E stands for the enclitic Cowgill particle):

Insular Celtic	Pre-Irish[a]	Primitive Irish	Archaic Irish	Old Irish
**bereti-E*	**bereti-E*	**b'er'eθ'i*	**b'er'eθ'*	*beirid* 'he carries'
**nī-E bereti*	**nī-E beret*	**n'ī b'er'eθ*	**n'ī b'er'*	*ni·beir* 'he does not carry'
**to-E bereti*	**to-E beret*	**to b'er'eθ*	**to b'er'*	*do·beir* 'he gives'
**nī-E tobereti*	**nī-E toberet*	**n'ī toβer'eθ*	**n'ī toβer'*	*ni·tabair* 'he does not give'

Figure 1: Simplified derivations for the absolute / conjunct distinction in Old Irish.
[a]I am using Pre-Irish in a loose sense to indicate some time after the early *i*-apocope (McCone 1996: 100–102) but before other distinctly Irish sound changes.

While the problem is fiendishly complicated, the above derivations capture the essential facts of the particle theory, which has two basic elements: the involvement of a second-position clitic and an early *i*-apocope. Both elements have been

1 The standard literature arguing for a single particle is Boling (1972), Cowgill (1975), Schrijver (1994), and Schumacher (2004).

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accepted by some and rejected by others, but most authorities accept some version of both as having a role in the rise of the distinction.[2] The generally accepted form of the enclitic is now **eti* (Schrijver 1994; Schumacher 2004: 90–114), the form of which has been determined based on direct British Celtic evidence, indirect Irish evidence, and etymological considerations.

One of the challenges of the Irish evidence is that the particle **eti* is itself totally lost. The only clue to its original existence is the presence of additional morphological material on the verb in the absolute endings (absolute *beirid* < **bereti-[e]ti* vs. conjunct *·beir* < **bereti*) and the lack of otherwise expected lenition (main clause *do·cing* 'strides' < **to-[e]ti-kingeti* vs. relative *do·ching* 'who strides' < **to-i̯o-kingeti*). Given this lack of direct evidence, any additional evidence for the presence of the Cowgill particle would be quite welcome. As it happens, there is a small group of forms, hitherto relatively unnoticed, which may offer support for the particle.

1.2 The preverb *ceta* 'first'

A somewhat uncommon preverb *ceta* 'first' appears in the glosses. It is connected etymologically to Gaulish **Cintu* in *Cintu-gnatus* 'first-born', Middle Welsh *cynt* 'earlier', and Old Irish *cét-* 'first, early' (first member of compound, usually with nouns) and is reconstructed as **kentu* 'first' (Matasović 2009: 201, LEIA C-103; Evans 1967: 182; Zair 2012: 174). The Old Irish use of interest here is as a preverb:

(1) *is* *hé* *céetne* *fer* *ceta-ru·chreti* *di*
COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ 3SG$_{MASC}$ first$_{NOM.SG.MASC}$ man$_{NOM}$ PV-AUG·believe$_{3SG.PRET}$ of
áis *assiæ* *hi* *Crist*
folk$_{DAT}$ Asia$_{GEN}$ in Christ$_{ACC}$
'He is the first man of the folk of Asia that had first believed in Christ.' (Wb. 7^{b}11)

2 For instance, Kortlandt (1979) accepts the particle but rejects *i*-apocope, while McCone (1979) accepts the *i*-apocope (see also McCone 1978) but rejects the particle. Other theories on the origin of the absolute / conjunct distinction (e.g. Sims-Williams 1984, McCone 2006, and Isaac 2007) accept both elements, but operate with a series of second-position clitics rather than with a single particle. That the main-clause negation *ní* is itself made up of two particles **ne* + **est* is not relevant to the discussion of the Cowgill particle, since the development **ne est* > **nēst* > **nīst* must be quite old, given the raising of **ē* to **ī*.

As noted by Thurneysen (GOI § 384, § 393) the preverb is never accented, always appearing immediately before the accent and after all other conjunct particles and preverbs (see also García-Castillero 2014):

(2) *fris-cita·comrici* *diib*
against.REL-PV·encounter$_{2SG.PRES}$ of$_{3PL}$
'which of them you first encounter'[3] (Thes. 2: 23.38)

The preverb is most frequently attached to relative verbs, and it has various forms: *ceta* / *cita* / *ciata*, as well as variants with final *-o* or *-u*. As there are few attestations, they can be listed here *in toto* for the glosses, as found in Table 1. Since only Wb. and Ml. have more than one example, they will be the focus here.

To be kept separate from *ceta* 'first' is the preverb *ceta* found in *ceta·bí* 'feels, perceives', which is cognate with Middle Welsh *canfod* 'sees, beholds, perceives'. The equation shows that the preform was **kanta-bī-* (Matasović 2009: 188; Schumacher 2004: 83, 242, 245). Additionally, the verb *con·céitban* 'consents, assents' shows the preverb in tonic position, which further differentiates it from *ceta* 'first'. We can thus set this verb aside for now.

Turning back to *ceta* 'first', we can examine the alternation of the first vowel. There are not enough examples in Wb. and Ml. individually to be sure that the choice between *cita* and *ceta* is not simply random. That is, assuming that the scribes randomly chose *cita* or *ceta*,[4] it is possible to arrive at the distribution of forms seen in Table 1 for the two gloss collections. On the other hand, if we compare the forms in Wb. to those in Ml., it is clear that the preferences are different.[5] There are various ways to interpret this difference. One could argue that they represent different scribal or scriptorial practices, regional variation, temporal variation or any of a number of different possibilities. Being a historical linguist, I interpret the differences through the lens of historical change: what was originally *ceta* at the time of Wb. in the mid-

3 I take this as the verb *con·ricc* 'meets, encounters' preceded by the prepositional relative *fris* (*a*) and *ceta* 'first'. This fits with the Latin text glossed: *quae tibi ex hís intranti uicinior* 'which of these (is) nearer to you having entered'.

4 The form *cíatu* is ignored here, as it is likely analogical (GOI § 398).

5 The following results are obtained by using Fisher's exact test, a standard statistical test when one variable (here *ceta* vs. *cita*) is being compared to another variable (here Wb. vs. Ml.) to see if they vary independently of one another. Wb. has 3 instances of *ceta* to 0 of *cita*; Ml. has 1 instance of *ceta* to 5 of *cita*. Testing this lets us see that this distribution of *ceta* / *cita* is not independent of the manuscript in which they appear, i.e. Wb. vs. Ml. The chance of this distribution appearing by chance is less than 5% (p=0.0476).

Table 1: Pretonic *ceta* 'first' in the Old Irish glosses.

Wb.		**Ml.**	
ceta-ru·chreti	Wb. 7^{b}11	*cetid·deirgni*	Ml. 124^{b}3
cíatu-ru·chreitset	Wb. 14^{a}29	*citid·tucat*	Ml. 125^{d}4
ceta·thuidchetar	Wb. 21^{c}5	*cita·roichet*	Ml. 44^{b}4
cetu-ru·pridach	Wb. 26^{c}4	*cita·rochet*	Ml. 86^{d}19a
		cita·co͗mmairsed	Ml. 39^{c}15
		cita·rogaib[6]	Ml. 38^{c}3
ad-cita·acæ	Tur. 60	*fris-cita·comrici*	Thes. 2: 23.38
cita-ru·oirtned	Thes. 2: 241.16		

eighth century became / was on its way to becoming *cita* by Ml. in the late eighth or early ninth century.[7]

That the *e* in the first syllable of Wb. is regular seems reasonable from the point of view of Irish sound change. Insular Celtic **kentu-* would have given **kēdu-* and then **ked-* in pretonic position, and it is this that we find in Wb. *ceta*. We will return to the final vowel later. Somewhat puzzling is that the pretonic *e* in *ceta* did not give *a* as in *a* 'his' from Early Old Irish *e*. This may be due to analogy with the accented prefix *cét-* 'first' (or the fact that in *ceta*, the *e* was originally nasal, cf. the suggestion made in Lash 2017a).

A similar sound sequence is found in *etar* 'between' < **enter*. Comparing **kentu-* and **enter* is instructive, since both are found in pretonic position and both have a similar phonetic structure. Interestingly, however, their outcomes are not totally parallel. Table 2 gives the outcome of the sound sequence **ent* in both Wb. and Ml. in pretonic position.

It should be clear that Wb. shows no difference for *etar* vs. *ceta*, while Ml. shows a considerable one. In Griffith (2016a: Appendix) it is argued that the pretonic sequence *et* in *etar* was on its way to becoming *it*. The tendency can be

6 Note that this example could be analysed as *cita-ro·gaib*. The same could probably be argued for *cita-ro·chet* as well. The exact position of *ro* is not critical for the purposes of this paper, but the fact that the particle appears as *ro* is suggestive of its being accented, since pretonic *ro* tends to become *ru*, especially as a second pretonic preverb (see GOI § 101 for the rule and Stifter [2013] for extended discussion of it).

7 The exact date of the Milan Glosses is unclear, but it is generally placed in the late eighth to early ninth centuries (see Lash 2017a: 148 and references therein).

Table 2: Outcomes of pretonic **enter* and **kentu* in Wb., Ml., and Sg.[8]

Wb.	***etar***	***itar***	**Ml.**	***etar***	***itar***	**Sg.**	***etar***	***itar***
	31	1		60	4		28	10
	ceta	***cita***		***ceta***	***cita***		***ceta***	***cita***
	3	0		1	5		0	0

clearly seen in Table 2. The tendency is, however, much stronger for *ceta* than for *etar*. In Griffith (2016b), it was argued that the only plausible explanation for the difference is that *etar* was a (relatively common) preposition in Old Irish, while *ceta* was not. Schumacher (2012) has documented the frequent analogical interactions between accented and unaccented allomorphs of prepositions (see also Griffith 2016a: Appendix), and it seems that the accented conjugated prepositional forms of *etar* exerted enough analogical influence to slow the change of pretonic *etar* to *itar*. Since *ceta* was not a preposition, this analogical influence was not present, allowing for a much faster, presumably regular phonological change to *cita*. Since the presentation of Griffith (2016b), Lash (2017a) has made a strong case for a slightly different interpretation of these facts. He notes that the *i*–variants are concentrated not only in pretonic position, but in a specific subset of this position: in pretonic complexes (which he defines roughly as a pretonic position containing more than one element). His argument is persuasive and I accept most of his findings here. One of the advantages to his approach is that it can explain the differential rate of change from *etar* to *itar* and *ceta* to *cita* in a straightforward manner without recourse to analogical influence. Since the preverb *ceta* 'first' was largely, though not exclusively, found in relative verbs (García-Castillero 2014: 87–89), which are pretonic complexes, the preverb would

8 The vowel in the final syllable is written variably in the sources. As it is not important for the topic under discussion here, I have simply written it as *a* here (see the appendix in Griffith 2016a on the final vowel in *etar* / *itar*). The data for in Table 2 comes from Table 1 above for *ceta* and Lash (2017a: appendix, Tables A, B, and C) for *etar*. The relevant parts of Lash's tables are the columns "prep(osition)" and "preverb", with the further proviso that only verbal forms where the *etar* is pretonic are included here. I further only consider glosses to Priscian in the St. Gall column and thus exclude other minor gloss collections that appear in his Table B. Finally, I exclude Wb. 28^{b}3 *etir fessin et dóini* 'between himself and men' because *etir* is a conjugated preposition and thus not relevant to pretonic position. I also include two examples of *etir* from gloss Ml. 97^{a}7 where Lash notes only one.

be more likely to change its *e* to *i* than *etar*, which had a more balanced distribution in pretonic complexes and simplexes.

We will shortly have occasion to return to Lash (2017a), which focuses on the initial vowel of *ceta*, but now the final vowel of *ceta* < **kentu-*, which has remained outside the discussion, must be accounted for. The oddity is not so much that the final vowel is variously written as *i* (*cetid·deirgni* [Ml. 124^{b}3]), *a* (*cita·roichet* [Ml. 44^{b}4]) or *u* (*cetu-ru·pridach* [Wb. 26^{c}4]), but rather that it is present at all. Despite Thurneysen (GOI § 73), final vowels should be lost in all preverbs. The only recognised exception is in relative position, where there is precedent for preverbs having an extra syllable. This is standard for the preverbs *ar* and *imm* (GOI § 493.4), as the contrast between the (a) and (b) examples below shows:

(3) a. *ar·beir*
PV·enjoy$_{3SG.PRES}$
'he enjoys' (Ml. 43^{d}14)
b. *ara·m-ber*
PV-REL·enjoy$_{3SG.PRES}$
'that he enjoys' (Ml. 69^{a}18)

(4) a. *im·folngi*
PV·make$_{3SG.PRES}$
'it makes' (Wb. 4d32)
b. *imma·folngi*
PV-REL·make$_{3SG.PRES}$
'which causes' (Wb. 16b8)

While Breatnach (1994b) has also found examples of the extra syllable with other preverbs in relative constructions, he notes that for these other preverbs, the extra syllable is not the rule but rather the exception:[9]

(5) *asa·gusi*
PV-REL·wish$_{3SG.PRES}$
'who wishes' (Ml. 61^{b}17)

9 For instance, there are two examples of the preverb *in(d)* with an extra syllable in relative construction. This might be expected, given that the preverb was **inde* / **eni*, but the preverb normally does not have an extra syllable in relative construction, and it takes class B infixed pronouns, not class A (as noted by Breatnach 1994b: 198). For the preverb **as*, the form *asa* even appears in non-relative position, as noted by Thurneysen (GOI § 834B). This fact will enter the discussion again below.

For the preverbs *ar* and *imm*, the extra syllable in relatives is the remnant of the fact that these preverbs historically ended in a vowel: **are* and **ambi* (see Uhlich 2009–2010 on the quality of the final vowel; but see also García-Castillero, this volume). Since we know that **kentu-* also ended in a vowel historically, it would not be at all far-fetched to assume that it would also retain this vowel when relative, like *ar* and *imm*: **kentu-i̯o-* > *ceta*, as suggested by Jürgen Uhlich (apud García-Castillero 2014: 88, n. 23). Since *ceta* developed into a preverb largely in relative contexts (García-Castillero 2014: 87–89), *ceta* would be the most frequent form of the preverb. Nonetheless, *ceta* also appears to be the non-relative form. Evidence is limited, however, to two verbal forms from Milan: *cita·rochet* and *cita·ċommairsed*.

(6) *airní* *doib* *cita·rochet*
for-NEG-COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ to$_{3PL}$ PV·sing$_{AUG.3SG.PRET.PASS}$
'For it is not to them that it was first sung.' (Ml. 86^{d}19a)

(7) *combad* *frisnagruade* *7*
so.that-^{NAS}COP$_{3SG.PST.SUBJ}$ against-the$_{ACC.PL.NEUT}$=cheeks$_{ACC.PL}$ and
frisnaforbru *cita·ċommairsed*
against-the$_{ACC.PL.MASC/NEUT}$=eyebrows$_{ACC.PL}$ PV·meet$_{3SG.PST.SUBJ}$
'so that it might be against the cheeks and against the eyebrows that it would first meet' (Ml. 39^{c}15)

It is noteworthy that in both cases, the verb is found in a cleft sentence with a fronted prepositional phrase. According to the rules of Old Irish syntax these verbs should be non-relative (Strachan 1929: 123, n. 7), and the form of the preverb, *ceta*, should thus be surprising. As has been noted, however (GOI § 506; McCone 1985: 96), relative verbs are occasionally found in such sentences even in the glosses.[10] If these two verbs are indeed relative, then there is no real problem with their form *cita*,[11] but it should not be forgotten that an interpretation as relative does contravene the rules of Old Irish grammar.[12] A perhaps unexpected

10 I thank Elliott Lash for reminding me of this fact.

11 Lash (2017a) does take these two forms as pretonic complexes, which means that they are relatives. I am less ready, however, than he is to assume that these two examples of *cita* are relative verbs. They may be, but the likelihood of that is not totally clear. For now, I assume they are non-relative, but at the end of this paper I reconsider the possibility that one or both are, in fact, relative.

12 The concept "rule" here should not be understood as a straitjacket but rather as a generalisation based on observed phenomena. In that sense, a form that goes against the rules should be seen as inviting further investigation. That investigation will follow below.

suggestion that leaves the rules intact is that the retained final vowel in non-relative forms of *ceta* is regular before the Cowgill Particle **eti*. The derivation can be posited as here:[13]

(8) **kentu-eti* > **kentuu̯eti* > **kēdou̯eh* > **kēdou̯'* > **kēdoi* > **kēde* > *ceta*

The important assumption of this derivation is that there was no elision of the **e* of **eti* after **u*. The standard assumption underlying the particle theory is that the **e* was elided after any vowel (Schumacher 2004: 98–99; see Jasanoff 1997: 152–153 for a possible – though analogically motivated – exception). No one seems have considered cases after **u*, however, probably because the vowel rarely appears in a position where it would be in contact with the Cowgill particle. As such, it might appear that this rule is *ad hoc*. There are a couple further verbs, however, which support the non-elision argued for here: the verbs *ocu·ben* 'touches' and *ceta·bí* 'perceives, feels'.

The first of these verbs, *ocu·ben* 'touches', is fairly rare. The six forms attested in the glosses are all from Ml. and are given below in Table 3:

Table 3: *Ocu·ben* in Ml. (forms in bold are non-relative).

ocu·biat	**126^{b}12**	*occu·robae*	98^{d}8
ocu·bether	**53^{b}17**	*ocu·bendar*	54^{a}12
nícon·rocmi	**76^{a}12**	*nad·ocmanatar*	54^{a}12

Note that the disyllabic pretonic preverb *oc(c)u* is both relative (2x) and non-relative (2x) and that the preverb ends in a historical **u*: **onku-* (GOI § 848; contra Matasović 2009: 299, who derives it from **onko-*).[14] This verb thus gives

13 It should be noted that the precise developments here are uncertain. For example, it is not clear whether **uu̯* would fall together with **ou̯* even at this late period, as it did earlier (McCone 1996: 55). If it did not, then **kēntuu̯eh* > **kēduu̯'* > **kēdui* > **kēdoi* etc. is the likely development, since there was no difference between **ui* and **oi* at this stage (Cowgill 1967: 135–137; Greene 1976: 39; Uhlich 1995: 15–16; Schrijver 2007: 362 n.12; see also Bisagni 2012: 14).

14 Pedersen's explanation of the retained *-u* in *ocu·ben* as due to a third person singular neuter infixed pronoun (Pedersen 1909–1913, 2: 298) seems unlikely. The verb is transitive, and we would not expect a meaningless infixed pronoun with a transitive verb. Compare also the verbal noun with an objective genitive: *cid cuit a ocmaide* 'even as to touching it' Ml. 39^{a}10. The objective genitive with verbal nouns is normal for transitive verbs. While an infixed pronoun with a verb that is inherently transitive is certainly possible, the resulting verb does not

added support to the suggestion that the Cowgill particle does not elide its vowel after **u*. Why the final vowel in *ocu·ben* is consistently *u* but more regularly *a* in compounds with *ceta* is uncertain. It may reflect the nature of the preceding consonant: velar [g] favours *u* while dental [d] is neutral (cf. McCone 2015: 127 for a comparable observation in the context of consonantal *u*-quality).

The second verb relevant for the question is *ceta·bí* 'perceives'. As noted above, the preverb is **kanta* 'along' and is thus different to *ceta* 'first' < **kintu*. It is nonetheless relevant here. In relative verbs, **kanta* would have regularly given *ceta*, much like *ar* / relative *ara* and *imm* / relative *imma* and *imme* (as well as relative *ceta* < **kentu-i̯o-*). For non-relative verbs, while there are no other exact parallels of preverbs of a shape like **kanta*, **cet* would have been the most likely outcome. Evidence from the glosses (see Table 4) shows that the form of the pretonic preverb is always *ceta*, regardless of whether it is relative or not (non-relative forms are in bold):

Table 4: *Ceta·bí* in the glosses (forms in bold are non-relative).

Wb.		Ml.	
ceta·biin	**12[c]8**	*cita·m-bí*	36[b]1
		cita·m-bé	36[b]1
Sg.		*cita·m-bénn*	44[c]15
ceta·biat	3[a]1	*cita·m-betis*	29[c]13
		cita·biat	**22[d]7**
		cita·bé	**68[d]15**
		cita·roba	44[b]22

Once again, there is not a large number of forms, but the relative and non-relative forms all have the final vowel *-a* (and incidentally, the vowel of the first syllable in Wb. and Ml. corresponds to the pattern for **kentu-* 'first'). The likeliest explanation for the unexpected appearance of the final vowel of the preverb in non-relative forms of *ceta·bí* 'perceives, feels' is that it was taken over from

remain transitive but becomes intransitive (cf. *at·baill* 'dies' < 'throws it' or *at·reig* 'rises' < 'raises himself').

the otherwise identical *ceta* 'first', which has been argued to have regularly *ceta* in both relative and non-relative clauses.

If all of this is correct, we have some further, limited support for the second-position clitic main-clause particle in the (Pre-)Old Irish verbal complex. While this particle usually disappears without a trace of influence on the preverb it was attached to, it seems to modify the shape of the preverb in exactly one case: when the disyllabic preverb contained a **u* in the final syllable. There are only two such preverbs known to me: *ceta* 'first' < **kentu-* and *ocu* < **onku-*. The preverb *ceta*, found in *ceta·bí*, appears to have followed the pattern of *ceta* 'first' in non-relative contexts.

1.3 Cleft sentences with fronted prepositional phrases

As was noted above, the main verb in cleft sentences with fronted prepositional phrases should be non-relative according to the rules of Old Irish grammar (Strachan 1929: 123, n.7). A more complete account says that when the subject or object is fronted, the main verb is relative (see also GOI § 494, § 501), but when anything else is fronted, the main verb is non-relative unless the word must be followed by relative *-n-* (i.e. in temporal clauses, manner or degree clauses, *figura etymologica*, source or cause clauses, with adverbially used adjectives; see GOI (§ 383, §§ 497–502) and Uhlich's contribution to this volume). The focus here is on fronted prepositional phrases (hereafter PPs), where non-relatives are expected:

(9) *ar* *is* *do* *thabirt* *dígla* *berid* *in*
for COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ to ^{LEN}bring$_{DAT}$ revenge$_{GEN}$ carry$_{3SG.PRES}$ the$_{ACC.SG.MASC}$
claideb *sin*
sword$_{ACC}$ DIST
'For it is for wreaking revenge that he carries that sword.' (Wb. 6^{a}13)

As noted in GOI (§ 506; see also McCone 1985: 96; Ó hUiginn 1986: 63), relative verbs are occasionally found:

(10) *Ni* *fris* *ru·chét* a propheta
NEG-COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ against$_{3SG.MASC/NEUT}$ AUG·^{LEN}sing$_{3SG.PRET.PASS}$ by prophet$_{ABL}$
'It is not with reference to it that it was sung *a propheta*.' (Ml. 64^{a}13)

(11) *acht* *is* *do* *sochaidi* *no·pridchib*
but COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ to multitude$_{DAT}$ PV·preach$_{1SG.FUT}$
'but it is to a multitude that I will preach' (Ml. 45^{a}8)

The question addressed here is how common the use of relatives in such sentences in the major gloss collections is.

2 Methodology

Examples of cleft sentences were collected inclusively (i.e. with a wide net) from the three major Old Irish gloss collections: Wb., Ml. and Sg. This included examples with fronted prepositions and adverbs (as there is significant overlap in function), as well as fronted subjects and objects. As it turned out, there are no exceptions to the rule that fronted subjects and objects are followed by a relative verb, and these sentences are not considered further here. After collecting the cleft sentences, numerous possible examples were excluded:

- as noted above, subject and object clefts as well as adverbial clefts were excluded;[15]
- examples without overt copula were discarded, since other interpretations are possible (see below in [12] for an example);
- examples with nasalising relatives according to GOI (§ 383, §§ 497–502) were set aside;
- some other examples were also excluded, such as noun phrases used adverbially: *in chruth so* 'in this manner' or *in méit sin* 'in that size, so much'.

Two examples of excluded sentences are given here in order to show the types of considerations made during the analysis:

(12) per prophetas *do·n-icfad* *cucunn*
through prophets$_{ACC.PL}$ PV·^{NAS}come$_{3SG.CND}$ to$_{1PL}$
'[It is?] through the prophets that He would come to us.' (Wb. 21^{a}3)

15 The distinction between adverbial and prepositional cleft is made in formal terms. That is, a number of adverbs are formally conjugated prepositions and are considered prepositional phrases for purposes of this chapter.

gl. UT SIMUS IN LAUDEM GLORIÆ EIUS NOS, QUI ANTE SPERAUIMUS IN CHRISTO
'in order that we might be in praise of His glory, we who previously hoped in Christ [i.e. through the prophets, that He would come to us]'

This example is excluded on principle because of the lack of a copular form at the beginning, but one should note that the relative is probably dependent on being in indirect discourse after Latin *sperauimus* 'we hoped', rather than being in a cleft sentence. This analysis fits with the lack of copula and illustrates why copula-less examples are excluded.

The next example is excluded because the fronted element is not a preposition, but it is interesting because the leniting relative seems out of place given the Thesaurus translation, to which a nasalizing relative would be more appropriate.

(13) *is* *mó* *ro·chéess* *crist* *airi*
COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ more AUG·^{LEN}suffer$_{3SG.PRET.PASS}$ Christ$_{NOM.SG}$ for$_{3SG.MASC.ACC}$
.i. *báas*
i.e. death$_{NOM}$
'It is more that Christ has suffered for him, i.e. death. [Therefore cast off the foods that you love].' (Wb. 6^{c}8; trans. Thes.)
'what Christ has suffered for him is greater, i.e. death. Therefore. . .' (author's translation)

The translation offered here makes clear that *ro·chéess* is a relative without antecedent (GOI § 496; Ó Cathasaigh 1990) in a copular sentence (see also Uhlich's contribution to this volume).

Having excluded various examples as indicated above, it remains to classify the prepositional clefts. Since the orthography of Old Irish is frequently ambiguous, the remaining prepositional clefts are coded as relative (14), non-relative (15), ambiguous (16),[16] non-nasalising relative (17), and non-leniting relative (18):

16 There are several ways in which a form can be ambiguous. A form like *do·rat-side* (Wb. 23^{c}17) is ambiguous because *r* does not show mutations (a geminate spelling *rr* is not probative, since it might indicate nasalisation or lack of lenition). The case is similar for *f*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *p*, and *s*. A further type of ambiguity is due to the irregular use of Class C pronouns in relative contexts. While a Class C pronoun after a preverb is a sure indication of a relative verb, a Class A pronoun is in the analysis here only taken as indicative of a non-relative verb if the infixed pronoun is third person. The other persons are treated as ambiguous. Class B pronouns are treated here as non-relative, but since the orthography does not always distinguish [t] and [d], it is impossible to make a principled decision between the two classes in some cases (mostly following *r* with first and second person pronouns), as in *fordon·cain* (Wb. 31^{c}16).

(14) *acht* *is* *do* *sochaidi* *no·pridchib*
but COP$_{\text{3SG.PRES}}$ to multitude$_{\text{DAT}}$ PV·preach$_{\text{1SG.FUT}}$
'but it is to a multitude that I will preach' (Ml. 45^{a}8)

(15) *huare* *is* *hifochaidib* *bithir* *hisuidib*
since COP$_{\text{3SG.PRES}}$ in=tribulations$_{\text{DAT.PL}}$ be$_{\text{3SG.HAB.PASS}}$ in=that$_{\text{DAT}}$
'since it is in tribulations that men are for them' (Ml. 56^{b}15)

(16) *is* *airi* *do·roigu* *dia* *geinti*
COP$_{\text{3SG.PRES}}$ for$_{\text{3SG.NEUT.ACC}}$ PV·AUG.choose$_{\text{3SG.PRET}}$ God$_{\text{NOM}}$ gentiles$_{\text{ACC.PL}}$
'It is therefore that God has chosen the Gentiles.' (Wb. 5^{b}12)

(17) *is* *airi* *as·berar*
COP$_{\text{3SG.PRES}}$ for$_{\text{3SG.NEUT.ACC}}$ PV·say$_{\text{3SG.PRES.PASS}}$
'It is therefore that it is said.' (Wb. 3^{c}21)

(18) *is* *airi* *ro·cload*
COP$_{\text{3SG.PRES}}$ for$_{\text{3SG.NEUT.ACC}}$ AUG·overcome$_{\text{3SG.PRET.PASS}}$
'It is therefore that it has been overcome.' (Wb. 3^{b}1)

One category of verb that does not fit well into this system is that of contracted verbs:

(19) *ní* *do* *dígail* *for* *fírianu* *tuccad*
NEG-COP$_{\text{3SG.PRES}}$ for punishment$_{\text{DAT}}$ on righteous$_{\text{ACC.PL}}$ put$_{\text{3SG.AUG.PRET.PASS}}$
recht
law$_{\text{NOM}}$
'It is not for the punishment of the righteous that the law has been given.'
(Wb. 28^{a}3)

(20) *Is* *do* *tra* *duic=sem* *a*
COP$_{\text{3SG.PRES}}$ for$_{\text{3SG.NEUT}}$ then $^{\text{NAS(?)}}$put$_{\text{AUG.PRET}}$=3SG$_{\text{MASC}}$ the$_{\text{ACC.SG.NEUT}}$
ndliged *so*
^{NAS}expression$_{\text{ACC}}$ PROX
'It is for this, then, that he has put this expression.' (Ml. 115^{b}15)

(21) *is* *do* *thucad* *an* ·una
COP$_{\text{3SG.PRES}}$ for$_{\text{3SG.NEUT}}$ ^{LEN}put$_{\text{3SG.AUG.PRET.PASS}}$ the$_{\text{NOM.SG.NEUT}}$ ^{NAS}*una*$_{\text{NOM}}$
'It is for this that the *una* has been put.' (Sg. 45^{b}19)

While contracted verbs correlate somewhat with leniting relative clauses, there are many exceptions to this trend (see Schrijver 1997b: 113–128 for an analysis and McCone 2006: 87–90 for objections; García-Gastillero 2015 is the most recent contribution to this interesting problem). Under the system of classification adopted here, examples like (19) can be seen as ambiguous or, perhaps, non-nasalising relatives. Because they cannot be clearly categorised and may not be relative at all, they are left out of further consideration. There are six such examples: Wb. $7^{a}2$, $24^{b}26$, $28^{a}3$, Ml. $62^{a}2$, $71^{c}9$, Sg. $161^{a}1$.

Examples (20) and (21) are interesting because they appear to be examples of nasalising and leniting relatives of contracted verbs. There are two examples like (20): Ml. $56^{c}11$ and $111^{b}15$; and there are two examples like (21): Sg. $45^{b}19$ and $77^{b}5$. Though the two Milan forms could involve the writing of nasalised *t-* as *d-* in a nasalising relative, they are ultimately ambiguous: *duic* in $115^{b}15$ could be a simple copying error or a late contracted form of *du·uic*. A parallel can be seen in gloss initial *duic* (Ml. $40^{c}22$), where there can be no question of a relative form. The same explanation is available for *ducad* (Ml. $56^{c}11$).

Forms like *thucad* in Sg. seem to follow the post-Wb. Old Irish tendency to lenite morphologically relative forms (GOI § 495). Nonetheless, it is notable that both examples appear in the sequence *is do thucad X* 'it is for this that X was put'. The form *do* in these glosses is the third singular masculine or neuter of the preposition *do* 'to, for' and is etymologically the bare preposition which is taken over as the conjugated form. It would thus be expected to lenite what followed, and it is just possible that these two forms show this lenition. For a slightly inexact parallel one might compare *air thuccai* (Ml. $42^{c}8$) or *ce thuc* (Thes. 2: 225.19 [Carlsruhe Glosses on Priscian]) for the lenition of the initial of a contracted verbal form. The upshot of this discussion is that the contracted verbal forms in the glosses do not appear to offer solid evidence for relative forms after clefted prepositional phrases.

3 The data: A first-pass analysis

Once the various exclusions noted above were carried out, the remaining examples were classified as above and tallied. The results are found in tables 5 through 7 below:

Table 5: Wb. main verbs after prepositional clefts (229 examples in total).

non-relative	120
ambiguous	45
non-nasalising	46
non-leniting	17
relative	1

Table 6: Ml. main verbs after prepositional clefts (265 examples in total).

non-relative	101
ambiguous	43
non-nasalising	93
non-leniting	18
relative	10

Table 7: Sg. main verbs after prepositional clefts (118 examples in total).

non-relative	62
ambiguous	16
non-nasalising	32
non-leniting	6
relative	2

This quick classification comparing clearly relative forms to clearly non-relative forms shows that relatives after clefted prepositional phrases are very rare in Wb. (< 1%), relatively rare in Sg. (approx. 3%), and uncommon in Ml. (approx. 9%).[17] The examples classified as relative deserve a closer look.

4 The data: a closer look at relatives

4.1 The Wb. data (one relative example)

The single example classified as relative in Wb. is the following:

(22) *is* *airi* *ɔnabrúi(thea)* *in*
COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ for$_{3SG.NEUT}$ PV·$^{(NAS?)}$break$_{AUG.3PL.PRET.PASS}$ the$_{NOM.PL.MASC}$
gésci
branches$_{NOM.PL}$
'It is therefore that the branches were broken.' (Wb. 5^{b}29)

This is not certainly relative, but at least possibly so. The question is how to interpret the spelling: *con·abrúithea* (non-relative) or *con·n-abrúithea* (relative). The following example makes clear that a non-relative form is possible in principle:

(23) *rodbo* *dia* *ad·roni* et *ɔnói*
either God$_{NOM}$ PV·make$_{AUG.3SG.PRET}$ and$_{LATIN}$ PV·preserve$_{3SG.PRES}$
'It is either God who has made and preserves.' (Wb. 29^{d}29)

Since this sentence contains leniting relatives, the spelling *ɔnói* must stand for *con·oí*, which implies that *ɔnabrúi(thea)* can stand for *con·abrúithea*, which is ambiguous in the classification here. This analysis removes the only example given above as relative in Würzburg, meaning that there are no examples of relative verbs after clefted PPs in the Würzburg Glosses.

17 One might compare the clearly relative forms against all others, in which case Wb. has approximately 0.5% relative forms, Sg. approximately 2%, and Ml. around 5%. This count given here is deliberately somewhat conservative, trying not to bias the discussion unnecessarily.

4.2 Sg. data (two relative examples)

The examples from Sg. are somewhat more interesting. This first of these is:

(24) *is* *i* *foilsigud* *frecṅdairc*
COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ in demonstration$_{DAT}$ present$_{DAT.SG.MASC}$
asa·gnintar *i* *n*-ego *7* tu. *tri* *atarcud*
PV·recognise$_{3SG.PRES.PASS}$ in ^{NAS}*ego* and *tu* through anaphora$_{ACC.SG}$
*im*murgu *asa·gnintar* *hi* *sui*
however PV·recognise$_{3SG.PRES.PASS}$ in *sui*
'It is in present demonstration that it is recognised in *ego* and *tu*. [It is] through anaphora, however, that it is recognized in *sui*.' (Sg. 197^{b}4)

Under discussion is the first example of *asa·gnintar*,[18] which could be seen as relative (see Breatnach 1994b on prepositions with added vowels in relative compound verbs). On the other hand, note that the preverb is regularly *asa* for this verb in Sg. There are eight total examples in Sg., and six are certainly non-relative;[19] the two examples above in (24) are probably not relative either.

The second example in Sg. of a relative verb in a prepositional cleft is the following:

(25) *cid* *arṅdid* *hua* *thuislib* *ildaib*
What for-^{NAS}COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ from ^{LEN}cases$_{DAT.PL}$ plural$_{DAT.PL.MASC}$
disruthaigedar[20]
(PV·)derive$_{3PL.PRES.PASS}$
'Why is it from plural cases that they are derived?' (Sg. 198^{b}3)

eDIL takes the verb as a simplex (s.v. *díṡruthaigidir*), in which case this is indeed a relative form. The evidence, however, makes it more likely that this is a compound verb *di·sruthaigedar*, in which case the form in (25) should be classified as non-leniting. Finite forms of the verb are non-probative as to the simplex / compound nature of the verb, since there are only two examples additional to the one above, and both of these are conjunct / prototonic: *hua·n-dirrudiged(d)ar*

18 The second is excluded according to the principles outlined above because there is no overt copula in the sentence, though in this case a cleft sentence seems clearly to be the correct analysis.
19 The examples are 29^{a}3 (*bis*), 146^{b}16, 180^{b}2, 209^{b}13, and 210^{a}10.
20 Thes. (2: 192) suggests reading *disruthaigeddar*, which is accepted here as the scribe's intention.

'from which they are derived' Sg. 33[a]23 and *ó·dir*uidichther 'from which it is derived' Sg. 50[a]1. Non-finite forms are more suggestive. The substantivised participle *díṡruthigthe* 'derivative' appears twelve times, always with the spellings *dir(r)-* / *dír(r)-*.[21] Similarly, the verbal noun *díṡruthigud* 'derivation' appears seven times with the spellings *dir-* / *dír-* (4x), *dírr-* (1x), and *dírṡ-* (2x).[22]

It is clear from the attestations that spellings of the prototonic forms and nominal forms indicate the lenition and / or assimilation of the *s*, while the one form that could be deuterotonic (the form in (25) above) is also the only one with the spelling *disr-*, which indicates that the *s* is not lenited. It is therefore very likely that this verb (which generally translates Latin *derivatur*) is a compound verb. In the context of this chapter, it should be classified as non-leniting. That is, it is not in a leniting relative, but it could conceivably be a nasalising relative clause.[23]

From the analysis of the two possible examples of relative verbs after clefted PPs in Sg., we have seen that neither is actually likely to be relative. That leaves us with no certain examples of relatives with clefted PPs in either Wb. or Sg..

4.3 Ml. data (ten relevant examples)

The Milan Glosses have a larger number of possible examples of relative verbs in prepositional clefts, and it will turn out that a number of them are indisputable, i.e. they cannot be explained away. It is necessary, however, to examine them in more detail, and it is useful to classify the relatives into nasalising relatives (three examples), leniting relatives (three examples), and ambiguous relatives (two examples), as well as two verbs for which the distinction is irrelevant because they are absolute relative forms, which do not distinguish leniting and nasalising contexts.

21 Loci: 8[b]2, 28[a]4, 33[a]17, 56[b]10, 59[b]12, 61[a]1, 188[a]7, 188[a]12 (bis), 188[a]13, 188[a]16, and 188[a]19.

22 Loci: 36[b]1, 51[a]4, 53[a]11, 188[a]4 (bis), 188[a]8, and 193[a]1.

23 The retention of pretonic *di* might seem surprising, but this seems to be not uncommon in such learnedisms. One might compare: *do·tá* 'differs' glossing *distamus* (*di·taam-ni* [Ml. 117[b]9]) and *deferre* (*di·tá* [Ml. 120[a]6]); *do·samlathar* 'compares' glossing *disimulat* (*di·samlathar* [Ml. 21[b]2]) and *disimulans* (*di·samlad* [Ml. 114[c]3]); *do·meiccethar* 'despises' glossing *detero* (*de·mecimm* [Sg. 39[b]1]); and *do·nochta* 'lays bare' (not *dínochtaid* as in DIL) glossing *denudatur* (*dí·nochtar* [Ml. 54[d]23]). The tendency is not universal, however: *do·gaib* 'diminishes' glosses *deminuitur* (*do·ṅ-gaibter* [Sg. 218[a]9]; elsewhere *di·rogbad* [Sg. 9[b]16]). I have not found examples in Wb. of this sort of learnedism, which is probably not surprising since Ml. and Sg. have more numerous short glosses which calque the Latin, while Wb. has fewer such glosses.

4.3.1 Nasalising relatives

(26) *is* *samlid* *inso* *as·m-bertar* ut. . .
COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ like$_{3SG.NEUT}$ the$_{ACC.SG}$=this$_{ACC}$ PV·^{NAS}say$_{3PL.PASS}$ so.that
'It is thus that they are said, in order. . .' (Ml. 23^{a}12)

(27) *is* *samlid* *insin* *imme·tét*
COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ like$_{3SG.NEUT}$ the$_{ACC.SG}$=that$_{ACC}$ PV-REL·travels$_{3SG.PRES}$
leu=som *int* *ais* *lósc*
with$_{3PL}$=3PL the$_{NOM.SG.MASC}$ people$_{NOM}$ lame$_{NOM.SG.MASC}$
'It is thus that cripples walk with them.' (Ml. 45^{c}9)

(28) *ni* *arindí* *bed* *n-aipert*
NEG-COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ because COP$_{3SG.PST.SUBJ}$ ^{NAS}uttering$_{NOM}$
asind·robrad-som
PV-^{NAS}3SG$_{NEUT}$·say$_{AUG.3SG.PST.SUBJ}$=3SG$_{MASC}$
'It is not because it was as an uttering that he would have said it.' (Ml. 50^{b}8)

It can be noted that the relative form in (27) could have been influenced by the (regular) nasalising relative *imme·tiagat* appearing earlier in the same gloss, but I am not inclined to accept that as strong evidence against *imme·tét* being relative. Example (28), however, upon closer consideration, can probably be set aside: although *arindí* was originally a prepositional phrase, it appears that it has become fully grammaticalised as a conjunction taking a nasalising relative, like the similarly formed *isindí*, *dindí*, and *lassaní*. This leaves example (26) and (27), and it seems quite likely that nasalising relatives spread to this class of fronted prepositional phrase at the same time such relatives spread to fronted adverbials, with which they are essentially synonymous:

(29) *is* *ámin* *tra* *as* *cert* *in*
COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ thus then COP$_{3SG.PRES.REL}$ correct$_{NOM.SG.MASC/FEM}$ the$_{NOM.SG.MASC/FEM}$
testimin *so*
text$_{NOM}$ PROX
'It is thus, then, that this text is correct.' (Ml. 62^{c}7)

(30) *is* *amne* *as* *coir* *a* *lathar*
COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ thus COP$_{3SG.PRES.REL}$ fitting$_{NOM.SG.NEUT}$ its explaining$_{NOM}$
7 *estoasc* *a* *chéille*
and expressing$_{NOM}$ its ^{LEN}meaning$_{GEN}$
'It is thus that explaining it and expressing its meaning are fitting.' (Ml. 114^{a}9)

As noted in GOI (§§ 505–506), the spread of nasalising relatives in such adverbials is itself secondary, probably an extension of the regular nasalisation found with manner clefts (GOI § 498). While Wb. shows neither the extension of nasalising relatives to manner adverbs like *améin* / *amne* nor the extension to fronted manner prepositional phrases, the fact that Ml. has both is interesting. It is quite likely that the spread of nasalising relatives after PPs and adverbs meaning 'thus' (i.e. *samlaid* and *amne* / *amin*) is connected, perhaps as a result of influence from the conjunction *amal*, which takes a nasalising relative and is frequently found in the collocation *amal . . . is samlaid . . .* (12 of the 33 examples of *samlaid* in Ml. are found in this sequence).[24] This is naturally speculative, but it seems unlikely that there is no connection between the appearance of nasalising relatives after *samlaid* and *amne* / *amin*.

4.3.2 Leniting relatives

Beside the two or three examples of nasalising relatives, there are three examples of leniting relatives. The first of these is:

(31) *as* *du* *Christ* *as* *immaircide*
COP$_{3SG.PRES.REL}$ to ^{LEN}Christ$_{DAT}$ COP$_{3SG.PRES.REL}$ appropriate$_{NOM.SG.MASC}$
in *salm* *so*
the $_{NOM.SG.MASC}$ psalm$_{NOM}$ PROX
'that it is to Christ that this psalm is appropriate' (Ml 16^{a}7)

The copula is clearly relative,[25] and since it does not nasalise the following *immaircide*, it must be a leniting relative. The text as given above is that of Thes. (1: 16.30). A closer look at the manuscript (see Figure 2), however, reveals that the reading is actually *immmaircide*, with three *m*'s. This sort of error is quite easy to explain as due to copying, but I would like to suggest something slightly different, namely, that the exemplar actually had *as n-immaircide* (i.e. a nasalising relative). This was either misread or miscopied as *mmmaircide*, a simple error given that the sequences *in*, *ni* and *m* are frequently almost indistinguishable in Insular Minuscule. Later, *mmmaircide* was corrected by the

24 The examples of this collocation in Ml. are: 26^{b}8, 27^{d}22, 31^{b}25, 34^{b}6, 37^{a}12, 44^{a}19, 49^{a}11, 51^{d}28, 74^{d}3, 84^{c}9, 96^{c}11, and 120^{d}2.

25 Though *is* and *as* do become interchangeable in Middle Irish, there is no evidence for such confusion as early as Ml., and I reject the possibility that *as* here could be non-relative.

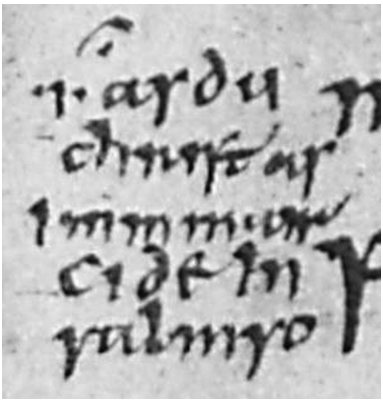

Figure 2: Ml. folio 16r, gloss 16[a]7.[27]

addition of an initial *i* in the margin.[26] This plausible sequence of events, while not provable, is attractive in that it can explain the miscopying of *immaircide* as *immmaircide*, as well as the fact that the initial *i* is not well-aligned with the margin of the gloss.

The second example of a leniting relative clause is below in (33), along with the Latin text being glossed. In order to understand the context better, the previous gloss is also given, in (32).

(32) *fris* *in* *coais* *fora·robae* *so*m
against the$_{\text{ACC.SG.FEM}}$ cause$_{\text{ACC}}$ on-REL·be$_{\text{AUG.3SG.PRET}}$ 3SG$_{\text{MASC}}$
'to the cause that occupied him' (Ml. 64[a]12)

(33) *ni* *fris* *ru·chét* a propheta
NEG-COP$_{\text{3SG.PRES}}$ against$_{\text{3SG.NEUT}}$ AUG·^{LEN}sing$_{\text{3SG.PRET.PASS}}$ by prophet$_{\text{ABL}}$
'It is not with reference to it that it was sung *a propheta*.' (Ml. 64[a]13)
gl. *usurpat hoc testimonio etiam beatus apostolus Paulus tamquam simile*[12] *non tamquam proprium*[13]*, quod non minus Machabeís quam apostolis conueniret*.
'In this passage, as a comparison[12] [and] not as his own[13], even the blessed apostle Paul uses what is not less fitting to the Machabees than to the apostles.'

26 An alternative explanation, that *n-immaircide* was correctly copied into the Ml. manuscript, but then later misread by the corrector as *mmmaircide* and "corrected", amounts to roughly the same thing.

27 Photo from Best (1936: plate 16[r]) © Royal Irish Academy; reproduced by permission.

While this example may simply represent a legitimate exception to the rule that clefted PPs take a non-relative main clause verb, it is important to examine whether any alternative interpretation exists. One alternative takes the sentence as a non-cleft and *ru·chét* as a headless relative subject 'what was sung': 'that which was sung by the prophet is not in reference to it (i.e. to what Paul is using it for)'. Normally, such sentences would be expected to have a substantive verb[28]:

(34) *Ni·fil* *dit* *daidbri-siu* *nachimm·éta-sa*
NEG·be$_{3SG.PRES}$ from-your poverty$_{DAT}$=2SG NEG(REL)-1SG·obtain$_{2SG.PRES}$=1SG
óm *muintir*
from-my people$_{DAT}$
'That you do not obtain me from my people is not because of your poverty.'
(Meid 1974: 130–131, *Táin Bó Fraích*)

Nevertheless, the division of labour of the copula and substantive verb is not as strict as is sometimes implied. The substantive verb is sometimes used where the copula would be expected (GOI § 774; also Stifter 2006: 119). The opposite is rarer, but it does occur in a few constructions and individual examples (GOI § 816; Ahlqvist 2014: 7; see also (36) below for an example: *ní hi suidiu*). The phenomenon is not well researched, so it is unclear whether assuming the copula here in place of the substantive verb is justified or not.[29] As a result, it is more likely that we have here a leniting relative in a cleft sentence with fronted prepositional phrase.

The final example of a leniting relative seems secure:

(35) *mad* *hua* [*a*]*icniud* *bes* *amlabar*
if-COP$_{3SG.PRES.SUBJ}$ from nature$_{DAT}$ be$_{3SG.PRES.SUBJ.REL}$ dumb$_{NOM.SG.MASC}$
'[For deafness is usual to one who is dumb] if it is by nature that he is dumb.' (Ml. 59^{a}12)

One might argue that *bes* is the substantive verb: 'if it is by nature that the dumb one is'. This interpretation seems forced, however. As a result, the three

28 I would like to thank Elisa Roma for bringing this example to my attention, though I do not assume she agrees with my interpretation here.

29 Less likely is the interpretation: 'it is not to that which was sung *a propheta* (that the comparison is proper / that the comparison refers)'. This would assume that the antecedent of *ru·chét* is found in the conjugated preposition and that the whole gloss is the fronted material of an implied cleft sentence.

examples with leniting relative verbs can be argued to be rather one example of (originally) a nasalising relative and two examples of a leniting relative.

4.3.3 Ambiguous cases

In the following example, the form of the preverb is ambiguous in that it could be relative or could contain an infixed pronoun:

(36) *cid* *ho* *deacht* *maicc* *nó* *ho* *deacht*
although-COP$_{3SG.PRES.SUBJ}$ from divinity$_{DAT}$ son$_{GEN}$ or from divinity$_{DAT}$
athar· *ara·foima* *doinacht* *maic* *a*
father$_{GEN}$ PV$_{REL}$·assume$_{3SG.PRES.SUBJ}$ humanity$_{NOM}$ son$_{GEN}$ the$_{ACC.SG.NEUT}$
n-í *ar·roet* *ní* *hi* *suidiu*
^{NAS}one PV·assume$_{AUG.3SG.PRET}$ NEG-COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ in that$_{DAT}$
'Whether it should be from the divinity of the Son or from the divinity of the Father that the humanity of the Son would assume that which He has assumed, it is not in the preceding (text).' (Ml. 17^{c}3)

The verb *ara·foima* may be a relative verb, but it also may contain a pleonastic infixed pronoun, coreferential with the neuter object *a n-í* (see Lucht 1994: 92–94 on pleonastic infixed pronouns with *a n-í*). In the latter case, this example does not belong here.

The second example in this category is also somewhat uncertain:

(37) *acht* *is* *do* *sochaidi* *no·pridchib*
but COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ to multitude$_{DAT}$ PV·preach$_{1SG.FUT}$
'but it is to a multitude that I will preach' (Ml. 45^{a}8)
gl. IN MEDIO ÆCLESIÆ LAUDABO TÉ. ne putaretur singulís[8] narraturus
'I will praise you in the middle of the church, lest it be thought that I preach to individuals'

Stokes and Strachan (1901 = Thes. 1: 130, n. i), recognising that the *no* seems out of place, suggested reading *not·pridchib* 'I will preach you', in which the *no* is necessary to infix the second singular pronoun. The emendation, which occurs on a line break, is possible though not necessarily likely.

4.3.4 Relative endings (i.e. no nasalising / leniting distinction)

Finally, we may turn to cases of simplex verbs with relative endings. As noted above, there is no distinction of leniting or nasalising here, but the forms deserve examination nonetheless.

(38) *corbu* *du* *reir* *nach* *aili*
so.that-COP$_{\text{AUG.3SG.PRES.SUBJ}}$ to will$_{\text{DAT}}$ some$_{\text{GEN.SG.MASC}}$ other$_{\text{GEN.SG.MASC}}$
labraimme
speak$_{\text{1PL.PRES.REL}}$
'that it should be at the will of some other that we speak' (Ml. 31^{b}16)

(39) *amal* *is* *ho* *imratib* *gnaither* *cech*
as COP$_{\text{3SG.PRES}}$ from thoughts$_{\text{DAT.PL}}$ do$_{\text{3SG.PRES.PASS.REL}}$ each$_{\text{NOM.SG.MASC}}$
gním
deed$_{\text{NOM}}$
'as it is from thoughts that each deed may be done' (Ml. 38^{a}5)

Note that vowel distinctions were beginning to become confused already in Milan (Strachan 1903a: 52, 67), so (38) could contain *labraimmi* (i.e. a non-relative verb).[30] For *gnaither*, however (the unusual spelling of the first syllable notwithstanding), it seems that this must be accepted as a relative form.[31]

Of the 10 examples in Ml., at least 3 may not be relative after all: 17^{c}3, 31^{b}16, and 50^{b}8. Of the remaining examples, three are nasalising relatives (16^{a}7, 23^{a}12, and 45^{c}9), two are leniting (59^{a}12 and 64^{a}13), one is ambiguous (45^{a}8), and one makes no distinction along those lines (38^{a}5).

5 Overview / Conclusions

The conclusions of this study are modest. From the collection of examples, it is clear that neither Wb. nor Sg. has any sure cases of relatives following fronted

30 A reviewer has kindly brought to my attention two interesting examples: *in tan m-bimmi* (Ml. 24^{a}18) and *in tain diagma-ni* (Wb. 3^{a}15), which both show relative nasalisation but a non-relative ending, possibly representing a schwa. This suggests, even as early as Wb., that confusion was beginning to set in in such cases.

31 The Ml. scribe's occasional tendency to write accented [er'] as *-er* (cf. *a n-í as·ber titul* 'that which the title says' [Ml. 24^{d}17]) is probably not relevant here.

prepositional phrases. This conforms to the standard rules for the grammar of Old Irish and would seem to be an isogloss linking these two gloss collections against Ml.,[32] where, by contrast, there are a number of clear examples of relative verbs in prepositional clefts. There are as many as ten relative examples in Ml., with the certain number being maximally seven (see discussion above). Of these examples, just under half are nasalising relatives. It has been suggested that the similarity of some manner adverbials (e.g. *amne* / *amin* 'thus') and certain prepositional phrases (e.g. *samlaid* 'thus') may have led to the occasional adoption by both of nasalising relatives, perhaps on the model of *amal*, which introduces clauses of manner and regularly takes a nasalising relative. Once nasalising relatives were possible in this small set of clefted PPs, further spread in other categories and encroachment by leniting relatives may also have become possible (GOI § 506). Of the three gloss collections, Ml. has the strongest representation of the nasalising relative generally (McCone 1980: 15–16; Ó hUiginn 1986: 63). Given that the nasalising relative becomes redundant already by the tenth century, the increase of nasalisation in Ml., followed by its rapid decrease and loss, is somewhat puzzling. Nonetheless, I would suggest that the increased number of nasalising relatives is probably connected with the spread of relatives in prepositional clefts.

5.1 *ceta* 'first' as evidence for the "Cowgill particle"?

It is now time to return to the case of *ceta* 'first'. It was argued above that this preverb provides some evidence for a second-position clitic "Cowgill particle", **eti*. Specifically, it was suggested that **kentu(u̯)-eti* gives *ceta*. There were, however, only two cases of non-relative *ceta*, and both happened to be in prepositional clefts. The examples are repeated here for convenience:

(40) *airní* *doib* *cita·rochet*
for-NEG-COP$_{3SG.PRES}$ to$_{3PL}$ PV·sing$_{AUG.3SG.PRET.PASS}$
'For it is not to them that it was first sung.' (Ml. 86^{d}19a)

32 There is much more to be said here, but this is not the place. Ó Muircheartaigh (2015: 204–217) has argued for Bangor connections for both Milan and St. Gall and affinity to Armagh for Würzburg. How this might play out for specific features, however, is quite an open question.

(41) *combad* *frisnagruade* *7*
so.that-^{NAS}COP$_{3SG.PST.SUB}$ against-the$_{ACC.PL.NEUT}$=cheeks$_{ACC.PL}$ and
frisnaforbru *cita·comṁairsed*
against-the$_{ACC.PL.MASC/NEUT}$=eyebrows$_{ACC.PL}$ PV·meet$_{3SG.PST.SUBJ}$
'so that it might be against the cheeks and against the eyebrows that it would first meet' (Ml. 39^{c}15)

In the light of the examination of prepositional clefts undertaken above, these two examples from the Milan Glosses cannot be considered definitely non-relative. Since one cannot be sure of their evidentiary value, one must ask if there is any solid support left for the idea that the Cowgill particle leaves a trace behind after disyllabic preverbs ending in **u*. The preverb *ocu* < **onku-* in *ocu·ben* 'touches' is one such piece of support, as there is no other plausible explanation for the retention of the final syllable.

A second piece of evidence is the preverb *ceta* 'along' in *ceta·bí* 'feels, perceives'. Here, the evidence is indirect. As this *ceta* has a preform **kanta*, it should have developed to relative *ceta·bí* and non-relative **cet·bí*. Since the non-relative form is actually *ceta·bí*, there must be an analogical explanation for it. It seems unlikely that the relative form of the preverb would be taken over directly. The fact that some preverbs in relative contexts had an extra syllable was well at home in Old Irish, being regular for *ar* and *imm* (relative forms *ara* and *imma*), and as Breatnach (1994b) has shown, the pattern even occurred sporadically also for other preverbs. It appears unlikely that an established **cet·bí*, relative *ceta·bí* would have been made into *ceta·bí* for both relative and non-relative without a good model.

The only possible model is *ceta* 'first', but interpreting the evidence is difficult. If the two examples (40) and (41) are relative, then we have no positive evidence for what the non-relative form was. There are three realistic suggestions for that form, however: it was *cet*; it was *ceta*; or there was no non-relative form because the preverb was only used in relative contexts. While García Castillero (2014: 87–89) has indeed argued that this preverb originated in relative contexts, it is unlikely that it did not spread from there at all. The textual attestation of the spread may simply be lacking. If the preverb indeed was found in non-relative contexts, it must have taken the form *cet* or *ceta*. If the non-relative form was *cet*, there would have been no model for *ceta* to be taken over in non-relative position in *ceta·bí*. On the other hand, if the non-relative form was actually *ceta* (and we happen not to have attestations of it because both (40) and (41) are actually relative forms), then this would support the argument being made here, and it would provide a model for non-relative

ceta in *ceta·bí*. Finally, it may indeed be the case that one or both of the examples (40) and (41) is non-relative. There would then be a model for non-relative *ceta* in *ceta·bí*, and *ceta* 'first' would provide direct positive evidence for the rule that disyllabic preverbs ending in **u* retain the final syllable before the Cowgill particle. Though the evidence in not entirely straighforward, we are left with a problem if the non-relative form of *ceta* 'first' was anything but *ceta*.[33]

5.2 The origin of the absolute / conjunct verbal endings

We can now briefly return to the debate about the origin of absolute and conjunct verbal endings in Insular Celtic. The evidence cited here will certainly not change anyone's mind about the validity of the particle theory as explanation for the absolute / conjunct distinction. It does, however, present evidence that disyllabic preverbs ending in **u* retained their second syllable in both relative and non-relative clauses. This does not happen with other vowels and must receive some sort of explanation, regardless of one's views on the origins of the absolute verbal endings. The particle theory provides a relatively straightforward, though difficult to prove, framework for that explanation.

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33 A possible third option is that the forms in (40) and (41) were seen by speakers of Old Irish as ambiguous. If they could be seen as either relative or non-relative, they could be examples of the bridging context by which relatives in prepositional clefts became possible. While this idea has a certain appeal, it seems to be ruled out by the fact that the ambiguity of the forms exists only as written. Spoken aloud, the distinction between relative and non-relative would have been clear.

Appendix: Examples

Below are given all the examples of non-excluded prepositional clefts in Wb., Ml. and Sg., i.e. the examples that make up the data represented in Tables (5), (6), and (7).

Wb.

Non-relative: 1^{d}4, 9, 2^{a}3 is, ^{b}6, 15, ^{c}6, 13, 3^{a}10, ^{c}6, 22, 4^{a}4, 13, 17, 24, 27 *is*, ^{b}27, ^{c}23, ^{d}15, 33, 5^{b}16, 27, 36, ^{c}16 (bis), 6^{a}12, 13, 19, 30 *im·tiagam*, ^{b}4, 14, 8^{c}6, 16, 9^{a}1, 18, 23 (bis), ^{b}5, 7 *bid*, ^{c}9, 10, ^{d}27, 10^{c}2, 3, ^{d}11, 23, 27, 11^{d}2, 5, 6, 12^{a}21, 13^{a}3, 5, 16, 22, 32, ^{b}13, 18, 29, ^{c}11, 12, 14^{c}8, 24, 40, ^{d}26, 15^{a}13, ^{b}11, 18, 28, ^{c}23, ^{d}18, 16^{d}7 *ar·focarar*, 17^{b}20, ^{c}19, 18^{c}5, 19^{a}19, 20, 20^{b}16, ^{c}21, 21^{b}2, 7, ^{c}19, ^{d}1, 22^{c}10 *coiscitir*, 17, 23^{a}2, ^{b}41, ^{c}11 *berir*, 28, ^{d}21, 29, 24^{a}17, 29, ^{d}1, 21, 25^{a}8, ^{c}16, 26^{b}11, ^{d}8, 25 (bis), 27^{a}11 (bis), 29, ^{c}18, 22, 28^{a}19, ^{b}17, ^{c}12, 19, 29^{a}16, ^{b}12, ^{d}6 (bis), 23, 30^{b}25, 31^{b}11, 32^{a}6, ^{c}13, 33^{d}7, 34^{a}6.

Relative: 5^{b}29.

Non-leniting relative: 2^{a}3 *do·téit*, 3^{b}1, 4^{a}27 *for·téit*, ^{b}14, 5^{a}5, 6^{a}29, 30 *ad·ciam*, ^{b}20, 10^{a}29, 30, ^{c}1, 10, 18^{d}6, 19^{b}6, ^{c}6, 21^{a}12, 25^{b}28.

Non-nasalising relative: 2^{c}17, 3^{c}21, ^{d}21, 4^{d}17, 5^{a}1, 6^{a}14, ^{b}7, ^{d}5, 8^{a}9, ^{c}12, 9^{b}6, 7 *as·berar*, ^{c}14, ^{d}25, 10^{a}4, ^{c}11, 12, ^{d}16, 11^{a}2, 12^{c}29, 13^{b}26, 14^{c}33, 15^{a}16, 16^{c}4, ^{d}14, 17^{a}2, ^{b}29, ^{c}23, 18^{d}1, 19^{b}14, 20^{d}12, 22^{a}6, ^{c}10 *do·airbertar*, 23^{b}12, 17, ^{d}25, 26, 24^{c}14, 22, 25^{a}12, 27^{b}3, ^{c}8, ^{d}20, 29^{a}21, 31^{a}10, ^{d}2.

Ambiguous: 1^{c}3, 2^{b}24, 26, ^{d}25, 4^{c}7, 27, 32, 35, 37, 5^{a}4, 12, ^{c}17, 6^{c}3, ^{d}14, 7^{a}3, 14, ^{d}15, 8^{b}2, 10, ^{d}22, 10^{a}22, ^{d}8, 12^{a}29, 13^{a}21, ^{d}26, 17^{d}16, 18^{c}13, 20^{d}9, 10, 21^{b}4, ^{d}2, 23^{a}7, ^{c}17, ^{d}4, 30 *immum·ruidbed*, 25^{a}3, 26^{c}11, 27^{c}35, 29^{a}28, 30, ^{d}29, 31^{c}16, ^{d}6, 32^{d}10, 14.

Ml.

Non-relative: 3^{a}4, 14^{d}10, 15^{c}10, 17^{b}8, 20^{b}13 *ata* (bis), 24^{d}30, 26^{b}8, 27^{c}10 *teit* (bis), 28^{c}8, 30^{d}24, 31^{b}1, 23, 32^{d}6 *ata*, 10, 34^{b}6, ^{d}6 *at·taat*, 35^{d}26, 37^{a}8 *berthair*, 8 *berthir*, 10 *téit*, 10 *berthair*, 10 *is*, 38^{a}5 *gnitir*, ^{c}3, 42^{b}7 *berid*, 7 *beirthi*, 7 *ra·gab*, 43^{a}2, ^{c}13, 44^{a}11, 14, ^{b}2, 47^{a}17, 48^{a}6, 49^{a}11, 27, ^{b}7, 50^{a}5, 8, ^{d}18, 51^{a}14, ^{b}12 *eirbthi*, ^{d}2 *da·gneth*, 2 *da·rigni*, 10, 53^{a}19, ^{b}8, 11 *da·airilbset*, 54^{a}1, 56^{b}3, 15 *bithir*, 33, ^{c}11, 60^{b}11, 62^{c}2,

64[a]10, 67[d]8, *ata*, 8 *trachtid*, 24, 68[b]2, 3, 69[b]1 *molfait*, [d]3 *at·ror*, 72[d]1, 12, 74[b]1, [c]21, [d]13, 83[b]14, 88[b]15, 89[b]6, 90[d]11, 92[d]12, 94[a]13, 15, [c]3, 10 *teit*, 96[a]10, 97[d]17, 100[d]4, 101[c]4, 6–7 *saidi* (bis), 103[d]26, 27 *teit*, 27 *is*, 106[c]11, 108[c]12 *trachtaid*, 109[a]2 (ter), 111[b]15 *dos·melmais*, 112[b]20, 114[a]2–3, 118[b]6, 121[d]8, 123[b]13, 124[b]3 (bis).

Relative: 16[a]7, 17[c]3, 23[a]12, 31[b]16, 38[a]5 *gnaither*, 45[a]8 *no·prithchib*, [c]9, 50[b]8 *bed*, 59[a]12, 64[a]13.

Non-leniting relative: 2[b]6, 25[b]6, 30[a]9, 32[c]17, 34[d]6 *no·tesad*, 39[c]15, 44[a]19, 50[d]7 *ro·cuala*, 54[a]21, [c]18 *no·teged*, 57[d]13, 95[a]1, 101[c]6-7 *du·tiagar* (bis), 106[c]3, 111[c]9, 126[b]2, 131[c]14.

Non-nasalising relative: 2[c]3, 14[a]4 *ro·gabad*, 4 *robu*, 9, [c]19 *ar·osailcther*, 16[a]10, 17[b]18, 18[a]8, 19[b]11, 24[c]15, [d]10, 26, 29, 26[a]8, 30[a]3, 31[b]17, 32[d]6 *du·gnither*, 35[a]8 *ro·gabad* (bis), 9, 10, [b]10, 16, 18, [c]21, 36[b]3, [c]21, 37[a]12, 14, [b]16, [c]20, 40[c]20, 42[a]15, 44[b]1, 45[d]7, 8, 46[a]21, [d]3, 10, 47[c]11, 48[d]27, 28, 51[b]12 *do·aisilbi*, [c]2, [d]8, 25, 52x0, 53[b]11 *do·airilbset* [MS *do airibset*], [c]13, 54[a]22, [d]4, 55[c]1, 57[d]8, 64[c]19, 66[d]4, 69[a]11, 71[b]14, 74[a]1, 81[c]4-6, 83[d]9, 84[c]9, 86[d]13, 89[a]2, 90[b]15, 91[b]7, 94[c]10 *do·adbat*, 96[b]18, 98[c]10, 100[b]12, 108[b]4, 109[a]1 (bis), 110[d]16, 111[c]3, 113[c]7, 115[a]14, 120[d]2, 121[c]16, 123[c]8, 10, 126[c]10, 127[d]2, 14, 132[a]1 *ro·uctha*, 1 *as·berat*, 133[b]2, 139[a]6 (bis), 8, 9, 10, 11, 142[d]1.

Ambiguous: 14[b]12, 13, [c]19 *ro·segar*, 17[b]2, [c]7 *ar·roét* (bis), 18[c]10, 21[a]11, 26[b]10, 31[a]25, [d]12, 33[d]12, 37[a]16, 45[a]8 *as·rubart*, 9, 46[c]24, 47[a]8, 20, 50[d]7 *ru·radus*, 51[a]19, [d]28, 53[b]11 *do·recachtar*, 11 *do·recatar*, [d]17, 61[d]2, 66[c]1, [d]15, 69[b]1 *ro·fessatar*, [d]3 *ro·pridach*, 14, 72[d]9, 85[d]10, 86[d]19[a], 88[a]17, 96[c]11, 102[c]7, 105[a]4, 108[c]12 *fu·fálgi*, 113[c]2, 119[d]3, 125[a]11, 130[b]8, 145[c]4.

Sg.

Non-relative: 7[b]14, 9[a]8, 19[b]2, 26[b]7, 28[a]3, 32[b]2, 36[b]1, 38[a]1, 41[b]3, 42[a]9, 52[b]1, 54[b]3, 6, 56[b]8, 57[b]1, 66[b]9, 10, 71[b]8, 76[b]7, 90[b]2, 95[b]1, 104[b]5, 113[b]3, 138[a]4, 139[a]1, 144[b]3, 152[a]1, 159[a]3, 168[b]1, 169[a]1, 173[b]2, 179[a]2, 181[a]2, 5, 183[a]2, 188[a]3, [b]1, 191[a]5, 196[a]1, 197[a]2 *ata*, 11 *ar·ícht* (ter), 199[b]3, 200[a]2, [b]7, 201[b]1, 203[a]7, [b]3, 8, 204[b]5, 8, 205[a]2, 207[a]2, 208[a]10, 209[b]10, 29, 213[a]1, 215[a]8, 217[a]1, 218[a]8, 222[a]9.

Relative: 117[a]5, 148[b]7

Non-leniting relative: 149[b]6 (bis), 158[a]3, 197[b]4, 198[b]3, 208[a]9.

Non-nasalising: 9^{b}10, 10^{a}8, 29^{b}15, 30^{a}7, 32^{a}1, 35^{b}13, 39^{a}25, 45^{b}9, 50^{a}4, 59^{a}8, 106^{b}16, 140^{a}4, 143^{a}1, 157^{b}1, 158^{a}4, 161^{a}2, 183^{b}3, 187^{b}5, 189^{b}2, 192^{b}4, 197^{a}2 *as·bertar* (bis), 203^{b}5, 206^{a}3 *do·gni*, 207^{b}2, 208^{a}1, 209^{a}1, 210^{a}4, 211^{a}6, 213^{a}7, K15^{a}3, K66^{a}1.

Ambiguous: 18^{a}1, 6, 28^{a}9, 40^{a}17, 69^{a}5, 74^{b}8, 103^{a}1, 136^{a}1, 153^{b}6, 154^{a}1, 157^{b}3, 188^{a}14, 195^{b}, 202^{a}3, 203^{a}22, 206^{a}3 *con·osna*.