

Celtic languages, megalithism and stories, published through bookofdunbarra No. 9 in a new series of books published via bookofdunbarra

Written by Linden Alexander Pentecost; published by Linden Alexander Pentecost on the 4th of February 2024, published in the UK and from the UK (the author is a UK-resident), published on my UK website: www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk, on the page: <https://www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk/new-ebooks-from-december-2023-onwards-also-separate-from-website-s-online-articles-content> (All of my books are published from the UK, but not all through this website or as ebooks). (This book, the one in front of you titled *Celtic languages, megalithism and stories, published through bookofdunbarra No. 9 in a new series of books published via bookofdunbarra* contains **34 pages**). The website above (not my only website) also contains articles not found in any of my published books; likewise material from my books is not on the online articles of the website. (No AI was used in the creation of this book, nor in any of my books, except for in one ebook last year where I included *one* piece of AI art, I then edited this art anyway).

This book (the one you are looking at) contains 34 pages, this is page one (the one you are looking at), the title and contents page. The one photo in this book showing a landscape in County Cork close to Hungry Hill was also taken by the author, Linden Alexander Pentecost, in the *Modern Celtic myths* section of this ebook. Page numbers are in all four corners of each page.

The *Modern Celtic myths* section contains one reference to adult nudity, so this book must not be read by those under the age of 18.

This book (the one in front of you, published 4th of February 2024) is a PDF ebook only, this is the only format, there is also no printed version (nor is there for my other ebooks). All of my books have only had one format, except for when they have been edited and changed and lots of new material added to be republished. For example the two print books I created last year are only available in print.

Like in all of my ebooks, a lot new, previously unpublished material is included with any older edited material, very little of the writing in this book was ever published, where it was originally casually, online, and non of the material in this book was previously archived in any sense.

Note that my opinions expressed in this book really represent the beginning of my writings on Scottish Gaelic dialects and on prehistoric language, subsequently my understanding of things when writing the content of this book, whilst still correct in essence, might seem to contradict with some of my more recent work: but really it is the form of depth of my understanding which has changed; and this older work is still very much relevant and expresses an as-important aspect to my studies. In the *Modern Celtic myths* section this is also the case, but less so. This material written long ago on languages and megalithism and East Sutherland Gaelic has not been edited much, only slightly with regards to a few points, to keep it accurate to my original understanding at the time.

Like for nearly all of my books, the material in this book will likely never be published again.

Note that this book contains entirely separate material to that in my many other recently published ebooks (and other books) published via BookofDunbarra; not also that there are many other ebooks published on this website before this *New series of books* from December 2023.

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The *Modern Celtic myths* section contains three stories, my favourite of which is the second, with comments on ancient supernatural ancestors in Wales, as a lady explores, meets a dragon that turns to stone, and then swims inside an underground lake that forms from

This book is written in honour of Wilma Ross, Jessie Ross, and my cat, and all ancestors to the Gaels and of all humanity.

Comments on Megalithism and language (written 2016)

The origin of Celtic Languages

The Celtic Languages are a family of Indo-European Languages, which have been gradually pushed into the extremities of western Europe. Unlike many other families in the Indo-European group, Celtic Languages have been marginalised and pushed in a westerly direction for hundreds of years. Because they have never been as widely spoken as languages such as English, French and German, or even as widely spoken as languages with only a few million speakers such as Norwegian and Swiss German, Celtic Languages have been viewed as being unsuccessful and unnecessary by many for hundreds of years. Celtic Languages can be viewed as being indigenous languages, they have mainly been spoken by people who have lived off the land and in harmony, with their own customs and music. In a world which is becoming increasingly more globalised, these indigenous people were systematically broken apart by people who wanted ownership over all resources and land. Celtic Languages were banned in education, to the extent where people were actually ashamed of speaking them. Even today, Celtic languages are viewed by some as being backward and outdated forms of communication, belonging to a bygone age of mystery and superstition. It might be comforting to think that things are improving, but from my own experiences of higher education, an interest in Celtic Languages is still sometimes regarded as amusing and pointless.

What do we mean when we say 'Celtic'?

The term 'Celtic' was originally a linguistic classification. Linguists generally categorise the Celtic Languages into different divisions, coming from a supposed common ancestor called Proto-Celtic. Because the Celtic Languages are spoken today in the UK, Ireland and Brittany, a romanticised era brought the word Celtic into people's consciousness. This led to the idea that the Celts were a single race, divided by invasions into their current groupings, the Bretons, Cornish, Welsh, Manx, Irish and Scottish. It is clear from modern genetic research that there isn't much genetic affinity between say, people from North Wales and people from the Isle of Barra. But often languages have little to do with genetic affinity anyway, at least according to most experts. There is also the palaeolithic-continuity theory, which states that the Celtic Languages have been spoken in their current locations for as long as those gene groups have existed there. This theory has met a lot of controversy, but I think it's important not to dismiss a theory just because it appears to go against most expert opinions. There definitely is a correlation between certain types of megalithic structures and Celtic languages for example, which I will go into more detail about later.

But for argument's sake, the term 'Celtic' originally referred to the indigenous languages of Atlantic Europe, Gaul and other parts of Europe, which shared certain

features in common and had obviously close relationships to one another. The word 'Celt' came from the word 'Keltoi', which more likely described a certain group of Celtic speakers. The word 'Keltoi' was never used by Celtic Language speakers as a whole to refer to themselves. If anything, the Gala- element appears to have been the most common description they used. This appears in 'Gaul' and 'Gaelic', or even in the extinct 'Gallaic' and 'Galatian' languages. Celtic language speakers in Britain appeared to use the terms 'prytton', and 'combrogii' to refer to themselves. 'Prytton' is where our word 'Britain' comes from, and is believed by some to refer to how the indigenous people would paint themselves. The term 'Combrogii' which seems mainly confined to Western Britain, translates roughly as 'fellow countrymen' or 'people of the land'. This word appears today in the Welsh word for Wales, Cymru, and in the name of the county, Cumbria, and the island Cumbrae in Scotland.

The Keltoi, Gauls, Britons and Celtiberians of two thousand years ago, don't bear much cultural resemblance to today's people in Wales, Cornwall, Brittany, Ireland, Man and Scotland. Celtic speaking regions have frequently become mystified thanks to romanticised ideas and storytelling, when in fact Celtic speakers are just like anyone else. This is not to say that there isn't an obvious connection to something ancient in these regions, and the language could be described as a key to this ancient past. There is a definite magic in these places, which is distinct from the nature and culture found elsewhere in Europe. It might be the stories of fairies and giants which bring this out in a person, or it might be the feeling of warmth and happiness from dancing at a céilidh. The Celtic languages and their speakers have been romanticised, and put into categories which are not historically accurate. But there is also something real, familiar and special behind this romantic facade, and that's often why people learn Celtic Languages. I first felt this in Wales, and on the Isle of Arran in Scotland. I said to myself "there is something beautiful here, alive but hidden. I want to speak Gaelic and Welsh to become whatever it is I can feel. I want to be home".

I think that 'Celtic' has come to mean anything related to our indigenous ancestry along the Atlantic coast. This is why sites such as Stonehenge and Callanish are associated with rituals in druidism. Stonehenge itself was not built by speakers of Celtic Languages, nor did these people use the same iconic art and metalwork as Celtic speakers from the Iron Age. But because they are such an iconic part of our ancient world, they have been included under the general umbrella of what is 'Celtic'.

The Indo-European language family is the oldest ancestor we can reconstruct from most of the languages in Europe. These languages include for example, Armenian, The Indo-Iranian Languages, the Hellenic Languages, The Italic Languages, The Balto-Slavic Languages, Germanic Languages and Celtic Languages. These can be imagined as a tree branching off, with PIE or 'Proto-Indo-European' at the base of the tree. The tree model of language evolution has become generally accepted throughout the academic community. Indo-European Languages are quite easy to trace back and reconstruct. The same is not true for the neighbouring Uralic Language family, where

for example there are only a few hundred lexical terms shared between Nenets and Southern Saami. Most of the words in Irish, in contrast, can be traced back to PIE, even if the exact meaning of those words changes upon context.

However, I like to question things too much and prefer not to readily accept ideas which seem to mechanical or deterministic. I think it's very unlikely that Proto-Celtic simply branched off from Proto-Indo-European and started heading westwards. I think it's likely that PIE itself was never actually spoken. It seems just as likely that there were several 'proto' languages around at this time, which lead to the formation of the Indo-European languages.

Not so long ago, the general theory of the Celts and of other ancient peoples in the UK and Ireland, was that they must have come from the east. We can put this down to hundreds of years of education, teaching people that Rome and Greece were the cradels of civilization, whilst other places were occupied by savages and barbarians. It seemed impossible that our culture might have actually come from here, so a whole number of interesting explanations were created to explain how it was possible for ancient Britain and Ireland to have had an advanced civilisation. For example, there is a book *The Phoenician origin of the Britons, Scots and Anglo-Saxons discovered by Phoenician and Sumerian inscriptions in Britain by pre-Roman Britain coins* by L.A. Waddell. Other authors have attempted to explain 'The Celts' in different ways, for example, that the Celtic peoples are lost tribes of Israel.

Proto-Celtic was seen as having an eastern origin for a long time, perhaps originating in the Urnfield Bronze Age culture of central Europe, which may have fully developed by the Iron Age Hallstatt culture. A more recent 'Atlantic Fringe' hypothesis is gaining ground. This idea has been put forward to explain why the oldest Celtic Languages appear to have been well settled in Iberia, and why Tartessian, an ancient Iberian language, might be Celtic.

Megalithism and a story of World Languages

Linden Alexander Pentecost

This book is in part a continuation from my book: *pre-Indo-European language and culture in Ireland and Britain*. In this book I outlined similarities and shared words between the Western Indo-European languages (Celtic and Germanic) and the Afro-Asiatic languages. Since completing this book I have looked further into the subject, and have noticed how groupings such as Afro-Asiatic and Indo-European are not the whole story.

Firstly, an outline of the subject area. The Celtic languages of Western Europe and the Germanic languages, show features which are not typically Indo-European. Indo-European is a language classification used to explain the common roots and similarity of many languages across Europe and elsewhere, the ancestor language is known as Proto-Indo-European and there have been many attempts to reconstruct this language. The study of Indo-European is a popular area in linguistics, but like most theories, it relies upon certain assumptions, and these assumptions aren't very good at fitting the archaeological and genetic story of Europe.

This is partly down to our way of thinking. We see our languages and try to explain how they may have got here, and how they may have changed, and having never lived thousands of years ago we have let modern examples inspire us. This has led to the assumption that languages simply replace one another, that people readily abandon their culture like an object and abandon the language which has connected them to their home, people and entire world, for thousands of years. This does happen today, because sadly indigenous people are constantly being provoked by the consumerism and greed of society, but people don't just give up their language, they have actually been forced to. We have also been taught that our ancient religion and culture in Europe was similar to our modern assumptions, people replacing one another and invading one another across history with new religious 'ideas'. There is actually barely a shred of evidence that our ancient cultures were barbaric warlords who 'took over' entire countries, a careful look at our past suggests that we too are *indigenous* to Europe and that our ancient cultures had similar beliefs to the indigenous people of the Americas or those of Australia, in contrast to this modern assumption of people replacing each other and being constantly at war.

To the south is another major language family. The Afro-Asiatic languages are also indigenous to people in Africa, regardless of their genetic lineage and physical appearance. Another lie which has been told in the past, is how language must 'come' from somewhere, other than the people who speak it. This is basically a way of saying that our language cannot be ours, because it 'had' to come from some other invading people or culture. Is there any evidence that in ancient times, people invaded

one another and were forced to learn a new language? Not really. But after people developed metallurgy this seems to happen, probably because metal allowed some tribes to be more politically powerful than others.

People have asked about the Afro-Asiatic languages, and what genetic group the speakers of Proto-Afro-Asiatic may have belonged to. But such a question is flawed. For one thing, the Afro-Asiatic grouping of languages does not account for most of the linguistic data contained within these languages. And secondly, is it not possible that these languages have always been spoken by these communities regardless of their ethnic background and genetic lineage? Of course these languages have changed and have been influenced by other languages, but that doesn't mean that the language as a whole has to 'come' from a different people.

There are also deeper, and more controversial theories of language development.

.Nostratic

The Nostratic theory is an inclusion of a number of major language families, including Indo-European, Uralic, Afro-Asiatic and Dravidian. Afro-Asiatic actually contains quite a lot of words in common with Indo-European languages. But when I have looked into this, the Afro-Asiatic forms are often more similar to the forms found in the various branches of Indo-European, for example Greek, Celtic and Germanic. If Indo-European and Afro-Asiatic evolved from a common ancestor, we would expect the Proto-Afro-Asiatic forms to be more akin to the Proto-Indo-European forms. But instead I've found similarity between Afro-Asiatic, and specifically with certain Indo-European forms. When a root appears in more than one Indo-European language, that also doesn't guarantee that the word came from Proto-Indo-European. Quite a lot of Indo-European roots have been 'invented' because it is assumed that they come from Proto-Indo-European. Before we can develop a more certain picture of our past, using archaeology and genetics, all of this will be uncertain, including the foundations of Proto-Indo-European.

.Eurasianic

Eurasianic is another grouping which includes Uralic, Indo-European, Turkic, Mongolic, and sometimes Eskimo-Aleut from the Americas. This makes sense as an early expansion of hunter gatherers across Siberia and into North-America, perhaps at the end of the last Ice-Age. But again, this doesn't account for how, or why these languages needed to be connected. There are also words in common between certain Uralic languages and Afro-Asiatic, but it appears these occur with higher frequency in western Europe, and which aren't found in all Afro-Asiatic languages. Are we really looking at two proto languages with a common origin, or are we looking at a language which influenced many proto languages? If there are words in common between these various proto languages, can we even assume that there was ever a Proto-Afro-Asiatic or a Proto-Uralic? Unless we can tie these words down to one

culture or language, their origin will always be uncertain, and the same goes for words in the Indo-European languages.

The early Afro-Asiatic language appears to have contained some kind of sound symbolism. Several root words are almost identical, and changes in vowels and consonants seem to suggest slightly different meaning. When these are taken into account, cognates in other language families can be seen as phonemic variations of slightly different meaning, rather than having evolved separately in each language family. This implies that an early language had a major effect on the lexicon of world languages. The languages themselves may have always belonged to different people in one form or another, hence why there are such enormous differences between the languages which share these common root words. In which case, it isn't necessary to assume a proto-language of Mongolian, Turkic, Uralic and Indo-European. Instead, a language would have influenced all of these already distinct peoples with their own languages. The ancient, indigenous languages of these people are visible today in our vocabulary. The more vocabulary in common with this ancient language which may have effected many of our languages, the more likely it is that the present day language can be accounted for by this ancient language, or languages.

Similarities in semantics and phonology, between Finnish, Celtic, Berber and Chadic, are greater than the similarity found between the Indo-Iranian Branch of Indo-European, and Uralic, or between Chadic and Indo-Iranian.

.Dene-Caucasian

Dene-Caucasian is another controversial link between world languages. In Europe, the different Caucasian language families are sometimes included, along with Basque. In Asia, Sino-Tibetan, which includes Chinese, is also included. And in the Americas, the Na-Dene family is included. Theo Vennemann has pointed out that certain words are found in 'highland' regions of Europe, and these might be attributed to an ancient language related to Basque, which he calls Vasconic. This makes sense from a Dene-Caucasian angle, because the Dene-Caucasian languages, including Basque and those in the Caucasian Mountains, could represent a very ancient, pre-Ice Age culture, or perhaps a culture associated with the Ice Age refuge areas of Southern Europe, which then expanded across the World as the Dene-Caucasian language family. The problem is, most of what is the Basque language, is very clearly culturally and genetically distinct to Chinese language and culture, and to Athapaskan language and culture. The existence of common roots between these languages doesn't change the fact that structurally these languages are completely unlike. Culturally and genetically, there is no major genetic input in any of the Dene-Caucasian language areas, which is enough to demonstrate that these cultures and language somehow come from a common ancestor. There is genetic similarity between the Basque people and the people of the Caucasian mountains, and this genetic input could account for the similarity. But it doesn't mean that the whole of the Basque language, is related to Caucasian, or that the modern speakers of any of

these languages ‘come’ from this ancient link. What we are definitely looking at is an influence, and it is also interesting that Basque and the Caucasian languages are spoken by some of the oldest genetic populations in Europe. In this sense, the Basque language preserves more of this ancient language, than Sino-Tibetan or Athapaskan, both of which have largely evolved from the indigenous communities and hologroups which have existed in these regions for a very long period of time. It is wrong to assume then, that the Athapaskan peoples came to the Americas at a later date. They may simply have been more influenced by this Proto-Language than the nearby Salishan and Wakashan languages.

The picture becomes more interesting, where the same word exists in Chadic, Celtic, Basque, and Finnish, although not in other Dene-Caucasian, Indo-European or Uralic languages. The picture becomes even weirder when the same roots start to show up in South America!

Megalithism

Megalithism is a kind of ancient architectural or structural type using large stones. The pyramids of Egypt are an example of megalithism, but normally ‘pyramids’ are seen as a separate category. The Berber tombs of Morocco, the Dolmens of Spain and Portugal, the standing stones from Ireland to Sweden, and the passage tombs of our Atlantic coast. These are all megalithic structures, mystifying and unknown. And yet they clearly remind us of something important and magnificent which happened on Earth. Megaliths aren’t just limited to the Atlantic coastline. Older types of megalithic structure can be found across central Europe, in the Caucasian Mountains, and south to Iraq, into India and parts of Asia. Megalithic sites dominate the Andean landscape of South America, and are also found in Central and North America.

These structures were likely created by the indigenous cultures of these regions. But there are also links, and traditions which speak of a seafaring culture associated with these places. They are sometimes said to be Caucasian looking, and sadly this has sometimes carried racist suggestions of an ‘Aryan’ race being responsible for all of this ancient architecture. This is false and based on assumptions about the genome rather than on the cultural and social interactions in our very distant past.

It’s ludicrous to suggest that one people are more intelligent than another. What isn’t so ludicrous, is the idea that interactions between different humans lead to hybridization and new genes which initially appeared in Europe. Why? Because this is where Homo-Sapiens and Neanderthals were not just interacting with one another, but also mating together. This doesn’t imply that we were somehow genetically engineered, as some have suggested. What I suggest is that some form of genetic hybridization took place in Europe, and some of these regions have been inhabited for long periods of time, well before end of the Ice Age. The genetic and cultural

differences of Neanderthals and Homo-Sapiens may have diffused to create a cultural entity, which may also have had a genetic component. The prolonged existence of these early cultures may have

The Denisovans and Neanderthals may well have had language ability, and it's unlikely that the language of homo-sapiens was much different in complexity. This is visible because few of these early people showed obvious signs of cultural or artistic complexity. Their language may then have been very abstract and lacking in pronouns and other features of grammar which we know today. It's likely that language evolved independently in different early humanoid types, and that structural and lexical similarity is something which evolved alongside our creativity and cultural structures. In this sense, the language of the Denisovans may be found within the vocabulary of the indigenous languages of Australia. The earliest homo-sapiens languages might be visible in the vocabulary of the Indigenous-American, Siberian, African and Asian languages. The language of the Neanderthals may be slightly visible in the languages of Modern Europe and Siberia. However, there is no way of telling the exact origin of these words, because Neanderthals, Denisovans and other ancient types of human are now extinct. We can say whether or not these words came from areas of Neanderthal and Homo-Sapien interaction, but unless there is evidence of that interaction there can be no influence from Neanderthal language.

The interactions of Neanderthals and Homo-Sapiens may have necessitated the need for a different kind of language, one which could express tense and number, one with more emphasis on identity and meaning. This is when artwork and symbolism first seems to appear, and I believe that this long term interaction and permanent settlement was responsible for the earliest permanent settlements. Perhaps the rock-cut towns in Georgia, Armenia, Turkey and Peru came from this culture. Towards the Atlantic, cave paintings were beginning to appear. Evidence of burial and ritual start to appear. Although these concepts may be innate within humanoids, it is only within the past 60,000 years or so where we begin to see ritualistic symbolism. It appears that people are no-longer just acting within ritual, but also expressing it and understanding it. A very long time ago, this change could have caused the expansion of homo sapiens, and this could account for the existence of many of our major language families as homo-sapiens began to stabilize in different areas, perhaps interacting with and mating with other types humans or even with other species of human, creating the modern areas of language distribution across much of the world. Sound symbolism could have existed since the days when humanoids first walked the earth. So in this sense, our languages could go back hundreds of thousands of years. But modern languages with full grammatical context may have only appeared in the last 60,000 years or so. Some peoples were probably influenced by this language more than others, and it is unlikely that the indigenous languages of Australia were very influenced by the language of this 'Cro-Magnon' man. Areas like Australia may have developed symbolism and culture independently of elsewhere, and this can also be partially accounted for by interactions between early homo-sapiens and Denisovans, and possibly others.

We have been told that history can be divided up into segments and sections. Kurgan, Indo-European. Germanic, Celtic and Roman. But a lot of this is based on poor assumption and little historical basis. We are told that the 'Celtic' languages in Britain arrived in the Iron Age, and that hill forts from this period were created during the Iron Age. But a lot of these sites have clearly been in use for thousands of years. The Celtic language can be used to periodize the way certain sites and structures were used, but many of these sites show continuity going back to the Neolithic and perhaps earlier. And logically speaking that isn't at all surprising.

The reconstruction of proto languages is something which needs careful consideration. And right now I don't think it's possible for us to get an accurate idea of any of our proto languages. We haven't taken the whole picture into account and have been reconstructing these languages on the basis of what we have been taught about history, through cultures we identify as Roman or Celtic for instance. Our proto languages are like attempts to make sense of our history in our present time, but that's all they are, an attempt or an image seen from our cultural and historical perspective. Modern Welsh is a living language, whereas Proto-Celtic is an attempt to make sense of the origins of the Welsh language through a particular historic perspective. It gives us a glimpse into where Welsh could have come from, according to one theory. But it isn't what our ancestors spoke, because so far we don't know enough about our ancestors or indeed who they were. I have tried to put languages into four categories.

Living languages are languages which are used, and spoken by certain communities. Their existence doesn't depend on a theory of origin to make sense of them.

Historic languages: historic languages are no-longer spoken as an everyday language, but act as vehicles of cultural identity. When we want to understand our own past, historic languages bring us to the centre of a cultural identity, making us feel more involved within that. Historical languages are also used for ritual purposes, to commemorate our own present identity because a historical language is part of the historic identity which we consider to be important.

Reconstructed languages: reconstructed languages are an attempt to make sense of our history through what we believe to be the past. Proto-languages are normally reconstructed by linguists, in which case they have no value as a 'language', being only an idea about our past. Some people enthusiastically begin to speak, or reconstruct these ancient languages in order to use them. Presumably each person involved with this feels that this identity and language makes sense to them. It is a part of their identity, not merely an image from the past. And by speaking and using these languages, we can better understand our past from a certain point of view.

Modern languages evolve in a different way. They are constantly being changed to include new ideas and concepts which we are influenced by. Reconstructed languages

also have to ‘change’ as new evidence comes to light, and both living and reconstructed languages go through different stages of stabilisation.

Modern English can be seen as a stabilised entity. Although the language is constantly changing, we can all use and speak a written, or standard form of English which anybody can understand. This might also mean that we exclude many of the more specialised ‘slang’ or dialect words we might otherwise use.

In contrast there are very few examples of reconstructed languages which are stabilised, fully developed and useable. Although these languages may not be accurate to our past, they are a good start. In a way they are a doorway for anyone to come into contact with the cultural identity they seek, which can lead to more research and a better understanding. The more we learn about our past, the more wholistic a picture we are able to build for our present. Just as in our modern times, the more we discover about the universe, the more we can communicate with one another through ideas that make sense at a cultural level and not just at an individual level.

Reconstructed languages should be spoken and used as well as reconstructed. Without using them in the present, we can’t understand the past or fully embrace the identity we seek. Examples of fully developed, reconstructed languages, include ‘Modern Indo-European’ and ‘Modern Gaulish’. Modern Gaulish may not be the language of Gaul, but it is a Celtic language, and it is used to express and understand the ancient culture of the Gauls. How then is it not a valid language of Gaulish origin?

I have refrained from teaching reconstructed languages, because over the past year I have changed my mind about so many things. But, there is a lot of important genetic and other research going on right now, which may make it possible to say more for certain about certain languages in our past. The reconstruction of useable versions of ‘Norn’, an extinct language from Northern Scotland, is entirely possible. The reconstruction of Cumbric, a Celtic language, may also be possible. Although in the future more evidence may come to light, which means that some people will choose not to use these versions of the languages and will have to create new versions, just in the same way that modern languages change.

This has happened a lot in the revival of the Cornish language. Kernewek Kemmyn acted as a standard for a long while, and because it was established and spoken by many hundreds of people, it is still being used today. But Kemmyn isn’t historically accurate in the opinion of many experts, and there is a constant battle between reviving Cornish authentically with time, and constantly needing to standardise the language, which sadly has suffocated its creative potential and the potential for more research. Both Modern Gaulish and Kernewek Kemmyn were designed, rather than evolving naturally, but they are accessible to people, and used, which is important. But there has never been a need for a standard ‘Gaulish’, because if someone wants to speak a form of Gaulish which represents a different point of view, they can create that language themselves and use it. In Cornish, this process has been rushed, with

various attempts at making a standard form before a standard form has even been spoken. This also means that a lot of hard work and effort which went into these projects, then becomes stolen and pushed aside through the belief that a new version is 'better' and needs to be imposed. For example, the historic spelling of Modern Cornish used circumflex accents to mark long vowels. This is a part of the language's historic spelling and reflects similar practice to Welsh usage. It is also used in Cornish place-names, but has been 'dropped' because Cornish speakers have had to compromise to create a standard form, which few Cornish speakers are even used to. The final category is constructed languages. These languages are individual or shared attempts to create languages suitable to the kind of reality people experience. The Na'vi language is an example which was originally used in the film *Avatar*. Most conlangs are not spoken, and arguably they do not constitute as true languages until they are used as languages. Thousands of fictional languages have been partially grafted, and serve as real language within the context of another world. We can refer to Tolkien's Dwarvish language as a real language, because it appears in our memory and knowledge and because reference is made to it, even in a fictional context. But most conlangs don't become real world languages, because they don't contain any easily recognised interest for other people. Each language is a vehicle, offering a slightly different perspective of reality. People are probably more likely to learn conlangs because of that perspective and reality, rather than just the language itself. So conlangs need to give people access to information, imagination and use in order to be interesting to people. Below I shall list some examples of living world conlangs:

Esperanto: a language created for international usage, using simplified elements of Slavic, Romance and English. Esperanto lives on as a cultural entity, and people may learn it because this idea of a common, central language between different cultures appeals to them. Esperanto speakers make up a friendly community of people who often travel and visit one another in cultural exchanges and by couchsurfing.

.Quenya: Quenya is one of Tolkien's Elvish languages. Even if there aren't any elves, there are a lot of people who love Lord of the Rings, and it has almost become a part of English folklore. Tolkien based parts of his stories on Celtic, Germanic and even Finnic mythology. In ancient times, the ancestors of these people were in contact, so Quenya and Sindarin are fictional ideas about the language in our ancient, and sometimes mystical past.

I asked speakers of these languages why they decided to learn them, and about 60 percent of people said that they just liked Lord of the Rings. The others gave more detailed reasons, but all of them in some way felt drawn to ancient Norse or Celtic cultures. They felt a real spirit in these languages and stories which appealed to them. Of course the Celtic and Norse languages are also very interesting, but maybe people like the idea of a sacred or magical language at the heart of a mythological world based on real myths. These languages were spoken by supernatural spirits of light, who gave life to a world with links to our real world and history. So it's no wonder that people want to learn them!

Cultural and linguistic contact between Europe and the Pacific Northwest

Although impossible to prove at this stage, I believe that there is a very ancient connection between Europe and the Pacific Northwest. To be more exact, with the North Sea area and with Vancouver Island and Northern British Columbia. There is no obvious evidence of genetic similarity between the people of Scandinavia and England, and between the Salishan, Wakashan, Athabaskan and other groups. **(There is – Haplogroup X).**

It doesn't appear that the peoples of these places had extensive contact with one another, but there is a common influence, which may have come from the Americas, or may have come from the North Sea area and the Mesolithic island of Doggerland. Try not to laugh at that word.

Mesolithic England was pretty different. For one thing, the sea was a lot lower in some areas. This was due to ice pressing down on the north of the UK, which having melted caused the land to lift back up. Doggerland was an island in the North Sea, north of the great channel consisting of the Thames, Rhine and Seine rivers. Doggerland was gradually lost to the rising seas, but was probably finally flooded by a tsunami.

But there is some evidence that people were more advanced back then to have been in what we call the Mesolithic. John Langdon has written about how Doggerland could have been protected by a series of dykes, to protect Doggerland from rising seawater. I believe that this island could have been a Germanic linguistic area, perhaps representing the earliest stages of the English, Scots or Norn languages. Old East Norse, Old West Norse, and Anglo-Saxon, appear to have been minor inputs into an earlier language landscape. Only during the Medieval period did England and Scotland begin to reflect the language areas we see today, previously there may have been 'northern' and 'southern' areas, which came to represent Anglic and Danish in both Denmark and in England.

What we call 'Anglo-Saxon' is probably a political term, because as soon as the Celtic speaking elite lost control after the Romans, the Germanic speaking tribes, who by now had become very wealthy and powerful, took over the positions and lands of areas which were previously under Brittonic control. A dialect of Brittonic seems to have developed in England, where *u* was often pronounced *o*. But the people of these areas may have been Germanic speaking since at least the Neolithic, although there are also Afro-Asiatic and Uralic words in Germanic languages. The West of Britain and Ireland appears to have undergone Afro-Asiatic influence, and to some extent so have the Germanic languages. But the Germanic languages show far less grammatical similarity to Afro-Asiatic. And yet many Afro-Asiatic words appear throughout Germanic.

The language we see evidence of in Germanic, could have been one of the oldest languages in Europe. It may also have influenced Afro-Asiatic, Basque, Celtic,

Saami, Finnish, and various other languages. It could even be an ancestor of Indo-European and the whole 'Altaic' family, but it was definitely distinct from Indo-European.

Although these people may have left no genetic trace, I believe that influence was not an invasion, but inspiration. They may have built some of the earliest megalithic monuments, because although it is theoretically possible for any people to create megalithic monuments, the sudden change from hunter-gatherer, to planting enormous stones in the ground seems unrealistic without some form of cultural intervention. The menhir of Er Grah in Brittany was constructed at around 4700 BC, nearly 7,000 years ago, much older than many megalithic monuments. And yet the stone weighed three hundred tonnes and was 67.6 ft high.

Odin and Thor seem to be one and the same deity (**no, they have similarities**), except in Norse mythology Thor is the same father deity being young again. He has gone out of his animal form and has become more human and represents a kind of people's hero. The original deities could have inspired the Egyptian gods, including Ra and Set who are both depicted with bird heads. This bird deity, often an eagle, is also seen depicted as a stone carving on Mount Nemrut in modern Turkey.

He is disguised, even in our language. Our word 'light' may come from the same ancient root as the Celtic word Lugos, a god similar to Odin. He seems to have been a protector of humanity, a celestial being of the heavens who rules over all and protects all from evil. Many of our heroes seem to have come from the idea that a person can become as heroic and selfless as this deity.

In Northern Scandinavia he was known as Horagalles. The Hora- element is probably related to Thor, showing that this initial 'th' sound became silent, something which also occurred in Basque, and occurs today in Goidelic languages and in some Berber languages. This appears to have been an element of language which spread out from the Ice Age refuge area in Southern France, where some of the world's most famous cave art comes from. Horagalles is also a god of the sky, and of thunder and lightning. He protects people from harmful beings and watches over us. Like Odin, he is also linked to rainbows and to water. In images he was often depicted as holding a sledge hammer in one hand, and a cross hammer in the other, which at first glance makes it appear as though he has wings. The general appearance and stature of the figure is very similar to Indigenous American depictions of the Thunderbird.

An island on Lake Inari in Northern Finland was a place where Ukko was worshiped. In Finnish the island is known as Ukonkivi. Ukko's bolt of lightning is similar to the shape of a snake and has been depicted in Neolithic rock art. In Finnic mythology, birds carry the soul between this world and the upper world. This is very similar to the eagle being used on Orkney in sky burials.

The early spiral rock art, found along the Atlantic Coast and in Northumberland on the North Sea coast, can also be found in parts of the Americas, including in areas

now inhabited by Coast Salishan people. A stylized form of this artwork appears today in Northwest Pacific cultures, the spiral patterns forming the features of faces and other features. This is quite similar to the stylization of Neolithic art in the Bronze Age, sometimes these spirals do seem to form faces. Later on, this kind of artwork was also used on Anglo-Saxon and later Christian carvings.

Thunderstones:

In Langdale, Cumbria, there is a Neolithic axe factory. These axe heads were made from an incredibly hard kind of rock, found in various outcrops on the steep mountain slopes. But they took the rock only from certain places, places of high altitude. Were these places which attracted thunder and had 'special power'?

These axe heads were not just practical but were also highly regarded as sacred objects. They were placed as offerings, some being found deep in a limestone crack at a megalithic monument near Urswick in Cumbria. In Scandinavia, these stones were considered to be protective deities. Others believed that these stones came from the sky, and could be linked with comets. Comets and lightning are both 'signs from above', and the Estonian deity . boulders were also considered sacred in Estonia.

A possible classification of Ancient Languages

.Initial megalithic language: also responsible for sites such as Stone Henge and Ar Graih. Their initial constructions were highly sophisticated and developed out of an earlier cave art, much of their world may now be flooded. Also responsible for wood henge or at least an inspiration of these sites.

After the Ice Age, a Vasconic language spread North along the coast and took with it the ancient dolmen tombs. These appeared in Ireland. These people were perhaps the first Neolithic culture, but before long they dissolved into surrounding populations and I don't believe that they represented a large population in some areas.

The first Indo-European people also spread west from the Eastern Mediterranean. These early Celtic-speaking people could have moved here as a rather distinct, and richer group, being some of the first non hunter gatherers in Britain. Their tomb building was probably influenced by Neolithic tombs in Iberia, which in turn was influenced by a gradual re-expansion of megalithism towards the Atlantic through Afro-Asiatic speaking cultures. These early Celtic speakers probably didn't build megalithic structures, but re-used sacred boulders in their burial tombs, which are known as the Severn-Cotswald tombs. These people abandoned their sacred sites during the Bronze Age, when they began to get involved in copper mining. The earliest presence of Celtic languages in Britain is probably traceable from the distribution of early megalithic tombs of the Severn-Cotswald type or similar, and of copper mining. Their style of megalithism was also greatly influenced by Afro-

Asiatic speakers who seemed to have a more advanced understanding of science and philosophy. Different Celtic speaking areas developed different Celtic dialects.

The people of ancient Cumbria seem to have been far less connected to the continent, developing a form of megalithism which was probably similar to sites in the Pictish area. The Cumbric language and the Brittonic 'Pictish' language seem to have shared a common ancestor, perhaps traceable to the Eden Valley region of modern Cumbria, an area also rich in megalithism.

A more extensive expansion of megalithism happened with the Afro-Asiatic languages. These people might have introduced the passage tombs and chambered cairns. The idea of a long tunnel, flanked by stones and leading to a burial chamber, is also paralleled in Berber and Egyptian architecture. These people may also have 're-built' earlier structures, using much older stones in their newer tomb designs. This seems to have been a totally separate branch of Afro-Asiatic, and it may not by any means have been people's main language originally. It seems to introduce a type of knowledge which Celtic speakers do not have. The spiral artwork featured on these tombs comes from the older culture responsible for these carvings around the world. This was again separate from Vasconic speaking peoples. Although these spiral carvings were found on Anglesey and in the Boyne Valley, they are less common in Orkney, one of the other areas where Afro-Asiatic language may have had an input.

Most of the words in Britain can be traced back a long way, and the similarity between Afro-Asiatic and Germanic is down to an older influence on both languages. This ancient language appears to have also influenced Finnic.

Each family represents an expansion of a new idea, certain words becoming used over others but the language staying more or less the same.

It's impossible to pinpoint the origin of any language, or any word. Ancient people wouldn't have forgotten their past, earlier species of hominid such as homo-erectus and neanderthal man may have had language ability. If they did, they would have been able to relate this to the land and to any particular and special place. Some areas could have been known as places of historical importance, other areas could have been known for other tribes, perhaps of the same species or of a different species.

It is impossible to really know anything of the earliest languages, but it might just be possible to see a trace of these early languages, in areas where modern humans evolved from earlier species or in areas where later hominids had significant contact with earlier species. We know for instance that modern humans contain both Denisovan and Neanderthal DNA. Denisovans and Neanderthals came from homo-erectus, remains of whom are often found in areas associated with Neanderthal or Denisovan activity and even with genetic antiquity in modern humans.

People in Papua New Guinea and Northern Australia contain higher traces of Denisovan influence, and it's possible that the Denisovan people came out of an earlier homo-erectus people in the area of Java. The language of these people could remain in the vocabulary of languages in Papua New Guinea and in Northern Australia. Homo-sapiens then further colonised this area, and added various new layers of language. Homo-floresiensis, or the 'hobbit' people lived in Indonesia. These people could have lived until only 60,000 years ago, although a folk memory of the 'Ebu Gogo' has survived. According to myth, the Ebu Gogo were around 1 and a half metres tall. Anthropologist Gregory Forth has speculated that some of these folk legends may be related to homo-floresiensis. The languages of Flores are Austronesian, and linguist John McWhorter believes that there is some trace of their language in the Ngadha language of central Flores. This language contains no prefixes or suffixes, and is the only known language to contain the retroflex implosive [ɗ].

Homo-habilis in Africa may have had some language ability, as did homo-ergaster and homo-erectus, two related species with ergaster seen as a family in Africa whereas homo-erectus lived elsewhere but may have evolved from ergaster, and ergaster has also been discovered in Georgia.

.Megalithic: -n is pronoun, marker of possession and also first person. Ti/ki/hi is second person marker. Influenced the vocabulary of Finnish, Celtic, Basque, Afro-Asiatic and Quechua. Secondary expansion could have occurred, linking Finnish and Japanese for instance, but links with Japanese and other 'Eurasian' languages could come from an earlier human-neanderthal migration.

Rather than seeing this in terms of time, it could be that languages such as Basque and Finnish retain more of this original input language, which may have been an input at several stages during human evolution.

Modern Celtic myths

By Linden Alexander Pentecost, original version published on Amazon under the pseudonym *Cormac MacEoghain*. This book was never archived.

These stories are fictional but have their roots and primary characters based in Celtic Mythology. You could say these are re-formed from the collective consciousness of Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The stories in part one include: Rhiannon's Mine, Oisín's Cave and The story of Knockanokreesh.



Rhiannon's mine.

It is said, that in the mountains of Meirionydd, there is a forgotten gold mine. This part of Wales has always been known for its gold, since the times of the first Celts. It is said that in this time, the high druids received a vision upon the moor of Trawsfynydd, that to the south there were great riches. But that only one of these druids was capable of venturing into the mountains to the south, and of being shown this special location. The other druids were less trustworthy, and this particular druid, Samananertos, thought that some of the others may have been using the druid council and their sacred places, as gateways to their own power and influence. Supposedly, Samananertos was the only one humble enough, because this gold was not to be taken completely from the mountains. Some of it was to be returned, and guarded, until a time came when mankind was in need of it again.

Samananertos went south, leaving the circle of trees at sunrise on midsummer's eve. He walked with his staff, inscribed with Ogham letters, through the dense, lush forest, over the hills to the north and towards the valley of the Mawddach. The valley was misty when he arrived here, and he slept for some hours beside a small cliff. Unknown to him, another of the druids, by the name of Pennhir, followed him. Pennhir had belonged to a far older cult, before joining the druid circle, fabricating a story of how he was abandoned by his parents and left to the wild. But the powers which inhabited and possessed gold were far too powerful to be tricked or persuaded. The only way he could get to this treasure and use it was by shapeshifting into mountain goat, and slowly following Samananertos. No-body knows what happened to this gold, if indeed there was any. Some say that Samananertos was killed by Pennhir and thrown into the river. Others say that Samananertos found the guardians of this gold, and that a certain, select few miners and druids, lived in this valley, extracting the riches across Wales to ensure that strength and knowledge was maintained for each clan against enemies.

Another story, tells how this gold was mostly taken back to this valley. There is a story recorded from 1790 by a botanist visiting Wales, about a local story. This story apparently originated in an abandoned settlement, now covered in pine forest and north of Dolgellau. Apparently, an ancient treasure of Wales was known about in the area, and spoken of in many stories. This was only discovered quite recently, and there is even some evidence that these stories brought people to the valleys to start gold mining in the first place. The story about Samananertos came from the tablet of Ynys Enlli. What is known, is that a slate tablet was discovered on this island, hidden inside a cave. Local rumor has it that this tablet is just one small part of a vast mythological database hidden in that cave. Others say that the tablets inscribed with the Brittonic language are fakes, and were made by a mad vicar from the 1920s. Supposedly he could speak to crystals, and claimed that the island had the entire collective history and knowledge of the Celtic peoples immortalised within it. Thousands of saints were said to be buried here, and some say that their minds became infused with the ancient rock.

Sarah was 26, a good looking blonde girl with freckles and blue eyes. She had gone to North Wales on a spiritual journey. She camped in the valleys, and hiked, living off her gas cooker and drinking out of mountains streams. She would drive here and there, and tried to relax by swimming in mountain lakes enshrouded with boulders and mist. She didn't really have interest in Welsh history at the time, but as she travelled, she found that it became more interesting, and more real. Until one night, she was sleeping in her car at a campsite in Beddgelert, and had a strange dream.

She was back in time almost. The valley was different, and to the west the sun was setting. Everything seemed dramatic and distances seemed to appear stronger at times, before becoming gradually thinner illusions in the next moment. She saw a figure standing upon a mountain to the west, and as she saw him, she was there. The wind was whistling ferociously, dark clouds swooped over them. The old, bearded

man gave her one look with his piercing, glowing blue eyes, and pointed with a quivering finger towards the south. There upon a distant hill, was a golden light, reflecting the last of the sun's rays as its red figure dropped below curtains of pink rain clouds over the sea. The man turned to her once more, and said "it's time".

Sarah woke up suddenly. It wasn't normal for her to have dreams as intense as that, or remember them at all. She felt shaken up, but also intrigued. That morning, it felt like she hadn't quite left the dream. Its sense of magic was still with her. At one point she turned briefly towards her car and thought she saw a man, in a dark brown robe gazing back at her. Who was this mysterious man and what had he been showing her? It wasn't until a week later when Sarah heard about the tablets from Ynys Enlli, and about the druidic association with gold. Quite by chance, as she went past the Sygun copper mine on the way south, she heard two old women talking about it. Sarah ended up talking to them.

They walked outside of the building and sat beside a reanimated waterwheel, and it wasn't long before Sarah mentioned her dream.

"If what you say is true", said one of the women. A forty years old looking pagan, wearing dark cloths and a necklace of shells. "If this is true, then you must be the one to find it. The story has appeared to me in dreams before. But there is no map to this place, and from what the spirits tell me, it is not south near the Mawddach, it lies at the head of another river adjoining it, and higher up. It's not in the valley but above it. The people in the age of Arthur destroyed the mine entrance, the only thing left of it now might be the flat, glaciated rock where they sledged the gold."

"wow" said Sarah. "you really know where this place is?"

The woman looked at her intently. "I have an idea. But if you're not meant to find it, you won't. A few people go walking there and feel uneasy, this place is not safe either. You have to be very careful when you go there, and even if you are meant to go there, you have to be very careful." The woman took a drag of her cigarette, looked at Sarah again to see that her enthusiasm had turned to unease. "Sarah, what I am saying is that you can't just go and find it. It wasn't meant to be made visible to human eyes. I know where it is, roughly. But you see, the thing is, me and Shona know that there are these, shall we say, other beings living there. And they're not to be fucked around with. Don't disrespect their power because they will notice your presence. They are enemies of the guardians and are trying to penetrate the walls to this place, but it's much easier when they have someone to follow. Be very careful. If you feel uneasy then call upon the light of the Daghdha, he will illuminate the path for you. Just don't look around.

Sarah tried to put on a positive expression, but was showing deep concern inside.

"What, or who are these guardians anyway?" she asked.

"They're the people of the mountains. There are, another race who live in these mountains. Several in fact, but these are probably the most human like and they can make themselves fully visible if they choose."

"Do they look like us?" asked Sarah.

“In a sense...” she continued. “They're like us, but, as the story goes, they aren't vehicles for our kind of consciousness. Our dragons in Welsh mythology are the energy of the earth, beings which are far more powerful and wiser than us. From what I see, the dragons spoke to one of the Tuatha De Danann, and this man learnt so much about them that he would fly on their backs and learnt all of their knowledge. He was so wise, that all of his children were born with the ability to enter the dragon world. They look like us, but some of them have... horns. Most have bright red hair, some have wings even, others have tails and claws. Hardly anyone knows about them.”

“Do these beings live here, in Snowdonia?” asked Sarah

“Yes. They keep themselves to themselves and can't be seen normally. Apparently their realm can only be reached at the tops of certain mountains. I remember seeing this handsome young man one time, in the mist when walking up Glydir Fawr. He gave me a look with piercing green eyes, a sort of playful smile, and seemed to just dive off the mountainside towards a spire of rock. In the corner of my eye, I could of sworn he had wings.”

Sarah didn't know where she was going. She found some roman steps marked on the map and continued to climb up them. The landscape was rocky, gold bearing rock with thick veins of quartz which stuck out from beneath the heather. The area had a strange feeling to it. She wasn't certain if she really wanted to spend the night on this area of elevated rock, but she had brought everything with her, and her car was now miles away.

Things were not getting dark. No sign of any danger yet. The clouds were doing weird things on the horizon though. They had formed into a great wall of whispering cloud, a glowing orange to pink colour. There was columns in the sky like those of a heavenly race, as their World became visible for a second before the sky became dotted with distant stars. There was nothing to hear except the sound of a stream. It sounded quite muffled and quiet, perhaps it was flowing out of a small bog just over the rocks by Sarah's tent. The night was still early, and it was still sort of light on the horizon being in early July. Sarah thought about how few people must go here, let alone experience this place at night. She wondered how many others had spent the night here over the last few thousand years. Perhaps no one, perhaps only a handful of people.

At about 1 am, the atmosphere changed. Sarah was smoking her last cigarette outside the tent, and this strange light appeared outside. She thought at first that it must have been someone walking past, which would be creepy. But the light had feeling too, it felt relaxed, comforting. The light seemed to have a mind of its own.

She cautiously crawled out of her tent and looked around. Nothing at first, but then sure enough the light came back, radiating from what appeared to be people stood upon the rock. These people were not ordinary people. Sarah was surprised at how calm she was, to be honest she thought that an experience like this would be beautiful regardless of how scary it might be to most. Looking at her, were five people with a glowing white-turquoise skin. They had beautiful blonde hair, and long ears like

those of an elf. Their eyes were elongated, a bit like those of your typical grey alien. Their skin was giving off some kind of divine light, something very pure. Sarah could hear singing and some form of music playing as she concentrated on this light. The more she let herself hear this music, the more it felt like the light was actually talking to her. The beings did not speak, just gazed at her with a sense of calmness and good nature. One by one, they walked off the rock, and Sarah decided to follow them. She couldn't see where she was going, everything was so dark. The stars provided no light and the moon was gone, she could only see the vague shapes of rocks in front of her, and could feel the boggy areas when her feet accidentally went into them. The pale blue light led her into a mist, until she was beside a mountain lake. The beings stood in a broad circle, and all of a sudden, a deep humming sound came from the earth. Other beings seemed to be appearing now from around the circle, including two humans with horns and glowing eyes. The dragon people of the mountains. Perhaps they knew where Sarah should go.

It was clear that the beings were speaking different languages but had switched to a common language, which sounded like the Elvish from Lord of the Rings, but it was hummed and sung, not spoken. A mystical man then came to join them. He was about 5 ft tall, with long dark hair and tanned skin. He wore animal skins and a strange hood like thing over his head. He also had a big necklace of sea shells around him, which made soothing sounds as the wind blew through it. Most of the beings kept glancing towards me. One of the older blue people kept looking across to Sarah as if he was quite anxious to include her in what was going on. But nothing happened, and she kept her distance. Sat beside a lake at night whilst beings from another world, which until tonight she had never even heard of before, let alone see that they were real. The heads of the blue people were glowing out of the mist, their each movement seemed angelic and otherworldly. After some time, one of the dragon people approached, a red haired man of about 6 ft, with wings, horns and bright green eyes. He sat on the rock beside Sarah, searching his miner's cloths for something.

"we are glad you came" he said. "We have been talking about the best cause for action. The people of Danu, who took you here, have been protecting you whilst on the mountain. They have taken you here to this lake where all is safe."

"where are you from?" asked Sarah.

"My name is Pengywylchwy, and my home is accessed by secret gold mine entrances upon this hill. My sister, who you saw me with, is from a different clan who live near the mountain of Tryfan. We are the guards of the land and all of its treasure."

"This mine I have been searching for. Why do I need to find it and am I close yet?"

"There is nothing you need to do Sarah. Only if this is right to you. But you can do it, so why would you not want to? Finding this place will be a test. The mine was closed in 700AD and a dragon was left in that valley to ward off any intruder. That's why no-one can find this mine. The energy of the valley is controlled by this dragon. He can make the people in that valley miss any vital clue. There is one story about a man confronting this dragon hundreds of years ago, and seeing it."

"But what you mean, is that, you don't know where it is?"

"No. Because this mine cannot be found with a map, or with a compass. It was hidden deliberately so that no-one searching for it for the wrong reasons would ever

find it. You need to step into the greater will of the creator for you to find it. That means going on a sort of quest.”

“Is there nothing you can tell me, or nothing you can do to help?”

“There is one thing we can do, and that is to provide guidance.”

The man took a necklace of gold from his pocket, with a charm in the centre shaped like three spirals.

“This is the symbol of everything in our world, made from the gold of the lost mine. Only a person pure of heart can use this gold to guide them.”

Some of the other beings had gathered around Sarah and were trying to communicate with her. Eventually, one of them, the older one who had seen her, started speaking in English. He gave her a gentle smile, and pointed his long fingers towards a single stone. “Start there” he said. “Carry the gold under the stars and it will protect you, go the the east as the sun rises and to the temple of knowledge. Find the valley with the bubbling stream and enter the kingdom of Annwn. Only a human girl can undertake this task. Should you succeed, and you will pass the power of the land over to the people of the land.”

Sarah started walking. She grabbed her tent and went back to the spot, holding her necklace below the starlight as it lit up every now and then. She walked towards the sun, down into a valley, crossing a road and into a deep pine forest. It was impossible to see anything much in here, it was now about 4 am and she hadn't eaten or drunk anything in hours. Sarah wiped the sweat off her face as she climbed over broken trees and slipped on the moss covered forest floor. The clouds above her were turning pink and gold. The trees were like strange figures in the fog, as small patches of light began to penetrate the deep forest. She had come to notice that the necklace tingled in her hand when she walked towards the sun, and she found her way up the mountain and into the valley on the other side by trusting. It was trust. She had never had such instincts before, she just knew that she was going in the right direction. Her close experiences with the fairy people last night had changed her outlook on things. Sarah crossed another river, and climbed upwards, following a stream this time through more dense pine forest. The stream trickled in the early sunlight, and it wasn't long before the three little spirals on her necklace were doing strange things as well. They started to glow, almost like a torch, as she climbed under trees and over boulders, opening out into a strange chasm. The chasm went into the mountain in front of her, and it got deep real quick. It was only about 12 inches wide, but as she peered in, it went down and opened out.

Sarah felt nervous. “Stupid” she cursed. “This is so fucking dangerous”. The necklace jolted her arm as if to say “shut up and trust me”. Sarah moved ferns out of the way, and slid her body past wet moss and sharp volcanic rocks. The necklace was lighting the way ahead, but she had to be turned sideways anyway. The chasm wasn't vertical, and seemed to switch to being at awkward horizontal angles at times.

Amazingly, it wasn't a chasm. It was the gap between two boulders. Two enormous rocks which had been crushed together. They had been crushed together over something, like a huge doorway or entrance. As the crack began to widen, she had to climb through and over other boulders, using only the light provided by her necklace.

It was dark and scary down here, although as she got further into this cave, beams of light penetrated into the underground fog from far above. The sound of water was trickling from up ahead, where a single light beam seemed to penetrate vertically into a pool of water. As she got closer, she felt uneasy. Like something was threatening in the air and trying to suffocate her almost. She heard a distant sound of moving rocks, and then a roar. Sarah ran into the corner out of the light and sat down, closing her eyes and hiding her face into her hands. But the creature could still see her. Its golden orange eyes were looking right back at her. She saw the dragon briefly, its eyes looked deep into hers and she kept her eyes shut and wondered what she could do. Its eyes were full of fear and danger, but Sarah was no-longer afraid. She deliberately opened her eyes, and looked around. Her vibe was of a girl who didn't give up, which intimidated the beast. "Come on, dragon" she said out loud, looking around the pool and into the darkness.

The dragon wasn't as she expected. There was a crushing sound, the sound of boulders moving dangerously close to her, and a red wave of glistening scales appeared before her. Its mouth was covered in sharp teeth. Sarah didn't understand how that thing even got down here. Its head was about the size of a car. The dragon gazed at her. His eyes were so penetrating and all seeing. She could feel the creature reading the fabric of her soul as it entered her mind and judged what kind of person she was. The beast's eyes looked curiously towards the gold amulet, and the dragon started to growl, and looked more ferociously at Sarah. "Here you go then" she said, throwing the golden amulet high into the air. The dragon grabbed it in his teeth, somehow, and then retreated. His mouth which had originally glowed with fire had become cooler. He gave Sarah one last look, and flew his enormous body across to the back of the cavern behind light. There he crawled up into a ball and seemed to disappear. The glow of his body melted him into the ancient rock behind him, and eventually his great, horned head came crashing towards the ground. He opened his mouth one more time and roared, and the fire within him seemed to open up a gateway. Colour rushed around his mouth in a bright, explosive moment. "Did the gold kill him?" asked Sarah. "Or did he just become a spirit again and open the gateway?"

Sarah walked up to the dragon. His head had become rock, a rock shaped like a dragon's head. Water was pouring out of his mouth into the pool, and now there were even lights in there. Sarah walked into the dragon's mouth. It was an entrance. And his throat, had become a tunnel. The walls were perfectly round, and glittering with iron crystals and formations. The water in the tunnel was also a deep red colour. There were lights placed into the walls of the tunnel. These lights were actually just crystals, which seemed to always be turned on. The tunnel eventually lost its throat shape, and opened up into rooms of cavernous proportion. Most of them were very tall, sometimes hundreds of feet, and with lakes in the bottom. Spectacular stalactite and stalagmite formations of copper and iron made the ceiling and floor meet. And veins of gold, a metre thick, ran through glowing veins of quartz which emitted a humming sound. A wooden railway track continued over underground rivers, and through fields of boulders. Each boulder must have contained billions of dollars worth of gold.

The railway track lead into a huge cavern, filled with a strange gold treasure of strange shapes. The treasure contained circular objects made of metal, columns of crystals inside gold, with celtic patterns carved into them. Ahead of her was a well, with gold coins and other things on the rock below. The cavern was illuminated from above by a bright orange light which seemed to come out of no where. Sarah walked over towards the pool of water, feeling as though a force was taking her towards it. The gold was very beautiful of course, but she didn't want it for herself. She knew that it would be distributed to different old tribal structures, and give power to those clans so that they could eventually expose the lies and corruption and bring about the next Celtic Age. This would be a time of natural prosperity, where the peoples were finally united and the other worlds would merge with ours, bringing the fairies and other beings back into our World.

Sarah walked over to the pool. An otherworldly fire was twinkling over the surface. Sarah felt its warmth, and took off her jumper and shirt. She stripped naked and walked into the water. She remembered random dance songs from the early 2000s, as her mind floated off and she jumped into the warm water. The moment she fell in, it was like a shock wave entering her body like a bolt of lightning. She swam to the surface, the water had become the universe. It was filled with stars. She looked at the gold, it was blurry. The gold had become stars, becoming more solid as they died. She saw information coming from that gold, writing, weird Celtic letters, moving patterns of something. She felt like she knew everything and that truth so enriched her, that she would spend the rest of her life spreading that truth.

The gold was revealed to those who had studied Celtic lore, and those who had chosen to come back here from the last celtic age. The celtic age was not a kingdom or authority. The celtic age was the age in Ireland, Britain and other parts of Europe, where man remembered where he came from and worked together with all that he is, instead of trying to destroy it.

Oisin's cave

Oisin sat on the wooded, damp mountainside. he gazed across the dark cloud as it swirled around the bare mountains, and streams flowed from the gentler slopes into lush woodland as they collected dew from the mosses and grass.

This was an ancient land inhabited by wild beings. These beings were not always so friendly, but nowadays their time stream has simply become our myths and legends. Everything was so green, so beautiful in the eyes of Oisin.

The language of the Gaels was slowly replacing the older, mystical languages. The name that Oisin knew this land by, was Tíra Mára, simply named 'big land'. This owed to the giants said to inhabit the mountains.

Oisin was different to the other Fianna, more defined in his love of lore and poetry. He was a great hunter though, and sat upon a stone outcrop next to the temporary

camp they had made. The smell of damp Scots pine wafted through the air, along with the smell of cooking deer. Oisín had stalked the stag at dawn as he darted through the forest, and gave thanks to him as he gazed towards the clouds and all the spirits which dwelt within them.

Suddenly a roaring sound bellowed from the foreboding mountains. It was An Fear Liath, the mountain giant, as he tossed and turned in the mist, striking the primordial mountains with his sharp claws.

Oisín was a man of giant posture, with the strength of many men. Deep in the mountains there was a large cave. Some called it the eye of Amon, others knew it as Oisín's cave. This is where the last of the Fianna in Scotland would one day go into hiding. After the Highland Clearances, the last kings of Tara retreated from the sacred MacKee clan and fled to Oisín's cave. Back in those days, it was the eye in the mountain. It enabled the Fianna to look across the valley below.

The giant had been causing problems lately, and it was Oisín's job to sort him out. The giants were the kin of the Fianna, a very distant relative. But they had been very uncaring towards life in the past. Not many of the giants, just certain giants. Some of them would be respected for their wisdom and strength. Others were feared for their strength, stupidity and for having hearts without kindness.

Oisín followed the giant on horseback up over Rannoch Moor, towards the mountains where Oisín's cave was. Much of his journey was spent concealing himself behind fairy trees, and behind cliffs and rocks, as the giant kept looking back. He knew that he was being hunted. Oisín didn't want to kill the giant, Oisín was a man of poetry and lore. He was a great hunter, but not a fighter. That was the job for the rest of his kin. He valued life and understood, where others did not or could not.

Oisín's cave was high on the mountainside. The only way of reaching it was a stairway which had been cut into the rock by the fairy people, now mainly gone from this land. The cave had been a shrine, and the mountain was dotted with deep cracks and fissures which contained the ritual axe and plant offerings of the ancient people. Oisín was exposed now though, running across a stony dry river bed and surrounded by enormous mountains. The giant had disappeared, and Oisín didn't like it. Just as Oisín started to run towards the cliff to find the bottom of the stairway, the giant stepped out of the mountain mist, above and to the left. He was tall, taller than five castles. He proceeded to rip a section of rock off the mountainside and hurl it at Oisín. Oisín had so little time, but managed somehow to avoid a direct hit, by running upwards and out of the way. Oisín was a fast runner, after all. Oisín decided that the situation was dark enough already. Oisín took out his fiddle and started to play a reel which he had once heard in Tir na Nog. The music captivated the giant, who poked his nose out of the clouds and gazed at Oisín with wide open eyes. This enabled the other Fianna, who were on the mountain above Oisín, to kill the giant. Oisín didn't want this to happen, but this giant had been annoying. Finn McCool rammed his foot into the rock above the giant, causing him to become crushed. Oisín was nearly killed by this rockfall as well, because Finn McCool was just a bit too cool with violence. He loved beating up other giants.

Oisín then removed the giant's single eye, and carried it on a long rope up the stairs cut into the rock. He placed the eye of the giant in the back of the cave, so that his

spirit would be immortal in the mountain. Sometimes even today, that cave gives us a stare from its deep blackness through the fog. The uneasiness we feel is caused by that same spirit, daring us to be arrogant towards an unforgiving mountain.

The story of Knockanokreesh

In the hills around Bantry Bay there is a hill called Knockanokreesh. This mountain is a glittering energy. It rains often there, and the ancient cliffs and boulders which make up most of the mountain, glimmer in the rain light. Michéal was a priest who believed that this light was God talking to him. So he took over an old church just below Knockanokreesh. It would rain there often, only to be covered by sunshine. In the first weeks of July, this was especially beautiful. The rain would fall heavily, soaking the grass, the rock, and filling all the bogs. Then the next minute, the sun would shine through again. The clouds are blown over, leaving traces of dark shadow here and there, whilst the rocks and grass twinkle in the morning light. Two rainbows would often appear, two archways over the sky. They were said to be paths to the otherworld in pagan times. The bottom of a rainbow was guarded by a leprechaun of course, and far from being just make belief, these other people were very real to the Irish.

Michéal was 19, and met his wife in Glengariff a year later, leaving the priesthood and working with the church in other ways. He started a career by writing of how the truth of the Bible was revealed to him in nature and in kindness. His wife, Aoife, was dark haired and green eyed. Something about both of them together made magical stuff happen. When they were together, the pagan element in the land and culture seemed to come about. They would dance on the lower slopes of the mountain within the fox gloves and bracken. On the mountain there was a small cave hidden in the rocks. This cave only appeared after a rainbow. The mountain was so rocky, boulders lying everywhere and exposed curtains of rock flanking all sides. The grass and rushes blew in the wind beside small bogs, which lay between areas of old sandstone and other ancient rock.

The cave was a boulder cave, created from what had once been a pile of boulders. This had become surrounded by soil and other rocks as the bog had built up in front of the cave.

Michéal and Aoife danced here in the rain. They got soaked. In early July, when the rain came thrashing down onto the raw landscape, they would just stand there. Smelling the mountain, their noses touching in a kiss, and the warm electrified feeling of water droplets falling from the sky as the sun warmed them. However, Michéal was afraid. He feared that one day he would lose Aoife, that she might be taken away from this valley of perfection. So he asked her to write name beside his, upon a piece of slate, and he brought it up to the small cave. At the back, he moved rocks and boulders, burying the piece of slate beside a collection of seashells and wild flowers, with a ring she had given him. Michéal thought that if he planted their love in the mountain, it would be as strong and unchanging as the mountain. But it was their collective empathy and kindness which made their love perfect.

The revival of East Sutherland Gaelic

Linden Alexander Pentecost

Some years back I became part of the Droitseach project, which works on the study and revival of Scottish Gaelic's traditional dialects. Seumas Grannd has produced a comprehensive study of the MacAoidh Gaelic dialect, dealing with the speech of the historic Durness area, from Reay to Cape Wrath. Since travelling back up there in the summer of 2012, on a road trip across Sutherland and Caithness, I began to develop more interest in the Gaelic dialects, and Norn languages of these regions. Many years prior to this, I had bought and read Nancy C. Dorian's book: *East Sutherland Gaelic, The dialect of Brora, Golspie and Embo Fishing Communities*. This book, along with her other studies, are a vital source of information for anyone interested in Northern Gaelic, or the more general study of Celtic Languages.

On this road trip I visited Embo, and found a couple of women who still spoke the East Sutherland Gaelic dialect. Between then and now I have done little work on Gaelic, although have been looking into the MacAoidh dialect more, and after visiting Brora three times so far this summer, it seemed like a suitable time to resume.

My task is to help revive the Gaelic of East Sutherland. I am also working on the dialects of Arran, Barra, St Kilda, MacAoidh county and Rosshire. I will first outline the methods and approach I intend to take.

1. Identify features across the whole East-Sutherland region, and publish details on how this relates to the dialects of Invernesshire, Ross and Cromarty, Caithness and other areas of Sutherland.
2. Publish a small guide to East Sutherland Gaelic, as a general dialect
3. Make resources such as posters and wordlists available to Gaelic enthusiasts, historians and teachers from the East Sutherland area.

Currently I am focusing on the evidence laid out by Nancy Dorian, on the Gaelic of three villages, where Gaelic survived in relative isolation well into the 20th Century. It is this study which I am largely drawing from at present.

This work here actually attempts to recreate a sort of Northern Gaelic with its own unique spelling system. Since the Gaelic of Caithness is not so well known, I am basing the revival of this language mainly on the Brora dialect of East Sutherland Gaelic, and will soon try to focus on phonological changes.

The villages

The traditional county of Sutherland occupies most of the northernmost areas of the Scottish Mainland. In the far North East of Scotland, the county of Caithness is situated, presumably named after the **Catti** Celtic speaking tribe (*Probably not originally*). Gaelic was once spoken as the first language of many thousands across both counties, but Caithness also had a greater Scandinavian influence, with a Norn language being spoken here into relatively recent times.

Eastern Sutherland sits beneath Caithness, and has a short section of coastline on the North Sea. The largest towns, from South to North, are Dornoch, Golspie, Brora and Helmsdale. Nancy's study of the Gaelic focuses on Embo, a small village just north of Dornoch, Golspie and Brora. Today, as far as I am aware, Embo is the only village out of these three, where Gaelic is still spoken, even if only by two individuals. (*I know at least one of them has passed away now sadly (2024), God bless. I heard there was one speaker living in either Brora or Golspie too.*)

The Gaelic of these villages is distinct from that of other areas of Scotland. Gaelic came to be concentrated here after the Highland Clearances, when the crofting way of life was impeded, forcing Gaelic speakers to settle the coastal regions in greater number, leaving them in relative isolation from other Gaelic speakers. Nancy explains how Gaelic speakers from these villages would often have trouble understanding Gaelic from other areas, particularly that of Lewis. Even though Lewis Gaelic shares quite a lot in common with Gaelic spoken in the Western part of Sutherland. Attempts to teach Gaelic in these villages were also a failure, as the Gaelic being taught was unlike what was being spoken in the villages, and led to more confusion than advances. It was because of this, and other factors, that the speakers of East Sutherland Gaelic, sometimes came to view their dialect as being less pure, and worthy of use, than the Gaelic of the Hebrides.

Common features of E. Sutherland Gaelic

1. E. Sutherland Gaelic shows higher numbers of borrowings from Scots and English, because English and Scots came to surround the villages almost entirely. This may also account for the simplifications in the case-system. (*This is likely not the case: the borrowings from Scots are not that great, and the unique vocabulary within East Sutherland Gaelic could be ancient to that area, as could the simplification of the case system be*).
2. Reduction of syllables is common in E. Sutherland Gaelic, and occurs in different ways, sometimes particular to each village.
3. Insertion of the semivowel [w] after g and c, a feature also found in Rosshire and Skye sometimes.

4. Long and short 'a' often become 'o', as in Caithness and other areas of North Scotland.
5. N often becomes 'r', a feature common in Scottish Gaelic, but this can be seen much more extensively in Northern dialects.
6. Alterations in the pronunciation of à and a may be down to Scandinavian influences. A similar change took place in the Norn language of Caithness, this will be dealt with elsewhere. *(This is I think very unlikely to be due to Scandinavian influence, it is better thought of as a mutual sound-balance found in many North-Germanic and in some Scottish Gaelic dialects, many, to a small degree).*

Spelling of E. Sutherland Gaelic

Although it would be more ideal to spell East Sutherland Gaelic in a way identical to the standard language, I feel this would impede upon the language's strength as a standalone speech form. Having a slightly adapted spelling system would allow this dialect/language form to survive better, and to be taken more seriously. Manx is very similar to Western Isles, or Minch Gaelic, in many ways, yet its spelling system allows it to stand alone, and for its own peculiarities to persist into the present. The alphabet I have constructed below is one possible option. The actual spelling and way in which this language is revived, should be as much up to the people living in East Sutherland, as any linguist.

This spelling is only used in this article for the purpose of making the dialect's differences a little easier to note. This spelling can also be employed for poetic writing, personal writing etc for this specific dialect, but its usage in the actual revival of ES Gaelic as a whole would probably confuse things.

The spelling I have used is to represent the traditional East Sutherland Gaelic dialects.

a b c d e f g h i l m n n o p r s t u w à – this is the main alphabet. *(Whilst “à” is used in my spellings of some Gaelic dialects, including East Sutherland Gaelic, it is used to write a sound recorded in the Scottish Gaelic dialect surveys in East Sutherland, but not to my knowledge in Nancy C. Dorian’s work, hence in this article “o” is used in accordance with the phonology recorded by Nancy.*

Most of these letters above carry the exact same pronunciation to that of Hebridean Gaelic. Here are some examples of E. Sutherland Gaelic, followed by their standard Gaelic equivalents:

go, gabh - *gabh* – to take
fheid, fhaid - *fhaide* - longer
ail, eil - *eil* – is (interrogative)

dómhn - *domhain* - deep
goit, gait - *gaibhte* – taken
Gollu - *Gallaibh* – Caithness
bol - *balla* – a wall
crèumh – *cnàmh, cnàimh* - bone

Basic phrases in East Sutherland Gaelic – work in process.

Ciamar (a) tha u? - how are you?
Ciamar (a) tha sibh/siu? - how are you (plural)
Tha mi gu math – I am well

Please note, that this spelling system is only being applied to the divergent 'dialect' of South Caithness, perhaps to give it some status as a stand-alone language/language form. This is similar to the case in Setesdal in Norway, where a different spelling is used for the Setesdalsk dialect.

Pronoun table:

<u>Gwàilig/ Gàilig</u>	<u>English</u>
mi	I
u, tu, du	Thou, you
a	he
i	she
sinn	we
sibh, siu	you lot
aid	they

The present form of 'to be' is basically the same as in Minch Gaelic.

tha mi – I am
tha u – thou art
tha a – he is
tha i – she is
tha sinn – we are

tha siu - you (plural) are
tha aid - they are

Interrogative forms:

.am beil? (Embo), **bheil?** (Brora, Golspie) – is/are? Standard: *a' bheil?*
.nach eil? (Embo), **nach ail?** (Brora, Golspie) is/are not? Standard: *nach eil?*

Basic example sentences:

- 1). **th'a bruin riut** – he is speaking to you
- 2). **nach ail sinn dul?** - are we not going?
- 3). **bha sinn péiu airson am biadh** - we were paying for the food
- 4). **nach ail lomman agad?** - do you not have fish scales? (on the off chance you may need to ask that question)
- 5). **'s urrn dhomh** - I can
- 6). **tha mi sòmhch** – I am quiet
- 7). **nach ail pìob ail agad?** Do you not have another pipe?
- 8). **tha sròine agam, orn 's a duine a th'annam** – I have a nose, because I am a person

Possession is indicated by prepositions being suffixed by personal pronouns, as in other modern Celtic languages. For example:

agam – at-me, I have
agad – at thee, you have (singular)
aig – at him, he has [ig]
eag – at her, she has [ek] (approximation)
agaínn, agan – at us, we have [agin, agan]
agai/agu – [agi], [agu] –
oc, ac – at them, they have

For example:

tha laom agam – I have a moth. Note that the combination **ao** is often pronounced as a long schwa sound in Eastern Sutherland.

Numbers

The cardinal numbers in S. Caithness, are as follows:

ùn, aon – one
dà – two
trì – three
ceir – four
cóig – five
sia – six
seachd – seven
ochd – eight
naoi – nine
deich – ten
ùn an diag – eleven
dhà dhiag – twelve

Interrogative words

daé? - what? (which?)
có? - who?
cron? - why?
cweas? - where from?
cao leis? - with what?

Some more phrases and examples (8 sentences):

- 1). **daé an t-airm a th'ort?** - what is your name?
- 2). **có a seo?** - who is this?
- 3). **cron bheil u fiarach?** - why are you asking?
- 4). **cweas a tha u?** - where are you from?
- 5). **nach robh u ann?** - were you not there?
- 6). **cron tha dollag agam?** - why do I have a dogfish?

7). **tha sinn cailea(II) a Chàilig** – we are loosing Gaelic. The *gh* in *Ghàidhlig* was unvoiced when I interviewed the two speakers from Embo, hence the spelling **Chàilig**, with a broad **ch** [x]. (This sentence was said by the women in Embo, Wilma and Jessie, see the video link below on this page to hear the conversation).

8). **bha a ag ibir** – he was working

He is my video on YouTube from when I spoke to Wilma and Jessie, made in 2012:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJBMFYdf18E>

Everything in this article came from information from what I learned in Nancy C. Dorian's book *East Sutherland Gaelic: the dialect of the Brora, Golspie, and Embo fishing communities*, and from my one field visit to East Sutherland, where I met Wilma Ross and Jessie Ross. I am grateful for having met you two, thank you.

This is the last page of the book.